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Unit - III

Folk Arts and Sportive Games:-

The expression of the village folks, in the form of dances, songs are called the Folk Arts. These arts are life-inspiration of the village folk. These arts centralized the beautiful feelings, and attracts all the sentiments, removes the sorrows and enhance the fertility of the country.

These arts are brought under two categories.

1. Social Connected arts.
2. Religious Connected arts.

The dances that are said to be in these are called as Arts.

1. Street dance.
2. Karagattam.
3. Velluppatta.
4. Kaniyankoothu.
5. Oyelattam.
6. Tholpavai Koothu.
7. Silampattam.
8. Valari.
9. Puliyattam - Tiger dance.

It is our duty to know all these and the speciality of these dances.

Street Dance:- Some times it is considered to be the very ancient art of drama, and some consider it to be a rough type of art. Street dances are been from many centuries onwards till today.

The Origin of its name:-

As there was no any closet for dramatising and dancing, people conducted it on streets. Therefore it is known as Street dance.

Mostly they were conducted to make the Villagers and folks - happy and gay. The actors who acted in the dramas were most uneducated and illiterates.

The Structure of the Stage and Time:-

At the Cross roads in a village or in open space, the villagers would erect high stages and put pandal, and would conduct these street dances.

The dances will commence only after 9,0' clock in the night. Only after hearing the sound of the 'Thabala' they would gather in the spot.

The Structure of the drama:-

The drama will be a combination of songs and dances. Mostly the songs will be included with prose order mixed together.

Jokers and Kattiyankaran; :- (One who introduces the characters)

In the middle of the dance, to keep the people happy and gay, Jokers will intrude and also Kattiyankaran will appear. These jokers and Kattiyankarans will change their dialogues and costumes very often and make fun in the middle.

The Structure of dance / Comedy:-

In the beginning of the dance - the Katti-yankaran - (one who introduces) will appear on the stage and introduce the characters of the dancing party. He would thoroughly explain about the dance, so that people will be able to understand the songs and dances properly.

The characters who take part in the dances most will be male characters. Male characters will take the role of women in disguise. Later on women too joined in these dances.

Theatre:-

The theatre is made of Thatched roof - and in the front a small stage will be constructed. Before the actors come on to the stage a white screen will be hung in the front of the stage. When the actors come on to the stage, then the screen will be removed.

Music and felicitation:-

The background music will be played. They would use, Miruthangam, Thabela, Harmonium for playing the music. These musical instruments would be the main instruments.

In order to felicitate the artists people used to garland them and put medals on them and express their happiness.

Street Dances - Today:-

Even today street dances are conducted in villages. As it is an ancient art the

politicians, pay more attention to this art and have much concern to it. The experts of these street-dancers are awarded with 'Kalaimamani' awards.

Karakattam: is one of the very famous folk dances in Tamil Nadu.

Karakattam: The reason for its name. A pot made of earth - mud, copper, brass in which the mouth part is piled up and the bottom seems to be big, - This is called Karagam. Sometimes it is filled with water, rice, or sand, and the mouth part is covered and decorated. They keep this pot on the head, without holding it, they would dance according to the 'Naiyandi Melam' and this is called Karagattam.

Worship and Karagattam:-

Karagattam is danced before the goddess Mariamman. There are two kinds of Karagam process:

1. Sakthi Karagam.
2. Aatta Karagam.

Sakthi Karagam:-

During the temple festivals the pujari will decorate the Karagam and carry it on his head → which is called Sakthi Karagam.

Nattakaragam :- A copper vessel will be neatly decorated, and kept on the head without holding it and would dance according to the Neigandi Mela music.

They would beautifully decorate the Karagam and keep it on the head and dance.

The Construction of a Karagam :-

The bottom of the Karagam pot is made flat, and it is filled with rice or sand. The top of the Karagam pot is inserted with a Coconut or a piece of wood. They tie the pot and the piece of wood lightly, on the piece of wood a small hole is made and a bamboo stick is inserted, and a parrot is kept on the stick. When they dance carrying the pot, and when they rotate themselves we can see the parrot flying; and it would be a beautiful scene.

Make up Process :-

The Karagam dancers, do their make up in a high polished manner. Their dresses will be very gaudy in colour. They tie the bells in their legs as if the Bharatha Nattiyam dancers do.

Musical Instruments :-

The 'Neigandi Mela' is played as the side musical tune, and they are danced according to that music. Two Nageswarams and two 'Thavils' are the major musical instruments, and 'Pambai', 'Urumi', 'Kidukitti', 'Kothalam' will be tuned side by side to the dancers.

Even today there is Karagattam:-

The art of Karagattam can be seen still, in Tanjore, Chennai, Salem, Madurai and this ancient art is still being carried out.

The ancient 'Kudakoothu' is now danced as Karagattam.

Villupaattu:-

'Bow' - 'Vil' - instrument is struck by fingers and they sing. This is known as Villupaattu. This is known under many names such as, Villu, Villadi, Villisaikalai, Vilpaattu, Viladichanpaattu, ..

Worshipping Ceremony Art:-

Villisai Art is conducted in Amman temples compulsorily and in Sudalai Madam temples in a little manner.

In the temples, the worship is done on a certain God or Goddess; the song will be based on that deity; and his story will be sung as Villupaattu.

The ancient epics will be the source of the story and the main theme of the song.

Construction of the Stage:-

The stage for Villupaattu will be constructed just opposite to the deities room.

Group of Villu paattu Singers :-

The members of this group will be minimum five members and maximum eight members. In a group, there will be people of different age group.

Musical instruments :-

The bow, Uddukku, Salar, (Thalakattai) are the major musical instruments.

Villuppaattu in Tamil Nadu :-

The art of Villuppaattu is required in Kanyakumari district as well as in Nellore district. Very interestingly. This song is sung to create social awareness in the minds of the people.

Kanyan koothu :- The Kanyan caste of people conduct this type of dances. They strike the instrument called 'Magudam' - and sing this song.

The Group of Kanyan members :-

In this group there will be six or seven members. One of them will be called as 'pulavar' - This Pulavar will sing the story. Assistant Singer will strike on the Magudam. Two of them will strike the Salar. One of them will be in disguise of a lady.

The deities that belong to Kanyan Koothu :-

In the temples of Sudalai Maadan, in Thirunelveli, Thoothukudi districts, there is Kanyan Koothu which is conducted Compulsorily.

also in the temples of Amman and Sastha Kanyan Koothu is conducted.

Kanyan Dance Programme:

In front of the Annavi temple, just opposite to the deities, people stand and they used to sing. At that moment singers who are in disguise of female characters will stand between the Annavi and the deities and will sing, according to the music of the Magudam.

Kanyan Aattam worship ceremony will be very artistic. Kanyan Koothu will be conducted only by the Kanyan section of people.

Oyilattam: Oyilattam is a dance having a cloth of the same colour tied on the head and the same colour of cloth hold in the hand and dancing according to the music. This dance is mostly done by male people. This is a group dance.

- (i) This dance shows the majestic features of a male person. Ladies will not take part in this group dance.
- (ii) Ten or Twelve members will stand just opposite or in a straight line and dance.

(iii) The music will be played on earthen pots, Thavil, timbrel, Cholak etc. will be used in this dance. They will also tie the bells in their legs and add music to their dance.

(iv) Mostly the story of Ramayana will be sung as songs.

(Skin)

Thol Pavai Koothu:

The inanimate dholls will be made to dance as animate figures, and this will be conducted through some persons.

In order to make these dholls, the skin of bulls or the skin of goats will be used.

Koothu Programme. To conduct the dance

Thol pavai Koothu, six members are required. Those who are operating these dholls will be behind the screen. The people who conduct this programme will have the talent of singing and talking.

⇒ The place where they conduct this programme will be a circular shape.

⇒ The songs meant for this Thol pavai Koothu is meant only for the groups of Thol pavai Koothu.

⇒ The story of Ramayana, the story of Rasama, the story of Nallathangal etc will be told and sung in this programme.

⇒ Mostly this programme is a traditional programme after the father, the son will take up the programme.

⇒ Tholpaavai Koothu is found to be conducted in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Orissa in South India.

Silambattam :-

Silambam is played with a big stick. It is an art of self-defence. This game is called as a sportive game of the Tamilians.

⇒ In Silambattam there will be minimum two persons - are required.

⇒ In Silambattam, the opponent's stick should be opposed, and touching the body of the opponent.

⇒ The well-trained dancers only will take part in Silambattam.

⇒ During festivals ^{and} processions Silambattam will be compulsorily played. It is mainly used in Thirunelveli, Thoothukudi, and Kanniyakumari districts.

Valari :- Valari is a weapon used for catching (seizing) the culprits who steal the cattle. It was mainly used by the ancient Tamilians.

- Valari is used by the Tamilians as a weapon of ^{self} defence.
- This weapon is used by rotating it in such a way that it goes and attacks the person and returns.
- Today's generation is not aware of such a weapon, that had once been and it is a great shame to our Tamil culture.

Tiger Dance: (Puliattam.)

The person who is dancing, will be in disguise of a tiger. Their body will be smeared with yellow, black, light red colour - stripes. They will have a mask of a tiger, the face, ear, tail, and the nails of a tiger. They will be dressed in such a manner and they will look like a tiger.

→ In the Tiger dance, the main dancer would carry a kitten in his mouth and throw it away - will be the end of the success.

→ This dance will be danced, ^{not only} to the music of Neigandi Melai, [^] for pleasure but also for praying to God for sending the rain.

The Sports and Games of the Tamilians:-

There were special sports and games especially for the Tamilians. The Sangam literature confirms this type of sports.

The Sports that are mentioned in the literature:-

1. Swing:
2. Oraiyadal: Ladies use small sticks and dance.
3. Erukol:- The male sports men will try to control the oxen with their full strength.
4. Small Ther:- Small children will roll the small wheels and play.
5. Water Games:- Swimming and Sailing.
6. Ball - playing.
7. Kalangaduthal - a game by girls.
8. Vattaduthal: Using small pieces of coins and playing.

Games by Males:- The games played by men are mostly outdoor games. (eg) Jallikattu, Silambam, Sadu Kudu, Ela-Vattakkal, Running, Bullock race, Urimaram Eruthal, Breaking the pot, Suthayam, Games of Intelligence etc are mostly played by men.

Games of Females:-

The Games played by women are mostly indoor games. They are Thayam, Pallanguli, Thattankal, Pouring turmeric water etc. are the famous games of women folk. Making rice, Tiewu, litte eyes, Fire on the mountain etc.

Children's Games:-

Kittipul, Kuthu, Patchai Kuthirai, Tops, Marbles, Throw ball, Fan - kite, wood-pecker etc. are games played by children.

Gyps' Sports:- / Children's Games: / child games

Game of pronunciation, Questions, Chain games, grinding dall - etc. are games of little children. We play the traditional games and these games teach us the forbearance and also the social duties that we have to perform.



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