

Development of Kuchipudi Dance in the Context of 20th Century Dance Renaissance in India

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There has been a transformation of the Kuchipudi dance form in the twentieth century from its rural, temple-centered, dance-drama origins in Andhra Pradesh into one of the major classical dance forms of India with a pan-Indian and now international reach and popularity. Kuchipudi dance form, both in its origins and its transformation is embedded in the socio-cultural milieu of the Andhra region and in the larger politico-cultural context of the Indian performing arts. The reasons and process of multi-dimensional changes in Kuchipudi dance and its propagation both culturally and globally is discussed in this article, through a sociological framework and in the context of the 20th century dance renaissance in India.

[Key Words: Kuchipudi, Colonialism, Nationalism, Modernity, Renaissance]

At present Kuchipudiⁱ is categorized as one of the eight classical dance forms of India. (Map 1) Prior to the 1920s it was practised as a dance-drama form and was confined only to Andhra region. It had developed over the centuries into a systematized form with a structured presentation style and a technique that followed the dance treatises *Natyasastra* and *Abhinaya*

Darpanam

There has been a transformation of the Kuchipudi dance form in the twentieth century from its rural, temple-centred, dance-drama origins in Andhra Pradesh into one of the major classical dance forms of India with a pan-Indian and now international reach and popularity. (Seth 2005)

Kuchipudi dance got recognition as one of the classical dance forms of India during the first seminar held by the Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Natak Academyⁱⁱ on February 28, 1959. Speeches delivered by art connoisseurs, eminent personalities and dance scholarsⁱⁱⁱ discussed and analyzed the dance form and made a powerful recommendation for the recognition of Kuchipudi as a classical dance. (Pasala 1966:77; Banda 1966:55-60; Chintalapati 1983:152).

Kuchipudi dance form, both in its origins and its transformation over the last hundred years, is embedded in the socio-cultural milieu of the Andhra region and in the larger politico-cultural context of the Indian performing arts. In my doctoral thesis^{iv} this development as one of the classical dance forms of India was analyzed, interpreted and described looking through a sociological framework as well as referring to scholarship on dance to understand the major

changes in Indian society in the last century ; the traditional milieu of performing arts; the impact of colonialism, nationalism and modernity; and the role of cultural forms and disciplines in general (of which classical dance is a specific example) in the forging of national and regional identities. Analytically speaking, the emergence and growth in the form and content of performing arts took place, at least in part, as a response to micro and macro socio-economic and political processes and also with a possibility of deliberate change by design and by intervention of individuals and groups.

In the first few decades of the twentieth century, the struggle for freedom and the associated feelings and ideas of nationalism were the dominant motifs. Even though other factors such as development of technology and commercialization had an impact, nationalism was the major force which shaped the performing arts. In turn, the performing arts played a role in consolidating national identity.

The process of revival and transformation classical dance forms is discussed in this article taking Kuchipudi as a specific case after briefly reviewing the dance renaissance in India during the 20th century and the revival of other classical dances namely, Bharatanatyam, Kathakali, Manipuri, Kathak, Odissi, and Mohini Attam practiced in various regions of India. The eight and latest classical dance form that got included in the list is Sattriya in the twenty first century. Keeping in view its recent inclusion, I have not elaborated on its development. Thus the content focuses on two aspects, that is:

1. Dance Renaissance and revival of dance forms (Bharatanatyam, Kathakali, Manipuri, Kathak, Odissi, Mohiniattam)
2. Specific case of Kuchipudi and its development as a classical dance form.

A variety of source materials, drawing from different disciplines like sociology, history, cultural anthropology, art history, dance, music, theatre is used.^v

1. Dance renaissance in India (20th century)

While nationalism and its impact on the rediscovery, revival and reconstruction of literature and the arts were significant and wide-ranging, its sharp impact was felt particularly in the dance scenario, since dance is a visual art capable of carrying a heavy load of symbolism.

The dance renaissance was a pan-Indian phenomenon, though there were some specialties in the regions, but virtually the same kinds and sequences of change occurred. Most importantly, the exclusive association of the dance forms with the hereditary entertainment castes was broken, and it became open to all strata of society. From social stigma it became a field of prestige, a symbol of national pride.

The changing ethos of the times inspired the interpretation of the ancient spirit in new perspectives. Many great names figure in the course of the revival and re-establishment of dance. One could see Rabindranath Tagore as a source of inspiration for this phenomenon. He conceived the idea of presenting dance forms of various regions in an artistic manner, reinterpreting them.

Through the performances of his dance troupes, these forms were taken to a wider and appreciative audience.^{vi}

The revival movement that started in Tagore's Shantiniketan was followed by Vallathol in Kerala, and it spread to other regions as well. It helped the rediscovery of the regional styles, for example, Manipuri by Tagore, Bharatanatyam by Rukmini Devi Arundale, Kathakali by Vallathol in Kerala and Kathak in Lucknow and Jaipur by Shamboo Maharaj and others. Also, during this period, there was an interaction between the dancers of India and Burma, Bali and other Asian regions and nations. The interest to learn about Indian dance shown by the visiting dancers from Europe and America like Anna Pavalova, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn and others helped Indian dancers in realizing the worth of their own dance forms.

From the late thirties many regional styles evolved and transformed their earlier structures and practices into a new format. In this process some got recognition as classical dance forms. Bharatanatyam was the first, followed by Kathakali, Manipuri and Kathak. Three other forms-Kuchipudi, Odissi and Mohiniattam were 'rediscovered' in the following decades and got added to the list of classical dance forms of India.

An important feature of the rediscovery of dance traditions was that forms where only males used to perform, and forms where women from certain entertainment castes only used to perform opened up to women from educated and middle class families. There were social reformers like Muthuslakshmi Reddy who campaigned against the Devadasi system where women were dedicated to temples and had become the custodians of the art of dance. The termination of the earlier patronage from temples and courts had a negative impact on the art of the hereditary entertainment castes. . Women like Rukmini Devi, Shanta Rao and Menaka, who were not associated with the hereditary entertainment castes, learnt dance and became role models for girls who wanted to learn. For instance, Shanta Rao went to Kerala to learn the difficult art of Kathakali, the dance-drama form of Kerala. Menaka was another dancer who with an ambition to show to the world the hidden beauties of Indian life through rhythm, movement and music impressed the dance lovers both in India and in the West with her Kathak performances and ballet presentations.

This period also saw the opening up of Indian dance forms to the gaze of western dancers. This was largely due to the pioneering dancers like Uday Shankar, Madam Menaka, Ragini Devi, Shanta Rao and others. They transformed the dance scene by presenting a variety of compositions in solos, duets, group-dances, folk dances belonging to different regions and were rightly credited with taking Indian dancing to international recognition. ---Erdman who made an extensive research on the life of Uday Shankar, considers Uday Shankar and his troupe were a legacy that inspired India's modern dance for many years. Anna Pavalova spotted Uday Shankar in Paris and shaped hi into a dancer of world-wide repute. Ramgopal, was the other leading light in taking Indian dance out of the country's shores. Their dance efforts were projected as

‘Oriental dances’. ((Venkatachalam No date: 18, 65; Ragini 1966:30 Erdman 2001:34).

In this process of making changes and innovations, while on one hand work of these pioneering dancers was hailed for their creativity, showmanship and skilful presentations that paved the way for the rebirth of a precious art form which might have gone into oblivion their presentations and on the other faced criticism too for combining more than one style in their dance presentations.

“The freedom of expression and creative methods of these dancers gave Indian dance the much needed fillip and revived lost traditions. But the renaissance had its own lows. No doubt experiments, international exposure and new ballets produced dancers of great caliber but not without some damage. The individual expressions of some performances, (for instance, Sadhana Bose expressed her ideas through mixed technique combining Kathakali, Kathak and Manipuri) affected the overall quality and did not match the quality of earlier dance traditions. Some of the dancers even failed to impress the audiences. In India, art appreciation is often mental and critics here care more for technique and tradition than for style or individual uniqueness” (Venkatachalam: 66)

Cinema culture that started penetrating into every nook and corner during this period too had its impact on the Indian performing arts. However some of the films like Uday Shankar’s *Kalpna* (1948) with a theme revolving around dance and V. Shantaram’s *Jhanak Jahanak paayal baaje* (1957), a first film shot in technicolour formed a genre of films that are dance-based. (Rangoonwala 1979)

Revival of regional dance forms

Though the development of distinct regional styles took place prominently in the medieval period, it was their rediscovery, recognition and revival in the early 20th century which marked the beginning of the modern period of classical dance in India. Four dance forms became established as classical forms between 1930s and 1940s. Bharatanatyam evolved as an individual style of Tamil Nadu region, Kathakali got established as a dance-drama tradition from Kerala, Kathak developed into different schools such as Jaipur and Lucknow schools, Manipuri developed as a unique style reflecting vaishnava bhakti and ancient ritualistic traditions of the Meitei community. These were followed by Kuchipudi, Odissi, and Mohiniattam in the late fifties. Dancers whose performances and artistic perceptions contributed to the revival of Indian dance forms are listed and their contributions evaluated in the books published in the first half of the 20th century written by dance practitioners and dance historians. Enakshi Bhavnani Kay Ambrose, Venkatachalam, Ragini Devi, Faubion Bowers were some of the prominent writers who focused on the different dance styles of India.

There were broad differences in the dance styles, especially between those practiced in the North like Kathak and Manipuri and others in the South with respect to the music, techniques, texts and repertoire. ^{vii} Also the different

forms follow different dance systems (called '*bharatams*') which are considered as off-shoots of the original system propounded by Bharata. (Tandavakrishna 1945: 251). While some used all four canons, others either used or eliminated one or more of the canons.^{viii}

These differences can be noted even the innovations and changes that took place in each style to attain the classical status in the years between 1930 and 1960.

Some of the innovations were similar across the dance forms but incorporated to different degrees. For example, a shift from only male-participation to include female dancers happened in Kuchipudi and Odissi. Revival of the dance form without any change in the presentation, that is, from solo to solo form happened in the case of Odissi and Mohini Attam. In almost all the dance forms, except Bharatanatyam, the shift was from the rural to the urban stage. The major shift from dance-drama to solo format took place in the case of Kuchipudi. Kathak no longer remained confined to North India. Similarly Bharatanatyam not only changed its name from '*Dasiattam*' to '*Sadir nrutyam*' to present Bharatanatyam indicating that it is based on the elements from *Natyasastra* but also travelled from the South to the North, especially to the metros and cities. (Iyer 1964:103-110)

Kanak Rele's summarization of the development of the regional styles makes the important point that the regional styles did not remain static. "From time to time there have been variations and innovations in the traditions, recoding the upsurge in creative endeavor of a particular people. But these creative artistic endeavors are always marked by one characteristic; they take the existing tradition as their basis and work out their innovations as embroidery on the old basic fabric, giving it newer hues, patterns, appearance. These changing appearances are always tempered by the ethnic and regional needs, requirements and affiliations. It must be remembered that these creative endeavors are not always of a major and conspicuous nature. Such major endeavors necessarily need a very strong catalyst in order to create a truly abiding and noteworthy contribution. Such a catalyst has usually been an upsurge of religious fervor which in turn has sparked off a sustained, and many a times frenzied activity in the field of all the arts, for religion has never ceased to motivate art in India." (Rele 1992:158)

Some distinctive disadvantages to the growth of the dance forms can be listed as: the deteriorating state of affairs of dancers (as in Bharatanatyam and Kathak); deficit of qualified actors to take over from the senior artistes and unwillingness of younger generation of artistes to undergo rigorous training (Kathakali); disintegration of group dance activity (Kuchipudi); the access of the dance learning and performing restricted to certain community only (Bharatanatyam and Odissi). Similarly even the revival process indicates some commonalities and differences. The pioneering efforts of some dancers in each dance form facilitated the revival of these dance forms by incorporating changes and innovations in the following aspects:

- Structuring the dance technique (Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi),
- Entry of women dancers in the otherwise male-dominated or male-oriented dance styles (Kuchipudi and Odissi)
- The learning and performing facilities offered to those not belonging to a certain community (Bharatanatyam and Odissi)
- Using the Hindustani classical music of North (Kathak, Odissi) and Carnatic music of South (Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, and a distinct music called ‘sopanam’ in (Mohiniattam)
- Accompanying music changed to suit the urban stage including addition of instruments, vocal support, and inclusion of a variety of dance compositions in languages other than their own regional language.
- Patronage received having wide range from local people to State, Central and even international cultural organizations.
- Duration of the performances edited as per the requirement of urban stage.
- Costumes, stage arrangement and use of modern technical equipment too changed suiting to the venue and thematic content.
- Thematic content included besides the common mythological stories, other social, historical and global issues.
- The propagation of each dance form was wide spread from their rural roots to regions other than their origin, to pan-Indian level and even outside India.
- The efforts and contribution of pioneering dance practitioners (the list is not exhaustive)

Bharatanatyam -E.Krishna Iyer and Rukmini Devi

Kathakali - Vallathol

Manipuri – Bipin Singh, Jhaveri sisters

Kathak Madam Menaka, Birju Maharaj, Sitara Devi, Gopikrishna

Kuchipudi - Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry, Chinta Venkataramayya, Vedantam Satyanarayana Sarma, Vempati Chinna Satyam

Odissi – Pankaj Charan Das, Keucharan Mahapatra, Sanjukta Panigrahi, Sonal Mansingh

Mohiniattam - Kavalam Narayan Paniker and Kalyani Kuttiyamma , Kanak Rele

Kuchipudi

The historical scholarship and dance scholarship as well as the living tradition indicates that Kuchipudi dance-drama (i.e. the traditional form) was associated with a group of brahmin families from Kuchipudi village for at least four centuries, from the sixteenth to twentieth century’s. Siddhendra Yogi, a medieval saint-composer is credited with having trained young boys from Kuchipudi village, developed a structure for the dance-drama and used it for spreading vaishnava bhakti. From 1930 onwards, with the migration of the hereditary families out of the village, the opening up of the dance to women from non-hereditary families, and due to numerous other factors, Kuchipudi got transformed into a solo-classical form performed mainly by women. The transformation is evident in the following aspects of its presentation.

These changes are placed in the context of the changing performing arts scenario in the country in general, highlighting the role of national movement and the quest for a national identity in influencing the a nature of these changes. In the case of Kuchipudi, the changes were partly a response to national pressure and agendas. This was the period when Andhra was slowly developing a separate political identity based on regional and linguistic consideration. Kuchipudi became all important symbols of Telugu aspirations for a separate and distinct culture identity.

Kuchipudi tradition and artistes

Kuchipudi was performed exclusively by male artistes who propagated bhakti sentiment through dance-drama presentations at temple premises and other prominent places in and around Kuchipudi village. These artistes presented various dance-dramas but *Bhamakalapam* became the most prestigious dance-drama and gained not only popularity but also became synonymous with the tradition. They performed in groups called *melams*. The solo items they included in their performances provided some welcome changes from the monotony of the story-line. The dance technique was based on the principles expounded in ancient texts like *Natyasastra*, *Abhinayadarpanam*, *Bhavaprakasam*, and others. They also incorporated some *desi* traditions due to the interaction they had with temple-ritual dances and street theatre forms of the region like *Veedinatakam*, *Pagativesham* etc. Their presentations gave more emphasis to *abhinaya* (conveying meaning through facial expression and hand gestures) rather than *nritya* (pure dance).

Kuchipudi dance teachers and artistes have been carrying on this tradition for around 400 years with the patronage received from the elite sections of society and rulers. The gift of land of 600 acres by the last Nawab of Golconda, Abul Hasan Tanisha in 1678 A.D. gave them the right to enjoy, sell, and inherit the agricultural land in Kuchipudi village.^{ix} This was significant in that it provided a base for many families to stay in the village and continue the dance tradition in the centuries that followed. The *firman* sanctioned the inheritance of the property to twenty odd families bearing surnames like Vedantam, Bhagavatula, Chinta, Vempati, Yeleswarapu, Mahankali, Pasumarti, Hari and Josyula and so on. From the 17th century till almost the second half of the twentieth century, the tradition was passed on from one generation to another by only those artistes who belonged to the families bearing the above family names and they dedicated their to the propagation of this dance tradition by living in Kuchipudi village. This exposed the family members to various aspects of the Kuchipudi tradition from childhood. The training process was based on an oral tradition and included the dance technique propounded by Bharata in *Natyasastra* as is the case with most of other classical dance forms. (Chintalapati 1983)

The formation of a separate Andhra state based on linguistic identity bought about a significant change in the cultural life of Andhra people. Introduction of social reforms like abolition of zamindari system, and *devadasi*

tradition exerted an influence in removing the caste and gender barriers to some occupations and the social stigma attached to learning music and dance. No doubt it was a difficult task for dancers to get permission and acceptance from their extended family, since dancing was considered as going against the customs and traditions of upper castes. In addition, the growth of the film industry in Madras facilitated the growth of new occupations like film directors, producers, singers, dancers, and dance-directors. Subsequently the restrictions and the social stigma attached on learning dance became less. These circumstances provided opportunities for dance practitioners and teachers to explore the avenues to improve their prospects in the respective fields. During this phase that is between 1920 and 1960 Kuchipudi went through multi-dimensional changes in its presentation style and content, not only to suit the public taste and demand but also to gain a distinct identity as a classical dance form as well as a regional dance form. From dance-drama to solo classical format was the major change that took place in this dance form when it got established as one of the seven classical dance forms of India. The revival efforts in each of this classical dance form discussed above, during the first half of the twentieth century, brought in a refreshing change.

The original Kuchipudi tradition consisting of group performances of yakshaganams and kalapams and other dance compositions by different melams like *chinta vari melam*, *vedantam vari melam*, *bhagavatula vari melam* which once flourished and received various awards and recognition^x faced a crisis in 1930s. The various melams started breaking-up with the artistes dispersing to different places for a better livelihood. Reasons were manifold, decreased patronage, several new and exciting developments in the field of Indian theatre and dance that were taking place due to the impact of nationalism, the influence of the West as well the impact of nationalism being prominent ones. Already Bharatanatyam, Kathakali, Kathak and Manipuri were being transformed into classical forms. The audience was ready for a different kind of dance.

The artistes who migrated went in different directions, some artistes settled in the capital Hyderabad. Many migrated to Madras which had been the capital of the undivided state, and in which dance activity thrived due to the head start Bharatanatyam had got in reviving and reinventing itself. Madras was also the centre for a flourishing film-making industry. Some of the pioneering teachers and performers got involved in films as choreographers and dancers. Some started teaching girls. Several gurus introduced innovations and modifications influenced by the new surroundings and responding to new demands. These changes can be discerned through tracing the activities of individual teachers and performers of that time, all of whom belonged to hereditary families from Kuchipudi village.

These processes show that analytically speaking, changes in the form and content, would at least in part, come about as a response to macro and micro socio-economic and political processes. This assumption also includes

the possibility of deliberate change by design and intervention of individuals and groups.

A recapitulation of the main courses of events and trends in this period the changes:

- Evolution of a solo format from the original dance drama form
- The shift from the rural stage and ritual performances in temple premises to auditoria in urban areas
- With the initiation of women dancers into Kuchipudi which had for centuries allowed only males, the base and scope of performers widened. The favourable response for solo performances and the enthusiasm of women dancers to learn the dance technique facilitated the spread of Kuchipudi in various directions. Well known dancers of other styles, like Balasaraswathi, Ragini Devi, Indrani Rahman and Ritha Devi started taking an interest in Kuchipudi. The film industry in Madras played a significant role in crating awareness about Kuchipudi by using the dance technique in its song and dance sequences.
- The emergence and growth of performers from non-hereditary families, and also from outside Andhra region as well as non-Telugu audience coupled with the opportunities offered by the film industry in South India and the institutionalization of teaching methods. Gradually disturbed the group activity of the traditional artistes as *melams*. Opportunities
- Bharatanatyam became a role model for Kuchipudi in implementing teaching methods, evolving solo format, and even changing the make-up and costumes used.
- The modifications in the dance technique, music used and thematic content along with use of modern technology were required as a response to the change in venue from rural to urban areas and the duration reduced from overnight performances to few hours in the evening.
- The interest and involvement of stalwarts like Vissa Appa Rao, Banda Kanakalingeswara Rao, Ayyanki Tandava Krishna, Nataraja Ramakrishna and others, facilitated the representation of Kuchipudi as a classical dance form.
- The patronage extended by the State and Central cultural bodies facilitated the growth of Kuchipudi. Even the establishment of institutions and academies to impart training in this dance form helped the spread of dance in regions other than Andhra.
- Two streams of practicing dancers evolved due to the continuity of earlier dance-drama presentations by traditional artistes and the new solo format that allowed dancers coming from different regions and strata to participate.
- Overall, the initial impetus of reviving and reconstructing the Kuchipudi classical dance forms came from the spirit of nationalism. In the specific case of Kuchipudi, its symbolic position as the regional pride of Andhras gave it the thrust to reach classical status.

(The inputs are excerpts from Seth 2005 thesis based on the data base prepared by referring extensively to the following works by : Kanakalingeswara Rao 1966; Pasala 1966; Naidu 1975; Chintalapati 1983; Vempati 1985; GowriShankar 1988; Sivaramamurthy 1991; Seth 1991, 2005; Kothari 1993; Vedantam 1993; Ramakrishna 1993; Ranga Rao 1996; Jonnalagadda 1996; Uma 1992)

A question raised in this context is, what was the need for this inclusion of more dance forms in the classical status? While some dances gained classical status, others like Lavani from Maharashtra, Bhavai from Gujarat, Bhagavata Melanatakam from Tamilnadu and a few others which represented well-developed regional traditions did not get the classical label. No doubt the efforts to revive the various theatre forms and dance were made in the context of the nationalist movement and the urge to look for indigenous roots. However, as Vatsyayan reasons, probably due to the predominantly desi and lokadharmi elements (*) used in their performance structure, certain regional forms remained confined to their respective regions only and did not spread to wider zones. Also 'in artistic terms, in the context of performing arts, these art forms can be classified as *margi* in terms of social status but not artistically' (Vatsyaya 1980: 157) mostly these dance forms remained confined to their respective regional areas. The exception was during the annual Republic Day parade, when troupes of regional, folk and tribal dancers were invited to perform.

Through the specific example of Kuchipudi, this article shows the growth and development of the dance form from its roots in Kuchipudi village to neighbouring towns within Andhra region with a regional identity, (Map 2) then outside representing at a pan-Indian level as a classical dance form. With the availability of the digitalization and networking facilities the performing and learning facilities are extended to any to any global citizen, thus widening the scope of propagation many fold.

Notes:

ⁱ Even though Kuchipudi is only the name of the village from which this dance-drama form originated, the term has become synonymous with the form itself. In this article, I often use Kuchipudi to refer to the dance form. I also use it (and this will be clear from the context) to refer to the village.

ⁱⁱ Central Sangeet Natak Academi, a Central Government cultural body, formed on May 31, 1952. Later under its programme state level academies were formed. One of them was Andhra Pradesh Sangeet Natak Academy formed on November 18, 1957 was inaugurated by then the Chief Minister, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy.

ⁱⁱⁱ Banda Kanalingeswara Rao, Nataraja Ramakrishna, Vedantam Raghavayya and other senior scholars like Vissa Appa Rao, Puchha Venkata Subrahmanya Sastry, Maremanda Rama Rao, C.V.V.R. Prasad, Ayyanki Tandava Krishna, and Lanka Suryanarayana Sastry,

^{iv} The doctoral thesis titled “The changing contours of Kuchipudi dance: A Sociological study.” (, Department of Sociology, University of Mumbai, 2005) was an interdisciplinary subject that examined the changes in the structure and content of Kuchipudi in a sociological perspective.

^v This includes published works of scholars (like Mulk Raj Anand, Abid Hussain, Barbara Stoller Miller, Milton Singer, G.S. Ghurye, Lloyd Rudolph, Bonnie C. Wade, David Waterhouse) dance historians (G. Venkatachalam, Enakshi Bhavnani, Faubion Bowers, Mohan Khokar, Projesh Banerjee, Ragini Devi, Kapila Vatsyayan, Sunil Kothari, P.S.R. Appa Rao and others. In regard to Kuchipudi, interviews of artistes, and other print material like brochures, newspaper reviews form the source material. The few publications exclusively on Kuchipudi in Telugu by both hereditary and other artistes, dancers and dance critics (Chnita Ramanadham, Chintalapati Lakshminarasimha Sastry, C.R. Acharyulu, Jonnalagadda Anuradha form an important source material.

^{vi} The artistic performances inspired by Tagore were being witnessed in many leading cities in India, such as Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. (Presently called as Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai respectively). Acknowledging his contribution to music, theatre and dance, many auditoria have been built in his memory named with “Rabindra” as their prefix like ‘Rabinda Bhavan (Delhi) or ‘Ravindra Bharati (Hyderabad) or a ‘Rabindra Natyamandir (Mumbai) to name a few.

^{vii} The eye movement during the execution of bodily movements (referred to as *angikabhinayam* in southern styles) follows closely the sloka ‘*yato hasta tato drishti---*’
^{vii} ‘where the hand moves, the eyes follow’ whereas in Kathak and Manipuri the hand movement is independent of the eye movement. The Northern dance styles follow the Hindustani music system whereas in the South, Carnatic music is the base. However, Odissi, which in its basic structure is close to South Indian forms like Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi, follows Hindustani music.

^{viii} In Kathakali, the actors do not themselves sing while acting; thus discarding the canon that the song is to be adopted through voice (*vachikabhinayam*). In Kathak and in the dances of Assam one does not find many ‘*mudras*’ or symbolic hand gestures and so they fail to express the meaning through hands, thereby not observing the second canon. The other canon, that the timing is to be observed by the feet, is displayed very strongly in Kathak.

^{ix} My attempt to locate the original document of this firman was not successful. The document pertaining to the distribution of the land amongst nine family surnames is said to be with the authorities governing the Kuchipudi dance centre in Kuchipudi village. The examination of a photo copy of the same secured from the staff of Telugu University shows that it contains the names of the artistes who hold the right to possess a share in the land acquired. The legibility of the writing is poor and the Telugu language used is also quite different from that currently in practice at present.) The mention of the land gift is found in the books written by the historians like Mustafa, K. Sherwani who wrote on the development of Hyderabad in Deccan (refers to the region ruled by the Qutubshahi kings.)

^x Chinta Venkataramayya, founder of Venkatarama Natyamandali, produced a series of dance-dramas and resented them under his leadership till 1936. The troupe played a significant role in bringing together a number of Kuchipudi artistes as participants in his dance-dramas. They received recognition in the form of awards and honours.

Pasumarthy Subrahmanya Sastry was honoured by Veda Sabha in 1937. Vedantam Lakshminarayana Sastry was honoured by Andhra Nataka Kalaparishad, Gudivad in 1945 and the presentation of 'simhatalatam' by Justice P.V. Rajamannar at Madras in 1948 (Jonnalagadda 1994:167)

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