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ART AND HISTORY

NATYA - THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION

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S.DHANDAPANI DESIKAR - ADALVALLAN-2018**

Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam

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CHAPTER II

NATYA - THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION

As part of our Art & History series - we have concised some information from the book " ADALVALLAN" by the author -"Adheena Mahavidwan Sri S.Dandapani Desikar".This book is published by the Thiruvavaduthurai Adheenam.

As a human experiences various emotions like sadness, happiness, troubles and a feel of thirst towards anything, he eventually forgets himself in that process and exposes his feelings through both rhythm and the movement of his legs and hands. He jumps out of excitement and dances. Others collaborate this with expressions in depicting a form of art known as 'Koothu'.

All living things dances in gods influence. Their lives are solely controlled by god. They dance to gods tune. So it is not their natural behaviour whereas it only triggers their inner self and makes them dance. Hence this form of expressing is purely influential and not natural.

‘Koothu’, dance and drama reveals the generality that’s commonly hidden, and relates to each other inspite of the differences in their origin, the program correlated dance and stories correlated dance are described as ‘Koothu’. It is categorised into two, namely “Shanthi and vinotham”. ‘Shanthi Koothu’, in which the hero dances to symbolise his happiness through the following: firstly, Pot dance (suddha nirutham) of Chokam nirutham. Chokam includes one hundred and eight Thandava Karanas. Secondly, Mei Koothu which is done by the body and it consists of three varieties, Desi, Vadaku, and Sinhalam. Thirdly, ‘Rasadham’ is based on the taste or flavour perception. Fourthly ‘Abhinaya koothu’ which is independent of the story but wholly relates only to the lyrics. And the last which is ‘Naadaga koothu’ describing the story.



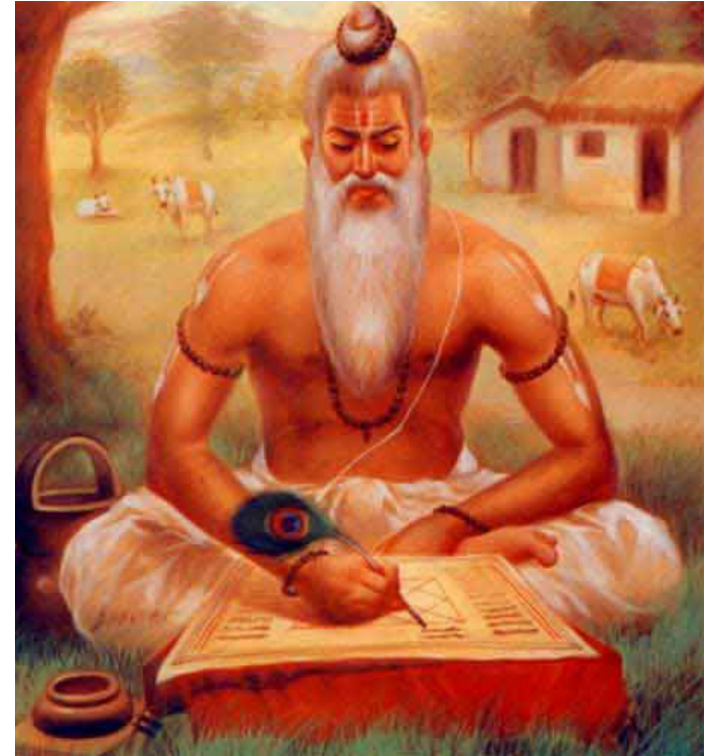
The other category 'Vinotha Koothu' consists of seven varieties of Koothu. Those are Kuravai Koothu, Kallal Koothu, Kuda Koothu, Karanam, Noku, Thod Pavai Koothu and Vidhooda Koothu. If vidhooda koothu is seperated from the above, and combined with 'Theivameriyadu' koothu, then again there comes seven forms. The above includes suddha nirutham which is one among the one hundred and eight Thandava Karanas performed by lord shiva, inscribed in (Silappadikaram verse 12- 25). In this literature, the above mentioned details are briefly narrated.





The emergence of koothu from within the soul that has gods glory present throughout the lifetime, when affiliated with Bhava-expression, Raga- music and Thalam- sequential rhythm, forms 'Bharatham' or dance. Thus koothu is the illustration while dance is its genesis. Koothu in Sanskrit is pronounced as 'Narthanam'; 'Nirth' - bounce and 'Natu' - moves, showcasing the thoughts into expressions which is an essential part of dance. And expression furnishes dance. The face expression, body language, stability and gestures is important in dance, along with the movements which promotes dance. Due to this reason 'Narthanam' is integrated with 'dance' and the same has been inscribed in the history by sage bharathamuni.

In the 'thredhayugam' period, during the rule of vaivasvadhama, all his subjects lived a unfriendly life filled with jealousy and anger. Their lifestyle had to be changed in order to spread peace among them, hence Bharata sought the help of Brahma. Brahma decided to grant Bharata with the 'Natyavedham' which comprised of ancient mythology, arts, other special arts, and details about sculptures. Immediately he sorted dance from 'rig Veda', music from 'Samaveda', expressions from 'Yajur Veda' and flavours from 'Atharvana Veda' and created the fifth Veda- astronomy of dance. Sage Bharatamuni tried teaching this art to the priests, but found it difficult. Once again Bharatamuni sought Brahma to teach him the art and it was granted to him. He in turn taught his children and wanted to teach women too, hence Brahma created Ramba, Urvashi, Tilothama. And dance was spread across the entire country as 'Niruthakalai', as composed by Bharatamuni in history. He thus concluded by saying that Bhava, Raga and Thala is being taught and practised along with dance.



Lord Shiva is known to be the father of 'Niruthakalai' when he took the avatharam as 'Aanandhaparavasar'. After years, it's said in compositions that bharathar took this art to the next level and spread throughout.

In the literary 'bharatharnavam' a different story is portrayed as it is said that, Thandu Alais Nandhikesvarar was Lord Shivas first student and he learnt the art from lord shiva and taught to bharathamuni .Hence the name Thandavam.

Bhrama once ordered Bharathamuni to enact the thiripurasankaram to paramashivan, and was overwhelmed in seeing Bharathar perform. Seeing this, Bhrama suggested Bharathar to learn Narthanam from thandu. He then performed Narthanam along with thandavam. Bhrama did not stop with this, as he wanted Bharathar to learn Lasya- women's dance, from Umadevi . By this bharathar learnt all three: thandavam, Narthanam and Lasyam forms of art.And sorkattu like Swaram and Jathi was framed likewise. The three dance forms were associated with each others growth, and the same was detailed seperately in several books and literatures also.

