

**UGC - MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT
FINAL REPORT**

THEATRICAL WORKS OF SHAHAJI

Submitted by

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*This Project is Dedicated to the
Maratha Rulers who have done
Tremendous Service to the South
Indian Culture and Arts,
Particularly to Telugu Language.*

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PREFACE

In the World theatre, India occupies a significant position. It is also one of the most ancient theatres. It has its own unique features such as Music, Dance, Costumes and expressions. The performing arts are an integral part of every country or society. These are generally classified into 3 categories. They are *Geya*, *Vachaka* and *Drisya* types. Theatre is a combination of these 3 elements. Yakshagana is a kind of Theatrical Art form popular in South India. This is a beautiful art form which can be performed in both Classical and Folk ways.

The Researcher is a great admirer of Sanskrit and Telugu languages besides Music and Dance. Being a performing artist in Music, the researcher has a special interest for the art form Yakshagana. This art form is a combination of Music, Dance and Literature. The researcher has a great regard for the Maratha rulers, particularly for King Shahaji who has contributed immensely to Telugu literature and to the South Indian Culture. During her Post graduation, the '*Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham*' of King Shahaji was a part of their study curriculum. The language, the sensitive expressions and the prosodical beauties inspired her to take up this Project work. For this reason, she has taken up this work with utmost interest and did her research very keenly on each and every aspect of this Art form.

During this process of her research work, the researcher had to face some challenges. She has chosen Dr. Uma Rama rao, Hyderabad, to do choreography for Yakshaganam. Unfortunately, she passed away in the middle of the project work. The researcher had to take the pain of searching another eminent choreographer. Later, the sudden illness of the researcher delayed the project work to some extent. The recording of the Audio Yakshagana was delayed due to the availability of some of the main singers and the availability of the Audio recording studio.

As a part of collecting the material, some libraries have not given permission to issue the books outside their library mainly TMSSM library of Thanjavur and Telugu University (branch) library in Bommur, Rajahmundry. As a result, the researcher had to visit the libraries frequently to make note of some important data. All these impediments resulted in a delay in submitting the Project work.

While working for this Project, the researcher felt the necessity of protecting these valuable art forms and preserving them for posterity. Otherwise this precious wealth may not be available for the future generations. The researcher expresses her gratitude to the University Grants Commission for granting the opportunity to study and do research on the Theatrical works of King Shahaji.

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INTRODUCTION

India is known as *Veda bhoomi* and *Karma bhoomi*. The four Vedas stand as supporting pillars for the culture of *Aarsha Dharma*. The epics such as *Ramayana*, *Bharatha* and *Bhagavatha* are regarded as the most sacred scriptures in this land. Though there are different people belonging to different regions, cultures, traditions, languages, castes, religions and arts, there exists a unity among them. This is known as *Unity in Diversity*. The same can be seen in Fine Arts as well. The definition of the word 'KaLa' (Art) in Sanskrit as mentioned in a Sanskrit dictionary is: "*Kam Paramaatmaanam laathi gruhanaatheethi KaLa*".

This means, an Art is one which pleases God. These Arts wish for the welfare of the world. There are 64 traditional arts in India. Among them Music, Dance, Poetry, Sculpture and Painting are known as Fine Arts. Of these, Sculpture and Painting are known as Visual Arts, Music is an Art based on Audio. Dance and *Naatakam* is an Art based on both *Drusya* (Visual) and *Sravya* (Audio).

"Kaavyeshu naatakam Ramyam" (Kalidasa)

Naatakam is a beautiful Art among the 64 Arts which is close to *Bharatha's Natya Sastra*. Drama, Music and Dance comes under Performing Arts. The scholars say, the expertise gained through study is known as Education (*Vidya*). 'Expertise gained through continuous practice is known as *KaLa (Art)*'. Arts are an integral part of their lifestyle. The word 'Folk' is added as a prefix to their Arts and Literature. Eg: Folk Arts, Folk Music, Folk Dance and Folk Literature etc. Folk artforms (*Janapada KaLa Rupa-s*) are classified into 3 types i.e., Music, Dance and Drama.

The famous Greek philosopher Aristotle stated that '*Man is by nature a Social animal*'. From the Early man period, he shared his joy and sorrows with his companions. He used to express his emotions and feelings in the way of shouting, making noise, dancing and performing actions. Later, they gradually took the form of Music, Dance and Language. In this process of evolution, these are further transformed into Classical Music, Classical Dance and Literature. The Folk Arts possess natural beauty. These arts are not bound by any rules and are performed in a free flow. This is the reason why these Art forms are greatly admired even today in

every society. In this way, these folk arts resemble the culture, tradition and lifestyle of the Folk people and became a part of the cultural heritage of every country.

‘*Kavyeshu natakam ramyam*’ is stated by the great scholar and Sanskrit dramatist Kalidasa (5 century A.D), it means Nataka (the Dama) is the most beautiful form among all the Kavyas. Drama is a feast to both the ears and eyes. Though there existed Dramatists from the ancient times, the Dramatists who have written Music based Dance Dramas began from the time of Jayadeva (12 century A.D). The Dance drama *Sri Krishna leela Tarangini* written by Saint Narayana Teertha belongs to the same category.

The 14th century is a very crucial period for the Dance based Dramas particularly for Yakshaganas. The Folk and Classical based Yakshagana-s came into existence from this period. From that period, a flood of Yakshaganas were written in Telugu and Kannada languages. Similarly, the Kuravanji Natakas (both folk and classical based) were written in Tamil language. Many scholars in the fields of Music, Dance and Literature have shown their expertise in these Yakshaganas.

The specialty of this period is that, the scholars have not written Yakshaganas merely in their native language. They have learnt a new language, acquired proficiency in it and have then written beautiful Yakshaganas in that language. In this manner, a yeomen service is rendered by the Maratha rulers. They are the Maratha rulers who ruled the Tanjavur region. They encouraged South Indian fine arts, its culture and tradition with a great respect. They learnt Telugu language and have written hundreds of Yakshaganas in this language. Among them, one such ruler is King Shahaji II. He thus became an inspiration to many composers of that period and also to those in latter times. Experts opine that, Shahaji’s works are a great inspiration to the *Geya Natakas* written by Saint Tyagaraja. The Researcher too has observed the influence of Shahaji on the *Geya Natakas* of Saint Tyagaraja.

CHAPTER 1

NATYA SASTRA AND DASA ROOPAKA-S

The first and foremost Sanskrit treatise on Theatre is Bharata's Natya Sastra. It has classified and described elaborately about the Indian Classical Music, Dance and Theatre arts. The term 'Natya' defined in it refers to modern drama (theatre). This is an authoritative treatise which expounds each and every element of performing a drama.

1.1 Natya Sastra:

Sl: Pranamyā Sirasā Devou Pithāamaha Maheswarou

Natya Sastram Pravakshyaami Brahmaana Yadudaahrutham (N S I-1)

This is the salutation of Bharatha before the commencement of the Natya Sastra. It means, I bow to the creator Brahma and the Lord of Dance, Maheshwara. I am retelling the Natya Sastra told by Lord Brahma.

Dance is an ancient art in India. It gives *Chaturvidha Phala Purushardhaas* (i.e., *Dharma, Ardha, Kaama Moksha*) which are the 4 essential principles of human existence as mentioned in the scriptures. Bharatha's *Natya Sastra* is a work which deals with Dramaturgy/Theatre/Drama. Lord Brahma took four elements from 4 Veda-s and created the *Natya Vedam*. This is stated by the following verse.

Sl: Jagraaha Paatyam Rugvedhaat Saamabhyo Geethamevacha

Yajurvedaath Abhinayaan Rasaan Adharvanaadapi (N S I-17)

It means the 4 elements i.e., *Paatyam* (Literature), *Geetham* (Music), *Abhinayam* (expression) and *Rasa* (Aesthetics/Mood) are extracted from *Rig, Saama, Yajur* and *Atharvana* Veda-s respectively. Bharatha says that this Natya Sastra is a summation of all kinds of subjects such as *Silpam, Vidya, Kala, Yogam, Karma* etc.

In another occasion, Bharatha said that *Natya Sastra* is a *Upa Veda*, as it is created by God which is related to the *Veda-s* and *UpaVeda-s*. This is mentioned in the below *Sloka*.

Sl: *Vedopavedaihi Sambaddho Natya vedo Mahaatmanaa*

Evam Bhagavatha Srusto Brahmanaa Sarva Vedina (N S I-18)

Natya Sastram is considered as the *Panchama Veda*. As the traditional Four Veda-s are not allowed to be chanted by the *Sudras*, this *Panchama Veda* is created for the benefit of all the castes, “—*Sruja param Veda Panchamam Saarva Varnikam*”

“*Sarva Saastrardha Sampannam Sarva Silpa Pradarsakam*

Natyaakhyam Panchamam Veda Setihasam Karomyaham” (N S I-15)

“*Evam Sankalpya Bhagavaan Sarva Devaananusmaran*

Natya Veda Tataschekre Sarva Vedaanga Sambhavam” (N S I-16)

Bharatha said that “I shall promulgate a Fifth Veda called *Natya Veda* which exemplifies righteousness, brings Prosperity, causes fame, contains instruction and comprehends all activities forming a guide to the future generations as well. It would be replete with the essence of all Scientific ideas and demonstrating of all Arts and Crafts besides embracing episodes. Having resolved thus the God gave shape to a fifth Veda called *Natya Veda* out of the auxiliaries of the four Veda-s.”¹

Sl: “*Kvachit dharmaha kvachit kreedaa kvachidarthaha kvachid kshamaha*”

II (N.S I – 108)

“*Kvachid haasyam kvachityuddham, kvachit kaamaha kvachit vadaha I*

Dharmo dharm pravruttaanaam kaamaha kamopa sevinaam II (NS I-109)

Nigraho Durvineethaanaam Vineethaanaam Damakriya I

Kleebaanaam Dharstya karanam utsaahaha sura maaninaam II (NS I-110)

---- *Loka uthhanukaranam Natyamethath Mayaakrutham*”

The summary of the slokas is, the *Natya Sastra* contains several aspects in it such as *Dharma* (virtue), *Kreeda* (amusement), *artha* (prosperity) and feelings such as peace, fun, fight, lust, killing (*vadha*) etc. Different feelings such as *utsaaha*, *kreeda*, *vismaya*, *kshama* (*S'ama*), *nirveda*, *haasya*, *yuddha* etc. feelings are explained in it. “He explains his view incorporating many ingredients like the absence of

¹ *Natya Sastra* (Vol 2) (p-379)

individuality of the person who puts on the role, defacement of his personality with the four kinds of representation, ability to the audience to perceive things by their natural inclination, the capability of the audience to identify with the character represented, capacity to enjoy all sentiments to the level of extreme bliss”²

Natya Sastram is meant for:

“Uttamaadhama madhyaanaam naraanaam karma samsayam” (N S I-113)

Hithopadesa Janmam Naatyamethath Bhavishyathi” ---

“Dukkhaarthaanaam Sramaarthaanaam Sokaarthaanaam Tapasvinaam

Visraama Jananam kaale Naatyamethath Bhavishyathi”

“Lokopadesa jananam Natyamethath Bhavishyathi”

This *Natya Sastra* mentioned about the 3 categories of people viz., *Uttama*, *Madhyama*, *Adhama* and the benefits obtained by them respectively. The *Natyam* (theatre) gives pleasure to those who are in sorrow, to the hard workers, to the sufferers and to those doing penance. “The art of drama will promote virtue, bring fame and longevity, provide benefit, increase the intelligence and contain proper advice to the world.”

“Nathath gnanam nathath silpam nasaa vidya nasaa kala (N S I-117)

Naasou yogo na thath karma naatye asmin enna drusyathe

Sarva Sastraani silpaani, karmaani vividhaanicha—

Saptha dweepaanukaranam natyamethath bhavishyathi”

“There is no knowledge, no fine art, no lore, no practical art, no combination of learning and no endeavor which is not seen represented in this art of drama. Sciences of all sorts, contrivances of different kinds and activities of vivid nature are all blended here in this drama conceived by me. Hence you should not hold any grievance against the gods since the drama emulates the actions of all the seven continents.”³

² Ibid (p-397)

³ Natya Sastra (vol 2) (p-398)

“*Devanaam asuraanaancha raagnaamatha kutumbinaam* (N S I-120)

Brahmarshinaamcha vigneyam naatyam vruthaantha darsakam

Yoyam swabhaavo lokasya sukha duhkha samanvithaha (N S I-121)

So angaadyabhinayo petho naatyamityavidhiyathe

Sruthi smruthi sadaachaara parisheshaardha kalpanam (N S I-122)

Vinoda jananam loke natyamethan mayaakritham” -- (N S I-123)

“The Natya depicting the stories and incidents relating to devas, asuras, kings, noble men and brahmin sages is very much educative. The nature of the world having pleasure as well as pain is represented through actions and gesticulation and is therefore called Natya. It takes into account the noble ideas found omitted from the scope of *Veda-s*, *Dharma Sastras* and other similar authorities and represents the same so as to serve a pastime for the world”

In this way, Bharatha’s *Natya Sastra* is a conglomeration of several *Veda-s*, *Dharma Sastras* and *Vignana bhaandaaram* (a treasure of knowledge). This is the basis of all the Indian Classical Dances. Also, thousands of Art forms have taken their origin from *Natya Sastra*. He elaborated on the *Dasa roopaka-s* (the ten kinds of plays) and their characteristics in his book. The various dance forms such as *Bharathanatyam*, *Kuchipudi*, *Kathakali*, *Odissi*, *Manipuri* etc. are formed on the basis of *Natya Sastra*. *Kathak* is the dance form which was influenced by Mohammedans during the Mughal period.

1.2 Dasa roopakas in Natya Sastra: The 20th chapter of *Natya Sastra* is *Dasaroopaka vidhaanam*. Bharatha explained ten types of Dramas in this chapter.

Natakam: The characteristics of *Naatakam* as explained by Bharatha is:

Sl: *Prakhyaata vastu vishayam prakhyaataa nuddaata naayakam I*

Raajarshi vamsya charitam tathaiva divyaa divyaasrayopetam II

It means, the story of the play should be a famous (*prakhyaata*) one. The hero should be a known character and a *Dheerodaatta Naayaka*. He should belong to the clan of *Rajarshi*.

Dasaroopaka Lakshanaas (Characteristics of Drama):

1. *Naatakam*:

- i. *Ithivruttham - Prakhyaatham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerodaattha*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Veera*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 5 to 20 Ankaas*

2. *Prakarana*:

- i. *Ithivruttham - Kalpitham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerasantha*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Srungaaram*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 5 to 20 Ankaas*

3. *BhaaNamu*:

- i. *Ithivruttham - Kalpitham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dhoortha*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Srungaaram and Veera*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 1*

4. *Prahasanam*:

- i. *Ithivruttham - Kalpitham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dhoortha*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Haasyarasam*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 1*

5. *Dimamu*:

- i. *Ithivruttham - Prakhyaatham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerodhathudu*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Roudram and Angarasaas – Veera, Srungaara*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 4*

6. *Vyaayogam:*

- i. *Ithivruttham - Prakhyaatham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerodatthudu*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Veera*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 1*

7. *Samavaakaaram:*

- i. *Ithivruttham - Misramam*
- ii. *Naayaka – More than one*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Veera*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 3*

8. *Veedhi:*

- i. *Ithivruttham - Kalpitham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerodatthudu*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Navarasaas*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 1*

9. *Ankam:*

- i. *Ithivruttham - Prakhyaatham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerodatthudu*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Karuna*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 1*

10. *Eehamrugam:*

- i. *Ithivruttham - Prakhyaatham*
- ii. *Naayaka – Dheerodatthudu*
- iii. *Angeerasam – Srungaaram*
- iv. *Ankavibhajana – 1-4 Ankaas*

In addition, there are some *Upa Roopakas* explained by Bharatha. Thus, all the Indian Classical Dances and Theatres are framed on the basis of *Bharatha's Natya Sastra*. Bharatha taught *Natya Sastra* to his 100 sons and they spread the glory of this Scripture to all parts of India. In this way Bharatha's sons propagated this Art among the people of various regions and various languages.

CHAPTER 2

VISUAL ART FORMS OF INDIA - MARGA AND DESI DIVISION

Mathanga in his treatise *Brihaddesi*, introduced two terms 'Marga' and 'Desi' while explaining about the Prabandhas. He defined *Desi* as:

Sl: '*Dese dese janaanaan - Yaddruchiyaa Hrudaya Ranjakam I*

Geetham cha Vaadam Nruttam Tatddesee tyabhidheeyathe' II

It says '*Desi* means the people belonging to various regions develop their own style of Music and Dance according to their taste. They perform this Art with *Geetha Vaadya Nrutta* (i.e., with Song, Instrument and Dance)'.

According to Matanga, the Classical form is *Marga* which pleases the God, and the local or folk type of form is known as *Desi*. The word *Desi* is applicable to Music, Dance and Theatrical Art forms as well. For example, Desi Music, Desi Dance etc. They gained popularity as Desi Arts (*Desi KaLas*) and the Art forms are known as Desi Art Forms (*Desi KaLa rupas*). In simple terms *Desi* means Local. In this study, hundreds of Art forms come under the category of 'Desi'. Among them, Yakshagana is one such Theatrical Art form which comes under the heading of 'Desi Art Forms'. The main components of a Yakshagana are Music, Literature and Dance.

The same Marga and Desi terms are applied to Music by Saranga Deva in his treatise *Sangeetha Ratnakara*. He defined *Margi* Music as the one which is practiced by Saints and which leads to *Moksha* (liberation). This type of Music does not exist on earth. The definition of *Marga* type of Music as given by Prof. P. Sambamurthy is "Desi belonging or pertaining to Desa or country. Every province of India was called a Desa in ancient times. Desi Sangita was the music that was in vogue in different provinces. It developed spontaneously. It was nurtured by the intelligent and thinking folk of the land without any dictation from a superior source or authority. It was the art music of the land that was different from the folk music which was current amongst the lower strata of society. The distinctive features of Desi Sangita were its *Hrudaya ranjakam* and *Janaranjanam* – pleasing to the heart and pleasing to the populace. The opposite of Desi Sangita was Marga Sangita which was developed on the basis of Laws promulgated by Sangita Lakshanakara-s. It had rigid and inflexible

rules and was more logical than emotional in its appeal whereas Marga Sangita was in conformity to strict Lakshana, Desi Sangita was in conformity to both Lakshana and Lakshya. Marga Sangita evolved first and then came the Desi Sangita. Marga Sangita was principally vocal music but Desi Sangita comprised vocal music, instrumental music and Dance. (Gita, Vadya and Nritya) – The distinction of Marga and Desi is seen in literature as well.”⁴

In modern times, the terms *Marga* and *Desi* are applied to both Music and Dance. ‘*Marga*’ denotes ‘Classical’ and ‘*Desi*’ denotes ‘Folk based or Local type’ as mentioned earlier. The same can be applied to art forms as well. In this manner, Yakshagana-s namely *Soubhara charitham*, *Sugreeva Vijayam*, *Usha Parinayam* etc. come under the category of classical art forms while *Kuravanji*, *Kathakali*, *Therakuttu*, *Pagati veshalu*, *Chindu bhagavathalu*, *Turpu Bhagavathalu* etc. belong to *Desi* type Yakshagana-s.

2.1 Maarga and Desi Theatres (Dance Dramas):

The treatises that are written based on Bharata’s *Natya Sastra* viz., Nandikeswara’s *Abhinaya Darpanam* and *Hasta Lakshana Deepika*, Kohala’s *Bharatamu*, Dattila’s *Dattilamu*, Sarangadeva’s *Sangeetha Ratnakaramu* etc. are known as Classical treatises. The Dance that explains these treatises is known as Classical Dance.

‘*Jakkulu*’ is a folk replacement (*vikruthi sabdam*) of the word ‘*Yakshulu*’ (*prakruthi sabdam*). In the epics, *Kubera* is considered as the King of *Yaksha*-s. As he is a devotee of Lord Siva, all these *Yaksha*-s are also devoted to Lord Siva even till today. From the history it is understood that these *Jakkus* are found mostly in and around the areas of SriSailam, the famous pilgrim of Lord Siva. During the 10th & 11th centuries, in the region of *Karnaata -andhra*, (i.e., Southern part of Coastal Andhra and Karnataka) the *Veera saiva* cult is very popular. *Jakkus*, *Kuruvaas*, *Goravaas*, *Gondu*, *Koya*, *Chenchu*, *Savara* etc. are known as the *Sanchaara jaatis* who lived in the forests of Andhra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. Their dances are named after their regions i.e., *Chindu*, *Ganthu*, *Gondli*, *Anje*, *Anga* etc. As these dances are presented by the *Kuruva* sect of tribes, it is known as *Kuravanji* Dance. In order to visit the pilgrims related to Siva, these *Jakkus* used to move from one place to

⁴ A Dictionary of South India Music and Musicians (Vol-1 p-105)

another. They are referred to as *Sanchaara Jaathulu* (the migrants). The word ‘*Yaksha gaana*’ is originated from *Jakkula paata*. The dance played by *Kuruvaas* is known as *Kuravanji* (‘*Anji*’ means play or dance). In this way, *Kuravanji* has a significant position in the Dravidian visual art forms and is regarded as the foremost Theatrical Form in South India.

2.2 Theatrical Art Forms of North India:

Tamasha: Tamasha is one of the important folk Theatre of Maharashtra. This Dance is performed by two of the communities of Maharashtra. “The word Tamasha is Persian and means fun or entertainment. This form is blend of several different influences. Some scholars believe that this form of theatre has been inspired by 2 forms of Sanskrit Drama – The Prahasana and the Bhana.”⁵

The songs in this Dance drama are known as *Lavanis*. The instruments used for this program are *Tuntuni*, *Harmonium*, *Dholki* (percussion), *Hulgi* (*Daph* like instrument), *Kade*, *Lejim* and *Ghungroos*. They are:

- a. Kuchipudi - Andhra & Telangana
- b. Bharat Natyam – Tamil Nadu
- c. Kathak - Many places of North India
- d. Kathakali – Kerala
- e. Mohiniyattam - Kerala
- f. Odissy - Odisha
- g. Sattriya - Assam
- h. Manipuri – Manipur & Assam

In this manner, 8 types of Classical Dances evolved from Bharatha’s Natya Sastra. These Dances are recognized by India as ‘The Eight Classical Dances of India’. From these, several types of regional Art forms based on Dance took birth.

⁵ <http://www.indianfolkdances.com/tamasha-folk-dances-of-maharashtrata.html>

Raasleela: This is also known as Krishna Tandava. It is a Dance performed by Lord Krishna along with Radha and her *Sakhi-s (Gopi-s)*. *Ras* means ‘Aesthetics’. *Leela* means ‘Divine Play or Dance or Act’. This is known as a “Dance of Divine Love”. This Dance drama is usually played Jayadeva’s ‘*Geetha Govindam*’ and the stories extracted from Bhagavatham. This *Raasleela* is very popular in North India. This theme is performed in all types of Classical Dance forms such as Kathak, Manipuri, Odissy etc. in their own style. In South India, the same theme is performed in the South Indian Dance forms such as Kuchipudi and Bharata Natyam. For example, *Sri Krishna Parijatham*, *Sri Krishna Leela-s*, *Rukmini Kalyanam*, *Parijaathaapa haranam* etc.



Rasleela in Kuchipudi Dance style⁶



Rasleela in Odissy Dance style⁷

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XYVy6SSrWnQ>

⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ybaIZua0A8



*Rasleela in Manipuri Dance style*⁸



*Rasleela in Kathak Dance style*⁹



*Rasleela in Bharatanatyam Dance style*¹⁰

Jatra – *Jatra* is originated from the word ‘Yatra’, which means Journey in Sanskrit language. This is a popular folk-Dance drama of Bengali theatre. “The origin of Jatra intrinsically a Musical theatre form is traditionally credited to the raise of Sri Chaitanya’s Bhakti Movement wherein Chaitanya himself played the role of Rukmini in the performance of *Rukmini Haran* (“The abduction of the charming Rukmini”) from Lord Krishna’s life story, a first definite presentation of the Theatrical spectacle.”¹¹

Jatra is a popular folk theatre in West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Tripura and Bengali speaking areas. In addition to this, some other plays such as *Nautanki* of Uttar Pradesh, *Tamasha* of Maharashtra and *Bhavai* of Gujarat are the other Art forms of folklore. In this way, popular Folk theatrical Art forms such as *Ramleela*, *Rasleela*, *Jatra* etc. in North India and the Classical Dance dramas such as *Yakshagaana-s*,

⁸ https://www.indianetzone.com/40/vaishnavite_dance_forms.htm

⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDh7Z_bpFhw

¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9kLQJkaULg>

¹¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jatra_\(theatre\)#:~:text=The%20origin%20of%20jatra%20intrinsically,first%20definite%20presentation%20of%20this](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jatra_(theatre)#:~:text=The%20origin%20of%20jatra%20intrinsically,first%20definite%20presentation%20of%20this)

Bhamakalaapa-s, Bhagavatha Mela Natakas, Kuravanji Natakas etc. and *Desi* type Theatrical forms such as *Veedhi Bhagavatha-s, Chindu-s, Pagati Veshagallu, Bayalaata-s* of South India are formed based on the *Natya Sastra*. (Initially Yakshagana-s and Kuravanji type Dance Dramas are considered as Folk Theatrical Art forms, later they gained the status of Classical Art forms).

CHAPTER 3

FOLK DANCE DRAMAS OF SOUTH INDIA

3.1: Folk Dance Dramas:

A Folk drama is a combination of many aspects and arts viz., Dance, Music, conversations, story etc. These dramas can be classified into 2 types. One is the drama performed using Puppets and Shadow Puppets. Second type include the actors themselves playing on the stage.

Art forms such as Puppets and Shadow Puppets are existed even before the period of *Kavitravam* (the three poets who translated the epic Mahaabharatha from Sanskrit to Telugu language) i.e., during 12th century period. There are some references which prove the existence of these Dance dramas from the period of Palkuriki Somanatha (12th century) to the period of Raghunaadha Nayaka (16th century). From some references, it is known that the art form *Tolu Bommalata* (Shadow Puppetry) took shape in Andhra and expanded till Maratha region.

There are references to these plays in the epic *Mahabharatha*. A commentator on Mahabharatha (Sanskrit), Pt. Neelakanta Sastry mentioned about these plays in a passage:

“*Roopopa Jaalamandapikethi Daakshinaathyeshu Prasiddham,
Yantra Sooksham vastram vyavadhaaya charmamayai
Raakaaraihi raajaamaalyaa deenaa, Charyaam pradarsathe*”

In those days, Shadow puppetry is known as ‘*Jaala mandapikam*’. This is another name for the Shadow play. In the book *Palnaati Veeracharitra*, a reference to *Bommalaata* (Puppet show) is mentioned.

“*Prathimala Naadagabattina yatlu ---*”

A reference to Shadow Puppetry is also made in the scripture Uttara Harivamsa Charitra.

“*Yantrakudaadinchi Yavani Drochen Vraalu Bommala gathi radha pooranamulu*”

From these references it is understood that these puppet shows are popular in Andhra even during the 12th century period.

3.1.1: Shadow Play / Shadow Puppetry and Wooden Puppetry: This is an Art form which is popular in India as well as in other parts of the World. There is a long history for these Shadow plays in India. *Tolu Bommalaata* (the play performed using the puppets made up of skins of the animals like buffalo, goat etc.) *Koyya Bommalaata* (play performed using wooden puppets), *Keelu Bommalaata* (play performed using puppets which are controlled by keys) are some of the popular names for this Play in Andhra region.



Shadow Puppetry¹²

The play goes in this way: behind a transparent curtain, pictures made of animal skin are placed and moved. These pictures are controlled by the humans behind the curtain and are played according to the story. It is estimated that, these art forms existed in India even before Christ.

This art form is a combination of several other arts viz., Painting, Dance, Literature, Vocal and Instrumental Music. In this play, one or two persons behind the screen moves the pictures with the help of sticks, sing the verses, songs, *Daruvu-s* and

¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2i9dH7NmpEk>

the conversations. In these Shadow plays, most of them are based on the epic *Ramayana*. For example, *Mairavana Charitra*, *Lankaa Dahanam*. In South India, particularly in Andhra and Telangana regions, Poetry is given much importance in these shadow plays.



Chekka Bommalaata¹³

In these dramas, *Mukhari*, *Madhyamavathi*, *Aarabhi* and *Anandabhairav* are the frequently used *Raagas*. Most of the play contains poetic verses and the most frequently used *Taalas* are *Adi*, *Mishra chaapu*.

Paalkuriki Somanatha, a great Telugu poet of 12th century has beautifully described this art form in his book *Pandithaaraadhya Charitra* as,

“*Cheera marugula Bharathaadi Kadhala Naadinchatam*”

Generally, the shadow plays are performed with a simple stage arrangement in open areas such as playgrounds, open auditoriums, temple premises. The play is described in this way - A white saree is projected as a screen supported by 2 bamboo sticks. The male and female performers of the show stand behind the pictures and give voice-over to the characters in the play. The shows are performed for long durations. Usually they begin at around 9:00 PM and continue till the early hours of the next morning. Sometimes these shows are arranged as a week-long series.

¹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4t2nD9Jp5Vw&t=5s>

The show begins with a prayer on Lord *Ganesha*, Goddess *Saraswathi* and other deities, and then proceed with the main story. *Bangaarakka*, *Kethigaadu*, *Juttu poligaadu* are some of the comic roles in the play. The pictures in *Shadow plays* are made up of the skins of animals such as Deer, Goat, Sheep and Donkey. These skins are processed and painted with natural colors according to the characters. As the animal skins are very rough and thick, it is a difficult task to process them. It is a highly skilled and challenging task to shape them into pictures and paint them with bright colors. A lot of effort is needed for it. The colors are chosen in such a way that, they appear clearly even during the night times. Deer skin is used for making the pictures of main roles (For eg: Sri Rama, Krishna, Hanuma etc.) as they appear brighter than the skin of any other animal. The skin of other animals is used for the side characters of the play. The Shadow puppetry is popularly known as '*Togalu gambeyaata*' in Karnataka, '*Thol paavi koothu*' in Tamil Nadu and '*Tholu Bommalaata*' in Andhra and Telangana states. In North India it is called as '*Chaaya natak*'. People believe that their village becomes free of droughts, evils or any other troubles if this play is performed in their village.

3.2 Folk Theatre of Tamil Nadu:

In *Silpaadhikaaram*, one of the most ancient scriptures of Tamil Nadu of 1st century AD, the Dance based art form *Kuravai koothu* has been referred several times. In Tamil dictionary, the definition of the word *Kuravai* is given as "Dance in a circle prevalent among the women of *Sylvan* or hill tracks. Chorus of shrill sound made by women by wagging the tongue uttered on festive occasions." In a Tamil scripture *VeNbamalai* it is mentioned that *Kuravanji* is one among the 96 Tamil Prabandha-s. In the Tamil scriptures viz., *Panni paattiyal*, *LakkaNa chindanai*, another art form performed by *Kuruva* lady known as *Kuratthi paattu* is mentioned.

3.2.1 Kuravanji Nataka-s of South India:

This is a very popular art form in Tamil Nadu. *Kuravanji Nataka-s* ('*Kuruva*' denotes 'a Tribal woman' and '*Anji*' means 'Dance or play'. Thus, *Kuravanji* means 'a play of a tribal woman') In these dramas, there is a female character by the name *Kurava*. This role is of spiritual importance. It is believed that the actress playing *Kuravanji* role is possessed by Goddess Herself. She answers the questions posted by the main characters viz., Hero, Heroine in the play, and foretells the future. Such women in the

drama are called as *Koramatiyaru*, *Koramaru*, *Koracharu* in Kannada and ‘*Erukala saani*’ in Telugu. This foretelling of story is known as *Sodi/Gadde/Gaddi* in Telugu. In this way, *Kuravanji* has a significant position in the Dravidian visual art forms and is regarded as the foremost Theatrical Form in South India.

Kuruva, *Korava*, *Gorava*, *Goraga* are similar terms that are used to denote a class of tribes in Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The male performers of this tribe are known as *Goravayyas*. There are various folk based Art forms with different names based on different regions. These art forms come under the category of Folk-Dance Drama.

The *Kuravanji Nataka-s* are the foremost Folk dramas in the evolution of Yakshagana-s. Later, these dramas are branched into several types of folk dramas such as *Veedhi Bhagothas*, *Bayalatas*, *Yakshagana-s* etc Later, in the 16 & 17 centuries, these *Kuravanji Natakas* were written in large numbers, in Telugu and Tamil languages. They are considered as Classical Dance dramas. For example, *Azhagarh Kuravanji*, *Kutral Kuravanji*.

Tamil Kuravanji-s:



Kuravanji Therukoothu play¹⁴

The meaning of *Kuravi* in Tamil lexicon is “a poem in which a *Kuruva* woman is represented as describing to a maiden, her future in a love affair”. (*Kuri* in Tamil means a female astrologer of folklore). From then onwards, *Kuri* became an important

¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDfMt3xmbac>

character in every Kuravanji Naataka. Similar names for *Kuravanji* in Malayalam, Kannada are *Koratti yaattam* and *Goravanji* respectively. These names exist in these languages since Seventeenth century. Simultaneously hundreds of Classical Dance based Kuravanji Nataka-s are also written extensively in Tamil language. Kuravanji Dramas are the best entertainment to the people belonging to rural areas. They are performed even today in the streets of the villages of Tamil Nadu region. For example, *Azhagarh Kuravanji*, *Kutraal Kuravanji* etc.

Teru koottu:

Terukuttu-s are folk based theatre art forms which are very popular in Tamil Nadu. In the history of Tamil Nadu, the Sangam period is considered as very ancient one and existed since 300 BC. In this period, *Kuttu* is defined as a combination of *Iyal* (literature), *Isai* (music) and *Natagam* (drama). From the Sangam period it is known that *Nataraja swamy*, the deity of Chidambaram is also known as *Thillai Koothan*. There is a reference to *Kuttu* in the *Silappaadhikaram*, an ancient treatise in Tamil. These plays are used as a medium to educate people and make them understand the socio problems. It is known that the plays such as *Kuttu* existed even during the Sangam period. *Teru kuttu*, *Kattai kuttu* are synonyms for the term *kuttu*. Both are performed similarly with minor differences. *Teru kuttu* is a performed while moving in a procession whereas with minor differences. *Teru kuttu* is a performed while moving in a procession whereas *Kattai kuttu* is performed at fixed places i.e., at open places, throughout the night.



Theru koothu Dance Drama¹⁵

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDIgBnq4sSU>

Terukuttu, *Kattaikuttu* are synonyms for the term *kuttu*. Both are performed similarly with minor differences. *Terukuttu* is performed while moving in a procession whereas *Kattaikuttu* is performed at fixed places i.e., at open places, throughout the nighttime. Besides these two, there are 3 other types of *Kuttus* based on the culture and region of Tamil i.e., *Nattu kuttu*, *Kuravai kuttu* and *Valli kuttu*. *Samay Kuttu* is used for religious topics; *Porkaala kuttu*, *Pelkottu* and *Tunangai kuttu* are used for martial arts and war. The themes of most of the plays are based on epics and traditional Tamil stories. The classical *Kuravanji* Nataka-s are performed based on the Bharatanatyam style in Tamil Nadu.



Kuravanji nadanam¹⁶



‘Kurutti’ character in a Classical Kuravanji Natakam¹⁷

¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u44bU6Qn-f4>

¹⁷ Tanjavur nritya shala - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D73KUK9FAfs>

3.2.2 Bhagavatha Mela Nataka-s:

This is a purely Classical art form associated with Thanjavur region of Tamil Nadu. “Bhagavatha Mela is a regional temple theatre form presented through the medium of Classical Dance and Classical Music. This blend of Theatre and Dance has been performed for over 5 centuries. Throughout this time one of the most unique aspects of Bhagavatha Mela has been that all the roles – dancing, acting, singing etc. have been performed only by men.”¹⁸ This is a Dance form based on the Classical Dance of Andhra Pradesh – Kuchipudi.



Traditional Ganesha *paatra pravesam* in Melattur Bhagavata Mela Naatakam¹⁹

Bhagavatha Mela is a tradition of Thanjavur region, that is being followed for the past five centuries. This is a traditional art form comprising of Dance, Music and Drama. This is an art form patronized by the Nayaka and Maratha rulers of Thanjavur. All the performers in this dance drama are male brahmins. They are highly devoted and perform dramas that are only based on mythological stories. Though their favorite deity is Lord Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy, they do not show any difference between Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu. This troupe is conglomeration of different regions and cultures. It comprises of brahmins belonging to Tamil and Andhra

¹⁸ Bhagavata Mela & Ancient temple theater forms of South India – (p-37)

¹⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5x7_RQUnN0Y

regions; Saiva and Vaishnava cults. In the words of Dr. R. Mahalingam, “For those who love Classical Dance, Bhagavatha Mela is a feast for the eye. For those who love Music, Bhagavatha Mela has Classical Carnatic as its best. For those who love Drama, Bhagavatha Mela is a living link our ancient heritage of theatre as laid down in Bharatha’s Natya Sastra. Thus Bhagavatha Mela is a unique blend of spirituality, Dance, Drama and chaste Classical Music.”²⁰

Melattur Venkata Rama Sastry of this region was the contemporary of Saint Tyagaraja. He is one of the most renowned descendants of the Bhagavatha Mela. He has written more than 10 Dance dramas which are filled with rich music and dance and are performed even today with great reverence.

“The traditions of Bhagavatha Mela Nataka now known as Kuchipudi Dance Drama tradition and has Bhagavatha Mela Nataka in Tamil Nadu came into being as a result of the Bhakti movement to devout poets, Teertha Narayana Yati and Siddhendra Yogi employed the art of Music, Song and Drama using themes from Shrimat Bhagavatha and other Puranas to extol the principle of Bhakti.”²¹

Although the present day Bhagavatha Mela Dance performers have settled in jobs in different parts of the world, they gather at Melattur village every year on the day of *Nrisimha Jayanti*. On that day, they perform the most sacred Drama, “*Prahlaada Charitra*” as an offering to their deity Lord Nrisimha Swamy. This shows their respect towards their culture, art and their devotion towards their favorite deity. This Drama is performed in Telugu language. Though the artists belong to Tamil Nadu, they put a lot of efforts to learn Telugu and speak on the stage by themselves without any voice-over. This is a highly appreciable task.

The specialty of this Natakam is the *Vighneswara Paatra Pravesam* (the arrival of Lord Ganesha) at the beginning of the play. This is the tradition which is adopted from the Kuchipdi Yakshagana style. The theatrical form of Bhagavatha Mela is a feast to both ears as well as to the eyes.

²⁰ Bhagavata Mela & Ancient temple theater forms of South India – (p-38)

²¹ Telugu Bharathi Silver jubilee special edition (p-144)



Prahlada Charithram – Melattur Bhagavatha Mela Natakam²²

Music: The music used in Bhagavatha Mela Nataka-s is purely South Indian classical music and is sung at a high standard. Difficult raga-s such as *Bhairavi*, *Sankarabharanam*, *Saveri*, *Ghanta*, *Aahiri*, *Mukhari*, *Punnaagavaraali* etc. are sung in a very slow tempo (*Athi chowka kaalam*) in the style of classical *pada-s* thus giving scope to the expression (*Abhinaya*) in Dance. This brings a beautiful co-ordination between the music and dance. Several *Taala-s* and *Gati-s* are used in their performance. The playback singers of the artists exhibit great scholarliness in their rendition. Their standard cannot be reached by any ordinary singer. For every character on the stage, at least 3-4 singers would provide chorus. The main accompaniments are violin, flute, mridangam and cymbals.

3.3 Folk and Classical Theatres of Andhra and Telangana:

Though there is a variation in the languages of South India, the culture and tradition of Performing Arts in the folklore appear to be similar.

[**Note:** Till the year 2014, as a part of United Andhra Pradesh (the combined state of Andhra and Telangana), the language (with minor differences in the slang), culture and tradition appeared similarly for both the regions. For this reason, the Researcher is not mentioning any separate note on the regions of Telangana].

²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SDRrpaIwnw>

In Andhra, Folk Dance dramas are considered as a combination of *Aata* (dance), *Paata* (song) and *Maata* words/story). The term '*Aata*' in Telugu denotes play or show. For example,

Bomma laata (Puppet show), *Bayalaata*, *Chindulaata*, *Dommari Yaata* (The word *Dommari* is derived from '*Drimmari*' in Telugu, which means 'migrants') etc.

The conversations are casual talks and do not take place in a formal way, as in the Classical dance dramas. These folk dramas do not need any ostentatious display such as stage, mikes, lightings etc. They are generally performed in the streets and in open areas. In these dramas, there is not much (physical) distance between the stage and the audience. Sometimes, as a part of the play, the actors move among the audience. As a result, these dramas appear very lively and thereby attract the attention of the folk people. In Folk dramas, along with Music and Dance there are many conversations that takes place between the characters.



Veedhi Natakam-1²³



Veedhi Naatakam-2²⁴

As most of the artists in these *Veedhi Naataka-s* are uneducated, they cannot read and write the dialogues. They spontaneously speak and perform on the stage.

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxn9ZaoZR4g>

²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BaeP9CbBsck>

Initially, these plays are performed as a one-man show. Later, it began to include multiple characters in the show. At times, the comic characters in these plays use vulgar language, to attract the audience and to create entertainment for them. With the passage of time, stories belonging to epics are also included in the theme of these dramas., as a part of the multi-character show. These plays are generally performed in rituals and folk festivals conducted at temple premises in villages. Such festivals are known as *Jatara-s*. In the process of development, the Kuravanji Nataka-s, are improvised as *Veedhi Naataka-s* or *Veedhi Bhagotaalu*, *Chindu Bhagothalu*, and other such Folk art forms. Several such Dance dramas exist in Andhra and Telangana regions which are performed with minor changes., *Veedhi Naatakaalu*, *Chindu Bhaagavathaalu* etc., in Telangana. *Bayalaata* is also a popular art form in Southern part of Andhra and in Karnataka. *Toorpu Bhagavatham* is a traditional folk based dance drama originated from *Siddhendra Yogi's 'Bhamakalapam'* in the North coastal Andhra. In this way, these Folk based dance dramas played a crucial role in providing entertainment to the rural people over centuries in the regions of Andhra and Telangana.

These plays mainly contain songs with very few traditional dialogues. As these are street plays, there is no equipment such as mikes etc. to make it audible to the audience. Due to this reason, all the characters of this play sing loudly in a high pitch. The artists in the play wear colorful clothes, heavy costumes and glittering ornaments to attract the attention of the audience.



Pagati veshalu²⁵

The *Pagati veshalu* and *Veedhi bhagavatha-s* are only performed with male artists. However, in the modern times, even the female artists also began to participate. The musicians along with their instruments sit on a bench behind the

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQo7XSQ71do>

performing artists and provide background music for the play. The play begins with a prayer on Lord Ganesha followed by prayers on other deities. All the formalities observed before the commencement of the play are common to all the plays in South India. Thus, the art forms such as *Pagati veshalu*, *Veedhi Natakalu*, *Chindu bhagavathalu* of Andhra; *Terukuttus* of Tamil Nadu; and *Kathakali*, *Kudiattam* and *Kutto* types (mainly the *Chaakyaar Koottu*) are similar folk art forms with minor changes.

3.3.1 Kuravanji Nataka-s of Andhra:

‘*Jakkulu*’ is a folk replacement (*vikruthi sabdam*) of the word ‘*Yakshulu*’ (*prakruthi sabdam*). In the epics, *Kubera* is considered as the King of *Yaksha-s*. As he is a devotee of Lord Siva, all these *Yaksha-s* are also devoted to Lord Siva even till today. From the history it is understood that these *Jakku-s* are found mostly in and around the areas of SriSailam, the famous pilgrim of Lord Siva. During the 10th & 11th centuries, in the region of *Karnaata-andhra*, (i.e., Southern part of Coastal Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu) the *Veera Saiva* cult is very popular. *Jakkus*, *Kuruvaas*, *Goravaas*, *Gondu*, *Koya*, *Chenchu*, *Savara* etc. are known as the *Sanchaara jaatis* who lived in the forests of Andhra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. Their dances are named after their regions i.e., *Chindu*, *Ganthu*, *Gondli*, *Anje*, *Anga* etc. As these dances are presented by the *Kuruva* sect of tribes, it is known as *Kuravanji* Dance. In order to visit the pilgrims related to Siva, these *Jakkus* used to move from one place to another. They are referred to as *Sanchaara Jaathulu* (the migrants). The word ‘*Yaksha gaana*’ is originated from *Jakkula paata*.



‘*Erukulasaani*’ role in Kalyana Sreenivasam – Kuchipudi Dance drama²⁶

²⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3RRwxd2usM&list=TLPQMTYwODIwMjC39L9fzTIaPA&index=3>

These tribes used to perform at pilgrimages such as *Srisailam*, *Tirupati*, *Mangalagiri*, *Simhachalam* etc. during festivals. At the beginning, *Kuravanjis* are only based on songs. Later they added some foot work (Dance steps) to it. The *Kuravanji Natakas* ('*Anji*' means Dance) are the foremost Folk dramas in the history of Yakshagana-s. Later, these dramas are branched into several types of folk dramas such as *Bhagothas*, *Bayalatas*, *Yakshagana-s* etc. In these dramas, there is a female character by the name *Kurava*. This role is of spiritual importance. It is believed that the actress playing *Kuravanji* role is possessed by Goddess Herself. She answers the questions posted by the main characters viz., Hero, Heroine in the play, and foretells the future. Such women in the drama are called as *Koramatiyaru*, *Koramaru*, *Koracharu* in Kannada and '*Sodemma or Erukatha*' in Telugu. This foretelling of story is known as *Sodi/Gadde/Gaddi* in Telugu. Later, in the 16 & 17 centuries, these *Kuravanji Natakas* were written in large numbers, in Telugu and Tamil languages. They are considered as Classical Dance dramas.

3.3.2 Veedhi Nataka-s or Street Dramas:

This is a drama performed in open areas, for free, amongst large gatherings. The performers choose an open area to allow huge crowd of audience to gather and see the drama. These dramas are performed in villages, for the sake of entertainment. Most of these plays are taken from some of the important scenes of Mahaabharatha. The performers attract the people with their appearance, songs and expressions.

The specialty of this drama is that even the female roles are also acted by male artistes. Some of the enthusiastic villagers approach a *Guru* (Master) and undergo training for a month under him. This is known as *Oddika* (Primary rehearsal). During these rehearsals, actors byheart the poems in the Drama, without their costumes and make up. These practice sessions take place in the temple premises or in the *Bhajana Mandirams* (prayer halls.) Even these rehearsals are attended by the people. Once the artistes are fully equipped, they perform the actual drama with their makeup and costumes. These dramas are attended by large crowds even from the neighboring villages. There are some kiosks setup, to provide the jewelry, costumes, weapons, curtains, facial colors and masks etc. used in the Drama, on rental basis. With the passage of time, the artistes began to focus more on their skills in conversations and poem rendition rather than towards the costumes, jewelry or the facial colors. As a

result of this change, they used to sing a poem for at least ten minutes, by adding *Raaga Alaap* (music) to it. This transition in the performance is accepted and appreciated by the audience. These dramas start at around 10:00 PM in the night and extend till 4:00 AM in the early mornings. The people watch the program patiently, till the end of the play. The language used in these conversations are sometimes mixed with slang and sometimes with vulgar words which are well enjoyed by the audience. Instruments such as Harmonium, Tabla and Maddale are used in these plays.

From the characteristics of this art form (i.e., the combination of Dance, Music and Instruments), this can be considered as an example for the *Desi* art forms mentioned by *Mathanga* of 5th century.

“*Geetham cha vaadanam nrittham tat desi tyabhi dheeyathe*”.

In this way, this art form is not merely a drama but also paved a way for the origin of other art forms such as Yakshagana-s etc.

3.3.3 Chindu Bhagavatha-s:

This is one of the oldest Art-forms of Andhra -Telangana. It paved a path for the development of many other modern *Pouranika* (based on epics) drama-s. In olden times, the land of Telugu is called as *Yaksha Bhoomi* (i.e., land of Yaksha-s). The Yaksha-s are known as Jakku-s. As they lived here and developed the drama with their Music and Dance, hence its name Yakshagaana. ‘*Bhagavatham*’ is a story of God associated with any epic. The *Chindu Bhagavatham* also belongs to the similar category. As this art form is performed by *Chindu-s* (the performers of this play), it came to be known as *Chindu Bhagavatham*. This play is very popular in *Telangana* and *Rayalaseema* regions of Andhra. This art form also gives entertainment to all classes of people starting from layman to a scholar. There are many such forms of dramas which are performed with Music, Dance combined with the story. These forms of plays exist in large numbers with minor differences which may differ from one region to another. Some of the popular dramas performed by *Chindu Bhagavataars* are *Chenchu Lakshmi*, *Sundaraakaanda*, *Sathi Savitri*, *Mairaavana*, *Jaambavathi KalyaNam* etc.

Chindu Maadigalu: The word *chindu* in Telugu means ‘a jump’ or ‘a dance with excitement’. *Maadigaas* belong to a class of tribes. There is another art form by name *Pagati Veshalu* (a one-man show). As they are performed during daytime, they are known as *Pagati Veshalu*. These *Chindu Bhaagavathaalu* are generally performed during daytime just as the *Pagati Veshalu*, and occasionally during night times.

Just as in *Veedhi Bhagavathaalu* and *Toorpu Bhagavataalu*, the female roles are also acted by male actors and are very rarely performed by female actors. In these *Chindu* dramas, symbols are played by women alone. The common features among all these folk drama-s are:

1. These are performed with very few artistes, i.e., 2 to 4 in number
2. They use simple music and limited instruments in these dramas.
3. These dramas, especially the *Chindu Bhagavathas* are performed in a simple manner. They are performed on small platforms and sometimes even without a stage.
4. Generally in these dramas the role of a hero is highlighted than the other actors.
5. In these folk dramas, *Aadi* and *Mishrachapu* talas are frequently used. The commonly used ragas are *Sankaraabharanam*, *Anandabhairavi* and *Madhyamavathi*.
6. The supporting singers in these dramas include women as well.

Chindu Jogitha-s consider the word ‘*Jogitha*’ as an honorary title. The *Alampuri Jogulaamba* temple is one of the 18 *Sakthi Peeta-s*. As these people take part in the service of the Goddess, they are called as *Jogulavaaru* (Male) and *Jogithaas* (Female). In every village, they perform the *Yellamma* play as a part of their performance. This is their specialty. These *Jogitha-s* play in ecstasy for the welfare of the people and the prosperity of the village. The villagers still believe that there would not be any calamities or condition of drought in their village, when these plays are performed. This is a tradition followed in many regions of Andhra and Telangana.

3.3.4 Thurpu Bhagavatha-s: This is a very notable folk-based Dance drama in the regions of East Coastal Andhra. As the troupes of this art form perform themes based on Bhagavatha i.e., the stories of Lord Krishna, they are known as *Bhagavatha-s* and

the performers are known as 'Bhagavatars'. For example, *Sri Krishna Paarijaatham*, *Bhaama kalaapam*. There are various types of *Bhagavatha-s* categorized based on their caste. They are *Golla Bhagavatha-s*, *Yaanaadi Bhagavatha-s*, *Maala Bhagavatha-s*, *Chindu Bhagavatha-s*, *Kuchipudi Bhagavatha-s*. *Thurpu Bhagavatha* belongs to the category of Street Dance drama. Though these are folk based art forms, they can even entertain the class audience, and the scholars of Classical based art forms. This is a distinctive feature of this art form.

The Dance drama *Bhama kalaapam* is written by Siddhendra Yogi. This Dance drama is performed in a different way by Thurpu Bhagavathars when compared to the Kuchipudi Bhagavatars. From the available information it is understood that the former one is based on Desi form and the latter based on the Classical form. In both Dance dramas, the heroine Satyabhama arrives on to the stage, covered under a curtain (as shown in the picture below, ref no. 27). After a few conversations with the *Sutradhara*, the curtains are raised and then the heroine enters the scene. Another similarity in both the Dance dramas is that, only male artists are allowed to perform.

The language and music used in Thurpu Bhagavatars is very simple and can be easily understood by a common man. The instruments used in this drama are Harmonium, Dholak and cymbals. They generally use the raga-s *Anandabhairavi*, *Mukhari*, *Kapi*, *Mohana*; and Taala-s *Aadi*, *Mishra Chaapu* and *Khanda Chaapu*. This dance drama is performed with a few artists on the stage, and it attracts the attention of all classes of people.



Bhama Kalaapam – Thurpu Bhagavatham-1²⁷

²⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEUui23x-34&t=719s>



Bhama Kalaapam – Thurpu Bhagavatham-2²⁸

3.3.5 Kuchipudi Bhagavatha-s:

The Arts such as Music, Dance, Sculpture and Poetry flourished during the period of *Kakatiyas* in Andhra region. The Dance postures mentioned in Bharatha's *Natya Sastra* are clearly seen in the sculptures of *Ramappa* and Warangal temples. The commander of *Kakatiya* dynasty *Jaayapa Senaani* has written a valuable treatise on Dance i.e., *Nrutta Ratnaavali*. The poet *Srinatha* is his works *Kreedaabhiraamam* and *Bheema khandam* mentioned about the different types of *Desi* Dances and musical Instruments. In many other literary works written during the period of 13th and 15th centuries, details about several Art forms are given.

Kuchipudi Dance is the Classical Dance of Andhra Pradesh originated from a village called *Kuchipudi* near Vijayawada, AP. Its original name is *Kuchelapuram*, also known as *Kushalavapuri*. As the performers play the stories based on the mythology, they are known as *Bhagavathars*. As the traditional *Vaidika* Brahmins of the *Kuchipudi* village, have taken Dance based Dramas as their profession, and started performing the stories of the Bhagavatha. In this way, they got their name as *Kuchipudi Bhagavathars*.

The story behind the name '*Kuchipudi Agraharam*' is said by a senior Kuchipudi Dance artist Sri Vedantham Radheshyam. He said that, *Tanisha*, the then Nawab of Golkonda, impressed by the Dance performance of the Kuchipudi Bhagavathars, has donated 600 acres of land to them to patronize the art form. At

²⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEUui23x-34&t=719s>

present, the village *Kuchipudi* is a hub of dancers and several internationally reputed artists. Hundreds of Dancers got popularity across the globe and take the credit of spreading this art form, thus bringing laurels to Kuchipudi village and to Andhra Pradesh state. The traditional teachers (*Guru*) played a very important role in training the students and moulding them as reputed Dance performers. A few Brahmin families of *Kuchipudi* village have dedicated their lives to this art form.

The Kuchipudi Dance was originated in 14th century. This Dance form shone brightly period of *Raghunaadha Nayaka* and lost its luster during the British era. Post-Independence, with the efforts of experts and artistes of *Kuchipudi* such as *Chinta Venkatarama Sastry*, it re-gained its Glory and occupied a significant position in the Indian Classical Dance. Gradually few changes were made in the *Kuchipudi* Dance system according to the taste of the people. The history of *Kuchipudi* can be divided into 2 parts. They are:

1. *Pre-Siddhendra Yogi period* (upto 14th century) 2. *Siddhendra Yogi period* (after 14th century)

1. ***Pre-Siddhendra Yogi period***: The *Sanskrit Roopaka-s* was frequently presented during this time. Later, dance based Theatres such as *Kelika*, *Yakshagaana-s*, *Nritya Naatakaalu*, *Pagati Veshaalu* etc. were presented.

a. Equal importance is given to Music, Dance and Literature in these Dance forms.

b. In *Sanskrit Roopakaas*, *Desi* poetry such as *Kanda*, *Seesa*, *Utpalamaala* etc. and songs

such as *Daruvuus*, *Keerthanaas*, *Dandakaas* etc. can be used.

c. There are conversations between the characters

d. There exists *Anka Vibhajana* (scene divisions)

e. Equal importance is given to *Aangika Vaachika Aahaarya Saatwikaabhinayaas*

f. While the Singers sing *Sandhivaakyaas*, the Dancers perform Dance

g. The Costumes are different for different characters

The *Rupakaas* viz., *Uttara Raama charitra*, *Veni samhaaram*, *Mruccha katikam*, *Saakunthalam*, *Vikramorvaseeyam* used to be performed in this period and they are not available now. Unfortunately, the performances of the *Sanskrit Roopakas* are also not known.

2. **Siddhendra Yogi period:** This period is known as *Siddhendra Yuga*. He is the creator of the format *Kalaapam* and is known as the ‘Father of Kuchipudi Dance’. He composed the famous *Bhaama Kalaapam* and introduced it in the *Kuchipudi Dance system*. There is no exact reference about his birth and lifetime. He introduced the *Kalaapa* format in *Kuchipudi* Dance and brought a classical status to this Art form. He has written *Bhaama Kalaapam*, set Dance to it, taught this to the *Kuchipudi Bhagavatars* and finally dedicated this *Kalaapam* to them. With great reverence towards him, the *Kuchipudi Bhagavatars* will stitch their nose and wear the ornaments and play this *Kalaapam* atleast once in their lifetime. The *Siddhendra Yogi* made a rule that all the Woman characters in this play must be performed by the males. Now-a-days even women are also participating in these *Kalaapa-s*. It is a rule they are following that, sometimes females play the role of a male character and vice-versa.

a. Kalaapam: *Kalaapam* means a conversation or argument. In deep sense *Kalaapam* in *Kuchipudi* means *Vedantha, Vignana, Bhramhagnana, Bhakthi tatva and Mukthi saadhaka*. This performance consists of 2-3 characters other than the main role. The *Sutradhara* plays a key role. This is a one act play and do not contain *Anka Vibhajana* (more than one scene). In this Art form, Dance is given more importance than Music and Literature. The *Kalaapas* are of 2 types, *Bhaamaa kalaapam* and *Golla Kalaapam*.

i. Bhaamaa Kalaapam: In *Kuchipudi* Dance *Bhaama Kalaapam* occupies a significant position. This is an imaginary story which is not seen in any of the scriptures. This is similar to the *Veedhi Roopakam*, one of the 10 *Roopakaas* of *Bharatha’s Natya Sastra*. There are various *Daruvus* (songs) in it. In the first *Daruvu*, *Satyabhaama* introduces herself in a *Daruvu* in *Aananda bhairavi* raaga and *Mishra chaapu taala*. This is a most popular song in the two Telugu states. The *Srunjaara Rasa* is the main *Rasa* Art forms such as *Tolu Bommalaatalu* existed even before the period of *Kavitraya* (the Three poets who translated the epic *Mahaabharatha* from Sanskrit to Telugu language) i.e., during 12th century period. There are some references which prove the existence of these Dance dramas from the period of *Palkuriki Somanatha* (12th century) to the period of *Raghunaadha Nayaka* (16th century). From some references it is known that the art form *Tolu Bommala*

(Shadow Puppetry) took shape in Andhra and expanded till Maratha region. In the book *Palnaati Veeracharitra*, a reference to

Bommalaata (Puppet show) is mentioned.

“*Prathimala Naadagabattina yetlu ---*”

A reference to Shadow Puppetry is also made in the scripture *Uttara Harivamsa Charitra*.

“*Yantrakudaadinchi Yavani Drochen Vraalu Bommala gathi radha pooranamulu*”

From these references it is understood that these puppet shows are popular in Andhra even during the 12th century period. In this Dance drama. The inner motto of this Drama is the eagerness of *Jeevaathma* to be united with *Paramaathma*.

The theme of this Drama is, *Satyabhaama* the consort of *Sri Krishna* separates from him due to her proudness. Unable to bear the pain of separation, she finally meets *Sri Krishna* with the help of her servant maid *Madhavi*. In this Drama, *Madhavi* is a special character created by Siddhendra Yogi. In *Kuchipudi*, this role is regarded as a ‘*Maya Kalpitha Bramha*’ because, the character appears as a female (i.e., as *Maadhavi*) in the presence of *Satyabhaama* and as a male (with the name *Maadhava*) in Krishna’s presence. In this way, the *Bhaama kalaapam* is regarded as the most reputed ‘Feather in the Cap’ of *Kuchipudi-s*. For the great contribution towards the *Kuchipudi Dance*, a temple has been constructed for *Sri Siddhendra Yogi* in the *Kuchipudi* village of Andhra Pradesh.



Dr. Vedantam Radheshyam as Satyabhama in Bhaama Kalaapam Kuchipudi Dance drama²⁹

²⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4o6k38DCpe4>

ii. **Golla kalaapam:** This was written by Sri *Bhaagavathula Ramayya*. The content belongs to the *Aathma Gnaana* (Self-realization). The theme of this Drama is, a *Golla* Lady (a lady shepherd) argues with a *Pandit* (Scholar) and discusses several topics related to Philosophy. She talks about various topics as stated below. She talks about *Pindotpatthi* (formation of Human embryo system) and says that the human body is a ball of flesh. *Athma* (Soul) is pure and unsullied. It is unaffected by the caste, color and religion. The ultimate state of *Jeevaathma* is its union with the *Paramaathma*.



Golla Kalaapam in Kuchipudi Dance³⁰

In this manner, the *Golla* lady teaches the Scholar about Self-realization. In this way, this Drama not only gives entertainment to ordinary people but also to the Scholars.

b. **Kelika:** This Art form was seen in the 15th and 16th centuries. These Dance dramas are mainly based on the Socio-themes or Socio-problems.

c. **Yakshaganam:** This is the description of old Yakshagana tradition. *Yakshagana* is based on Music and they are performed by *Jakkus* and *Purandaraas* (a class of tribes). The ratio of *Sahityam* is more in this Drama compared to *Nrutyam*, and the *Anka Vibhajana* is more than the *Kalaapa-s*. The costumes (*Aahaaryam*) are specially designed for Yakshagana-s. He priority is given to *Sutradhaara* and *Paaripaarsvaka* (his followers) rather than the main actors of the play. There are some more conversations in this drama, known as *Vaachakaabhinaya*. In this, much importance

³⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwSTFnJl0Ts>

is given to *Padyaa* and Prosodical poetry compared to *Raaga*, *Taala* and *Laya*. The characters themselves sing and talk unlike playback singers.

The first *Yakshagana* in Telugu is *Soubhari charitam* and *Sugreeva Vijayam* of *Kandukuri Rudra Kavi*. These are very popular *Yakshagana*-s in Andhra. Though there are several *Yakshagana*-s available in Telugu, only a few of them are practiced by the *Kuchipudi*

Bhagavatars (Male performers). Modern Dance Dramas: *Roopaka*-s, *Kalaapa*-s, *Nrutya Naatakaalu* etc. are very frequently performed.

CHAPTER 4

YAKSHAGANA-S OF SOUTH INDIA

Yakshagana is a beautiful art form which gives great pleasure to the mind of the audience. This is a significant Art form which is a combination of Music, Dance, Expression and Literature. There are some versions which consider this Art form as *Desi* (Folk) Dance form and some which regard this as a *Maarga* (Classical) Dance form. However, both types of Dance dramas exist in South India. There exist several types of theatres with minor changes among themselves.

4.1 Kannada Yakshagana-s:

A reference is made to *Yekkalagaana* in the earlier literary works of Kannada like *Aggala's Chandraprabha purana* (1105 AD) and *Nagachandra's Mallinatha purana* (1187 AD). It is known that even since 12th century, there are some visual art forms that existed in Karnataka. There are some other dance dramas that are nearer to Yakshagana-s but slightly differ in their performance. They are *Bhagavathar Aata*, *Dasaavathara Aata*, *Bilaata*, *Doddaata* etc. In Kannada language, Aata means *Naatakam* (Drama). During the period 1336-1565 AD, the Saluva Kings chose Vijayanagara region in the Ballari district as their capital. In one of the inscriptions found in the Lakshmi Narayana temple at Somasamudra, a land has been presented to two brahmins who play *Maddile* in praise of the deity.

They usually present the stories of Yakshagana-s based on the epics *Ramayana*, *Bharatha* and *Bhagavatha*. The troupe performing the Yakshagana is known as '*Melam*'. Among them, the role of *Sangeethakaara Bhaagavathar* is considered to be more important than the *Nayaka* and *Nayaki* roles. The *Bhaagavathar* sings all the songs and poems to which the hero and heroines will act and dance accordingly. In this manner, the Yakshaganam begins with the entry of *Bhaagavathar*. The pitch of the songs goes accordance with the scene. This is known as *Mattu* and it is decided by the *Bhaagavathar*.

Based on their tradition, the Yakshagana-s are classified into 2 types. They are *Badagu Tittu*, *Thenku Tittu*. *Badagu Tittu* is performed in the districts of North Karnataka and *Thenku Tittu* in the regions of *Kaasaragaadu*. The term '*Tittu*' means Direction. There are minor differences between the terms *Tittu*, *Mattu*, attires and

makeup. But there is a lot of variation seen in the footwork. In *Thenku Tittu*, there is a lot of gap between each footstep. In this manner, the dignity of the character (*Gaambheeryatha*) can be easily exhibited. But in *Badugu Tittu*, the *laasyam* (Dance performed by ladies) portion in Natyam is more and *Abhinayam* portion is almost negligible. In *Badugu Tittu*, the aspect of *Hastha vinyasam* is very simple. As per the tradition of Bharatha's *Natya Sastra*, the artists initially perform the rituals at the beginning of the play in *Nepathya gruha* (behind the curtain) and then a lady character will enter the stage. This is the tradition of Kannada Yakshagana. In the beginning, the lady dances for few minutes and gives a gist of the story. Sometimes, the King introduces himself saying that "I am the King". This is known as *Oddoloaga*. The way of dressing in Yakshagana-s is very attractive. The women wear sarees of length 10 yards in a traditional (*kattcha*) way and the color of sarees is usually green, red or yellow.

In Kannada Yakshagana-s, the story is based on *Puraanas* and *Ithihaasaas* besides poetry i.e., *Vrittham*, *Satpadhi*, *Karnika*, *Dandakam*, *Vachanam*. Of these forms of Poetry, Vrittha-s are composed in Sanskrit and very rarely in Kannada. In ancient times the Yakshagana-s in Kannada are called as '*Bhaagavathar Aata*, *Dasaavathaara Aata* or *Bayalaata*. (*Aata* in Kannada refers to Drama/Theatre). As most of these plays depict the *leelas* (childhood pranks) of Lord Krishna, they are referred to as *Bhagavathar Aata-s*.



Kannada Yakshagana - Shri Devi Mahatme³¹

³¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80nrTzTk_Yw

In Kannada Literature there are references to Yakshagana-s from 10th and 11th centuries, a few to mention are, *Chandraprabha* and *Mallinaatha puranaas*. In the *Mallinaatha Purana* written by Nagachandra, Yakshagana is defined as a play which pleases Goddess Mahalakshmi. The treatise “*Bharateesa Vaibhava*” is written by Ratnakara Parni of 16th century. There are a few references to Yakshagana mentioned in this treatise. Ratnakara Parni belonged to South Karnataka region who popularized this art form to a great extent. Later, the author Aggala composed a Yakshagana in *Gaandharva* style.

The inscription is dated 18th June 1556. The Kings of Vijayanagara empire popularized Telugu not only in the regions of Andhra but also in the state of Karnataka. In this way, the Yakshagana tradition began from 15th century onwards. The same tradition of Yakshagana became popular in different regions of South India especially in Thanjavur region. In the dynasty of Vijayanagara, Yakshagana-s are performed using colorful puppets. In this manner, the Yakshagana-s of South Karnataka, Kathakali of Kerala; and the Yakshagana-s, Veedhi Naatakas (street plays) and Bhagavatha Mela Natakas of Andhra and Tamil Nadu immensely contributed to the development of South Indian Theatre.



Kannada Yakshagana - Kurukshetra³²

³² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_b_C6rp3Gk

The theme or the story of the Yakshagana is called 'Prasangam.'. The costumes of each actor are very colorful and attractive. Their ornaments are made up of a special kind of tree's bark and are decorated with shining beads and other attractive material. The impact of Bharata's Natya sastra is seen in Kannada Yakshagana-s. The difference between the human and divine roles in the play is seen from their costumes and their way of dressing.

Similar to Sanskrit Yakshagana, the Kannada Yakshagana also follows the same tradition in the beginning of the play. The play commences with a worship called "*Ranga Pooja*" (worship to the stage). This means, the initial rituals prior to the play are conducted behind the curtain and thus create a musical atmosphere. There are some rituals which are performed even after the raise of curtain, i.e., "*Jarjara pooja*", "*Naandi vakyam*" etc. Then the play begins with the entrance of Sutradhaara and his followers. They enter the scene with a music in sync with the musical instruments. They believe that, in this way they first seek the blessings of God and then commence the program. The same format is followed in all Yakshagana traditions in South India. The same tradition is followed in dance forms such as "Kathaakali" and "Ankiya nat" of Kerala, with some minor changes.

In Kannada Yakshagana-s, most of the expressions are performed through hand gestures. The expressions and hand gestures are less complex in Kannada Yakshagana-s compared to that of Kathakali and Kuchipudi. Artists in these plays perform without any knowledge in the classical treatises such as Nandikesara's Abhinaya Darpanam and Hanuluru Venkata Sundarasan's works i.e., Bharatha sastram, Rasikajana Manollaasini, Saara Sangraham etc. All these Yakshagana-s are filled with emotions (*Rasa-s*). Kannada Yakshagana-s exhibit *Veera* and *Roudra* Rasa-s. Though this art form belongs to the category of folklore and is performed by the rural artists (i.e., people who are unaware of the classical dance), there is an influence of Sanskrit theatre on seen on these art forms. This can be clearly seen in the Kannada Yakshagana-s. In view of the above reasons, some people categorize the Kannada Yakshagana-s as Classical Art forms.

Music: The artists render songs and poems in Carnatic and Hindustani Music ragas. Generally, they play only the percussion instruments such as *Maddela*, *Chande*, *Taala* (Metallic cymbals) and *Sruthi* etc. in the Kannada Yakshagana-s. Occasionally,

Mukha Veena is used. The music in these plays is simple and is not so complex. Unlike in a classical music performance, this does not involve any accompanying instruments such as Violin, Veena, Flute or Harmonium.

4.2 Andhra Yakshagana-s:

In this context, *Andhra* refers to Telugu language i.e., the language spoken in both Andhra and Telangana states. Yakshagana is an ancient art form. There is an ancient sect called Yakshas among the tribes. *Jakkulu* or *Yekkulu* in Telugu is another name for Yaksha-s. The play performed by these people is called as *Yakshagana* or *Yekkula ganam* or *Jakkula Katha*. This is a 'Desi' art form. It consists of the traditional regional dance along with the regional music. These art forms, later by adding classical poetry viz., *Dwipada*, *Ragada*, *Rekulu* etc. to the existing *Daru-s* (songs) and *Vachana-s* (words), got a classical tinge to the Yakshagana. It is known that these Yakshagana-s existed even before the 12th century. There are several references to Yakshagana in the Telugu literature.

*“Bhramarul jaalemul payanamul merasi, ramaNa panchanga peradi aaduvaaru
Pramadha puraathana patu charitramulu, kramamunda bahu naatakamulaadu vaaru
Lalithaanga rasa kaLaalankaara rekha, lamvada bahuruupamaadedu vaaru –
Amaraanganalu divinaadedu chuudki, amaranga gadala pai naadeduvaaru
Aa viyadgathi pakshulaadedu nati, bhaavana mrokulapai naadedu vaaru
Bhaarathaadi kathalu cheera marugulla naaranga bommala naadinchu vaaru
Kadu nadbhutambuga kambha suutrambu, ladaranga bommala naadinchu vaaru
Aachata gandharva yaksha vidyaadharaadulai paatra naadichuvaaru—”*

From the above *sloka*, it is known that, Palkuruki Somanatha mentioned about several visual *rupakaas* (folk dramas) and *Natakas* in his Telugu *Kavya*, '*Pandithaaraadhya charitra*'. They are *Dommarata* (a play performed by *Dommaras*, a kind of tribe), *tholu Bommalaata* (puppet show), *yaksha vidyaadhara paatralu* (drama containing characters), plays performed on roadside using bamboo sticks and ropes, shadow puppetry etc. which are being performed from 13th century till now. The artists perform shadow puppetry for the stories viz., *Siva leela*, *Vishnu leela*, *Ramayana*, *Bharatha* and *Bhagavatha*.



Telugu Chindu Yakshagana – Keechaka vadha³³

The stories of these Yakshagana-s are extracted from the epics *Ramayana*, *Bhaaratha* and *Bhagavatha*, *Garudaachala Mahatyam*, *Sugreeva Vijayam*, *Bhakta Markandeya*, *Rukmaangada Charitra*, *Kaaleeya Mardanam*, *Gouri Vilaasam* are some of the popular Yakshagana-s at that time. Initially the Yakshagana-s are Music oriented. Later they added Dance to it. The expressions in these Yakshagana-s are shown through hand gestures and foot work. Each character enters the scene through a *Paatra Pravesa Daru* i.e., a song which describes a character, and its appearance. In other words, it can also be said as *VarNana Daru*. Earlier, Yakshagana is a one man show i.e., a single actor plays the role of all male and female characters on the stage. With the passage of time, Yakshagana took many changes from one-man show to a multi-character show. This created interest among the audience. *Sutradhaara* is a character in the play who introduces every character in the play. He also links up the story in between the scenes by saying *Sandhi vachanas*. Later, the comic characters such as *Singi*, *Singadu*, *Chodigadu* etc. also took part in these plays. Another interesting role “*Erukala Saani*” (a tribal women astrologer) is also included in the play. Her role is to foretell the future of the main characters i.e., hero, heroine etc. The main characters act according to the scene, and thus entertain the audience with their expressions, movements, speech and dance.

³³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjeoLJcWSc>



Jaambava puraanam – Desi Yakshaganam³⁴

4.2.1 References to Yekkalu or Jakkulu in Andhra:

From the history of Kakatiya dynasty it is known that, in the 13th century, “Maachala Devi” was the court dancer of King Prathaapa Rudra Deva. Her biography is written as a Yakshagana and performed by “*Kolanupaaka Jakkula Jagadamba Melam*” in the premises of Swayambhu temple. At the time of the great Telugu poet Srinatha, Yakshagana-s were performed extensively. A reference to these plays can be seen in the “*Daksha vaatika*” scene of Srinatha’s “*Bheema khandam*”. Some consider that Kandukuri Rudra Kavi’s “*Sugreeva Vijayam*” Yakshagana is older than “*Garudaachala maahatmyam*”. It is said that the Yakshagana “*Thaayikonda Naatakam*” is presented in the royal court of Sri Krishna Devaraya. The Yakshagana “*Maareecha Parinayam*” is said to be written by the daughter of Sri Krishna Devaraya.

King Vijaya Raghava Nayaka, the ruler of Thanjavur, is very passionate about Literature, Music and Dance. Apart from these, he is also a patroniser, poet and a composer by himself. He has written a Yakshagana “*Raghunaadhaabhyudayam*” in Telugu, in which he included the greatness of his father and his daily routine. Rangaajamma, the court poetess of Vijaya Raghava Nayaka wrote a Yakshagana on the King, in the name of “*Mannaaru Daasa Vilaasam*”. Raghunadha Nayaka has written a Yakshagana “*Sri Krishna Vivaaham*”.

The period of Nayaka Kings is described as a Golden era for Yakshagana-s. Hundreds of Yakshagana-s were written, patronized and performed in this period. The Yakshagana-s of this time followed a similar format. The play begins with the

³⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTEZMOO_cQI

entrance of a *Sutradhaara* followed by the hymns on Lord Ganapathi and Saraswathi. There would be a brief note on the author of Yakshagana before the commencement of the actual play. There are some comic characters which add humor to the play. Sometimes their conversations seem to be rude as well. Earlier, the theme of Yakshagana-s is limited to the stories based on epics such as Ramayana, Bhaaratha and Bhagavatha. During the time of Nayaka rulers, its scope was extended to socio-cultural aspects as well. The rulers of the Nayaka dynasty have written several Yakshagana-s and patronized many poets, musicians, dancers and the authors of Yakshagana-s. In this way, these rulers rendered yeomen service not only to the South Indian Fine arts but also to Telugu language. This tradition was further enhanced by the Maharashtra Kings who were next to the Nayaka rulers. From this period, Yakshagana was transformed from being merely a folk art-form to a classical art form. In this way it became one of the most popular art forms in South India.

Goravayyas: *Goravas* are devotees of Lord Siva. They are mostly seen in the regions of *Rayalaseema* (part of Andhra Pradesh) and in few parts of Karnataka. They play flute and *Dhamarukam* (a small two-headed drum). They sing and dance in rounds. They are primarily the devotees of *Mylaar Linga*. The terms *Kuruva* and *Kuruba* denotes the same meaning. These class of people are also seen in some regions of Tamil nadu. Basically, these are shepherds and are used to weave *Kambalis* (a kind of shalls). Lord *Beerappa* is their family deity. They celebrate the *Ugadi* (Telugu New Year) day by carrying the Lord *Beerappa*'s idol on their heads and take it in a procession by singing songs and playing drums. This also comes under *Kurava dance* or *Kurvanji* dance.



Gorava Dance of Madasi kuruvas³⁵

³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M66rhyihMY>

“From the point of Musical excellence, they stand midway between the classical Bhagavata Mela Nataka and the Rustic Dance drama whereas the Music of few songs here and there may raise to classical heights, the music of the bulk of the songs in Kuravanji-s is characterized by a certain simplicity and a native charm.”³⁶ There are some Yakshagana-s with the name *Kuravanji*, which belong to the category of Folk dramas. In these dramas, there is a woman character by the name *Kurava*. This role is of spiritual importance. It is believed that the actress playing *Kuravanji* role is possessed and acted by God Herself. She answers the questions posted by the main characters viz., Hero, Heroine in the play, and foretells the future. Such women in the drama are called as *Koramtiyaru*, *Koramaru*, *Koracharu* in Kannada, and *Sodemma* in Andhra. This foretelling of story is known as *Sodi/Gadde/Gaddi* in Telugu.

Later, in the 16 & 17th centuries, these Kuravanji *Natakas* were written in large numbers, in Telugu and Tamil languages.

Kuchipudi Yakshagana-s:

These are purely Classical based Yakshagana-s. All the characters in this theatre are performed by male artists. In general, there are 2 traditions in Dance dramas, one is *Natya Melam* and the other one is *Nattuva Melam*. Kuchipudi Yakshagana-s belong to the Natya Mela tradition. As a result, all the characters enter the stage following a beat (*Jati*). *Proluganti Chenna Souri's Soubhari Charitamu* (15th century) is the first Yakshagana available in Telugu Literature. *Kandukuri Rudra Kavi's Sugreeva Vijayam*, *Prahlaada Charitra*, *Usha Parinayam*, *Sasirekha Parinayam* belong to the category of Yakshagana. The *Kuchipudi Bhagavathars* have rendered a tremendous service in popularizing this art form. *Chinta Venkata ramayya* is the first among them, followed by many others. Yakshagana-s and Dance dramas of Kuchipudi differ slightly but are almost similar in their performances. In Yakshagana-s, the scope of *Paatradhaara* is more compared to that of *Sutradhara*. The Music in Yakshagana is complex compared to the Dance drama portion in it. In Yakshagana-s the *Vaachakaabhinayam* (i.e., the artists themselves will speak and act), *Nrittam* (foot work) portions are more compared to the *Hasthaabhinayam* (movements with hands). In Yakshagana-s, whenever a main character such as a hero, heroine or a villain enters

³⁶ South Indian Music (Book VI) (p-72)

the stage for the first time, they will arrive on to the stage covered with a curtain held by two other side characters.

Music: Daruvu-s of Kuchipudi dramas are composed in Classical raga-s such as Mukhari, Ananda Bhairavi, Mohana, Bilahari, Athaana, Bhairavi, Kalyani, Kambhoji, Yadukula kambhoji, kedara goula etc., and the Tala-s in Slow, medium and fast tempos with gati bheda-s in Adi taala, and Khanda and Misra Chapu taalas. Classical Carnatic music instruments such as Veena, Violin, Flute, Mridangam, Tabla, cymbals and Harmonium (rarely) etc.

4.3 Kerala Yakshagana-s: Over 2000 years, '*Koottu*' and '*Krishnaattam*' are considered as the oldest art forms in the history of Kerala. Of these two, '*Koottu*' is of many types. '*Krishnaattam*' is one among them. Though '*Koottu*' is a very ancient art form, there is no proper evidence to determine its origin. This art form is of 3 types and is performed during different occasions.

They are '*Atiyaantha Koottu*', '*Kanka Koottu*', '*Vahivaada Koottu*'.

1. '*Atiyaantha Koottu*' is performed once in a year to worship the deities.
2. '*Kanka Koottu*' is performed during any happy occasions and celebrations.
3. '*Vahivaada Koottu*' is performed after a desire is fulfilled. In South India, it is equivalent to placing the offerings to God as an act of gratitude (*Mokkubadi*). It is believed that people who are childless are blessed with children when they perform this art form.

There are several kinds of '*Vahivaada Koottus*' such as '*Chaakyaar Koottu*', '*Nangyaar Koottu*' and '*Kudiyattam*'. The '*Kudiyattam*' is a popular art form in Kerala. *Kudi* means collectively and *Aattam* means play. Thus, *Kudiyattam* means a collective play. This is performed only during night times, in some restricted areas of the temples known as "*Koothambalam*".

Kathaakali: Kathakali is also a Classical dance drama very popular in Kerala. There are many similarities seen among Kathakali and Yakshagana and a few differences as well. A Yakshagana contains *Nrutta*, *Nrittya* and spoken prose, whereas Kathakali contains gesture language. In both of them, only the *laya vaadyaas* such as *Maddale*,

Chande, metallic cymbols are used in support to the vocalist. Kathakali is a popular and traditional art form containing all these features.

In the 9th and 10th centuries, the King Kulasekhara Perumaal ruled the region *Mahodaya Puramu*. He made some changes to this art form and designed a structure to it. Some of the changes include, the actor *Vidushaka* should only speak in his regional language i.e., in Malayalam. In addition, he divided the play into *Ankaas* (acts) and thus structured it in a proper format. There is a controversy on the art form '*Karnataka Yakshagana*', whether it belonged to the folk form or classical form of music. Initially it is treated as a folk-art form performed with folk language, music and dance. Gradually it is developed as a visual art form and performed using classical literature and music with classical ragas. "The Yakshagana folk-theatre is no isolated theatrical form in India. We have a number of such theatrical traditions all around Karnataka. It is but proper that we should assess Yakshagana in its contemporary setting and as a part of the All India scene. In far of Assam we have similar plays going by the name *Ankhia Nat*. In Bengal, we have the very popular *Jatra* plays. Maharashtra has its *Tamasha*. Adjacent Andhra has its Kuchipudi theatre, as well as a few others. In the South of Karnataka lies the vast Tamil region which has its *Teru Kuttu* as its own Yakshagana of Melattur in Tanjore district. Immediately South of the coastal belt of the Karnataka, the home of the Yakshagana we have the Kerala country. It is a repository of many hoary traditions like Sanskrit literature, grammar, astrology, medicine, dance and drama. It has a number of well-preserved forms such as *Rama Nata, Krishna Nata, Kathakkali, Kudiyaata, Mohini aata, Ottam tullal*". These are the words of K. Sivarama Karanth in his book *Yakshagana*.

CHAPTER 5

NAYAKA AND MARATHA RULERS OF THANJAVUR

The culture and language of Andhra flourished during the rule of Vijayanagara Kings. The ruler of the Empire at that time is *Sri Krishna Deva Raaya*. The greatest contributor to the Telugu Art and Literature, the King Sri Krishna Devaraya, is himself a poet. He patronized many erudite poets and singers including eight extraordinary poets known as *Ashta Diggajas*. He eulogized the greatness of Telugu language as “*Desa bhashalandu telugu lessa*”, meaning, Telugu is great among all the other Indian languages.

During the later period i.e., from 1500-1600 AD, the subordinate rulers of *Sri Krishna Devaraya* i.e., the Nayaka rulers introduced Telugu language in the regions of Thanjavur and Madurai. In 1565 AD, the ‘*Raakshasa Tangadi*’ war led to the downfall of Vijayanagara empire. As a result, many court poets, scholars and artists of the royal court migrated and settled in the courts of Nayaka kings of Thanjavur. In the court of Nayaka kings, the Telugu language and literature received great respects and Telugu is recognized as one of the official languages of the state. Simultaneously, the Yakshagana tradition was also highly honored at that time. In the historical perspective of Andhra literature, the era of Nayaka rulers is a significant one. Various aspects of Telugu literature i.e., different forms of poetry (*vachana kavitvam*, *geya kavitvam* etc.) flourished during this period. Along with the poets, even Nayaka rulers have written many books in this language and thereby rendered yeomen service to the Telugu literature. Literary aspects such as Classical Music, Dance and Yakshagana-s were written, performed and were given a high status. Other art forms such as Sculpture and Paintings too earned great reputation during this period. This advancement in these Fine Arts is seen in the Kingdoms of Thanjavur, Madhura, Mysore and Pudukottai, particularly in the Thanjavur Kingdom. Along with other Art forms, an extensive development is also seen in Yakshagana-s.

5.1 Nayaka Rulers:

The Yakshagana-s in Thanjavur received a royal status during the rule of Nayaka kings. The reason is the rulers are themselves experts in music, dance and poetry and have also authored plenty of literary grantha-s and Yakshagana-s in Telugu. The first

Nayaka ruler of Thanjavur region, Raghunadha Nayaka has written many *Prabandhas* and known as “*Prabandha Parameswara*”.

“Ragunatha Nayaka was the most illustrious of the Tanjore line of Nayaka as well as the main prop of their fame and glory. Himself a great authority on the science and practice of Karnatic Music, an accomplished scholar and author of numerous works in Telugu, an expert Veena player, his court was the paradise on earth attracting eminent scholars, musicians, vainikas, dramatists, poets, poetesses and experts in branches of learning. The circle of most eminent critics who adorned his court, acclaimed his scholarship in art and letters. The King Raghunadha was held in great acclaim by his Guru and Guide, Sri Govinda Deekshitar and veteran scholars of the age like Yagnanarayana Diksita, Cemakkura Venkata kavi, Kshetryya and others, prove the genuine nature of his accomplishments.”³⁷

His son Vijaya Raghava Nayaka’s (1633-73) period is known as a Golden era in the history of Yakshagana-s. He is a great admirer of Music, Dance and Literature. With his deep interest and love for Yakshagana-s, he encouraged his court poets to write Yakshagana-s in Telugu. He himself authored several of them. He appointed few Nattuva Melas (Dance troupes) and made them to perform in his court. Even though the Yakshagana-s of Thanjavur are set to *Desi* (local) type, their characteristics are in the traditional Rupaka style as mentioned by Bharata. None of these plays are mentioned as Yakshagana-s, while they are termed as *Nataka-s* and *Maha Nataka-s*. The reason may be, their importance to the traditional term *Nataka* rather than the term *Yakshagaana*.

5.2 Maratha Rulers:

In the year 1676 A.D., the Andhra Nayaka dynasty has come to an end. Then began the rule of Maharashtra Kings. Similar to Nayaka kings, the Maratha rulers have also done remarkable service in promoting the Telugu language. Though they belong to the land of Maharashtra, they encouraged South Indian culture and tradition to a great extent. They learnt Telugu language and have written many treatises including Yakshagana-s and have thus promoted the Telugu literature on Dravidian land i.e., in the region of Tamil Nadu.

³⁷ Tanjore as a Seat of Music (p -33)

The Maratha rulers showed interest towards *Yakshagana-s* and they themselves have composed some Yakshagana-s. They also encouraged the composers of Yakshagana-s by felicitating them.

CHAPTER 6

KING SHAHAJI AND HIS WORKS

The rulers of Saluva dynasty have rendered a remarkable service to the Sanskrit and Telugu languages. They have recognized the greatness of Telugu language and declared it as the greatest of all the languages in country. After the downfall of the Vijayanagara dynasty, the Thanjavur region is ruled by Nayaka Kings followed by the Maratha Kings. The Maratha kings have rendered a commendable service not merely to the Dravidian languages but also to the Fine Arts viz., Music, Dance, Paintings and Sculpture etc. With great passion towards these art forms, the rulers being unaware of the language, encouraged the artistes and offered them lands for their livelihood. In this way, they were greatly responsible for the existence of these art forms for several generations. Having passion towards these art forms, the rulers encouraged the poets and artistes and have offered them lands for their livelihood.

In the history of South Indian Music, the period of Maratha rulers is considered as a “Golden Era” in the aspect of Fine arts. They ruled the Thanjavur region after Nayaka kings. The Maratha rulers have rendered enormous service to the South Indian Arts viz., Literature, Music and shaped Tanjore as a Seat of Music. They encouraged Fine Arts viz., Music, Dance, Literature, Painting and thus elevated the Cultural heritage of South India. They have restored the glory of the Fine Arts of those times by patronizing many poets, Musicians, composers (*Vak-Geyakara-s*), Dancers etc.

Among the Maratha rulers, King Shahaji-II (1684-1712) belonged to the 2nd generation rulers after the Great Maratha Emperor Sivaji Bhonsale. Shahaji is an accomplished ruler and a patron of Art and Culture. He is popularly known as ‘*Abhinava Bhoja*’ and is a ‘*Sahrudaya*’ (a good-hearted person) by nature. He is also honored with several other titles viz., ‘*Sakala Bhasha Bhushitha*’, ‘*Sakalaartha viraajitha*’, ‘*Sakala chitra Sahithi*’, ‘*Sangitha Bharitha Sambharitha*’, ‘*Sahitya Sangitha Bodha*’ etc. Shahaji is an admirer of arts viz., Music, Dance, Literature, Sculpture and Paintings, just as the King Vijaya Raghava. Shahaji is also well versed in Drama which is a combination of Music, Dance and Literature. He is known as

Srunngaara Sura, Haasya chathura. All these titles depict Shahaji's vast knowledge over the varied aspects of the fine arts and Telugu language.



King Shahaji II (1684 – 1712)³⁸

He has vast knowledge of the traditional principles of Drama and is an expert in Telugu Kaavya prabandhas. “Shahaji brought together the tradition of the literary Prabandha-s and the Yakshagana tradition and created a fusion of the two in his wonderful *Drsvya Kavyas*. A harmonious blending of Sanskrit and Telugu is witnessed in the fine Sahitya of his Prabandhas. There is plenty of scope for Dance both in its *Nrtya* and *Nrtta* aspects. Shahaji has an extraordinary skill in weaving words and his language is majestic, his imagery polished, his sentiments fine and his touch delicate”. He incorporated them in his Yakshagana-s. So, all his works belong to the category of Classical Yakshagana-s. The language, *Darus* (songs), poems used in these Yakshagana-s are in the form of *Grandhika bhaasha* (bookish language). The poems contain several literary beauties such as *Nindaasthuthi*, *Vyastha pada grasthanam* etc. It is known that he has written 20 theatrical works out of which 18 are available. Among them, 16 are *Natakaas* and 4 are *Prabandhaas*. The *Natakaas* are known as “*Udaara vesha bhaashaa bhushithaalu*”. His works can be categorized as follows:

- i. *Music, Literary and Theatrical works or Yakshagana-s
- ii. *Musical compositions such as *Tyagesa Pada-s*
- iii. **Raga Lakshanamu* – A treatise on Musicology

³⁸ Tanjore as a Seat of Music (p-64)

6.1 THEATRICAL WORKS OF KING SHAHAJI

All his theatrical works are suitable to be performed as Yakshagana-s (Dance Dramas) comprising of Music, Dance and Theatre. The list of his Yakshagana-s are as follows:

1. Bhaktavatsala Vilaasa Naatakam
2. Ganga-Parvathi Samvaadam
3. Pancharatna Prabandham
4. Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham
5. Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandham
6. Vighneswara KalyaaNam
7. Sathi Pathi Daana Vilaasam
8. Kiraatha Vilaasam
9. Valli KalyaaNam
10. Santha KalyaaNam
11. Sita KalyaNam
12. Rama Pattabhishekam
13. RukmiNi-Satyabhama Samvaadam
14. Jalakreedalu
15. KrishNa Leela Vilaasam
16. Draupadi KalyaNam
17. Tyaaga vinoda chitra prabandham
18. Sati Daana suramu
19. Sachi Purandaram
20. Rathi KalyaaNam

1. In the above list of Yakshagana-s, 4 of them are mentioned as *Prabandha-s*. They are *Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham*, *Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandham*, *Pancharatna Prabandham* and *Tyagaraja Vinoda Chitra Prabandham*.
2. Similarly, there are some works with the name *KalyaNam*. They are *Vigneswara KalyaNam*, *Rathi KalyaNam*, *Valli KalyaNam*, *Seetha KalyaNam*, *Santha KalyaNam*, *Draupadi KalyaNam* and *Saraswathi KalyaNam*.
3. There is one work with the name *PariNayam* i.e., *Parvathi PariNayam*
4. There are 2 *Samvaada-s* in this list. They are *Ganga-Parvathi Samvaadam* and *RukmiNi Satyabhama Samvaadam*.
5. There are 3 works with the name *Natakam*. They are *Bhaktavatsala Vilaasa Naatakamu*, *Sechi Purandara Naatakamu*, *Sri Krishna Leela vilaasa Naatakamu*.

It is known that King Shahaji has written 20 Yakshaganaas. Among them, the *Tyagesa Padas* are a collection of songs. Among them, 4 are in the name of Prabandhas. They are

1. *Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham*
2. *Vishnu pallaki Seva Prabandham*
3. *Pancharatna Prabandham*
4. *Tyagaraja Vinoda Chitra Prabandham*

A *Prabandha* should possess *Ashtaadasa* (eighteen) features. It should contain 18 such descriptions about the King, Capital, Mountains, Love, Sick, Sunset etc. The Prabandhas are categorized into 3 types.

1. *Prakhyaatha Prabandham*: The theme should be a *Prakhyaatha* (famous) epic (eg: *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*).
2. *Uthpaadya Prabandham*: This play is a complete imagination of the author. eg: *Meghasandesam*, *Mrucchakatikaa*, *Swapnavaasavadattha*
3. *Mishra Prabandham*: It is a combination of *Prakhyaatha* and *Uthpaadya* Prabandhaas. It means, the story is extracted from an epic and is modified based on the Author's imagination. For eg: *Prahlaada Bhakthi Vijayam* of Tyagaraja.

Shahaji worshipped both Siva and Vishnu equally. This is seen in his Yakshaganaas *Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham* and *Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandham*. In South Indian Geya Natakas, Shahaji created a new trend. His prabandhas contain many literary aspects and are suitable to be presented as Visual dramas. In Telugu literature, *Prabandhas* should have certain characteristics.

During the Bramhotsava-s of Lord Vitanka Tyagesa in Tiruvarur, the *Pallaki Seva* is performed in a very grand manner. In his *Pallaki Seva Prabandham*, he described the *Pallaki Seva* of Sri Tyagesa in a beautiful manner. The decoration of *Pallaki* is explained in an excellent manner. The story describes the pangs of separation of Parvati from Lord Siva, and their unison.

He worshipped both Siva and Vishnu equally. This is seen in his Yakshaganaas *Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham* and *Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandham*. In South Indian Geya Natakas, Shahaji created a new trend. His prabandhas contain many literary aspects and are suitable to be presented as Visual dramas. In Telugu literature, *Prabandhas* should have certain characteristics. “*Prabandha* literally means a poetic composition or a *Kavya*. In this sense, it denotes any *PuraNica* work or literature – It must necessarily contain the *VarNana* or description of the King, Capital, mountain, river, sun-set, love, sickness, marriage etc. A *Prabandha* is considered perfect only when the above descriptions are present.

According to the Sources supplying the theme, the *Prabandha*-s are classified into 3 classes.

1. *Prakhyatha* in which the story is drawn from some well known source such as the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharatha* or *Puranas* and handled without any modification.
2. The *Utpadya Prabandha* in which the story is born out of the imagination of the author himself.
3. The *misra prabandha* is also known as *misrabandha*. Here the theme is borrowed from the *Purana* or epics, but is mixed up with interesting indications and situations introduced by the author for the sake of appeal. Modification of the original story is an attractive feature here. Owing to this element, this class of *Prabandha* acquired enormous popularity during the 16th century.

But this *Prabandha-s* are regular *Kavyas* only and are interesting from the literary point of view. The crude Telugu Drama, the street play (*Terukkuttu*) which was given a literary status and brought on to the Royal stage during the Nayaka period, flowered under the name of Yakshagana in Tanjore. This is a dramatic presentation containing the requisites of a Drama with characters, dialogues and scenes. The remarkable feature about the Yakshagana-s unlike the earlier literary *Prabandha-s* lies in the utility of the triple arts of Music, Dance and Literature. The language is simple as it is sweet and adapted to the sentiment of love. These are usually referred to as *Madhura Kavithaha* in which the *Sringaara rasa* is conveyed through the triple medium of acting, song and Dance.”³⁹

6.2 Tyagesa Padaalu:

Tyagesa padaalu are a collection of 1000 *Padaas* (songs). These songs were composed by King Shahaji, on his favorite deity Sri Tyageswara swami and dedicated to Him. Though most of them are in Marathi, a few of them are in Sanskrit and one in Telugu. This work begins with the line “*Sri SaahaMaharaja virachitha Sangeetha paden*”. These compositions are devotion oriented and are classified into few categories. They are *Bhakti para padaas*, *Vairagya para padaas*, *Bhaava para padaas*, *Mangala daru padaas*, *Sringaara padaas*, *Ashta vidha Naayika padaas*, *Sallaam daru padaas*, *Neethi para padaas*. By observing the structure of these songs, few songs look like *Dwidhaathukaas* and few others like *Tridhaatukaas*.

Structure of Pada-s: In Tyagesa Padas, everything except the *Sallam padas* are in a proper format. These compositions consist of 5-6 parts. For the *Sallam padas*, the *Swaras* and *Jathis* are clearly mentioned. They are *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi*, and the other stanzas may be considered as *Charanas*. One of the Tyagesa Padaas is composed in Hindustani *Drupad* style. Its specialty is that the entire song is written with *Swaras* and there is no *Saahityam*. The 3 sections of this song are named as *Vilamb kaal*, *Madhyama kaal* and *Para kaal*. Although no *taala* is mentioned to this song, it is suitable for *Aadi taala*. Some of the Tyagesa padas do not have *Talas*, some of them are without *Raaga* and some without both. For some of the *Sallam Daru* padaas, the *swaras* and *Jathis* (sol) are given. Few songs are mentioned with captions viz., *Mangala daru padaas*, *Jaya Mangalam-Nitya subha mangalam padas*.

³⁹ Tanjore as a seat of Music – Dr. S. Seetha (pg 72 & 73)

The titles of the songs in Ashtavidha Naayikas and Naayakas are named with Nayika and Nayaka's names respectively.

Ex for *Nayika padas*: *Abhisarika lakshana pada*, *Vipra labdha lakshana pada*, *Khanditha lakshana pada*.

Ex for *Nayaka padas*: *Dakshina nayaka Lakshana padas*, *Anukoola nayaka lakshana padas*.

Shahaji composed Samvaada padaas as well. For eg, *Yogi-Bhogi Samvaada*, *Gowri-Parameswara samvaada*. In addition to these songs, several compositions were written with new titles i.e., whose names were neither used before nor after. A few to mention, *Kusuma bandha pada* (a variety of flowers whose names go in sync with the lyric), *Raasi bandha padas* (the zodiac names were included in the lyrics) etc.

Other examples include, *Phala bandha*, *Swara bandha*, *mruga bandha*, *Navaratna bandha*, *Pakshi bandha*, *Navagraha bandha*, *Samvatsara bandha*, *Nakshatra bandha* etc.

Along with these, he has composed songs on several *Kshetras* (Pilgrimages) and Deities.

Ragas and Talas used for these padas: Shahaji's mastery over the Carnatic and Hindustani Music are seen in his Padas. Some of the ragas are ancient and rare, while the other are popular and rakthi ragas. Some examples in Carnatic music are *Sankarabharanam*, *Todi*, *Subhapantumarali*, *Bhairavi*, *Kambhoji*, *Saranga*, *Mohana*, *Aahiri*.

Some of the very rare ragas which are not in practice are *Sri Gowri*, *Gumma kambhoji*, *Poorvs gowla*. Few Hindustani ragas are *Raam kali*, *Lalitha pancham*, *Asaveri*, *Nayaki kaanada*, *Syama Kalyani* etc.

Many of his padas are in *Aadi*, *Eka* and *Ata* taal. Few compositions are in *Jhampa*, *Dhruva*, *Roopaka* and *Tripata*.

Literary beauties: In many of his Sanskrit padas he addresses God. Most of his Sanskrit padas and some of his Maratha padas are filled with *Praasa*, *Yati*, *Antyapraasa* and *Muktha pada grastham* etc.

1. An example of *Praasa* composed in Subhapantuvarali raga, Aadi tala.

Pallavi: *Sankara thanaya maampaahi* –

Anupallavi: *Kinkaram deenam Maamtraahi* –

2. An example of Antyapraasa:

Saranu Sree Siva Girija Nayaka –

Sree jaya daayaka –

Vara pradaayaka –

Sri Hari Saayaka --

3. An example of *Yati* composed in Aahiri raga, Aadi tala.

Kriyaa rahitha naama – *Kinnimittha Vaagavithosa*

Dayaanidhi majavari – *Dayaana karithaam sathatha*

4. An example of *Mukthapadagrastham* composed in Aahiri raga.

Karuna saagara

Garala kandhara

Dharajaa manohara

Hara nagadhara s'ara

S'aranaagatha thraana para

parama paavana sankara

kara dhrutha soola vara

varada Paraathpara eeswara

It can be said that these Tyagesa padaas is a noble work containing many specialities in many aspects. Unfortunately, the lyrical part of these padas alone are available while the music part (notations) is not available. However, there is scope for composing music to these padas.

With the great efforts of *Saraswathi Mahal Library* of *Thanjavur*, 361 out of 1000 padas are preserved.

6.3: Raga Lakshanam:

This is a book written in Telugu which depicts the Musicologist phase of King Shahaji. In this book, the Mela and Janya raga-s are very well explained. Shahaji mentioned 20 ragas as Mela raga-s in this book. The mela ragas mentioned in this book are categorized in the following way according to modern Janaka-Janya system:

- i. Major Janaka raga-s such as Sankarabharanam, Todi, Kalyani, Malavagoula etc.
- ii. Major Janya raga-s such as Bhairavi, Kambhoji, Mukhari
- iii. Ghana raga-s such as Nata, Sri, Varali
- iv. Rare raga-s such as Desakshi, Hejjujji

Preceding each raga he mentioned the following Sanskrit lines, “*Iti sri bhosala kulaavatamsa sri Saha raja sasanka prakaasitaha sama varali mela vivekaha trayodasaha*”. In the above lines, he mentioned the Mela number of each raga at the end. For example, in the above verse, the last word *trayodasaha* (thirteen) denotes the Mela number of that raga. In this manner he has described 20 Mela raga-s and 95 Janya raga-s which are popular during his times.

CHAPTER 7

THEATRICAL WORKS (YAKSHAGANA-S) OF KING SHAHAJI

Shahaji's Yakshaganas are filled with literary and prosodical beauties such as *Choornika*, *Seesa padyam*, *kanda padyam*, *utpalamaala*, *champakamaala* and *dwipada*.. The language is simple, and can be easily understood by anyone having considerable knowledge in Telugu language. In addition, different types of folk songs associated with daily offerings to God such as *Sobhanalu*, *Mangalalu*, *Pavvalimpulu* and occasional events such as Marriage etc. It is very pitiable to find the Music part missing for these Yakshaganas. In his Yakshaganas, several types of Daru-s such as small, big Daru-s are seen. Most of his works contain the *Paatra pravesa Daru* on Lord Ganesha.

1. BHAKTAVATSALA VILAASA NAATAKAM:

The story of this *Yakshagaana* is taken from an epic and belongs to the *Prakhyatha* category. Lord Siva is known as *Bhaktavatsala*. (i.e., the one who loves his Devotees) The demon *Baana* is the King of *SouNapura* and an ardent devotee of Lord Siva. He prays and impresses the Lord with his devotion and is bestowed with a boon. As per the boon given to *Baana*, Siva is appointed as a security guard to *SouNapura*. As per the mythology, Lord Siva along with his consort and other *PramathagaNaas* goes to *SouNapura*.

King Shahaji slightly modified the epic based story. As per his version, Lord Siva alone goes to guard the kingdom. In this way he gets separated from his consort Parvathi. During this separation, *Vipralamba Srungaaram* was portrayed. In this way, *Srunagaaram* is the main *Rasa* that was in this drama. During this context, Shahaji explains the effect of *Shadrutuvus* on *Uma-Maheswara viraham*. Siva stays at *SouNapura* for one year. Unable to pain the suffering of separation, his consort *Parvathi* sends her maid to the Lord to convey her agony. *Banasura*, after realizing his mistake, feels ashamed for separating the Divine couple and repents for his mistake. He, thus says to Siva

Sl: 'Aparaadhinaithi Naa aparaadhamulanu krupa chesi manninchi

GeervaaNa vandyā Vijayambu seyudu veetikinipude'

Thus *BaaNasura* begs Siva to pardon him and requests him to leave for his abode. Parvathi devi welcomes Him to their abode Kailasam and says:

Sl: '*Varadaa! Sankara! Bhaktavatsalaa! Vinudu*

Paraga Bhakthulanitu Paalimpakunna

DharaNi lo Bhaktavatsaludanu peru

Chirakaalamitu vale chellu Devaraku'

With these words spoken by *Gowri*, the name 'Bhaktavatsala Vilaasamu' suits as an apt title for this story. One may get a doubt regarding the title of the story as to why the word '*Vilaasam*' is added to the story title. The answer for this is, for the Lord who is omnipresent, all this is a part of the game. Most of this play describes the pangs of separation of the Divine couple. As this separation is also due to the Lord's love and affection towards his devotee, so this title is aptly suited for this Yakshagaana.

The *MangaLaacharaNam* in this drama and the *GaNesha paatra prevesa Daru* are same as in the Yakshagaanam *Kiraathavilaasam* also. The language used in this Yakshagaanam is somewhat archaic. It contains many literary beauties such as *Praasa, Yatipraasa* etc.

For many of the songs, the *raga* and *TaaLas* are not mentioned.

2. GANGA - PARVATHI SAMVAADAM:

The theme of this Yakshagaana is very popular among the Folk, but not in in Mythology. It can be said as an imaginary story. Parvathi and Ganga are two wives of Lord Siva. The quarrel among Ganga and Parvathi are of a great interest among the Folk people. Both of them are equally capable in all aspects. Their argument reached to a peak level at the time of Siva's marriage with Ganga.

Shahaji briefly explained about it in a *Dwipadaa* (poem) in this way.

Sl: '*Gangaa samethudai garima sankarudu –*

-----'

The conversation between Narada and a disciple is very humorous and makes the audience enjoy. The conversation between the *Eruka* couple (tribal couple-astrologers) is a bit vulgar.

In one of the dialogues of Sutradhara about Lord Siva, His glory is explained marvelously. The language used is highly complex and is very difficult for a common man to understand it. Similarly, in the dialogues of Kundodara, the language used is very impressive and beautiful. This shows his equal command over the classical and folk languages.

The *ManGalaacharanam* and *Ganesha Paatra Pravesa Daru* are same as in Bhaktavatsala Vilaasa Naatakam.

3. PANCHARATNA PRABANDHAM:

There is no much story in this Yakshagaana. This play relates to the dances of several regions and various Dance styles performed by the artistes. The story is that, several Dance experts viz., *Birudu Mitaarulu*, *Navasiddha Yogi*, *Chenchu Nattavozu* (folk dancer), *Biruda bantu*, *Saadana vaandlu etc.*, come to the royal court of Lord Parameswara to showcase their talent and receive many awards and titles for their performance. Through this theme, the author exhibits his scholarliness and knowledge on Dance. This is mentioned by Shahaji himself in the following poem.

Sl: '*Ghana Naatya Sastra Vaikharulanu minchu -----*

Pancha ratna prabandhambu -----

Sahithi pumbhava sarada yaina

Saaha bhoopaaka saasanudu rachinche'

The greatness of this Prabandha is described as '*Udaara vesha bhaashaa bhooshitham*'. This *Prabandham* contains many special compositions which were neither seen before nor after it. They are *Sallaamu Daru*, *Sollu*, *Moharam*, *Tirumaanam*, *GaNapathi Koutham*, *Trikaala swaram*, *VarNa Trikaala sollu*, *Jathi*, *VarNa sollu* etc. Most of the *Daru-s* in this Yakshagaanam are filled with *Jatis* without any lyrical part. Some *Daru-s* contain *Swaram* as well as *Saahityam*. The names of the lady characters in this play are *BiruduMitaari*, *NelaKanta*, *Sollu Birudu Mitaari*, *Chenchu vaadu*, *Navasiddhi Jogi* etc. All the Dance characters enter the

Sabha by singing a *Dwipada* on Lord Siva. The same prayer song is repeated by all the characters i.e., ‘*Sankara Paramesa Chandra Kalaapa ---*’

The *Mangalaacharanam* and *Ganesha Paatra Pravesa Daru* in this *Yakshaganam* are same as in the above *Yakshaganam*.

After the arrival of Ganesha character, a *Katika* character enters the stage. His appearance is described beautifully in a *VarNana Daru*.

‘*Patti Naamamulu vetti – Paari kola kela batti*

Kati pai duppati gatti – Juttu ninda poolu sutti

Mitta pandlu keka batti – Attahaasamu thona vacche’

In this *Pancharatna Prabandha*, the language used is in a scholarly manner. Though most of the songs are written in Telugu, a few of them are in Maratha and Sanskrit languages. For some *Darus* in this *Yakshagana*, there are no *Raagas* and *TaaLas* mentioned, and for some of them only *TaaLas* are mentioned i.e., *Chaapu*, *Aadi* and *Eka*. Some *Ragas* mentioned are *Suruti*, *Bhairavi*, *Saveri*, *Kapi*, *Ahiri*, *Saanthasailaani* (?) etc.

In an *Eka Tala Marathi Daruvu* (*Raaga* is not mentioned for this), is a special composition. Its specialty is that, one of the *CharaNas* is completely written with the names of *TaaLa Dasa PraaNas*:

eg1: ‘*Kaala Marga kriyaangaane – Graha jaati KaLaane*

Seela laya Yati prasthaarane chaalatha Natana bhedaana

Kaala hara tyaaga natesa apane – kamaneeya Saahendra che Prasanna

Illilaam takka tajham tari takkita – YaNa reeti Sandhya kaaNi na che’ ||

Another *Charanam* is written with the names of division of *Ragas*.

eg2: ‘*Sarasa audava sampoorNa - shaadava suddha raaga Gaana*

Varaaroha avaroha ghuna – sarasa sruthi bhedana

Parama suswara pramaaNa – Saraswathi nija kaaraNe –

Tarikita taka dhaLaangu takkita taka – vara veena vaaje’ ||

4. SANKARA PALLAKI SEVA PRABANDHAM (SPSP):

During the Bramhotsava-s of Lord Vitanka Tyagesa in Tiruvarur, the *Pallaki Seva* is performed in a very grand manner. In his *Pallaki Seva Prabandham*, he described the

Pallaki Seva of Sri Tyagesa in a beautiful manner. The decoration of *Pallaki* is explained in an excellent manner. The story describes the pangs of separation of Parvati from Lord Siva, and their unison.

This is a *Prabandha* written on Goddess Kamalamba and Lord Tyageswara, the presiding deities of Tiruvaarur. The Goddess in this temple stands facing North – East and appears to be waiting for *Parameswara*. Inspired by the custom of *Pallaki Seva* festival, Shahaji composed this Yakshagana “*Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandha*”. This is a completely imaginary story and is not based on any epic.

This *Prabandha*, unlike the others, does not begin with a *MangaLaacharaNam*. It begins with a *Praardhanaa Dwipada* on Lord *GaNesha*.

“*Sri kari mukhuni poshitha chaturmukhuni eka danthuni
durithebha kesarini*

Thaaraka daitya vidaaruni guhuni gaaravambuna kannaa

Gouri Sankarula

Pallaki Seva prabandhamu gaanu -----

----- Bhosala Sree Saaha bhuu purandarudu

*Virachinche kavulella venoLLa pogada, dharaNi lo
naachandra thaaraarkamuganu”*

The theme of the *Dwipada* is as follows. *Shahaji* says that, he is writing a *Pallaki Seva prabandham* on Lord Siva and Parvathi who are the parents to Lord *GaNesha* and Lord *Guha*. The name of this work is *Gouri Sankarula Pallaki Seva prabandham* written by *Sri Saaha Bhupurandara*.

This follows the *Praardhana* on Lord Siva. The language used in this *Praardhana* contains more of local slang and gives pleasure to the language lovers.

The story of the *Prabandha* is as follows. *Parvathi Devi*, unable to bear the pain of separation from Lord Siva, sends two of her maids to bring Him back. On this task, they start to the *Sabha* of *Parameswara*. As the Lord is seated in the assembly amongst all the other deities, the maids describe the grandeur of the *Sabha* in a *VarNana Daru*. It is a popular *Daru* in *SankaraabharaNa raaga* set to *triputa taaLa*.

“*Koluvaiyunnaade deva devudu*
Koluvaiyunnaade koti surya prakaasude
Vala raju pagavaade Vanitha mohanaangude—”

In the above *Daru*, the way *Parameswara* is described is in a most beautiful and in an unapparelled way. (This song became popular through an awarded Telugu movie named *SwarNakamalam*). All the deities in the assembly praise the Lord in the form of a *Daru* in *Saveri raaga* set to *rupaka taaLa*.

“*Paakaari mrokkeeni chekonavayya –*
Lokanaayakaa paraakaa Heccharika –”

In the above *Daru*, it is mentioned that the *Sabha* is filled with many deities including Lord *Indra*, *Brahma*, *NarayaNa*, *Dikpathis* and other *Sages*.

The two maids, after seeing the *Sabha* cannot take a bold step to go inside and approach *Lord Siva*. In this context, the maids discuss with each other in the form of a *Daru*, in *Mohana raaga* set to *Mishra chaapu taaLa*.

“*Etula rammanduve amma—*”

They worry about how to approach the Lord in that situation. They, then plan to take the assistance of His ornaments, to convey their plea to Him.

First, they plan to approach *Mandaakini* (*Ganga*) and discuss about her in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Idi vinaraade ee maatalu—*
Puttina biddala potta nunchi ega
Gotti ledanu palu neeli entha,
Gattaina juNuku kaRaaLi idi
Mitta pallamu leni puttu gayyaaLi—”

They discuss about *Ganga devi*, in a sattirical manner. *Ganga* is not to be trusted as she kills the newborn babies by drowning them in her waters, she also takes the advantage of dancing on top of the Lord *Siva*, she is so rough and forceful in nature and moves away any hard substance that comes in its way, she is a *vagabond* who roams everywhere in the three *lokas* (worlds), she is a shrew who always shouts on her co-wife.

Thus, they stop their proposal of approaching *Ganga*, after discussing about her *GuNas* (nature/qualities).

Then the maids approach the deer, and take it's help to convey *Parvathi devi's* message to the Lord. This is described in a *Daru*.

*“Vinnavimpave maa chinni mekamaa
Innela daaritho ipudu maa manavi –
Maakee kaaryamu masalaka seyumu
Neeku mrokkedamu nenarunanu—”*

In the above *Daru*, they praise the deer and requests it to convey their message to Lord *Siva*. As the deer doesn't respond, they blame it saying that it is a brainless beast.

They next approach the serpent in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Thelupavayya maa manavi – chiluvana raaya
Thadavu seyaka lemmani tharuNi pai daya seyumani
Vididhiki rammani Saaha bhuu
Vibhu daivamaina Pasupathi tho buuni” ||*

They request the snake to convey their message to Lord *Siva* but it too doesn't respond. They blame the serpent in a poem.

*“Palu visamulu rendu jivhalu
Kalavaarala kedanaina kalave nenarul
-----”*

The maids again blame the serpent saying that, they don't have any love or affection, as it has two tongues and is full of poison.

Then they approach the moon God. This is written in the form of a poem.

*“Maruvaka chandamaama vinuma idi neekoka bhaaramaa—
Maa manavi gaikonumaa haruthona delpumaa”*

They request the moon as well to convey their message to Lord *Hara*. As he too doesn't pay attention them. So, they blame the Moon in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Polathi enthaina daya puttunatave
Haalahalamutho puttina annekaaniki
Chaala veeni veduta chaalu chaalune pove
Menu teliyani vaani menamaama ku”*

They blame the moon in this way. The moon is a brother of *Haalaahalam* (poison). He is a *Drohi* (deceiver) and a cousin to *Manmadha*, who himself does not have a body.

As no one helps them, they both directly approach Lord *Siva* which is expressed in the form of a *Dwipada*.

*“Oo deena mandaaraa Oo nagaagaara –
Vaamaakshi gouri devararaaka gori
Kaamuniche duuli gaali che soli
Kalugu chunnadi chaala kaliki ee veLa
Kalaya raavayya Sankara chakkanayya”*

They say that, Goddess Parvathi is unable to bear the pain of separation from you. She is very eagerly waiting for your arrival. The same is mentioned in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Elukovayya chakkanayya
TaaLa lenayya intha thadavela
Raavayya maa baala nelukovayya”*

After listening to their words, Lord *Parameswara* ends the session and orders to bring the *Viri Pallaki* (floral palanquin). This is described in a *VarNana Daru* in *SankaraabharaNa raaga*. This is a major composition of this Yakshagaana. The description of palanquin in this composition is a grand manner.

“*Srungaarampu pallaki cheluvu chuudave*

Sangeetha meLam thona chanudenchenide

- 1). *Jigiminchu jalapotha jeeni pannaagamu ||*
Biguvo nindu burusa vinjaamara
Niga nigayanu paccha pagadampu dandiya
Magaraala nigaraala manchi chattamu gala ||
- 2). *Chirutha pacchala gacchu chesina dabikeelu*
Kuruvindamula geelu konu gobbeelu
Sarige kandai nallina jamidi naali dindulu
Eragu biLLalu pattu birudu biLLalu gala ||
- 3). *Sari jeeni kuttula nagaLaathi netthalu*
Hari neelamulanu katthera koralu
Harumunji puusala norapaina kucchulu
Paragu kuraaLamu pattu toramulu kala ||

The Palanquin is decorated with *Navaratnaas* (nine kinds of gems), precious stones, beads, silk and special kinds of smooth clothes, supporting cushions and pillows made up of silk cloth etc. Thus, the Lord Siva ensconced in the palanquin starts towards the abode of *Parvathi*, followed by Gods, demi-gods, *Sangeetha MeLas* and other followers.

The procession of the Lord moving amidst the Gods is described beautifully in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Kamlaayathaakshi ro kanugonave*

Amaruleesuni kuudigamulu seyuvinthalu—”

The services rendered to the Lord by different Gods is as follows. Kubera serves him with Paan made of camphor; Indra offers *KaaLaanji*, a fan made of peacock feathers;

the Wind god waves with *Surati* (hand fan); Lord Brahma chants *Mantras* (sacred hymns) in praise of the Lord, *Yama* follows Him with a sword, the Rain god serves the *Chaluvu paavadalu* (spreading red carpet on their way); *Garuda*, *Kinnera*, *Yaksha*, *Gandharvaas* sings with immense joy; *Rambha* and other court dancers perform dance. With all these offerings and servings, the Lord *Pasupatheeswara*, the favorite deity of *Shahaji*, arrives happily along with Lord *Hari*.

As the procession is carried out, one of the attendants *Vasantha* cautions the palanquin bearers to carry the palanquin carefully in the form of a *Daru*.

“Kadalinchaku royee pallaki – kadalaneeyaku royi chaala

Mruduvaina maa jangamayya – menu nocchine haha

Thinnaga nadava neeya royi – teevra melanoi

Kukshi nunna bramhaandamulella – nuugaboyee ni haha ||

Vasantha asks the bearers to carry the palanquin with utmost care without causing any disturbance to His stomach, as it contains all the fourteen worlds in it.

In this way, the procession reaches the abode of Goddess Gauri in a grand manner. Then, the Lord *Nandi* says the words of caution, in the form of a *Chuurnika*.

“Jaya sakala geervaaNa vanditha sundara paadaara vinda –

Jaya Saaha dharaadhipa chittambuja pathanga

Jaya dhavaLaanga jaya bhaktha bhaya naasa

Jaya thyaaga pasupatheesha namasthe namasthe”

Then, the Lord Parameswara get down from the palanquin and cautions in the form of *Heccharikaas* which is known as a *Paadaavadhaana/ Paadagamanam* in *PanthuvaraaLi raaga*.

“Bahu paraakeccharika devaadi deva

Paadaambujamulu munulu puujincheru

Idigo indrudu analudidigo semanudu heccharika

Idigo puNya janulu idigo jalesudu

Idigo gandha vaahanudu idigo dhanesundu”

In another scene, the bedroom of *Parvathi Devi* is described marvelously in a *Daru* in *PanthuvaraaLi raaga* set to *Jhampe taaLa*.

“Entha vedukalaaye – nee padaka illu chuuda—”

Then arrives Lord Siva towards Goddess Parvathi who waits eagerly for her husband. She decorated herself beautifully waiting for His arrival. This is described in a *VarNana Daru*.

*“Idigo koluvaivunnadhi Himagiri kumaari –
Madana haruni raaka madini ee veLa goli—”*

The *Daru* describes the beauty of Goddess Parvathi, who has put up makeup to wait for the husband, Lord Siva’s arrival.

As the Gods praise the glory of Lord Siva loudly, the Lord enters the residence of *Parvathi*. This is described in a *Daru* set to *Jhampe taaLa*.

*“Amara pathi mrokke eccharika paraaku – analudu mrokke eccharika
paraaku*

*Jamudu mrokke eccharika paraaku – chanuvuna nairuthi mrokke eccharika
paraaku*

*Jalavibhudu mrokke eccharika paraaku – Dhanadudu mrokke eccharika
paraaku*

*Eesaanudu mrokke eccharika paraaku – ithara devathalu mrokkedarammaa
eccharika paraaku*

*Daasulu munulu mrokkedaru paraaku – Sri Saaha vinuta devaraaNee
paraaku”*

In the above *Daru*, *Indra*, *Manmadha*, *Yama*, *Nairuthi*, *Jala*, *Kubera*, *EeshaaNa*, other deities, Gods, followers and Sages salute to the Goddess Parvathi.

After receiving the salutations from them, the Goddess praises her husband in a *Daru* in *Souraashtra raaga* set to *Aadi taaLa*.

“Neeve daiva sikhaamaNi – deva chidaananda

Nevee naa pennidhi karuNaanidhi soma skandudu

Kadalani Tripura mahaatavi kaalaagniyu neeve

Madanuni ruupa payonidhi galachina mandara giri neeve

Bedarani gaja danujaadhamu netthi ki pedda pidugu neeve

Gadumuchu tirige andhakunaku laya kaalayamudu neeve”

The specialty of this *Daru* is that, the Goddess praises Lord Siva in many ways and in many forms. In this context, allusions of several *PuraaNic* stories related to Lord Siva are mentioned. For example, *Tripuraasura samhaaram*, *Gajaasura vadha*, *Andhakaasuruni vadha* etc.

Lord Parameswara and Paarvathi are made to sit comfortably and offer *MangaLa haarathis*. This is mentioned in a *Daru*.

“*Jaya mangaLam Nithya subha mangaLam—*”

Later, the Divine couple (*Parvathi* and *Parameswara*) are offered *Aaragimpu* (food).

This is mentioned in a *Daru*.

“*Aaragimpara vayya mrokke mayya – maayayya*

Kuurimi gouri tho kondaveeti jangamayya

- 1). *Thiruvissamulu pongaLLu thimmanamulu*
Varugulu nethi buurelu perugu dosaliddenalu
- 2). *Uuragaayalu kuuralu nuluchu pappulunu*
Saaraphalamulu kanda chakkeru lukkeralu
- 3). *Kala vantakamulu paayasamu kalamaannamulu*
Paramaannamu laanavaalu panchadaaralu thenelu
- 4). *Polupaina daddhojanamu pulihoralunu*
Melaku meegada perugu melaina sonTi majjiga
- 5). *Kamaneeya parimaLayutha gangaa jalamu*
Gama gam ani vaasinchu kapurampu videmulu || Aaragimpavayya”

The Divine couple is offered and served with various food items. Then they are offered *PavvaLimpu seva* in *Madhyamaavathi raaga* set to *Jhampe taaLa*.

“*Laali laalayya laali*

Laali vrushabha thuranga laali bhava bhanga

Laali karuna paanga laalidhavaLaanga”

The maids give some advice to Goddess *Parvathi* on how to serve the Lord, in the form of a *Daru*. This *Daru* contains eight stanzas, so it is called as an *Ashtakam*.

*“Batthi tho devaadi devuni paada padmamu lotthu mi
Mettha mettha ga Sankaruni nimmene gandhamu metthume—
Velaya Saaha vibhudu chesina vinuthi padamulu paadumee
Alayakanu devaadidevuni kaanandamuga rathi kuudumi”*

This Yakshagaana concludes with a *Naatyaantha mangaLa geetham* i.e., in the form of a *Daru*.

“Maa paali devuniki mangaLam – mamu ganna thalliki mangaLam

- 1). *Gangaadharuniki karuNaabdhi ki divya mangaLa dehuniki mangaLam
Sangeetha rasikaku jalajaakshiki sarvamangaLa ku devi ki Mangalam—*
- 2). *Mudhitha Sankaruniki mohanaakaaruniki madana samhaaruniki mangaLam
Sadayaapaanga ku smarajeevana daayaki madhavathiki girija ku mangaLam*
- 3). *Rahi gala tyaagesunaku raajamouLiki saahamaheepaala devuniki mangaLam
Guaha kari mukhulanu kuurimi tho kannu mahitha guNaaDhyaku
mangaLam”*

This concludes with a *Dwipada* which is known as *Naatyaantha Dwipada*.

*“Sree sankaruni pera sree gouri pera vaasavaarchithu pera paarvathi pera
Kesava nuthu pera giri sutha pera neeshuni pera sarveswari pera
Bhogi bhuushaNu pera puuboNi pera Tyagesa pera kaatyaayani pera
Pallaki seva prabandhambu divasa vallabhaanvayu deka vasudheesa dharmu
Pathni deepaamba gardbha siddha peti rathnambu sree saaha choLa
Raajendru
Donarinche kavulella lullasilangaa thanarutha naachandra
Thaaraarkamuganu”*

This concludes the *Prabandham*. *Shahaji's* scholarliness over the Telugu literature can be seen in this Yakshagaana. Particularly the attributes used for describing *Lord Siva* are even admired and appreciated by the experts of Telugu literature.

5. VISHNU PALLAKI SEVA PRABANDHAM:

The theme of Yakshagaana in Sankara and Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandhas are similar. Similar to SPSP, in VPSP also Goddess Lakshmi also two of her *Sakhis* (maids) ManjuVani and Priyamvadaa to bring back her husband Lord Vishnu. At that

time Lord Vishnu will be seated in his royal court amidst all the *Devataas* (Gods). The two maids could not dare to enter the Royal court. Then they take the help of his followers i.e., *Vishvaksena, Narada, Hanumantha, Nagendra*, to convey the message to Him, but fail to do so. Then, they (i.e., the maids) directly approach the Lord and convey the message of Goddess Lakshmi's to Him. Lord Vishnu then completes the *Sabha* (i.e., court meetings) and start to his abode on a palanquin and unites with the Goddess.

This Yakshagaanam is bigger than SPSP. Both the Yakshagana-s contain literary poems such as *Dwipadaas, Utpalamaalas – Champakamaalas, Kandaas* and *Seesa* poems, *Layagraahi* and *Mattha kokila* etc. In addition, other poems such as *Todaka Vruttham, Choornika, Ashtakam, DhavaLam, MangaLam* etc. For some of the *Darus* in this play, the Raga is missing. The Ragas (available) set to *Darus* are *Pantuvarali, Mukhari, Kambhoji, Aahiri, Desaakshi, Malahari, Devagaandhari, Bhairavi* etc. The beauty of Palanquin is described in a wonderful manner in SPSP than in this Yakshagaana. It contains 38 *Darus*. *MangaLaas, Melukolupulu* songs, *Sobhanalu, Heccharikalu* etc.

6. VIGNESWARA KALYAANAMU:

This is the story of Lord Ganesha's wedding with the daughters of Brahma. They are *Siddhi* and *Buddhi*. As this is the story of Ganesha himself, there is no *Ganesha Paatra pravesa Daruvu* in this Yakshagaanam. In this, the *MangaLaacharaNam* is immediately followed by *Dwipada* which gives a brief summary of the story.

The story goes this way. The Divine couple, *Parvathi* and *Parameswara* arrives to the *royal court*. Goddess *Parvathi* enquires her maids about that day's news. Looking at the fear-stricken faces of the maids, the Goddess assures *Abhayam* (protection) and asks them to freely tell the news updates. One of the maids, by the name, *SakalaKaLaa PraveeNa* says that, all the people are passing comments on the Divine couple. They opine that all the Gods including *Indra* have performed their children's marriage in time except you. Some performed the marriages on earth and some started preparations for it. But, the one who is responsible for the creation of all the worlds, the omnipresent and the omniscient is not showing any interest towards His son's marriage. They (the maids) say that it is painful to hear such comments on the Divine

couple. Lord Ganesha also expresses his sadness to them saying that His parents are not taking care of him, and not getting him married. He (Ganesha) got vexed waiting for his Parent's consent, says that, he himself has chosen two girls as a good fit for him. He saw them in the *Sugandha Madhuvanam* and fell in Love with them. In the following *Daru*, the maids explain the Goddess about the state of Lord Ganesha who fell in love with the two girls. This *Daru* is set in *Bhairavi* raaga, in simple words and with beautiful expressions.

'Pilichina palukade – Nilichina chota niluvade

ALikula ravamula kulukuchunnaade

Kudumulu che pattade – Pandikokkunnade

Vadivadi gaa Mukkanti Pandlanaasimpade

Panneru muttade – Kanela thalanchu chunnaade

Vennala chicchani – anta verachi yunnaade'

Lord Ganesha conveys to Mother Parvathi through the maids that, in case of further negligence on his wedding matter he would leave that place and go elsewhere. This is said as '*Pooni vivaahamippudu seyakunna boluponda nindaina poyedananuchu velaya neetho vinnavimpu mannaadu'*

Showing her motherly affection for her son, she conveys this matter to Lord Siva. This is described in a *Daru*, in GouLi Panthu raagam set to Aadi TaLam.

'Pannaga BhushaNa Paramesa neevunaa vinnapamokati vinavayya saami'

She further says, even poor parents perform their child's marriage, but his parents did not. All these words are conveyed by Parvathi to Siva. She conveys this message in a funny way, in a *Daru* set to Bhairavi raga and Aadi Tala.

'Andarikee pendlante yaasa puttunaiyya - -

Nandanundainatti GaNanaathu nananemayya

It means everybody shows interest on marriage. In this issue why should you blaim our son GaNanaatha.

The meanings of other stanzas are as follows:

1. Lord Sri MahaVishnu married Goddess Lakshmi and gave her a place in his heart.
2. Lord Brahma married Goddess Saraswathi and placed her on his tongue.

3. She (Parvati) sarcastically says, Lord Siva gave half of his body to her (Parvathi), and even more to Ganga by placing Her on His head.

With these words she requests Parameswara to perform the wedding of their Son Ganesha soon. This is written in a Daru set to Kedaragoula raga, Aata TaaLa.

'Vega pendli seyavayya chakkani saami'

In between their conversation, the two maids convey Parameswara about the two girls loved by Ganesha and He feels happy about it.

The two girls *Siddhi* and *Buddhi* are known as *Brahmamaanasa putrikaas*. They, along with their maids come to the garden. This is mentioned in a beautiful *Paatra Pravesa Daru* in *Aahiri* raaga. "*Kannelu vedaliri kanthuni serammulana* –"

The two girls express their *Viraham* (pangs of separation) towards Lord Vighneswara, to their maids. This is expressed beautifully in a Daru set to *Naadanaamakriya* raaga and *Aadi TaLa*. "*Etuvale taaLudnammaa* –". Another Daru in same raaga "*Cheli taaLa jaalune*—"

Parvathi and Parameswara will come to see the girls and will be impressed very much by seeing them. One of the maids of Parvathi, *SakalakaLaa praveeNa* describes the charm and handsomeness of Lord Ganesha and ask the Girls to Marry Him. Replying to them, the Girls obediently say that they are under the control of their father Lord Brahma. It is not a right way to tell their opinion without the permission of their father. Then, enters the Sage Narada. His entrance is beautifully described in a *Paatravpravesa Daruvu*. He offers his salutations to the Divine couple, in a traditional sloka that was not composed by Shahaji.

Sl: "Vande sambhu Umaapathim ---

Vande Sivam Sankaram"

Narada talks to Siva and Parvathi about the marriage proposal of the two Girls with Lord Vighneswara to which the Divine couple happily agrees. Knowing this, the *Chaturmukha* (the four headed God) *Brahma* comes to the abode of the Divine couple, in ecstasy. This was explained in an excellent manner in a Daru in *Sankaraabharana* raaga and *Aadi Tala*. "*Naalugu momulanu Naalugu Vedamulu*

Leela chaduvuchu vacche Sri Bramha Devudipudu”

Thus, the wedding gets fixed.

The deities are invited, and their arrival is expressed in several poems and Darus. Firstly, SriMahaaVishnu along with his consort Goddess MahaaLakshmi arrive to the marriage venue on *Garuda Vaahana*. Lord Devendra along with his wife comes on the *Airaavatha* and other deities that include Kumaraswami etc. arrive to the venue. The entrance of the groom, Lord Ganesha, is described in a Daru in KedaragouLa raaga, in Ata taaLa. “*Mujjagamula vaari mrokku leederinche*

Gujju roopu devara gunisi yaaduthaa vedale –”

The arrival of the brides to the Marriage hall is described in a Daru in GouLipantu raaga. ‘*Chanduru paavaDa paina sarige cheeralu meraya*

Chandana Gandhulu vega sariga pendli ki vacchiri

Pacchala kadiyamulu pasindi sommulu thannaraa

Pacchaviltu seramulanna vacchiri kanyakaamaNulu’

In this way, the wedding takes place in a splendid manner. All the Gods such as *Narada, Kinnera, Kimpurushas* etc. will sing all the songs viz., *Sobhanalu, MangaLaashtakaalu, Saavadhaanaalu* and *MangaLaas*. Then the Sutradhaara will sing the MangaLam song in Gumma Kambhoji raagam. This Yajshagaanam concludes with the words read by the Sutradhaara “*Iti Sreemat Bhosala Kula Saaha Mahaaraaja virachita Vigneswara Kalyaana Naatakam Sakala Rasika Vidwadjjana Preetaye Sree Tyaagesa Saamba SivaarpaNamasthu”*

The literary beauties in this Yakshagaana can be enjoyed by anyone who all are well-versed with Telugu language. From the descriptions and attributes used, the culture and tradition, the way of dressing and the words used in those times are very clearly depicted. Few songs in this play are tuned to some of the popular songs of those times.

7. SATHI PATHI DAANA VILAASAM:

This is a very Heart touching Yakshagaana. This also begins with a *MangaLaacharaNam* and *Ganesha Patra Pravesa Daruvu*. The plot of this play was

extracted from the *Sri Krishna Paarijaatham* story and written as a Yakshagaana with slight modifications.

The play begins with the entrance of *Satyabhaama* to the *Sringaara Vanam*. Her beauty and appearance are described in a *Dwipadaa* (poem). Her arrival to the *Sringaara Vanam* is also described in a very pretty way in a *Daru*. “*Vayyaaramuna vedalenu andamu meera*”. In another *Daru*,

“*Muthyaala Kamma Chaaya chekkiLLa vintha vennela gaaya*
Chittaru bomma chaaya vacchenu Sri Satyabhaama vacche”

In this way, *Satyabhaama* is described as a beautiful portrait. In the *Vanam*, *Devamuni Naarada* comes to *Satyabhaama*. This is described in a *Paatra Pravesa Daruvu*.

“*Kalahame KalyaaNamani kouthukamuna pulukuchu*
Mellana VeeNe vaayinchuchu melaena Naaradu vacche—”

Then *Satyabhaama* requests *Naarada* to show her a way where her husband stays with her forever and does not leave her. The *Sage* replies her saying that, whatever charity we do, the same fruit is received as a result. He further says that, in this manner if you give away your husband as a donation, you will receive Him in return, and He will never leave you. This idea works only if He obeys to whatever you say. To this, *Satyabhaama* replies confidently that her Husband never disobeys her word. She asks the Sage to make arrangements for this event.

The arrival of Lord Krishna is written in a wonderful manner. The glory and charm of the Lord Krishna is described in a *Dwipada* and two *Paatra pravesa Darus*.

The Lord adorned with various ornaments arrives to the place of *Satyabhaama*. Then, she asks Him to grant her a boon, with an assurance. To this, *Sri Krishna* replies in a smiling way and says he never disobeyed her word even for a joke or in a dream. Then she happily starts preparing for event.

In this context, the author Shahaji adds little humor to it.

As a recipient for the donation, she invites a Brahmin priest. Assuming the donation to be *Shodasi daana-s* (i.e., the traditional sixteen *Daanas* mentioned in scriptures),

the Brahmin is initially Happy to receive the donation. Later, after knowing the object of donation to be Lord Krishna himself, the priest was apprehensive. He says that he cannot accept the Lord as a donation, as he needs to provide milk, curd, butter, good food, clothes made of silk (*pattu*). In addition, he also needs to provide ten girls to play with Him. So, the Brahmin refuses to accept the donation, unable to maintain Him, and further says, he cannot accept the donation even if the *Chaturdasa bhuvanaalu* (fourteen worlds) are also offered to him in addition to Lord Krishna.

Then, Satyabhama requests Narada to accept the donation. The Sage accepts her request based on a condition that Krishna should obey to whatever he says.

The event of donating the Lord will be completed. Knowing this, the remaining wives feel very sorry for the Lord. This is expressed in a Daru

*“Entha kaaryam sesithivi naa saami
Intha mohamu kaladaa ee satya korakai neeku*

Stanza 1: *Katakata Sthree purushulu kalasi melasi yundaroo*

Ituvanti vinthalu yedanaina kanamu

2: *Nenaru kaligina sommulu neraya nitthuru gaani*

Thanuvu neevale nevaraina dhaara voya manduraa

3: *Raavayya Sri Krishna raavayya naa swami*

Ee verri danamu joochi evaraina navvaraa”

Saying so, the other wives curse Satyabhama. This is mentioned in a Daru

“Entha nanganaachive Oo Satya neevu

Inthulalo nella vintha rakkasivi gaava

Orula sommunu neevu noorake yituvale

Garimanu Dhaaravoyi GaaraNameme jantha

1. *Ekkuva haani sesi, eruga natlu nunnaavu*

Rakkasi, divaakaakaruthaDbheetha yannatlu”

Satyabhama retorts, which is expressed in a Daruvu.

“Kalaha kantakulaara! Ee kantu maataleelaane-naa

Cheluvuni nenu daanamu sesithi pove”

In this way, Satyabhama quarrels with her co-wives. Narada calms up the *Ashtha Mahishees* (eight wives) of Krishna, and tries to take Krishna with him, to his ashram. Balarama, the elder brother of Sri Krishna arrives and says in anger, to leave his brother or else he would punish Narada with his *Halaayudham* (plough weapon). After knowing what has happened, Balarama requests the Sage to provide a way to bring back his brother. The Sage replies saying, it is not fair to take back the donation that was once offered. Later, feeling pity on Balabhadra, the Sage explains the remedy to give the quantity of Gold equal to the weight of Krishna and Balabhadra accepts to this condition. They all come back to the royal Palace.

Balarama places all the Gold in his treasury, on one side of the balance to match the weight of Krishna but fails to weigh him. Later, Satyabhama places all her ornaments and other Gold from her treasury to weigh her Husband and she too fails. As all their efforts become futile, Balarama sends a message to RukmiNI, to come to that place. The arrival of RukmiNI is mentioned in a Daruvu.

“Vayyaaramuna vedalenu andamu meera ----- RukmiNI devi”

RukmiNI arrives to that place without any ornaments. Seeing her simplicity, all the people in the assembly starts speaking satirically about her. RukmiNI worships Lord Krishna and gives Harathi to her. She puts a Tulasi leaf on the other side, to weigh Krishna. Then, the side of the balance containing Krishna, comes up at once bringing down the other side of the balance. This is the result of RukmiNI’s sincere devotion. Then all the people feel happy and praise the devotion of RukmiNI devi.

This time, the author again adds a tinge of humor, at the end of the play. During this Happy occasion of coming back of Sri Krishna, all the other wives (except RukmiNI) fight among themselves to take away their respective Gold ornaments that were placed on one side of the balance, to weigh Krishna. This situation is mentioned in a Daru:

*“Mutyaala kuthi kantu idi naadu pove
Muditha maa baava icchinadi kaadatave -----
Hecchu vela mukcara idi naadi pove
Mecchi Krishnudu monna icchinadi kaadate -----
Sanditi dandalu ivi naavi pove
Savathi naa thatha icchinavi kaadate -----*

After collecting their ornaments, all the remaining wives praise RukmiNi, in a daru:

*“Maa paali daivamu maa pennidhaanamu – RukmiNi devi
Chakkani thallivi saakshaath Aadi lakshmivi
Nikkamu RukmiNi ninu nutimpa nerthune ----
Kula girulanu poru kaladhana mellani
TulasidaLamu thoda thulatoogadaayanu -----”*

Seeing all this, Narada feels sad as the huge quantity of Gold that he expected was lost. At the end of this play, the Sutradhara sings the MangaLam and the Phalasaruthi, expressed in a Daru

*“Mandara Dharuniki Maadhavunaku --- Yasoda nandanuniki sobhaane
sobhaane
Bhosala Shahaji bhu vibhuni –
Vaasiga sobhana vaibhava santhathi dheesampadalidu devuniki sobhaane
sobhaane”*

The story of this Yakshagaana is very popular one. The expressions are very simple and lucid, and any person having a basic understanding of Telugu will enjoy each and every scene of the play. This once again proves the scholarliness of Shahaji over a foreign language i.e., Telugu.

8. KIRAATHA VILAASAMU:

This is a romantic story of the *Aadi Dampathulu* (Divine couple) Parvathi and Parameswara. This Yakshagaana also begins with a *MangaLaacharaNam* and *Istadevathaa praardhanaas* and *Paatra Pravesa Daruvu*. The story begins with the arrival of Divine couple to the royal court. The couple spend their time in a happy mood and start playing a game. Then, the Goddess Parvathi asks her husband to play the game for a bet, instead of playing it casually as this makes the game more interesting and challenging to the players. They start playing a game, *Pagada saamu* (a game played with Dice). The bet is that the loser has to give away everything that they possess, to the winner. This is described beautifully in a Daru.

“Pagadasaalaadudamu pandemuna jattupaducha neevu raave”

The game begins.

First Game - Siva loses the game and gives away the *Vyaaghra charmam* (Tiger skin) that he wears, to Parvathi

Second Game – Siva loses the game and gives away his *Rudraaksha* (rosary) to Her

Third Game – This time Siva loses his *Trishul* (the Trident)

In this series of Games, Lord Siva gets defeated. He loses all his ornaments and thus feels inferior to Her. Then arrives the *Kalaha Priya* (the one who is happy by creating quarrels) Narada. This is described in a *Patra Pravesa Daruvu*.

*“Kalahamee KalyaaNamani kouthukuamuna palkuchu
Melapuna VeeNa vaayinchuchu melaena Naaradudu vacche
Menantha vibhuthi poosi meragu jedalu mudivesi
Daanavaarini smaraNa jesi Taandavamaaduchu vedela tapasi”*

The Sage approaches Lord Parameswara who was defeated and totally lost everything in his game. He asks Siva about his ornaments, in the form of a Daru

- “Vintha kanti nedu ennadu leni – Vintha kanti nedu*
1. *“Rudraaksha maalika edi – ruDaina trishulamedi
NaagabhushaNamulevi vyaaghra charmaambaramedi --*
 3. *Vibhuthi bharaNi kaanamu – Vrushabha vaahanamu kaanamu
Idiyanthaa evariki dayachesi eeshaa! Peruprakatamu chesevu”*

Narada asks Siva out of surprise, as to, what to happened to his belongings. Then He says about the bet game he had with Parvathi devi. He asks Siva to get back his ornaments, as they are lost in the game, and the game in ended now. Then, Siva goes to Parvathi asking her to return her gifts. She refuses wittily saying that,

*“Aata lo gelichinadi aduguduraa evvarainan kaani—
Inti sommu adigithey yeeya vacchu
Nenaruna meeru yemadigina yeeyavacchu
Jathagoodi naatho naatalaadi sarvaswamunu voidi”*

This is a reply given by Parvathi adding a bit of pride to it. Feeling very bad about these words, Siva himself says in a Daru with a lot of anger

“Oho BhaLaa lessaayanu – ontigaa undenduku –

1. *Sthreela nammaraade anumaata neelaveNi lo nijamaaye nee valana*
2. *Magadu manchi vasthuvulu macchika nicchinagaani Sagamu seyuduru maccharamunanu*
3. *Penimiti oka intha pilichinapude vacchi*
Garimanu thalakekki genthulu veyavatthu
4. *Purushundu dayachetha poojyamandarilo – seya*
Purushu vanchinchi puNya mandedaru
5. *Ituvanti sathi dharmamu ee jagamunanuda*

Nechata koothurani manasu karugane inthaina – Sthreela nammaraade”

After feeling severely hurt by the words of Parvathi, Parameswara angrily feels that staying alone will bring peace, and women should never be trusted. He says to Narada about the argument, and her refusal to give back His Ornaments. He further says that He wanted to leave this place for peace of mind and asks Narada for a suggestion in which guise He can go. Narada advises Him to take the form of a *Jogi* (saint) or a *Chenchu* (a tribal) man. Then the Lord leaves his abode and goes to forest.

Narada then approaches Parvathi who was in an unhappy mood and asks the reason for her dullness. She says all that had happened, including Her refusal to give back Siva’s belongings, and finally the departure of Siva. Then Narada ironically says that, You have Won the game and He left the place, and the Game is over. He reprimands Her by pointing out Her mistakes, in a Daru. *“Intha dayavaani manasu eela noppinchithive –*

Tharanendu sekharuni sarasa guNamulu virasamu chesukontivi”

Then, Narada admonishes Her saying that, a Wife should always be bound to her husband. That is the right conduct. He asks Parvathi to go in search of Her Husband, convince Him and bring Him back. This is the Sathi-Pathi Nyaayam. Saying so, Narada leaves that place. Thus, Parvathi gets hurt, and sadly says to her maid that she

is innocent and did not commit any mistake. This is said in a Daru “*Emantine vaaniki emihesithi neramu*

Kaama harudu oorake naa meeda naligenoyi
Pathi thana praaNa bandhuvu pathi thana paali daivamu
Pathi eelaagu chesina gathi vere sathulakemi”

It is He who left the place. My Husband is my very life and I am unable to bear his separation. This is expressed in a Daru

“Elaagu thaaLudune –
Phaalaakshu nedabaasi bhayamu lekaethundu namma”

Parvathi repents for her mistake and expresses Her pain of separation. She remembers all Her Happy moments with Him.

“Naa nerame nannintha jese –
Naadhunipai dosamu ledu—
Makkuva raajasekharuni Mamatha poyi pagadaannaithi“

She approaches Narada and asks him the way to reach her Husband. Then Narada says about Siva taking the form of *Chenchu* man. The sage asks Her to take the form of a *Chenchu* lady; convince and bring Him back.

In the forest, Siva roams as a *Chenchu* man. The young *Chenchu* man is described beautifully in a Daru.

“Chenchu redu vacchenu – Pacchavillu chetha booni vinthagaa –“

Shahaji describes the beauty of the forest in a VarnaNa daru “*Adavi vinthale vinthalu—”*

Siva searches for a suitable place for doing penance. Parvathi in guise of a *Chenchu* lady comes to that forest in search of Her Husband. That is depicted in a *Paatra pravesa Daruvu*

“Bhavaani vedale Bhilla veshamuna
Guriginja dandalungaramulu chethula danaragaa
Niduvaina nemali rekkalu nadumuna vilasillagaa
Sera chaapa soolamulu karamuna booni vega”

This song beautifully depicts the appearance of a *Chenchu* lady. Then she asks Vana devatha about the whereabouts of Her Husband but doesn't receive any reply from Her. This situation is shown in a Daru. *Unfortunately, half of the Daru is not available. Few lines describing the appearance of Lord Siva by Parvathi in telling the identity of Her Husband to *Vana Devatha*, are:

*“Puli tholu gattinavaade boochula ekimeede
Chaligattu raayani Allude
Paduchaa nanu vanchinchi itu vacchinaade”*

Then she alone goes in search of Him. This is depicted in a Daru

“Vanamulella vedakithi Haruni gaanamma”

In this song, she describes the list of places that she searches for Her Husband i.e., forests, mountains, trees, anthills, bushes, sacred-places, rivers and caves but She couldn't find Him anywhere. Finally, she reaches to Himalayas and finds the *Kiraatha* (the tribal man). He, in turn, mesmerizes to Her beauty, and talks to her. Their conversation is depicted in a Samvaada Daru.

“Neevu indela vacchinaavu Chenchu paduchaa telupave”

In this song, She indirectly says about Her name and Her children's names. She says that Her name is AparNa (meaning, the one depriving herself of leaf). When asked about Her sons, she replies as One without Horn (Lord Kumaraswamy) and another with a single Horn (*Ekadantha* i.e., GaNesha). In this manner, beautiful conversations take place between the Kiraatha Man and Kiraatha woman. The Man asks the Lady not to go further and says tries to frighten Her by saying that there are Wild Animals viz., Lion, Tiger, Elephant etc. This is mentioned in a Daru

“Minchi pokuve paducha –”

In reply the Lady says in a *Daru* that

“Raama niluvamanevera –”

In this song She describes the valour of Her Husband and says that, Her Husband killed Tigers and wore their skin as a cloth (*Vyaaghra charmaambara dhara*). She

says about Herself that she rode on a Lion (*Simhavaahini*). My Son himself is an Elephant headed God (*Gajamukha*). With these instances She says that She has no fear of these animals. The next 3 *Darus* describe the way the *Chenchu* Man tries to flatter Her.

In this Daru, the tribal man expresses His feelings towards Her

*“TaaLalene nenu ika taaLalene
Ninu joochinapude Niluva jaalane”*

For this, She replies in a Daru about the valour and attributes of Her Husband and Her two Sons:

“Chaalu chaalu verri maata evaraina vinaboyaru”

In the Third Daru, the Chenchu Man again tries to convince Her

“Veladi palukulu ritthalai yunnavi”

Finally Parameswara reveals both of their identity. Then, Parvathi realizes Her mistake and repents for what has happened and begs for His pardon. Then Parameswara forgives Her and they Happily gets united. Their Love is depicted in a *Daru*

“Thaamasamika ela Daya seyavee Parvathi”

The Yakshagaana ends with a MangaLam read by a *Sutradhaara*

*”Maaya Kiraatha Haruniki MangaLam Nityam
Maaya Kiraatha Deviki MangaLam
Amaravandithunaku Subha MangaLam
Mahaneeya roopunaku MangaLam
Mahaaraaja Devuniki MangaLam”*

Shahaji has written this Yakshagaanam in a traditional *Naataka Saampradaaya*. In this play, no Ragas or TaLas are mentioned for any Darus.

9. VALLI KALYAANAM:

This Yakshagaanam starts with *MangaLaacharaNam* and *Ista Devathaa praardhana*. Unlike the other plays, these are not followed by a *Paatra Pravesa Daru*,

but a *MangaLam* in the form of a *Daru*. Following it is the salutations offered to *Lord GaNesha, Sri Sarada Devi, Parvathi & Parameswara, Sri MahaVishnu* etc., in the form of Verses. Then the author Shahaji writes about himself, his family and his lineage in a *verse*. Following it, A type of composition *Kaivaaram*, begins, with a *Jaya Sabdam*.

“*Jaya jayaa saantha vishRaaNa naraadheya –
Jaya Jayodaara! Bhosala Shaaha raja*”

Later, the *Sutradhaara* will speak about *Naandi* (a kind of worship) in the form of a *Dwipada*. This contains the *Ishta Devathaa praardhana*, a description of the *Naayaka* (Hero), a brief introduction of the story. Then the story begins.

“*Munu Kumaaraswaami mudamu meeraganu
Tana nitya kolvuku tanara vacchutayu
Vetakaandranu noori vetaadaboyi –
Metaina yaa valli melathanu joochi
Yathi moha vibhraanthudai chelikaani
Nathi vrutthaanthambu naduga bamputayu

Puruhuuta nibha Shaaha bhoopaaludelu
Thanjaapurini sakthi dharuni sathiki
Manjulatharamaina mangaLambaguta
Anu kadhalanu jaalanamari raajillu
Ghana kumaaraswami kalyaaNamipudu
Sarasudainatti bhosala Saahavibhudu
Virachinche kavulella vinuthi seyaganu*”.

In this way, this Drama will commence with a Prayer and a *Paatra pravesa Daru* on Lord Ganesha. The same *Daru* is repeated in many *Yakshagana-s* of Shahaji. Lord Ganesha is described in a beautiful way, in a *Daru*.

“*Mudamuna Kundalamula ruchulamaraga –
Node vedalenu Vighneswarudipudu-----*”

The story is briefly narrated by the *Sutradhaara* in this *Dwipada*.

This is an introduction to the Drama with a conversation between the *Raja bhata* (guard) and the *Sutradhaara*. The *Bhata* belongs to the Royal court of Lord Kumaraswamy and says that the court has been bedecked with flowers and other decorative items, as the Lord arrives. The charm of the Lord is explained in two poems.

p-1 “*Kaanchana ratna sanghatithamaina kireeta
mulu siramuna chaalaa cheluvu meera
Mendaina navaratna kundela dyuthi nindi
Ganda bhaagambulu kappukonaga
Bolupina Kasturi bottu nennudurula
Niga niga mani chaala neeu dera
Merugaina mutyaala saruluraha sthalamuna
Sarasatha penagoni choukaLimpa ----*”

p-2 “*Ponkamainatti thama karapankajamula
KankaNambulu jhaNa jhaNathkaara mesga
Deva senaadhi pathi mahaadeva suthudu
Vedale koluvuku mikkili vedkameera*”

The same is described in a *Paatra Pravesa Daru* of Kumaaraswami. The lyrics of this Daru is as follows.

“*Cheluvu meeraga vedalenu
Sakthi dharudu cheluvu meeraga vacchenu*”

While the *Narthakis* (court female dancers) are arriving to the court, the guards report to the Lord about the arrival of some Brahmins. The Brahmins report the King about the attack of wild animals in their area. This is written in a *Dwipada* poem.

“*Devasenaani ee trijagambulella –
Pululu pandulunu duppulu gajamulu
Elugulu jinkalu nennanga raani
Mrugamulu pairulu meyuchu janula
Digulonda jeyuchu tiruguchunnavi—
Khandinchi veegame kaavumi mammu*”

Saying so, the Lord orders his servants to get the Hunters ready for the hunt. Then, Kumaraswamy along with the Hunters go to the forest for hunting. The weapons and other equipment taken for frightening the animals such as Guns, swords, spears and nets etc., are described in a beautiful way in a *Daru*.

“*Thaaraka vairi bherula ravamulu bhoru kolangaa –*”

The author mentions about the Gun as a weapon in killing the wild animals. The language used by the hunters and the *kaapulu* (villagers) is described in a very natural way. Later, with the permission of Kumaraswamy, the hunters begin hunting of the wild animals. This is described in a *Daru*

“*Ponchi ponchi deeni bodiche vara singaa*
Minchi minchi Dora meereni—”

After completion of the Hunting, Kumaraswamy takes rest under the shade of a flower bush. Valli devi arrives to that *Sringaara vanam*, with her maids. Her beauty is described in a wonderful manner. Her arrival to the garden is described in a *Daru*.

“*Garima meeranga vedalenu Valli Kanyaka*
Garimanu vedalenu maru sera managanu
Karaku Jedanu viri saramunu meraya—”

In the above *Daru*, the description of various ornaments such as beads, mirrors, *guru ginja dandalu* (the ornaments made up of a type of seeds). At that time, She plays *Kolaatam* (a dance played with two sticks) with her maids. This is described in a *Daru*

“*Nerikurulanu viri saramulu merayanu*
Sarasatha payyeda jaaraganu—”

Kumaraswami, amazed by the beauty of Valli devi says to his friend Srimantha, in a *Daru*

“*Kanugonavoyi Sreemantha ee kanyakaamaNini*”

and says that He has never seen such a beautiful lady till that time. Srimantha says that She deserves to be admired by you. Then the Lord asks his friend to make an

enquiry about Her. At the same time, Valli Devi also looks at Kumaraswamy and gets attracted towards Him, and says to Her maid in this way, in a Daru

“Cheliyaro evade ee Ghanudu—”

Mesmerized by His beauty and unable to bear the pain of separation, Her feelings are expressed in a Daru.

“Baalaro vinave – TaaLa jaalane cheliyaro

Entha ne delupudu cheiyaro –”

Then Srimantha approaches the maids of Valli Devi and about the details of Valli Devi, for which the maid replies in a Daru

“Vinumu ee kanya vidhamu vinnavincheda nee vela

Ghanudaina chenchula raaju tanaya ee baala—”

Then, the maids ask Srimantha about his whereabouts. He says that my Lord is Kumaraswamy, the son of Parameswara. He also expresses Kumaraswamy’s Love towards Valli Devi and seeks help of Her maids to unite the Lovers. The maid asks Srimantha to approach Her father (i.e., the Chenchu Raju) to take the permission and tell Him about the marriage proposal. Srimantha returns and conveys the same message to his Master Kumaraswamy. This is described in a *Dwipada*.

“Telipeda vinavayya Devasenani

‘Kaliki chenchula raaju kanyaka daani

Peru Valli devi—”

Then, Kumaraswamy feels sad as She did not immediately accept His marriage proposal. This is described in a Daru.

“Kanyanu joochutennado

Daanine bigiya kougita jerechutennado—”

Then, Srimantha asks Kumaraswamy not to feel sad, and takes His permission to go to Chenchu Raju to speak about the marriage proposal. Then he starts on his way, as mentioned in a Daru.

*“Anchithamuga senani yenupaga Srimanthundu
Chenchula naayakuni cheravacchenipudu—”*

The way Srimantha goes to the Chenchu King is described in a Daru

“Chenchu raaju vacchenu sriminchu villu bune—”

The appearance of Chenchu Raju is described beautifully, in a poem. Srimantha after repeated attempts, fails to enter the court of Chenchu raju. This is described in a humorous way.

Finally, after introducing himself as the friend of Lord Kumaraswamy, he will be allowed to meet the Chenchu Raju with due respects. Srimantha then tells about Sri Kumaraswami, who is the son of Lord Parameswara. He also tells about Kumaraswamy’s Love towards Valli Devi and discusses about the marriage proposal i.e., the purpose for which he arrived at that place. With immense happiness, the Chenchu Raju accepts the marriage proposal and considers it as His greatest blessing. His happiness is said in a Daru.

*“Baala Chandra dharu thanayuniki naamuddu
Baalaneeya galigi nenu baaguga dhanyudanaithi”*

The Chenchu raju asks the Srimantha to bring his Lord to this place, for performing this marriage here itself. Srimantha, in reply says that they came to the forest for Hunting and the Lord cannot marry without the presence of His parents and relatives. For this, the Chenchu Raju asks Him to invite Parvathi and Prameswara along with all the other *Devatas* (Deities).

Then Srimantha says that there is one great ruler on this earth, who appears like a cupid, highly courageous and generous in nature known as the Shaaha Maharaja (King Shahaji) who rules the Thanjavur dynasty. He is such a devotee of Lord Siva that, the Lord himself dwells in his heart. Srimantha asks the Chenchu Raju to bring his daughter to Thanjavur and perform her marriage in the presence of the King who is an ardent devotee of Lord Siva. The Chenchu Raju feels very happy and accepts it with humility.

The Bridegroom, Lord Kumaraswamy arrives to Thanjavur along with Srimantha and his other followers. This is written in a *Daru*

“Cheluvu meeragaa vacchenu Sakthi dharudu

Later, the Chenchu Raju arrives with the Bride and his family and relations. This is described in a *Daru* by Shahaji.

“Veduka meera vedalenu Veduka meera vedalenu

Velaya bandhula goodi Pendliki thana koothuru nim

Pondugaa thodkoni veduka meera vedalenu chenchu raaju—”

The Chenchu Raju praises Kumaraswami in a *Dwipada* that starts with a *Jaya Sabdam*

“Jaya meru samadheera santhatha udaara

Jaya bhaktha mandaara jaladhi gambheera—”

The Chenchu Raju asks Kumaraswami to marry his daughter to which He accepts it happily. Kumaraswami asks Srimantha to invite all the Deities for His marriage. This is described in a *Daru*.

“Vinavoyi Srimantha vivaahambunaku

Devendraadi devatalanu todkoni raavoyi”

Upon receiving the wedding invitation of Kumaraswamy, all the Deities arrive to attend the event.

The description of each deity is mentioned in the form of poems and *Darus*.

Firstly, the arrival Brahma is described in a poem.

“Naalugu nimmu gammulanu naalugu vedamulan paTimpuchun

Melagu Dhovathul bhujamu meeda namarchina Yutthareeyamun

Laalitha patte vardhanamulan vilasillu subhaakshathambulun

Phaalamululla sillaganu brahma mudambuna vacche nittharin”

The same expression is explained in a *Paatra Pravesa Daru*

“Naalugu momulanu – Naalugu vedamulu

Leela chaduvuchu vacche Sri Bramha Devudipudu”

Then comes Lord MahaVishnu. His arrival is described in a *Dwipada* and *Daru*

*“Karamula sankha chakramula dheedhithulu
Nerasi dikkula yandu niga niga leena –
Vinutha vaibhavu daadi Vishnundu vedale”*

Daru: *“Velaya Sri sencha chakrammulu hasthamula thanara –
Subha peethaambara prabha sobagonda souri vacche”*

Next comes *Devendra* on His vehicle *Airaavatham* along with *Apsaraas* (*Rambha*, *Oorvasi* etc.). All these deities come and praise the Lord *Kumaraswami* by saying *Jaya Jaya*. His arrival is mentioned in a poem and follows a *Daru*

*“Karamuna noppu Vajramunu kannulu veeyi naalugu dikkulan—
Suranikarambu golva bala soodanudindrudu vacche nattharin—”*

The same is expressed in a *Daru*,

*“Airaavatham painekki harshamutho rambhaadulu
Chaaruru srungaara naatyamul meera devendrudu vacchenu
Jejelu thana changatanu jeyjey yanuchu Kolvagaa
Raajasamu meera sura raaju vedka thonu vacche”*

During the marriage of *Kumaraswami* and *Valli Devi*, all the deities chant *MangaLaashtakaas*. Others such as *Narada*, *Kinnera* and *Kimpurusha* sing *MangaLa Geethaas*.

*“Gouriki ramya vihaaruniki - Saara krupaarasa haarikini
Meerina premanu dheerula brochuchu - Korikalosagedu guNanidhi ki ||
Devuniki mahaadevuniki – devaadhipa nutha bhaavuniki
Sree vaibhavamula paavanudai thagu sevaka nidhi yagu sivunakunu ||
Bhosala Shaahaji bhoo vibhuni bhaasillu premanu bhaavinchu
Vaasiga sobhana vaibhava samthathi – Dhee sampadalidu devunaku”*

The Yakshagaana concludes with a *Dwipada* and a *Phala Sruthi*

*“Bhosala kalasaabdhi poorna chandrundu
Satya Sampath sadaachaara sampannu
Dathyantha daya saali harsha maanasudu
Sarasa siromaNi saaha Bhoovarudu
Iruvanda gaa rachinchina sakthi
Dharuni kalyaaNambu DharaNi lopalanu
Evvandu chadivinaa evvandu vininaa
Evvandu aadinaa nevadu choochinanu
Suthulu dhanmbulu subhamulu migula
Sathulithambainatti yaiswaryamulunu
Pondagu krupa boluponda vaaralaku
Indu sekharudicchu neepsithardhamulu”*

This Yakshagaana consists of many traditions, cultures and moral values of those times.

10. SAANTHAA KALYAANAMU:

This Yakshagaanam is based on an epic but is not so popular. The hero in this play is Rushyasruna Maharshi. Of the three qualities of a Nayaka, he belongs to the category of *Dheera Saantha Naayaka*. Just as the *Valli KalyaaNam* this too begins with a *MangaLaacharaNam* and *Ishtadevathaa praardhana*. A *mangaLam* song is composed on Lord Parameshwara. The author offers salutations to the deities i.e., *Vighneshwara, Saraswathi Devi, Vishnu, Parameswara* and begins his work. This Yakshagaanam begins with King Romapaada entering his court. He feels sad listening to the grievances of the farmers, due to no rains in their regions. Upon the advice of his minister, the King *Romapaada* invites all the Sages and performs a series of *VaruNa japaas*. As this does not yield any result, the King approaches the Sage *Bhrugu*. On the advice of Sage *Bhrugu*, the King invites Sage *Rushyasruna*. The Sage performs some rituals which results in heavy rains. With immense Happiness the King performs the marriage of the Sage with his daughter. This is a story in brief, about this Yakshagaana. A few lines of *Dwipada* is as follows:

“----- Romapaadudu gunaarohundu vega
 Thana nitya koluvuku thanara vacchutayu
 Manasau ranjilla naa mantri vacchutayu
 Varshambu dwaadasa varshambulu leka
 Karshakulellaru karaguchu raju
 Koluvuku vacchi grakkuna thama vinnapamu
 Vinipimpagaa raaju vini chinthanundi –

 Thaapasa mukhyudai thanaru bhrugundu
 Cheluvondagaa rushyasrungu neeveLa
 Pilipimpu varshamul permi tho kalugu –
 Bhoomi paaludu thana putrika santha
 Sreeminchagaa rushyasrungakicchutayu
 Aniyedi kadhalache namari vedukanu
 Thana ruchu nundu Santhaa pariNayamu
 Ghanudu Saahendrudu gaavinche bhuvini –

 Dharani lo naachandrataaraarkamuganu”

In this way, the play begins. Just as the other Yakshagana-s, this play also begins with a *Vighneswara paatra pravesam* in a *Dwipada* and in a *Daru*.

The King Romapaada arrives to the court in his usual way. At that moment, the *Raja bhata* (guard) at the entrance says ‘*Paraaku*’. The appearance of the guard is described well in a *Daru*. It is also a *Paatra Pravesa Daru*.

“Patte Naamamunu betti bari kola gela batti
 Datti paini duppati gattigaa katti
 Juttu ninda poolu suttu Mitta pandla nilabetti
 Attahaasamu tho vikataangudu vacche”

This is the description of *Katika* (another name for Raja bhata). The way of arrival of the King Romapaada to his royal court is described in a *Paatra pravesa daru* and in two poems

*“Meti gaa sirasuna aataka ratna ki
Reetambu mikkili neetu dera
Mendaina chevulanu meerina maNi maya
Kundala jyuthulu nekkuvanu thanara
Andamo muthyaala Haaramu luramuna
Sarasatha penagoni choukaLimpa
Karamula ratna kankaNamulu chelarega
Jilugu duppati chengu jeeralaada
Molaka navvulu momuna velayuchunda
Pancha sararoopudagu Romapaadudipudu
Vibhavamu podalu chunda Devendru pagidhi
Vedale thana nitya koluvuku veduka lara”
Daru “Srungaaramuna vedale hoyalu meera—”*

Later, *kaapu vaaru* (a group of villagers) come to the court, to report the drought conditions for the past twelve years, in their villages. The report is given in the form of a *Dwipada*

*“Vinavayya Rajendra vinnavinchedanu—
Panuvadi dhaaruNee bhaagabu nandu
Nenayaga varshamokkintha ledaaye”*

The villagers report saying that, there is no growth of paddy, wells are becoming dry etc. They pray to the King to protect them from these drought conditions. The Minister’s arrival is written in a *Dwipada*.

*“Satata neethi parudu sakala jana hithudu
Chathurupaayamu nandu chathurudaina mantri vedale||”*

After listening to their plea, the Minister assures the villagers that *VaruNa japam* will be performed. On the order of the King, the Maharshis will arrive and suggest to perform *VaruNa Japam*. This is written in a poem and a *Paatra Pravesa Daru*.

“*Cheluvu meerina thama sirasula melaina –*
Daru “Vedaliri munulu vintha gaanu
Vedaliri munulella veduka mikkili
Podamaga sirasula jadamudi thanalaga
Ponkamuga chittha pankajamulayandu
Sankaru thalachuchu jananaathu koluvuku||”

The king mentions the reason for calling the Sages, in a *Daru*.

“*Muni varulaara theluparayya*
Muni varulaara ee pudami varshamu
Enayaga ledaaye nemi kaaraNamo
DharaNIni varshamo kuriyu upaayamo
Narayana naduga piluvanampithi mimmu
Indukupaayamu idiyani telipi mee
Randaru nannipudaadarimparayya”

The King requests the Maharshis for a suggestion to overcome this situation for which the Sages suggests performing *VaruNa Japam*. The Sages asks to provide the required material to perform *VaruNa Yagam*. They are:

SwaRna kalasa – 10 crores, Rajatha kalasa – 2 crores, Muraara dilli biyyam (a kind of rice) – a few bags, several kinds of grains, coconuts, wheat, oil, ghee, milk, curd, butter etc. Then the Sages begin the *Yaagam* with the chantings “*Yehi VaruNa Yehi VaruNa*”.

Though they perform the *VaruNa Yaagam*, their efforts go in vain. This is mentioned in a two-lined *Daru*.

“*VaruNa japamu seyaga vaana ledani telpa*
Vara munulu vacchiri bhoo varuni vaddaku”

The sages convey this matter to the King. They express it in a *Daru*

“*VaruNa japamu seyaga varshamu ledaaye –*

Itti vipareethamennadu vini memu erugamu raja Chandra”

Then the King feels sad about it in a *Daru*.

“*Emi seyudu munulaaraa!*

Bhoo janulu vaana leka pogulu chunnaaru induku ---

Aavulaku mrugamulaku traava jalamu ledaaye

Puttinadi modalu nenitti chitramu gaananu”

It means, the people of this region are severely suffering as there are no rains. Cows and other animals do not have water to drink. He says, he has not seen such a worst situation in his lifetime. Then, the *Bhrugu maharshi* says in a *Dwipada*

“*Telipeda vinu raja Devendra bhuvini*

Velayu mahaa daana vibhavambu valana

Japamula thapamula saanthulanaina

Vipareethameeyanaavrushti doshambu

Teeradu nenokkateragu seppedanu—

Angaja hara bhakthudainatti Rushya

Srunga muneendruni seeghrambu gaanu

Pilipimpumu—”

Saying so, the Sage says that, there is an *Anaavrushti dosham* (a fault leading to drought conditions) which cannot be overcome by performing rituals such as *Daana*, *Japa*, *Thapa*, *Shaanti*, *Homas* etc. The only way to get rid of this is to invite the *Rushyasrunga Maharshi* to his kingdom, who is a great devotee of Lord Parameswara. Then the King requests the Sages to invite him.

Then, the Sage *Bhrugu* says about *Rushyasrunga* as the one who is a great *Taapasi* (a great Sage), one who is not aware of any worldly matter, women, cities, villages etc. *Bhrugu* adds to it, asking the King to send *NaatakaSaala Sthreelu* (court female

dancers) to draw his attention and bring *Rushysrunga* to his Kingdom which will clear the *Anaavrushthi dosham*. Then the King *Rompada* agrees to *Bhrugu Maharshi's* words happily and make arrangements.

Then the *Koluvu bhoga* ladies arrive. Their beauty is described in a poem and a *Daru*.

“*Naataka saala bhaamalu metiga vedaliri
Muddu paatala naatala sari saati leranuchu—*”

Then the King *Romapada* requests the dancers to go and bring the *Rushyasrunga* Maharshi with their music and dance. This is written in a *Dwipada*

“*Vinudu naataka saala viriboNulaara
Mana desamuna vaana mandukunaina
Ledaaye janulu dooliri karavunanu—
Oka yupakaarambu nonarimpavalayu –
Cheluvondaga rushyasrunguni nindu
Velaya decchitireni vembadi vaana
Kalugunu kattenda kaakella teerunu
Chelulaara naa maata seyudu meeru*”

These dancers after taking the permission of the King and take leave.

The ambience of the *ashram of Rushyasrunga* is described in a poem

“*Veda veda vedamantramulu vinthaga jeppuchu bhakthi todanal
Gadalanu sishyulellaru kadu gaaravamandaga cheri kolvagaa
Dodi bada naara cheera puli tholu dharinchina mouni rushyasrun
Gudu nanudenche masthakamu kommu chelanga thapambu seyagan*”

Seeing the Sage and his appearance, they make fun of him among themselves and approach him. The Sage becomes surprised to see those women, as this is the first time, he saw a woman. Then, he says to his disciples

“*Kanugonaroyi chakkagaa sishyulaara
Yanuvonda manamuna kadbhuthambuganu
Ye vanambuna nundi ee dusta mrugamu
Lee vanambunaku nethenchiaviyo
Cheraboyina yemi seyuno—*”

As the Sage has not seen a woman till that time, he thought these are a kind of beasts which came from forest. He further says to his disciples that, even though he tried to scare them, they didn't even move from that place. So, he understood that these are not beasts and assumes that they may be Sages who arrived from another region. He salutes them.

In this way, a lot of conversations take place between the women and the Sage. Though these women pass cheap comments on the him, *Rushysrunga* considers them to be great sages and pays respects to them. The Sage says about the women in a *Daru*

“Munulaara mimu joochithe vinthalaaye”

The women pretend to be ascetics and offers some raw vegetables and dessert items to the Sage. As the Sage relishes their food items, he further asks them to chant the *Vedic hymns* in their style. Then the ladies perform the dance with music as per the rules of *Bharatha Sastra* and says that they itself are the *Vedic hymns*. After watching their performance and listening to their music, the Sage becomes immensely happy and asks the women to teach him the same in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Vinthaga munulaaraa mee vedamulu vini chaala
Santoshamaaye nupadesamu seyudeeveLa”*

In this way, these women attract him and draw his attention. They ask him to stop his *Japa-Tapaas*

In case he wants to learn the vedic hymns in their style. This is given in a *Samvaada* or *Uttara-pratyuttara Daru* (in a conversational *Daru*)

Woman: *“Upadesamu chesemu o muni chandra neevu
Japa thapamula ninka chaalimpa voyi”*

(*Rushyasrunga* replies saying that, there is no need to perform any *Japa* or *Tapa*, and following them itself is sufficient. He says this in the same *Daru*)

Rishyasrunga: *“Japathapa mika yela sathathamu mimmu golchute
Japathapamulu thanaku sanmunulaaras!”*

In this *Daru*, many conversations take place between *Rushyasrunga* and the women, and the women finally ask the Sage to come with them, to their place. The Sage readily agrees to it and joins them. It is mentioned in a *Daru*

*”Raavayyaa muni raja sekharaa
Ee vanamandunda nela
Ee veLa maa vanamunaku raavayya”*

Then *Rushyasrunga* says that he cannot walk and so the women carry him by placing him on their arms. It is depicted on a *Daru*

*“Chethulu gucchandu rushyasrunguni nunchi
Vinthaga seethaamsu mukhulu raja sekharulu chera vacchiri”*

As soon as they enter their place, the *Anaavrusthi dosham* will be cleared and it starts raining heavily. The King Romapada understands the reason behind the rainfall to be the great sage *Rushyasrunga*. With due respects, the King offers his salutations to the Sage in a *Daru*

*“SeraNu seraNu bhava bhanga
SeraNayya vijitha ananga
SeraNu seraNu dhavaLaanga
Mammu karuNimpu maa rushyasrunga”*

In this way the King acclaims the Sage for his presence. He appoints the *Naataka saala* ladies to serve the Sage for which the women agree. Then the Minister suggests the King to appoint his beloved daughter *Santha* for serving the Sage, rather than these *Naataka saala* ladies. *Santha* can impress the Sage through her service and later, you (the King) can make the Sage as his Son-in-law. This is expressed in the form of a *Daru*

*“Rajendra vinumu naa maata
Angana loodigamu chaalinchu
Idi athisayamanuchu neevaathma yandu yenchu
Bangaru saanthanu pilipinchu
Rushyasrunguniki seva chelagi sevimpa—
Enna neekathadu alludaunu nee vennina
Ennikalella nipudeederunu”*

Then the King orders his daughter to come. Her arrival is described in a *Paatra prevesa daruvu*.

*“Santhasamuna vedale andamu meera
Santhasamuna vedale sakhulu cheri kolavaga
Banthula melbanthaina saanthaakanyaka cheli thoda”*

Then the King orders Santha to serve *Rushyasruna*. This is mentioned in a *Dwipada*

*”Santharo vinumu rushyasruna mouni
Chentha chere proddu sevalu seyu
Peddala sevalu pemponarinchu
Peddalu daya subha brundambu licchu
Nattu gaana nathademi adigina nosagi
Patuthara keerthula badayu meeveLa”*

Thus he appoints Santha to serve the Sage. Then Santha goes to the place where *Rushyasruna* is staying. This is described in a *Daru*

*“Ponduga thama thandri ampagaa madini ponkaina bhakthi chelangagaa
Sandelu ghallani mroyagaa vacche athiva rushyasrunguni chera”*

She says to the Sage

”SaraNu saraNu bhava banga saraNaiyya Vijitha ananga—“

Then the Sage talks to her in this way, in a *Dwipada*

*“Munukoni mee vanambuna nunna munulu
Thanaraga rendu vithambulainaaru
Maa vale kondaru malayuchunnaaru
Mee vale kondaru melaguchunnaaru
Neevevvarindulo mee peremi”*

Santha explains about the Female and Male genders in human beings. She introduces herself as the daughter of *Romapada* and her name is *Santha*. She says her father appointed her to render service to the sage. Then she compares her service to that of

Parvathi serving Parameswara, Lakshmi Devi serving Lord Vishnu and Saraswathi Devi serving Lord Brahma.

The Sage asks Santha to bring material to worship Lord Siva. Then she compares all the material needed for the worship, as her body parts. They are depicted in a *Samvaada Daru*.

Rishyasrunga: "Chigurulu tevee meti siva poojakipudu"

Santha: "Chigurulela naadu kara chigurulundaganu"

Rishyasrunga: "Aravindamunu teve haruni poojakunu"

Santha: "Aravindamulela momane aravindamundaganu"

Rishyasrunga: "Chakkerava vega teeve mukkanti poojakunu"

Santha: "Chakkeralera naa muddu maata chakkeralundagaa"

The Sage asks innocently as to why she is comparing the material of worship with her body parts. In reply to that, Santha explains the relation between *Jeevaathma* and *Paramaathma*. In this way, Santha completely diverts the Sage and turns his attention to the worldly affairs. The Sage asks her to make him understand about *Loukika Pooja* to which she replies that there is a *Kalaapam* called *Pendli* to explain the *Loukika Pooja* in a practical manner. This is written in a *Daru*

"Ee pooja chaalunika baala—

Needu poojaavithamu nerpumika baaya"

In another scene, the father of Rishyasrunga, Vibhaandaka Maharshi comes to the Tapovanam and shocked to notice his absence. He comes to know about his son's stay in the Kingdom of Romapada. This is described in a *Daru*

"Danda kamandalamulu thanaraga jada mudi

Menduga merayaga vibhaandakamuni vedale"

The Vibhaandaka Muni speaks to Romapada in a *Dwipada*, asking the King's daughter to wed his Son.

"Vinu romapada ee vrutthanthamella

Vini naadu chittambu veduka chende –

Gaavuna nee muddu kanyakaamaNini

Ee veLa naa suthukimmu vedukanu"

Romapada happily and humbly agrees to the wedding in a Daru:

*“Dhanyudanaithinee veLa muni thanayuniki naa muddu
KankyakaamaNi iyyagalige nedu
Pannuga naadu kulamu paavanamaaye mikkili
Maanyudanaithini nenu muni chandraa ||”*

In this way, the wedding is performed for Rushyasrunga and Santha Devi. In this situation, many *MangaLaashtakaas* are chanted by the Gods and Sages.

*Unfortunately, the last two pages in this Yakshagaana are missed. For this reason, not all the *MangaLaashtakaas* are available. The specialty of this Yakshagaana is that, Raga or TaLa is not mentioned to any of the Darus in this Yakshagaana. In this way, Shahaji has taken a rare *Pouranic* story which is not so popular and has moulded into a beautiful Yakshagaana.

11. SITA KALYAANAMU:

This Yakshagana is the traditional wedding ceremony of Sita and Rama described in an excellent way. This is described in a Sanskrit Sloka.

*“Raamam raamaabhiraamam ravi sasi nayanam koti suryaprakaasam
Divyam divyaastra paaNim saramukha saradhim chaaru kodanda hastham
Kalam kaalaagni rudram ripu kula dahanam vighna viccheda daksham
Bheemam bheemaattahaasam sakala bhaya haram ramachandram bhajeham”*

This Yakshagaanam commences with a *MangaLacharaNam*, followed by a Daru in Todi Raga set to Ata TaLam. This is a prayer on Lord Rama starting with a *Jaya sabdam*.

“Jaya Dasaratha putra – jaya divya nuti paatra”

Next is a prayer on Lord Siva in GouLa raagam set to Triputa taLam and a *MangaLam* song on Goddess Mahishaasura mardani in Gumma kambhoji ragam set to Aadi taLam. The beginning line of this song is

*“Mahishaasura mardani thee mangaLam—
Sahendra poojithaayai sajjana deepithayai
Mahimaa viraajithaayai mangaLam”*

Similar to other Yashagaanas, the *Ishta devta praardhana* is given in the form of slokas. Next is a sloka on Lord Parameshwara. This sloka is full of literary beauties such as *Sabda gaambheerya* and *Ardha gaambheerya*. This is a best example of Shahaji's scholarliness and command over the Sanskrit language. Many other salutations are written in praise of Lord Siva.

Sl: “*Chandastaandava kaanda shounda mahimaashundaala tundoonnama*
Cchundaadhanda prachanda bhaanda viharath kundalya khanda sriyai
Thandooddanditha chanda dindima mukho dindeera shandairvamath
Kaandairmanditha ganda mandala jataa khandosthu chandi patheehe”

The Lord is praised as *Saaha bhoopaala mouli*, *Sahendra sakalaanavadya*, *Sri Saaha prudhvi pathe*, i.e., relating the Lord with him. Later, a kind of composition *Gadya-Kaivaaram* is written with the starting words ‘*Jaya Jaya*’.

Sl: *Jaya jayaashraantha vishraaNana radheya –*
Jaya jayoodaara bhosala Shaha raja

In the *Sutradhaara Vachanaas*, he says that the *Seetha KalyaNam* story begins with a brief summary note in a *Dwipada*. The story goes this way.

The King Janaka wishes to get his daughter married and, in this regard, announces a *Swayamvaram*. Several kings will come for the event. The sage *Gaadheya* (Viswamitra) along with Rama and LakshmaNa will attend the event. The Kings gets insulted for their inability to lift the *Hara Chaapamu*. *Siva Dhanurbhangam*, The King Dasaratha arrives to the wedding along his family and followers. Performs marriage to Rama, LakshmaNa, Bharatha and Satrughna etc., are contained in this story. All these events are combined in this story and presented as *Seetha KalyaNam* by King Shahaji.

“*Bhuvini-sarasa satkavi varul sannuthi seya*
DharaNi lo naachandra taaraarkamuganu”

This is followed by a traditional *GaNesha Sthuthi* in a *Paatra pravesa Daruvu*.

Now the story begins, with a conversation between the *Sutradhaara* and *Katika*. The same *Paatra pravesa Daruvu* that was used in the other Yakshagana-s, is taken in this

play as well. The King Janaka arrives to his internal chamber, to meet his ministers. His arrival is described in a poem and a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

Poem: “*Kanaka kireeta menthayu vikaasamutho siramandu meraya –*”

The *Paatra pravesa Daru* is as follows:

“*Kanaka ratnamaya bhooshaNamulu thanaraga
Janakundu vedalenu thanadu koluvukunu*”

Along with the King, the minister also arrives, which is described in a *Daru* in *Kedaragoula raaga*.

“*Sathatha neethi parundu sakala jana hithundu
Chaturupaayamulandu chaturudaina mantri vedale*”

Then comes the *Purohit Vamadeva* along with his disciples.

“*Veda sastra puraaNa vidundu vaama devundu
Saadaramuna vedale janaku koluvukunu*”

Then the King expresses his desire of getting his daughter married and discusses the same with his Ministers. In this regard, he prepares to announce a *Swayamvaram*, invite Kings from different Kingdoms and get his daughter married to the King who can tie the two sides of *Hara Villu*. All the ministers feel happy on listening to it. Following the order of the King, the entire city is decorated for this event. The arrangements are described in a *Daru*:

“*Mutyaala haarathulu dere mutthaiduvalaaraa
Nithya toraNaalettharoyi neetu gaa maanavulaara
Kadali kambaLamulu niluparoyi ghana kaapulaara
Mudamuna panneeru sallare mohanaangulaara meeru
Angallu srungaarimparoyi athi varthakulaara
Sangeetha meLamutho rare ranguganu Oo veshyalaara*”

The *KaraNika* is asked to make preparations to accommodate the Kings. Then the Kings start arriving to the *Mithila* city. Each of their arrival is composed in a *Daru* in

a raagamaalika. Firstly, the arrival of the King of Magadhaa is described in a *Souraashtra* raagam.

*“Sogasaina kireetam niga niga neetu dera
Magdhesundu vedale madagajamu painekki”*

Secondly, the arrival of the King of Maalava is described in Dhanyasi raagam.

*“Chaala bhatulu kolva vaalu kelunu booni
MaaLavendrudu vedale melaina radhamu nekki”*

Next comes the King of *Sindhu*, described in GouLi panthu raagam

*“Tejamu meera raajillu nejamu cheta booni
Tejinekki yaa sindhu desaadheesundu vedale”*

Next comes the King of Laata

*“Meti villu chebooni neetugaa senalu kolva laataadheesudu vedale saati leka
ee veLa”*

After the arrival of all the Kings, the *Naatyasaala sthreeLu* (female dancers) will come to the court, described in a poem.

*“Netthhavi sarulu pisaaLimpa –
Chittaruvu bomma chandambu cheluvu meeri—
Koluvu seyanga vacchiri cheluvosanga”*

The above expression is written in a Daru.

*“Naataka saala bhaamalu metiga vedaliri
Muddu paata laatala sari saati lerana—”*

The sage Viswamitra along with Rama and LakshmaNa also arrives, which is written in a *Paatra pravesa daru* in Madhyamavathi raga.

*“Niduda jedala mudi neetugaa thanaraga
Nodalanu bhoothiyu norapuna meraya
Pudamini veduka puli tholu dharinchi*

*Vedalenu vinthagaa Vishwaamitrudu
Guruthuganu chippa kookatulu thanara
Karamula dhanuvulu garimane booni
Sarasulu raama lakshmaNulu vembadi raaga
Meravadi viswaamitrudu vedale”*

Then, the King Janaka brings his daughter to the *Swayamvara* function. Her arrival is described beautifully in a *Daru*.

*“Chittaju mada danthi chelula melbanthi
Puttadi bomma sompunanu pooremma
Kalahamsa yaana satkaLalandu jaaNa
Ali neelaveNi melaina pooboNi
Janaka thanoojatha jegadeka maatha
Kanakaangi seetha sreekara guNavraatha
Molaka navvulu muddu momuna thanara
Cheliyanu koluvanga cheluvonda vedale”*

The same expression is seen in the following *Daru*

*“Kanaka bhooshaNambulallaraa
Chaka chaka kuluku nadara vedale neeveeLa
Manasiju seramoyani – janamulu koniyadaga||
Andelu ghallu ghallani mroya paadamulandu
Andamuga janulandaru soodaga
Induvadana cheluvondedi nadala”*

Ten thousand *Kinkara* (guards) bring the *Hara chaapamu* (Siva Dhanassu) to the court. The Raja purohith Vamadeva announces the rules and regulations of the King in a poem.

*“Telipeda vinarayya dheemanthulaara –
Chakkagaa Sankaru chaapa mokkintha
Ekkubettina vaanike nitthu seetha*

*Nani janakundu mahaa prathigNayunu
Nonaranga thaajesi yunnaadu gaana
Gattigaa neesuni kaarmokambekku
Petti ee seethanu pendlaada valayunu”*

The coming of each King to lift the *Hara chaapamu* is described in a *Daru*.

*“Vedaliripudu raajulu vedaliripudu –
Kadimi bhujabala garvamulatho
Dadayakanu haru dhanuvunetthanu
Laata bhota maraata karnaata sindhu viraata naathulu—
Haruni chaapamu viruthu thanavanti doraku
DharaNija doraku nanuchunu –”*

All the Kings in the court are a bit frightened to see the way how the *Hara chaapamu* is brought to the court.

*“Kanulaasa itu vacchinadi garuvame Magadha
Dhanuvunekkuvetta mana thaatha tharame”*

Similarly, the rulers of other kingdoms such as *paandya, bhoja, anga, laata, gouLa* etc. are even scared to make a step forward to lift the *chaapam* (bow). The same is continued in this *Daru*

*“Indu sekharuni villu etthalemo janaka
Ponduga noka vede mimmu poyi vacchedamu”*

The King Janaka feels sorrow to hear these words from the Kings, and says in a *Daru* in Aahiri raga

*“Endukee pratigNa sesithi mandundanaithi munivaraa –
Thinnaga villedu pettedamannavaaru ipudu
Sinnavoyunnaaru siggula chendi veeru
Ennatiki ee kanyakaku pendlemi sethunu
Munivaraa ennaraani vichaaramaayenu emi sethu”*

It means, the King Janaka is worried as to why he has taken that vow to get his daughter married only to the person who can lift the bow. Now the Kings are unable to lift the bow.

Then, the sage Vishwamitra asks Rama to lift the bow, in a *Daru* in Mohana raga

*“Villemku pettumu vedukatho lemmu Ramachandra ee
Pallava paaNini baaguga gaikonumu Ramachandra –”*

Seeing all this, the Kings seated behind Vishwamitra start making sattiress on the sage and Rama, in a *Daru*

“Villemku vettumani verri muni –”

With the permission of the sage, Rama gets up and lifts the bow. The *Dhanurbhangam* is performed by Rama. Then the sage Vishwamitra hugs Rama and asks Janaka to perform the marriage of his daughter with Rama as per his vow. Then the King Janaka replies in a *Daru* in a sad way, thinking that Rama is a sage by seeing his appearance.

*“Ithandu mahaabaalundinthandu muni sishyundu
Ithaniki nee seethanu iccheda netuvale vaamadeva
Srungaara vathiyaina seethaneeyaka pothe
Rangaina naa prathigNaa bhangamouchunnadi”*

After listening to the words of Vishwamitra, the court-purohit Vamadeva says that these two (Rama and Lakshmana) do not seem to be like ascetics and even it is not possible for an ascetic to lift the bow. After listening to this conversation, Vishwamitra gives the details of Rama and Lakshmana to the King. This is explained beautifully in a *Dwipada*.

*“Vinavoyi Janakesa veeralu mouni
Thanayulatanchu chittamuna nenchakumu—”*

In the same *Dwipada*, Vishwamitra describes the valor of Dasaratha who belongs to the *Suryavamsa*. He performs *PutrakaameshTi yaagam* in the presence of *Rushyashrunga Maharshi* as he was childless. Later, he is blessed with four children.

Among them, Rama is the eldest son and lakshmaNa the younger one. The sage thus introduces both Rama and LakshmaNa to the King Janaka. On his request, Dasaratha has sent both the boys with him to protect the Yaga from the demons such as *Taataki* etc. After killing the demons, Rama blesses Ahalya who was cursed to become a stone, and brings back her to the human form. Then, Rama has come to the *Swayamvaram* along with the sage, and He has now become your son-in-law.

After listening to the words of Vishwamitra, King Janaka says with utmost happiness in a *Daru*,

*“Munichandra dhanyunadaithi nenu
DharaNijanuvega Sri raamachandrukicchedanu—”*

In another scene, the sage and *Kula guru* (family purohit) comes to the court of Dasaratha, which is expressed in a *Daru*

*“Karamuna dandamu merayaga
Rudraaksha saramulu mikkili sarasatho thanara—
Arudinche vasisTha varamuni yipudu”*

As the King Dasaratha feels bad that Rama has still not returned. In the meanwhile, a messenger arrives with a news, in the form of a letter from King Janaka and gives it to Dasaratha. The content of the letter is explained in a *Dwipada*. This is about the Wedding Invitation of Rama with Sita i.e., with the daughter of King Janaka.

The King Dasaratha along with his family members and followers start to the city of Mithila which is described in a *Daru*

*“Magadha maaLava matsya mandalendrulu koluva
Migula bhatulu koniyaada
Thagaga thanayulunu vasishta muni raagaanu
Thagina baandhavulatho dasarathudu vedale”*

The King Janaka happily receives Dasaratha and his family which is described in a *Dwipada*.

*“Rajendra dasaratha raja nee suthudu
Rajasekhara villu rayamuna drunchi
Bhoomija gaikoni bhujabalambunanu
Thaamasimpaka thana thanayalainatti
MaaLavi yoormiLa mari sruthakeerthi
Melaina bharatha soumitra setrughnu
Laku nosangedanu nee lagnamunande
Sakala baandhavulella sannuthi seya”*

The King Janaka, in the above *Dwipada* also mentions about his three other daughters and their wedding with the other three sons of King Dasaratha.

On the request of Dasaratha, Janaka brings his other three daughters. Their arrival is described in a *Daru*

*“Vayyaaramuna vedaliri—
Punnami chanduru sariboru momu velugagaa
Raajillu roopuna valaraaju moham chendagaa
Raajahamsa nadalanu raja bimba vadanalu”*

Then the wedding of Sri Ramaswamy with Sita, Bharatha with MaLavi, LakshmaNa with UrmiLa and SatruGhna with Shruthakeerthi is performed in a grand manner. Then, Naarada, Kinnera, Kimpurushasaas etc. will sing MangaLam. This Yakshagaanam concludes with this MangaLam.

*“Maa raamabhadruniki mangaLam
Nityam mee seetha deviki mangaLam
Vanajaatha netruniki para keeravaaNikini
Manasija roopuniki mangaLam bhaanu kuresuniki parama kalyaaNikini
Maanavendruniki mangaLam
Vihanga vaahanuniki viriboNiki
Sree Saaha maheepaaluni devuniki mangaLam”*

This Yashagaanam does not contain any reference to RaavaNa during the time of Swayamvaram. The story in the Yakshagaana is based on the epic RamayaNa. In this play, the hero is *Dheerodaattha*. All the slokas such as *Naandi* and other *Ishta devatha praardhanaa* are written in a highly complex and scholarly way in Sanskrit. This shows Shahaji's command over the Sanskrit language and his expertise and knowledge over the *PuraaNa Ithihaasaas*.

12. RAMA PATTABHISHEKAM:

This Yakshagaanam is an extract taken from the epic RamayaNa. The *MangaLaa charaNam* in this Yakshagaanam is in the form of a *Daru*

*“Jaya Dasaratha putra Jaya raama sucharitra
Jaya divya nuti paatra jaya jaganmitra”*

MangaLam, Ishta devata praardhana and *GaNesha patra pravesa daru* are common in both *Sita KalyaaNam* and this Yakshagaanam. An extra verse on Lord Krishna is written in sasnkrit.

“Vande tham devadevam – jagadamam saasvatham Krishna devam”

A summary of the Yakshagaana is mentioned in a *Dwipada*.

*“Sriraama chandrudaashrita hitodayudu –
Panuvadi Sreerama pattabhisheka
Ghanuvonda saahendrudathi bhakthi meeri
Ghanatha tho rachiyinche kavulu mecchaganu”*

It means, Lord Sriramachandra after killing the demons such as Ravana, KumbhakarNa etc., coronates VibheeshaNa as a King of Lanka, sends Hanuman to go and convey the matter of their arrival to Bharatha, arrives to Ayodhya with Sita and LakshmaNa, they are heartily welcomed by Bharatha and Satrughna, with the blessings of Sage VasishTa and others the coronation ceremony of Rama takes place.

Next is the *GaNesha paatra pravesa daru* which is same as that of other Yakshagana-s. The *Sutradhaarudu* and *Katika* converse on the topic of the arrival of Bharatha and Satrughna. Their arrival is described in a *Daru* and a poem

Poem: *“Kari jalajambu nandu vara kaarmukamun vilasillagaa jadal
Siramuna tejarilla sasi sekharu kaivadi naaracheeralan
Garimanu gatti munduga vikaasamu thoda janul nuthimpa gaa
Bharathudu vacche koluvunaku baaguga thammudu seri kolvagan”*

The same is expressed in a *Daru* that Bharatha and Satrughna go to the court.

*“Kanakamaya maina dhanuvunu
Kara yugamunanu booni
Thana satrughnuni thoda vedalenu
Ghanudu bharathudipudu”*

Then arrives Hanuman to ayodhya. Both Bharatha and Hanuman exchange words of affection and respect. Then, Hanuman conveys the arrival of Rama in the form of a *Dwipada*.

*“Bharatha maheepaala bhaasura seela
Vinavayya telipeda vishadambu gaanu
Nanu vanda gaa nenu vacchina raaka
Ve vega sri raama vibhudani lona
RaavaNu samayinchi lankaa puramuna
Paraga vibheeshaNu pattambu gatti
DharaNija gaikoni thammudu thaanu
Varusa sugreevaadi vaanarulu koluva
Narudenchu chunnavaadu aa ayodhyakunu
Munukoni nannu bilchi mudamuna meeku
Thana therangellanu thaddayu delpu
Mani pampa mee kadakathiveegamunu
Chanudenchithini nenu santhasambunanu”*

Listening to these words, Bharatha feels very Happy and replies in a *Daru*

*“Chaala dhanyudanaithini
Sreeraama chandruni semamu vintini
Melu Hanumantha rammaa
Sommulanu migulanicchedanu kommu
Ravoyi Hanumanthudaa—”*

It means, Bharatha is immensely happy on listening to the news of Rama's arrival. He feel like honoring Hanuman with gifts and presentations for conveying this good news.

Satrughna also is immensely happy to hear that news. The conversation between Bharatha and Satrughna is written in a *Samvaada Daru*.

Satrughna: "Enni dinamulaaye sri raamuni kanugoni ipudu soodagaligenu Satrughna

Anna! Dhanyulamaithimi Maanyulamaithimi PuNyulamaithimi manamu

Bharatha: "Andamu meeraga vegame ee janulandaritho koodanu Ponduga Sree raama chandruni keduruga boyi vatthamu—"

Bharatha humbly invites Sage Vasishta to come. The arrival of the Sage and his appearance is described in a *Paatra pravesa daru*:

"Karamuna dandambu merayaga – narudenche Vasishta vara muni yipudu"

After knowing the happy news of Rama's arrival, Bharatha orders to decorate the city. The decorations are mentioned in a *Daru*

"PoorNa kumbhamulu teroyi bhoosurulaara –

Muthyaala haarathula there mutthaiduvulaara

Mudamuna panneru challare mohanaangulaara—

Kaapulanthaa goodi kadaLi kambaal nilipi—

AngaLLu srungaarimparoyi athi varthakulaara

Sangeetha meLamutho raare rangu ganoo vesyalaara—"

Bharatha places *Raama paadukaas* (the slippers of Rama) on his head joins Satrughna, Sage Vasishta and go barefooted, to welcome Rama.

In another scene, Rama and Sita along with LakshmaNa and his other followers reach Ayodhya. That scene is described in a wonderful manner in a *Dwipada*, by Shahaji:

"Punnama chanduru bolu momunanu –

Neela meghacchaaya nirasinchu meni –

Merapu chandambuna meti kaarmukhamu—

Meerina jadalanu metaina naara
Cheeralu dharinchi sivuni kai vadini---
DharaNi jayunu sumitraa thanoojundu
Nirugadalandunu nimpondi raaga
Arudaina bhakthi tho aa vibheeshaNundu
Mudamuna mrokkuchu mundara naduva
Madi chelangaga hanumanthundu golva
Sakala vaanarulella sannuthi seya
Sakalesudagu raamachandrundu vedale”

The same is mentioned in a *Paatra pravesa daru*.

“Janakaja lakshmaNa sahithudai – sreeraama jananaadhudu vedale—”

Upon seeing Ramachandra, with great joy and happiness Bharatha welcomes Ramachandra swamy in a Daru

“SaraNu Sriraama chandraswamy
SaraNu LakshmaNa dayaa saandra –”

Then Lord Rama embraces the two brothers affectionately and offers His salutations to his Guru Vasishta. Rama enquires about the welfare of the family and people in the kingdom. Then Vasishta praises his highness as *Manuvamsakuladeepa* (an illuminator of the *Manu* clan), *Pitruvaakyaparipaalaka* (the one who obeys His father’s words), *RaavaNaadulanella raNamuna goolchi* (the destroyer of demons such as RaavaNa), *devathalella nuthimpa ee veLa chanudenchithivi* (arrived here amidst the praises of Gods) and very happily gives blessings to Him. The Sage asks Rama to become the King and rule the people.

After blessed by the Sage Vasishta, Rama along with Sita, LakshmaNa, Bharatha, Satrughna, Hanuma along with his followers, enters the city of Ayodhya. This scene is depicted beautifully in a *Daru*.

“Ghanatha meeraga vacche sreeraamudu—
Janaka jaa LakshmaNa bharatha satrughNa samethamuga
Ghanatha meeraga vacche sreeraamudu—”

Then He invites his guests viz., Sugreeva, VibheeshaNa, Angadha and Hanumantha to be seated in their respected positions. Then, Guha (the boat owner who helped Rama cross the Sarayu river during Rama's exile). Rama and Guha exchange words affectionately with each other). Then arrives the Minister of Ayodhya i.e., Sumanthra. His arrival is beautifully described in a *Paatra pravesa daru*.

*“Chaturupaayamulandu chathurunathi vinaya
Vithundu sakala jana hithundu vedukanu
Mantri yaina sumanthri vedalenu
Athulithundaina raghupathi koluvukipudu”*

Then the Sage Vasishta asks Bharatha for the *Pattaabhishekam* (coronation ceremony) of Rama. On sending a message to the Purohitha, he arrives to the court. This is described in a *Paatra pravesa daru*.

*“Panchaangamunu chetha batti patte vardhanamunu betti
Enchanga daivagNu lethinchiri ipudu”*

For this coronation festival, all the Gods and demigods arrive to the city of Ayodhya. Firstly, the arrival of Lord Parameswara is described in a beautiful manner, in a *Dwipada*.

*“Siramuna baala sasi prabhaaJharamu
Karamuna jaapa Dhakkaa trisoolamulu
GaLamuna rudraaksha kanTamaalikalu
Jadala lopala gangaaJhara nartanamulu
Kati yandu vilasillu garati charmambu
Patimatho chelaga vaibhavamula thoda
Namaruchu vrushabha vaahanaarooDhudaguchu
Namara vanditudu sree harudu thaa vedale”*

A similar expression is used in a *Daru*

*“Devudu vedale nee sree mahaadevudu vedale –
Sree vrushabha vaahanamu pai veduka thonekki –*

*Baala Chandra chandrikalu phaalamura vilasilla
Laalitha rudraaksha kanTa maalikalatho vaama
Naaga charmothareeyamu naaga bhooshaNamulalara—
Soola Dhamaru chaapamulu kelanu dharinchi bhaktha
Paaludaina Saaha bhoomi paala daivamaina aadi devundu vedale”*

Later, other Gods such as Devendra, Brahma etc. arrive to the ceremony. The description and their arrivals are described in a similar fashion as in the other Yakshagana-s of Shahaji.

In this way, all the Gods along with Sita, LakshmaNa, Bharatha, Satrugna and other followers start proceeding for the *Pattaabhisheka Mahotsavam* (the coronation festival). This is mentioned in a *Daru*

*“MaNi mayamulaina bhooshaNamula thanalaga –
Vinayamuna devathalu vedka nuthiyimpa
Anujulu koluvaga nathi vaibhavamulanu
Janakaja tho Sri Ramachandrudu vedale”*

During the Rama’s coronation ceremony, Rama and Sita are made to sit on a Throne adorned with the *Navaratnas* (the nine types of Jewels), and *Abhishekam* (anointment) is performed to the Divine couple with the sacred water that is brought from various holy rivers. At that time Narada, Kinnara and Kimpurushaas sing *MangaLa* geethaas.

*“Maa raamabhadruniki mangaLam
Maa seethaa deviki mangaLam
Vihaga vaahaanuniki viriboNiki, sri saaha
Maheepaaluni demuniki mangaLam”*

This *MangaLam* is the same as the one used in the Sita Kalyaana Yakshagana. This Yakshagana concludes with a *Dwipada* containing the *Phalashruthi*.

*“Srivelayanga naasritha rakshakundu
Bhaavajaakaarundu parama puNyundu
Bhosala kula sindhu poorNa chandrundu*

*Sri saaha bhoopaala sekharundipudu
Sri Rama pattabhisheka naatakamu
Kori gaavinchenekkudu bhakthi meera
Evvaru sadivina evvaru vinna
Nevvaraadina mari evvaru saduva
Dhana dhaanya cheyamulu daruchaina sathulu
Ghanamaina sampadal kari radhaashwamulu
Arudaina bhakthi nou nathi sobhanamulu
Garuda vaahanudicchu Garima meeraganu
DharaNi lo naachandra taaraarkamuganu”*

In this Yakshagaanam, very few *Darus* and *Dwipadaas* are used and most of them are in thorn of *Vachanaas*

13. RUKMINI-SATYABHAMA SAMVAADAM:

This is an epic based story moulded into a Yakshagaana. In a *Samvaadam*, an argument leads to a quarrel. Among these *samvaadaas* the famous ones are

The *Ganga-Gouri Samvaadam* and *RukmiNi-Satyabhama Samvaadam* stories are famous among the folklore. *Pagati veshagaLLu* is an art form which is older than the Yakshagaana-s. They used to perform these *Samvadaas* which is very popular in villages.

This Yakshagaana begins with a *Dwipada* which is directly connected with the story. This type of *Dwipada* is known as *Kathaa Sangraha dwipada*. Unlike others, this Yakshagaana does not contain any *MangaLaacharaNam*, *Ishta Devatha praardhanas* or *MangaLa geethas*. This is a specialty of this Yakshagaana.

Dwipada: “*Cheluvonda rukmiNi sree satyabhama
Tholutha vacchutayu muddula krishnudantha ---
Jagadamu rukmiNi satyabhaamanaku
Narayanga nautayu naluka deerutayu
Sarasa rukmiNi satya samvaadamipudu
Nava vaikharula meeri naatakambuganu
Vividha subhokthula vinipinchu saaha
Raaja devendrundu raajasambunanu--”*

It means as follows. RukmiNi and Satyabhama, the two wives of Lord Krishna approach Him.

RukmiNi approaches first and they both have a happy time. In the meanwhile, the maid of Satyabhama observes the closeness of KrishNa with RukmiNi and reports it to Satyabhama. Similarly, the maid of RukmiNi finds the both (i.e., KrishNa and Satya) spending time happily and reports it to RukmiNi. As a result, both the wives quarrel. KrishNa interferes and solves their differences. This is the theme of the Yakshagaana written by Shahaji, in brief.

As per the tradition, the play begins with the *Vighneswara paatra pravesa daru* and *Dwipada*. Their lyrics are the same as that of other *Yakshagana-s*. The story begins with Lord Krishna asking RukmiNi to come to a secret place called *Sanketha sthalam* in *Srungaara vanam* (garden). Then comes RukmiNi devi with her maid, to the garden. Her arrival is written in a *Dwipada* and *Paatra pravesa daru* (also known as *VarNana daru*).

Dwipada: “*Bangaaru chengaavi paavada gatti*
Srungaaramulanu raajilu cheera meraya—
Telivonda kasthuri thilakamu diddi
Velaya keeljada ninda viri sarul vaalchi—
Bhaavajunaku thapah phalamaina mantra
Devatha rukmiNi devi thaa vedale”

The meaning of the above poem is as follows. The beautiful lady RukmiNi wore a *pattu* (silk) saree and *NavaratnaabharaNaalu* (the ornaments made up of nine kinds of Gems) and shone like a Sun.

The same is mentioned in a *Daru*

Daru: “*Vayyaramuna vedale andamu meera –*
Raajillu ruupuna valaraaju mohamu chindaga
Raja hamsala nadalanu raja bimbaanana vedalenu

As she waits for KrishNa, she feels the pain of separation which is described in a *Daru*.

“*Valapu nilupa lenu ra –*”

In the next scene, KrishNa asks a *Gopalaka* (his maid) to search in the garden to see if both RukmiNi and Satya have come. In this context, a conversation takes place between the Sutradhaara and Gopalaka. The Gopalaka says to Krishna that he could see RukmiNi but not Satya. Then KrishNa sends his maid to bring Satya to the garden which is described in two poems and a *Daru*.

Poem1: “----Palukulu chiluka palukulanu meera
Noppaina thana vaalu koppuna mandaara
Sumamula saramulu nompu dera
Boluponda bangaaru bhooshaNambulu mena
Tholakari merupula valenu thanara --”

Poem2: “Janulapai vacchu maaruni seramananga
Nimmi viharinchu bangaaru bomma yananga
Jantra rekhana Sangeetha saalakipudu
Nitya yavvanavathi yagu satya vedale”

In this *Daru*, Satyabhama is described in a most beautiful way. She appears like a Golden idol. KrishNa also comes to the same garden which is described in a *Daru*.

Dwipada: “Neelambudhacchaaya nirasinchu mena
Melaina sommulu merupula reethi –
Deva devudu krishNa devudipudu
Vevega leela gaa vedale vinthagamu”

The same is described in a *VarNana daru*

Daru: “Vinthaga ratnaala konda chentha nemali pinchamu—
Pamthamu meera Gopala baalakulu koluvanga
Jhamtharikita dhimikita thaka thaLaangu—
Ani aaduchu vacchi choodade gopaaludu

1. *Kanakamaina bhooshaNamulu thanaraga
Dinakara koti thejundu deva devundu
Vanaja lochanundu yashoda thanayundaina Sri KrishNundu
TaLaangu dhimikita ani aaduchu”*

In the above poems and *Daru*, Shahaji describes the stunning beauty of Lord KrishNa. He is described as *Neelameghashyama* and *Ratnaala konda* (a mountain of Jewels). He shines as lustroously as Sun, wears anklets made of Gems, plays flute and his arrival is described in the form of a Dance.

Later, a conversation takes place between KrishNa and Gopalaka. Then KrishNa asks Gopalaka about his wives and he replies that he could see only RukmiNi waiting for Him, at the flower bushes. Then KrishNa asks Gopalaka to search for Satya.

Then KrishNa goes to RukmiNi and she happily welcomes Him in a *Daru*.

*“Raavayya ravayya krishNa
Ee veLa nenu nee raakakeduru chuchu chunti
Netiki icchatikini maata thappaka vacchithivi”*

After seeing RukMini, KrishNa also expresses His joy in a *Samvaada Daru*.

*KrishNa: “Santhoshamaaye ninu joochi RukmiNi
Kanthu thaapamu inkanu deerpave—”
RukmiNi: “Inthagaa movaananicchedaa namuvega
KaLatha cheyaka yelavayya sri krishNa—”*

In the next scene, Satya eagerly waits for Lord KrishNa and complains to her maid to find about the whereabouts of Him. Satya suspects KrishNa to be enjoying with another lady. She blames herself for trusting his words and coming to the garden. The maid asks Satya not to worry and goes in search of KrishNa. Then this maid and Gopalaka face each other which is described in a *Uttara-prathyutthara Daru/Samvaada Daru*

*Gopalaka: “Cheliyaro neevu ichatiki vacchina pani –”
Maid: “Aada boyina theerthamaaye satya
Nannathanini thammani vacchithini”*

In this *Daru*, Gopalaka gives information about the whereabouts of KrishNa. Then the maid asks Gopalaka to bring KrishNa to Satya. After coming to know that KrishNa is with RukmiNi, the maid gives an idea to Gopalaka and asks him to lie to Krishna saying that Mother Yashoda called Him.

Then Gopalaka conveys the same message to KrishNa and He starts to see His mother along with Gopalaka. RukmiNi sends off her husband asking Him to return soon. After starting, Gopalaka says to KrishNa that he lied to Him, and then they go to Satyabhama.

In another scene, Satya's maid says to Satya that she could somehow get back her husband even by lying to Him. Satya happily welcomes KrishNa in a *Daru*

“Raavayya raavayya KrishNa—” (The same song is sung by RukmiNi earlier)

Then, KrishNa and Satyabhama spend time happily which is described in a *Daru*.

*“Nedu mikkili vedukalaraga
Kuudi yundaamu kommaro—”*

In another scene, RukmiNi waits eagerly for KrishNa and shows her sorrow of separation from Him. She expresses her unhappiness to her maid in the form of a *Daru*.

*“TaaLa jaalane cheliyaro
Enthani ne telpudu cheliyaro”*

Then, her maid explains RukmiNi the reason why KrishNa left her, in a *Dwipada*.

*“Telipeda RukmiNi devi krishnundu
Poluponda acchata poyina vidhamu—”*

The maid says that she has seen everything that has happened. After hearing to her maid, RukmiNi becomes furious and says this in a *Daru*.

*“Kallari krishNundu cheppina kaliki nijamani yundi
Mollamuna vanchana teliyaka mosapoyithine
Nammaraade vaani maata naatho jaalamu chesinaadamma—”*

RukmiNi says that she was deceived by KrishNa. She further says Satya allured Him through her tricky words. She gets annoyed and approaches them to teach Satya a lesson. Her way of going towards them is described in a *Daru*.

*Daru: “Kopamu tho muddugummaa rukmiNi chelini goodi
Epuna podarintiki cheravachenu vinthagaa”*

In the meanwhile, KrishNa and Satya are happy in their own world. Then arrives RukmiNi in an angry mood. She speaks to Satya which is described in a *Daru*.

*“Cheluvugaa naa inta mundedu cheluvuni
Chelivanampi pilipimpanu kaaraNameme kalaha kantaki”*

Satya retorts in the form a *Daru*.

*“Padaritlu palukaku ve Oo bhaama—
Naathoneti vaade naathundokani sommu kaade
Chetanaithe lokuva chesi kove pove
Intinta chandurundeme krishnundu
Kantakinchi naadu kaanthude yani neevu||*

It means, Krishna is not anyone’s property. He is like a moon who shines in every house.

In this way, both have serious arguments with each other.

Then, Satya turns towards KrishNa and asks why he stays calmly while RukmiNi is scolding her. She also asks KrishNa that why did He send a message asking Her to come while RukmiNi is already present in this garden. This is described in a *Daru*

*“Kallari Krishna sarisaati kaani yaathantha tittagaa
Chulakana gaa jesi vinuchundedi meraa—”*

Seeing the arguments of the both, KrishNa says in a *Dwipada* in this way

*“Palikeda vinu satyabhaama ee reeti
Kaliki rukmiNi thonu kalahimpa nele
Em neekadi munne eggonarinchene
Vemaaru neevitlu vidanaada nele
Jagadampu maatalu chaalinchu minka—
Arayanga neekadi akka kaadatave
Mariyaada leka ee maatalaadaakuve”*

In the above *Dwipada*, KrishNa says in this way. Is not RukmiNi your co-wife and elder to you? This was told to you many times earlier. Give respect to her and speak to her politely.

Satya angrily speaks to KrishNa in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Chaalur ee jaalaminka chakkani rukmiNi yunda
Indela vacchi nannitla yechevu ee vagalu||*

- 1.) *Tholi chesina naa poojaaa phalamu nitla nundagaa
Kaliki krishNuni ninna kaaraNamemi jaalamu||*
- 2.) *Manasaithe Krishna nee kandu maatalaithe indu
Nenaru thelisenika ninnu nenu nammajaalanu*

In the above *Daru*, Satya gives counters to both RukmiNi and KrishNa.

Then KrishNa tries to convince Satya in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Ele mudduguma vale yo satyabhaama
Ele vidanaade vadele ele”*

In this *Daru* KrishNa asks Satya, how can she suddenly become so rude to Him after being so affectionate to Him till now.

Satya: “Cheluvunda itlela neevu palikithivi RukmiNundanga”

*KrishNa: “Tolutha inthe maatalu ala guNammu unnadaa neekipudu
Elami aa rukmiNi kannu hecchu kaadatave thanaku—”*

In this *Daru*, KrishNa tries to console Satya and says that He loves Satya more than RukmiNi.

This makes RukmiNi angry, as her Husband praises her co-wife Satya in front of her and He seems to be more affectionate towards Satya rather than her.

Then RukmiNi along with her maid tries to make a move from that place. KrishNa tries to convince RukmiNi in a *Daru*.

Daru1: “AlugakaaraName alugakaaraName

*AliveNi nee daasuni alahanthanu ne mecchinadi
Jaalamani telisi”*

Daru2: *“Palukavadele nenu ni praaNeshunda kaadate*

Palukuchoo noti muthyamulu chindunatave—

Emantinee ninnu nemi neramu sesithi

Raamaa maNi nannipudu rammanaveme dayanu”

In the above *Daru*, Krishna tries to convince her with His words and says in the following way. RukmiNi, you are my very life. Why don't you speak to me? If will you lose if you open your mouth and talk to me. What mistake did I commit?

Saying so, KrishNa follows RukmiNi. Then she replies to Him which is mentioned in a *Daru*.

“Ikkadakela vacchevuraa

Chakkani Satya neekipudu satamai undagaa neeku

Tacchana maatalaaduku raa

Mucchu vagalu maani nee mohanaangi vaddaku pora—”

In the above *Daru*, RukmiNi asks KrishNa why he is following her as He already has the beautiful Satya with him. She sternly asks Him to go away to Satya.

As both the wives leave KrishNa, He remains alone and feels the pain of separation of them. Krishna expresses his sorrow in the form of a *Daru*

“Emani taadudu evariki telupudu

Komaluliddaru kopaginchiripudu

Kaamuni siramula kaakaku taaLanu

RaamaamaNi okathaina rammanadaayenu

TaruNula kopamu thalana deerchedanani

Guruthugaa naa madi korika koranga

Verapimpa boyi thaa veruchukunna yetlu

ArudENCHI vaariche nagadaithi yipudu—”

In this way, KrishNa become weak and sad, and leaves that place. Then RukmiNi realizes her mistake and thinks of KrishNa in a *Daru*.

*“Mosapothi gadave aasinha vacchinapude
Athaniki lokuva gaaka pagalu reyi naathudu
Alugavaddani palukachundedu napudu—
Chakkani gopaaluni Oo cheliyaro
Sarasa guNaseeluni kosaruchu nenu
Munuvale goodakamadini”*

Satya also suffers the pangs of separation of KrishNa, that is expressed in a *Daru*.

*“NeelavarNuni baaya nimishamokke daye—
Aluka deerchanaiithi gaa ayyayyo pohi gaa
Gopala raayani guNamu teliyaka madini
Rapela chesithini rathi benaganaithini”*

Satya too realizes her mistake and repents for what she has said to KrishNa. Her maid asks Satya to apologize RukmiNi in a *Daru*.

*“Seyave vibhuni daayave –
Kommaro rukmiNi cheri vedukommu satyabhaama ee sari
Lemmu thaamasamela sammathigaa nitlu—”*

Satya thinks that she being younger to RukmiNi, herself comes and apologizes to RukmiNi. This is expressed in a *Daru*.

*“Chanavu cheli tho vagameera vacche
Satyabhaama rukmiNi chera”*

Satya reaches the place of RukmiNi, and their conversation is described in a *Samvaada/Uttara-Pratyuttara Daru*.

Satya: *“Akkaro nenu neeku mrokkedane
Nenanina maatala negguseyake”*

RukmiNi: *“Chakkani chellela neevemanina gaani
Ekkuva thanakidi thakkuva kaade”*

Satya: *“Chinnadaana nemi theliyane
Nee chitthamerigi naduva nerane”*

RukmiNi: “Ennaraani nee neramu lenni jesina gaani yedi
Ennikagaa nenchu mannana sethune”

Satya: “Cheluvundu manakintha kayyamu jesi
Alasinanduku velapu telupave”

RukmiNi: “Cheliyaro manamiddaramekamai krishNuni
Velaya vedi munuvale goodi undaamu”

In the above *Daru*, Satya apologizes RukmiNi in many ways and RukmiNi, being the elder co-wife, excuses her and treats her affectionately. They together go to Lord KrishNa. This is described in a *Daru*.

“Sarasuraalaina RukmiNi satyabhaama yu guudi
Theerugaa krishNuni alukadeerpa vacchi”

In this way, RukmiNi and Satyabhama repent for what they have done and speak to Him in a soothing way. Further they say to him that,

“Chakkani sri krishNa yaluka maanu neeku
Mrokkedamu mrokkedamayya”
Pakkanundi mammu laalinchu vaadavu
Paluka kunnaavemaya ee veLa

- 1.) Ninnintha yedabaasi nappude maakoka nimishamu yedaadayyenayya
Maa kannulaana idi nikkamu maa meeda karuNa inchevemayya
- 2.) Entha neramu memu sesinam gaani sahinchi mannincha vayya
Panthamu chaalinchi gopala raaya mammu baaga guudumayya”

In the above *Daru*, RukmiNi and Satya appeal KrishNa.

O Krishna. Don't be angry with us, we bow to you. Our separation with you for a minute seems to be a year. Please forgive us despite any number of mistakes we commit.

Then KrishNa replies to them in a *Dwipada*.

“Ela naagalaara meeriddaru monnu
Chalamuna kalahinchi chanuventha leka
Thappu naa yanduvinchi thagaveedanaadi
Ippudu meeriddarekamai magadaa
Tittavacchithiremo thelise ee manasu—”

In this *Dwipada*, KrishNa talks to both his wives in this way. You both initially quarreled with each other and now you both unite and try to blame me.

Then, RukmiNi and Satya repent, as mentioned as a *Samvaada/Uttara-Pratyuttara Daru* (the first two lines in this *Daru* are missed).

Wife-1: “*Cheluvuda eeventha paliki –*
----- *neeku sri KrishNa*

KrishNa: Chetulaara nanu vidanaadina vallanu
Chellu kadave naatho chelimika nela

Wife-2: Ninu nallani vaadani vidanaadithimaa
Neela meghundantimi kaani

Krishna: Konakoni nallani vaadani vanchanal
Gollavaadani tittaletedate meeru

W-1: Gollavaadani ninnu vidanaadithimaa
Maa gopaaludantimi gaani

K: Gollavaadanavalena nannu mikkili
kallareedani palkaledate meeru

W-2: Kallareedani memu palkithimaa memu
Kapata naataka suutrudentimi

K: Kallareedanavalenaa nannu Gopala
Kanyala battinavaadanaleda

W-1: Golla bhaamala battinaadantimaa ninnu
Gopikaa vallabhundantimi

K: Gopikaa vallabhundanavalenaa chimni
Komalini mrucchilina vaadanaleda

W-2: Komalini mrucchilina vaadantimaa
Mammelu saamantiminthe gaani

K: Saamanavalenaa meeriddaru kalahinchi
Jagadamu naa valena vacchenana ledata ne

The above *Daru* is very composed in a very interesting and a heart-touching way. The conversations in this *Daru* takes place in a humorous way i.e., KrishNa speaks about the way he was blamed, and as a reply his wives try to convince Him by giving a funny or a witty reply.

For instance, KrishNa feels hurt and says that, you (both the wives) left me saying that I am dark in complexion. In reply the wives say, we never said that you look Dark (black in color).

Second instance, KrishNa says he was insulted as a shepherd boy for which they give a witty and convincing reply.

Third instance, KrishNa says that He was blamed as a cheater and tricky in nature. The wives reply that He is very wise instead.

Fourth Instance, KrishNa says that He was balmed as a playboy enjoying with *Gollabhaamas* (shepherd girls). In turn the wives reply that, He praised as *Gopika vallabha* (the protector shepherd girls) etc.

In this way, the two wives apologize KrishNa in many ways in the form of a *Daru*.

“Neramenchedavela nenaruna ee veLa

Kuurimi meera chaalaa gopaala deena paala—

1.) *Proddaaye maa paini pola yelikalu maani*

Buddhi lekunna gaani diddukovale gaani||

2.) *Aada vaaralamintha yagadu koorvamokintha*

Maataadumu Srimantha mammeelu roopavanta”

In the above *Daru*, the two wives say in this way. Instead of blaming us, why can't you take care of us. Don't get angry on us and rectify our mistakes in case we commit any. Being women, possess a bit of temperament. In spite of all these qualities you should take care of us.

Then KrishNa gets convinced and showers his love towards them. This is expressed in a *Daru*.

“Kommalaara muddu gummalaara pooni maataadeda gaani—

-----”

Then, the two wives sing the following *Vruttha Daru* expressing their devotion for Him.

“*Cheluvuga nee paada seva sesedamu nee
Palukulu vini memu paraga nadachedamu
Poluponda idi nijamu poovilthu padamaana
Haayinka velayanga mammelaraa Sri Krishna
Veduka meeraga raaraa*”

Thus, the *Yakshagaana* is concluded. In this, there is no *Naandi* part and *MangaLa geethas* at the end unlike the other *Yakshagana*-s. The story begins with a *kathaa sangraha* and concludes with a *Vruttha Daru*. There are more *Darus* compared to *Dwipadaas* in this *Yakshagaana*. In some instances, there are some *Samvaadam/Uttara-pratyuttarea Darus* seen.

Vruttha Daru is a special type of composition which is seen only in this *Yakshagaana*.

14. JALAKREEDALU: The story of this *Yakshagaana* is extracted from the *Gopika VastraapaharaNam* scene of *Bhagavatham* with some imagination added to it. It starts with a *MangaLaacharaNam*, a prayer on Lord Krishna that begins with *Jaya Shabdham*. It includes *MangaLa geetham* on *Mahishaasura mardini* and *Ishta Devatha praardhanaas* in the form of Sanskrit verses.

The *Kathaasangraha Dwipada* contains the story in brief. The *Dwipada* is as follows:

“*Gopikalellanu gumpu goodukuni
Eepuna Jalakreeda limpondanaada
Vacchutayunu thama valuvalu teesi
Yachhugaa gattuna amara nunchutayu
Chinni krishnudu vacchi cheeraletthukuni
Ponna painunduta puubuuNulapudu
Voluvala naduguta vanajalochanudu
Pilichi cheeralosangi pendlaadutayunu*

Nanuvonda jalakreeda navya naatakamu----
*Ghanudu Sahendrudu gaavinche bhuvini
Sarasa satakavivarul sannuthi seya
DharaNi lo naachandra taaraarkamuganu”*

The meaning of the above *Dwipada* is as follows. The *Gopikas* go to a lake to take bath. They remove their clothes and go into the water. In the meanwhile, little KrishNa steals those clothes and climbs up the *Ponna* tree. On the request of *Gopa sthrees*, KrishNa gives away their clothes and marries them. The poets praised and blessed this drama written by Shahaji, to remain forever on this earth.

As per the tradition, this Yakshagaana beings with a *Vighneswara Paatra pravesa Daru*. The story begins with a *Suutradhaara vachana*. The *Gopalaka* (shepherds) caution everyone to stay away as the *Gopakanyaas* (shepherd girls) are coming to the *Srunagaara vanam* to take bath in the lake. The appearance of *GollvaaLLu* (shepherd boys) is described in a *Daru*.

*“Nalla kambaLi thana nadumunu chuttukuni
Chilla kolanu chetha jimmuchu, nudutanu
Thellani naamamu theerunu merayaga
Mella mellanu vaacche gollavaadipudu”*

The meaning of the above *Daru* is as follows. The shepherd wore a black woolen cloth and a held a stick in his hand. He has a *Tirunaamam* (a vertical Bindi) painted on his forehead. Then the *Gopika-s* (Shepard ladies) arrive which is described in a *Dwipada*.

*“Srungaaramulanu raajilluchu mena
Bangaaru sommulu baagugaa betti
Telivonda nudutanu tilakambu diddi
Velayanga jada ninda viri sarul daalchi—
Kalayanga ratnaala kammalu chevula
TaLa taLamanuchu vinthagaa kaanthuleena
KankaNamulu thama karamulayandu
Pokambugaa buuni puuboNulapudu---
Kaatuka kannula ghanthatho deerchi
Alaranga jala kreedalaada kanyakalu—”*

The same is described in a *Daru*

*“KanakabhooshaNamu lallaraa
Thanaraga gopa kanyalu vedaleriiveLa—
Andelu ghallu ghallani athiseyillaga
Indumukhulu muodamandu kolavagaa”*

In the above *Daru*, the beauty of *Gopa sthrees* (shepherd girls) is compared with the arrows of Cupid. Their ornaments are made up of precious gems and gold. With the sound of their anklets, the beauty of eyes after applying collyrium to them, the bindi applied with *kasthuri*, the shepherd girls appear to be more than *Rambha*, *Urvasi* (i.e., Angels in heaven).

Shahaji described the *Chaitra masa* or *Vasantha ruthu* in a *Dwipada*, in a wonderful manner.

*“Maaninulaaraa ee madhumaasamandu
Puuni vrukshambulu pushpinchi nadiyu
Cheluvaina lathalella chigirinchi nadiyu
NaLulu jhummani chelagaaduchunnadiyu—
Yendathaapamu theeranika jalakreeda
Laada boyedamu raare yandambu gaanu”*

It means, all the trees are fully covered with flowers. The creepers are filled with budding leaves. The bees making a humming sound. The girls prepare themselves to take a bath in the lake in order to overcome the heat of the Sun. Among them, two of them go to get some Jasmine and other flowers generating fragrance. The girls enter the water by calling each other with their names, as described in *Daru*.

*“AliveNi raave raayincha gamana rave || Jalakreedalaadudamu
Chilakala koliki raave chittaru bomma raave || --do--
Kuluku miTaari raave kokila vaaNi raave || --do--
Jalajanayana raave Chandra vadana raave || --do--
Malayaja Gandhi raave maruvompu molaka raave || --do--*

The beauty of the girls taking bath in the lake, is described in a *Daru*.

*“Jalajamane vadanamu chelaregagaa
Meti kaluvalane kanugava kaanthuleenaganu
ALulane nerikurulu atiseyillaganu
Alalaneti vaLulu andamu meeraganu—
Pekkaina saikathamulane pirudulu velayaganu—
Jalapakshula ravaLanedi palukulu merayaganu
Aaakanjamula patramulanu paLLelamula—
Kolanu devatha manakedurkoni thana thona
Jalakrredalaada rammanu chandaana nunnadi chuudare”*

The above description is about a beautiful and picturesque lake. The beauty of the lake is compared with an angel. Then all the girls leave their clothes at a point on the shore and get into the lake. They play in the water. This is known as *Jalakreeda*, which is described in a *Daru*.

*“Kanyaro nee chinni channulamelaina
Panneeru challeda baagu meeraganu
1.) Sannuthaangiro nee thinnani menuna
Vanyavasanthamu vagagaa jalleda
2.) Pallava paaNi nee baagaina momuna
Mellana puuthene challedanippudu
3.) Mollanu Gandhi nee vaalu kannulayendu
Challani jalamulu challedanippudu”*

In this manner, the girls play in the water.

In another scene, KrishNa and his friends reach to a place which is beautifully described in a poem.

*“Melagu nora gunde pai minnalu dera Mayura pinchamunan -----
Go - paaludu vacche gopavara baalura thodutha naatalaadagan”*

KrishNa comes along with *Gopalakas* (shepherd boys) to the *Shrunngaara vanam*. This is described in a *Daru*.

*“Vinthaga ratnaala kunda chethanu nemali
Pinchamenthayu thejarillaga santhasamuna
Panthamu meera Gopala baalakulu koluvaga
Jhamtarikita dhimikitathaka thaLaangu jhaNu jhaNu
DaNa thaka yani yaaduchu vacche chuudare Govindudu”*

This is continued in the next *Daru*

*“Munduga paadamulandunu ratnaalayandelu gajjelunu
Ponduga mroya Govindudu vinthaga
Dhim dhimi dhimi dhimi yanu tha aadeeni chudare Govindudu”*

These two *Darus* describe the beauty and appearance of Lord KrishNa. It means as follows. The color of KrishNa is blue as that of a Dark cloud. He shines with an effulgence of Sun. He wears anklets embedded with precious stones.

In this way, Lord KrishNa comes to the *Srunngaara vana* joyfully, playing with his friends. The two *Daru* mentioned above are known as *Jikkina Darus*. These naughty boys make a bet, to get the belonging of anyone from a near distance. One boy goes to the lake and comes back shockingly to know that some women are taking bath in the river. The boy says to KrishNa that he has seen a wonderful scene, in a *Dwipada*.

*“Panivadi sri krishNa padhetthaboyi
Kani nokavintha kanyakaamaNulu
Cheeralu gattuna cheluvoppa nunichi
Arayanga jalakreedalaaduchunnaaru
Kannula pandugagaa chuudumipudu
Chennuga vaarini chera raavayya”*

The naughty boy says that, the girls are taking bath and you will feel happy if you see this scene. Then krishNa speaks to His friends very happily, in a *Daru*.

*“Melu bhaLi sebaasu raa! Gopaalulaara!
Melu vaarthalu vintinoyi chaala santoshamaayenoyi
Gopaalulaara chakkani sekunamu laayenoyi—”*

In the above *Daru*, KrishNa asks the other boys to sit quietly in that place, and He leaves that place. He silently walks towards the lake holding the anklets in his hand tightly in order to prevent them to sounding. The same is described briefly in a *Daru*.

*“Muvvalu gajjelandelu mroyaka patti krishNudu
PuuvuboNula cheragaa navvuchu vacchen”*

Then, KrishNa robs all the clothes kept on the shore and climbs the *Ponna chettu* (ponna tree).

As the *Gopakanyalu* (shepherd girls) still did not complete their bath and come home, their parents send a girl Thimmakka. The appearance of Thimmakka is described in a humorous way as she walks towards the lake, in a *Daru*.

*“Doppa chevulu guuni vippunu
Bukki norunu doni kadupu thanara
Dhappu chuupulu chuuchuchuu kanyala bilwa\
Pappu thimmakka vacchenu”*

Thimmakka says she has come to bring all the girls back. She asks them to stop bathing and get ready to come back home. Agreeing to Thimmakka’s words, the girls ask one among them to get the clothes from the shore. That girl is shocked to see the missing clothes on the shore, and this is expressed in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Cheeralu gaaname yo yammalaara!
Mana siggulu boye gadave yammalaara ---”*

In the above *Daru*, the girls talk to each other about their lost clothes. They express different feelings and think of various possibilities about how their clothes were disappeared.

Then all the girls search for their clothes in the garden which is depicted in a *Daru*.

“Valuvalu gaanamu vanamandu chutamu kanyalaara--”

In this search, one girl notices the footprints of a boy and says to her friends in a *Daru*.

*“Chuuthamu raare kanyakalaara
Thadayaka baaluni adugulu teliseeni
Adugula padma rekhala mari yunnavidigo
Eedanu veNu naadamemo vinabadeeni—”*

In the meanwhile, Pappu Thimmakka notices the clothes on a *Ponna* tree and says to the other girls. They feel happy and go to the tree. As they see KrishNa, they get into the lake with a feeling of shy. KrishNa comes down from the tree and steals a *gantha* (a kind of soft cloth) from Pappu Thimmakka and runs away. She speaks in a *Daru*.

“Gantha dochukupoyene thandanana krishNudu--”

The girls in the lake speak to KrishNa in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Kolanilo mementhasepu konkuchunundumu raa
Voluvalanu daya seya raa orori krishNa—”*

The girls say that, it is not good on His part to take away their clothes. They request Him to give back their clothes. Then KrishNa speaks to the girls in the form of a *Samvaada Daru*.

KrishNa: *“Jalajaakshi ro neevu kolanu gattuku poyi valuvaladugavamma—”*

Gopika: *“Cheliyaro gattuku pova thanaku chaala siggouchunnadi—”*

Gopika: *Magavaadu yeduta nundaga nannu pommanuta taganatave -----”*

In this way KrishNa asks the girls to come out of the lake and take their clothes from Him. All the girls try to convince Him in many ways. Finally, KrishNa agrees to give away their clothes, if they all raise and fold their hands and pray to Him. This is described in a *Daru*.

*“Mrokkemuraa oo muddula krishNa nee che
Jikkithimi ikanaina maa cheera leerendu chethulaa
Proddu poyera indlaku povale maa cheeraleeyaraa
Thaddayunikanaina maa pai daya yunchu saami neeku”*

Then the girls pray and request Him to give away their clothes soon as it is becoming late for them. KrishNa replies in the form of a *Dwipada*.

“---- Arayanga nannu pendlaadithireni
Iravanda cheerala icchedanipudu”

In the above *Dwidapa*, KrishNa asks the girls to marry Him if they want their clothes back.

Then, Thimmakka says to the girls in a *Samvaada Daru*.

Thimmakka: “Ippude pendlaadedamani yopparee meeru”

Girl: “Thappumaatalela musalidaanaveevu pove”

Thimmakka: “Abbabba pendlikoppaka athadu cheeraleeyade meeku”

Girl: “Pappu thimmakka yoppithe oppedame memu”

The meaning of the *Daru* is as follows. At last, the girls agree to marry KrishNa as it is accepted by Thimmakka as well.

At this point, Shahaji adds a little humorous conversation between Thimmakka and KrishNa. As KrishNa gives away the girls’ clothes demanding them to marry Him. Similarly, Thimmakka asks KrishNa to marry her and in return, He can give back her *Gantha* (soft cloth). In reply, KrishNa simply refuses her request.

In the conversation between KrishNa and the girls, the girls express their fear of their marriage without the consent of their family members. But KrishNa convinces them for a *Gaandharva vivaaham* (a marriage in the style of *Gandharvaas* which does not require any formalities or any other rituals as performed in a usual marriage). The girls readily accept to it and get back their clothes in return.

All the above conversation is written in a *Samvaada Daru*. Then KrishNa asks them to tell the identify their respective clothes and the girls reply to it. This is described in a *Samvaada Daru*.

Girl1: “Bangaaranchula cheeraraa chinni krishNa
Naadi niggu bangaaru ravika raa”

Girl2: “Pagadapoosala cheera raa oo chinni krishNa
Naadi sogasaina poola ravika raa”

In the above *Daru*, the girls say about the color and other marks of their clothes. KrishNa tease the girls in many ways and at last give away their sarees.

Then comes the husband of Pappu Thimmakka, Paapaavadhaani. This is mentioned in a *Daru*.

*“Panchaangam chetha batti patte vardhanam petti
Enchaga purohithudu ethenchenu ippudu”*

In the above *Daru*, KrishNa gives away the *Gantha* of Thimmakka and marries all the girls.

Later, KrishNa speaks to the girls in a romantic manner, in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Kuudi yundamu raare komalulaara
Vedukalu chaalameera –”*

As KrishNa marries all the girls in a *gaandharva* way, all the Gods including *Devendra* (King of all the Gods), Bramha and Siva attend the marriage. Other demigods and sages viz., Narada, Kinnera, Kimpurushaas sing the *MangaLam* in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Mandara dharuniki maadhavuniki
Nandakumaaruniki narahariki
Ponduga gopakanyalanu -- mangaLam”*

This concludes the *Daru*.

Unfortunately, the last few lines of the *MangaLa Daru* are missing. In this *Yakshagaana*, several *Samvaada Darus* can be seen. The language used in this *Yakshagaana* is simple and in an easily understandable way to all the people who are familiar with Telugu language.

15. TYAAGA VINODA CHITRA PRABANDHAM:

This *Yakshaganam* is also known as *Sankarakaali Natana vaada mahaanaatakam*. This contains six *ankaas* (scenes). Its specialty is that it contains Maratha language along with Telugu and Sanskrit.

In the first scene, the Sutradhara makes a comment on this Yakshagaana, in Maratha language. This is mentioned in a *Dwipada* and contains references about Andhra language. The fourth scene contains a complex *Daru* known as *Savyaapa savya samapada leelaa Daru*. Similarly, in the sixth scene there is a *Daru* known as *Krama sapthaswara varnaardha leela Daru*. This *Daru* is composed in the ragas Todi, Kapi, Kalyani and Sankaraabharanam. This Yakshagaana concludes with a *Jikkini Daru*.

This Yakshagaana is dedicated to his beloved deity i.e., to *Sri Tyagesa*. The theme of this play is that, Goddess Bhadrakali overwhelms with pride thinking herself to be the greatest dancer. Then the Sage Narada plans to suppress her ego and invokes Sri Tyagesa who is a form of Lord Nataraja. Then a Dance challenge will be held between Goddess kaLi and Sri Tyagesa. They both compete equally at all levels and finally the Goddess gives up and accepts her defeat. At last, He marries Kali. This is the theme of this Yakshagaana.

*Unfortunately, the Yakshagaana is not found anywhere. The above script is written based on a summary of Dr. S.V Jogarao's *Andhra Yakshagaana Vaanngmaya charitra* (Vol-I, HOD, Dept. of Telugu, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, April 1961).

15. KRISHNA LEELA VILAASAM:

This story belongs to the *Prasiddha* category. The theme of the story is taken from *Bhaagavatham*. The plot of the story is that, Lord KrishNa incarnates through *Devaki Devi*. His childhood pranks, and his marriage with *Satyabhama* constitutes the main part of this Yakshagaana.

Unfortunately, the script of this *Yakshagaana* is not available. The above summary is written based on a small passage taken from the book "*Yakshagaanaalu (Thanjavur vol3, page no. vii)*" written by Sri S.V Joga rao.

16. DRAUPADI KALYANAMU:

This story is an extract from Mahabharatha and belongs to the *Prasiddha* category. The Yakshagana begins with a *MangaLaacharaNam* and *MangaLageetham* and *Ishtadevatha praardhana* in the form of slokas. *Kaivaaram* is a type of composition that includes several praises on the King, by their guards. It follows *Kaivaaram*,

Kathaasangraha Dwipada, and the *Vighneswara Paatra pravesa Daru* which is the same song used in the other Yakshagana-s.

The story begins with a conversation between Katika and Sutradhaara. The King Drupada asks the *Raja Purohit* (court Purohit) in a *Dwipada*.

“*Vinavayya naa maata vipravareNya*
Vanajaakshi Droupadi vaikhari chuudanga—
Hecchagu kalyaana mika cheyyakunna – yantra
Meenambu sesina metiki thanaya
Nicchedanantine nidi naa pratigNa”

It means, the King Drupada expresses his desire to perform the wedding of his daughter. The person who chases the *Matsya Yantra* will be the person who is eligible to marry my daughter.

The arrival of Drustadyumna i.e., the son of King Drupada, is described in a *Daru*.

Drupada orders his son to arrange for *Swayamvara* and orders to decorate the city to prepare for the event. Kings from different regions such as *Anga, KaLinga, Kaashmira, kaambhoja, MaaLava, NepaaLa, SouraaShtra, Kukururu, Kuru, KonkaNa, TenkaNa, KeraLa, GouLa, Kunthala, Kasi, Kashmira, Kiraatha, kethaka, Ghoorjara, trigartha* etc. comes to participate in the *Swayamvara*. This is described in a *Dwipada* as described in the *SeethaKalyaNa*. Lord KrishNa arrives to watch the event that is described in a *Daru*.

“*Vacche souri vedka--*
Balaramuni tho guudi cheluvu meera neeveLa”

Later, the hundred Kauravas along with KarNa, Aswatthaama, Somadatta, Bhurisrava, Shruthasena etc. arrive there and it is described in a *Daru*.

“*Vinthaga vedale thammula guudi –*
Chenchela kaaryundu maana duryodhanundu”

As all the invitees arrive, Droupadi is brought to the court by her brother Drustadyumna. Droupadi is described as a beautiful woman and appears to be a

Golden doll. The King Drupada introduces all the Kings to his daughter and announces the conditions of the *Swayamvaram*.

Many Kings come and display their courage and skills but fail to achieve the target. Finally, a person comes out from a group of brahmins and makes an attempt to chase the *Matsya yantra*. All the kings including Duryodhana makes fun of him as he appears to be a poor brahmin. He chases the *Matsya yantra* and the King prepares to marry Draupadi to him. He is none other the Arjuna in the guise of a brahmin. Then the King tells his daughter about the moral values and explains the code of conduct of how a traditional daughter-in-law should behave with her in-laws in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Poyi raavamma maa yamma*

- 1). *Attha maamala patla batthi tho naduvumee—*
- 2). *Pathiye daivamani bhaavimpu mee---*”

In the meanwhile, Duryodhana along with his supporters wage a war against Drupada for marrying his daughter to a poor brahmin. Then Arjuna and Bheema try to support the King Drupada for which Dharmaraja doesn't give his consent. At last, they both convince Dharmaraja and go in support of Drupada. Arjuna targets KarNa, and Bheema fights with Duryodhana, and win over them. They both join the rest of their group. They are the *Pancha Paandavas* in the guise of brahmins. They join their group and return to their city *Ekachakrapuram* where Mother Kunti resides.

Then Arjuna speaks about Draupadi to his mother in a metaphorical way. He says that he brought a strange and a precious fruit in the form of a poem.

”*Nira Teevula kaladamma*

Dorala sikhaamaNulakaina dorakanidamma

Tharuvuna podamanedamma

Thiramuga noka vintha phalamu thecchithinamma”

He says that, the fruit he brought is very precious, it has not come out of a tree and stays with us forever. Mother Kunthi replies that, all of you share the fruit and eat it, without any disputes among yourselves. After Kunthi sees Draupadi, she understands what she spoke earlier and regrets for it.

Then each of the five sons discuss among themselves. Dharmaraja says that, as the *Matsya yantra* is chased by Arjuna, he is the right person to marry Draupadi.

Arjuna says that, one should not transgress one's own mother's word. In this way they discuss among themselves.

On the other hand, the King Drupada feels sad that he married his daughter to a poor brahmin and sends some spys to know their whereabouts.

As the secret agents move nearby they hear the conversation of these five persons about the *Matsya yantra chedana*, fight with Duryodhana and such matters. They could also see an old woman along with them. They could identify those five persons as *Pancha Paandavaas* and convey the same matter to King Drupada. Then the King Drupada asks his son Drushtadyumna to bring all the Pancha Pandavaas and Kunthi devi along with Draupathi. This is mentioned in a *Daru*.

“Drupada suthundu vedale – Paandu nrupathi nandanula piluva”

Then Drushtadyumna respectfully takes all of them to the place of Drupada. The King Drupada invites all of them happily and praises them after finding out their identity, in the form of a *Dwipada*.

*“Chanda vikramulaara sadguNulaara
Paandavulaara dorbalayukthulaara—
Tholutha meevithamu nisthula vrutthi meera
Teliyaka dwijulani deenudai yunti
Dharmanandana, purandara thanuujunaku
Permi tho jeyumu pendli ee veLa”*

In the above *Dwipada*, the Drupada King expresses his happiness to know the identity of *Pandavaas* and feels excited to marry his daughter to Arjuna.

Then Dharmaraja expresses his *Dharma sandeha* about the conversation they had at their home, in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Thagavu kaadidi chuuda – Dharmambu gaadu
Nagare itlaithe mu – jjagamuvaarella*

- 1). *Balavairi thanayudoka phalamu thecchthinanuchu*
Paluka sariपालुगा – पञ्चकुम्भानुचु
Thecipe maa thalli i – ttheragu gaavimpumika
Thalli thandrula maata java – daata bhuupaalaa ||
- 2). *Harahara! Idiyemi – aidugurinoka kanya*
Variyinchutettu lee – vaavulethu
Purushunikidi chellu nen – dara bhaamalainanu
TharuNi koka purushude – dhaatha Kalpana yitlu ||”

In the above *Daru*, Dharmaraja says that in this world a man can marry any number of wives, but here it is vice-versa. How can this happen. With reverence to a mother’s words, can five persons marry a single woman? How can this act be approved by the *Mullokaas* (the three worlds)? Thinking so, he feels very sad.

Feeling in this way, all the people present there including King Drupada feel very sad about it. In that situation of a dilemma, he sage Vyaasa enters. This is described in a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

“Vyaasulu vedaliri bhaasura muganu
Paayaka madilo kaasi pathini smaraNa jesi
Maayanu thega kosi maini bhuuthi puusi ||
Hari naama Sudhanu groli yaanandamu na deli
Parama puNya saali padmasambhavu boli ||”

The above *Daru* describes the appearance of the Sage Vyasa. The one who thinks of Lord Kasi Visweswara in his mind, applies *Vibhuthi* (sacred ash) on his body, chants the name of Lord Hari and appears as Lord Brahma i.e., as the one who has gone beyond the *Maya* (illusion).

Everyone in the court humbly offer their salutations to the Sage. The King Drupada also offers his respects to the Sage in the form of a *Daru*.

“SaraNu saraNu bhavanaasa - SaraNu saraNu swaprakaasha
SaraNu saraNu haridaasa swami - SaraNu saraNu vedavyaasa”

The King praises the sage and puts before him, the doubt expressed by Dharamaraja.

Then the Sage explains all the past, present and future births of Draupadi and says it in the form of a *Dwipada*.

“— *Varamincche naa prabhaavamuna nee bhaama*
Parama pathivratha paanchaali yayye
Chathuratha minchina sankaru krupanu
Pathulairi ee pancha paandavulipudu
Daiva kruthambidi thappimpa tharame!
Kaavuna lagnambu gaavimpu vega”

In the above *Dwipada*, the Sage Vyaasa describes about the past birth of Draupadi. He says in this way. A wife of a sage serves her husband sincerely but feels very sad as she does not have a satisfactory family life. She prays to Lord Siva day and night.

Impressed with her devotion, Lord Siva appears and asks her for a boon. She asks for a husband. The Lord blesses her saying that she will have five husbands who will look after her with love and affection, in her next birth. Thus, she becomes a *Pathivratha* and *Paanchaali*.

The sage Vyasa says that Draupadi is the same *Paanchaali* who is blessed with five husbands in this birth.

After listening to the words of Sage Vyaasa, Drupada happily marries her daughter to the *Pancha Paandavaas*. At that time, all the people sing *MangaLam* on this happy occasion.

Darus are less in number compared to *Dwipadaas*, in this *Yakshagaana*. In some instances, the traditions that prevailed in those times are depicted in this *Yakshagaana*. Thus, Shahaji proved himself as a great composer, from the literary beauties seen in this *Yakshagaana*.

17. SATI PATI DAANA SURAMU:

This is a completely imaginary story which was never heard before. This *Yakshagaana* contains *MangaLaacharaNam* in *Todi raaga* and a *MangaLa geetham*

on Lord Tyagesa and *Ishtadevatha praardhanaa slokas* followed by *Kathaa sangraha dwipada* and *Vighneswara Paatra pravesa Daru*. The *MangaLa Geetha* begins with these lines:

“*Mahaneeya tyagesuniki MangaLam—
Bhosala saahendra bhaasura kula devuniki
Maa siva tyagesuniki MangaLam*”

The above *Daru* is written in praise of his beloved deity *Sri Tyagesa*. In this *Yakshagaana*, the *Ishta Devata praardhana* slokas are taken from the old scriptures. They are:

- 1). *Saraswathi sthuthi – ‘Yaakundendu tushaara haara—’*
- 2). *Mahaa VishNu sthuthi – ‘Saanthakaaram bhujagasayanam—’*
- 3). *Parvati, Parameswara shuthi – ‘Gangaa taranga kamaniya—’*

(*Viswanathaashtakam*)

In the *Kathaa Sangraha Dwipada*, he very briefly introduces the story of the *Yakshagaana*. A *Bramhin* person falls in love with a *Maathanga* woman and proposes her to marry him. As she is already married, she does not accept his proposal. After having a long conversation with the women, her husband arrives, and he too argues with the *Bramhin* in support of his wife. Finally, the *Bramhin* realizes his mistake and apologizes both. The story ends with the *Lord Parameswara* giving *Moksha* (liberation) to all of them and gives the *Phalasaruthi* of this story. The *Dwipada* is as follows:

“*Sree ramaNeeyamai cheluvondunatti—
Kramamugaa navuchunda khandendu darudu
Vacchi prathyakshamai vaari naluguriki
Mucchata teeraga mokshamicchutayu
Anedi kathalache namari raajillu
Chunu minchu sati daana suura naatakam
Virivigaa Saaha bhuvibhudu gaavinche
DharaNi lo naachandrataaraarkamuganu*”

It follows the *Vighneswara paatra pravesa Daru* which is the same song taken from the other Yakshagana-s. This *Paatra pravesa Daru* is tuned in *Todi raga*. The story begins with the conversation between *Sutradaara* and *Katika*. The *Katika* says that he is going to *Champaka vanam* (garden) to prepare for the *Nityotsava pooja* (the daily worship) of *Lakshmi sametha Sri Rajagopala swamy* (the Lord along with his consort). This is mentioned in a *Daru* set to *Kambhoji raaga* and *Aadi taaLa*.

“*Velayu Sree senkha chakramulu hasthamulan jalaga*
Suluvaina garuda vaahanamu pai vishNuvu vedale
Abhaya varahasthamu lamaranga disalandu
Subha peethaambara prabha sobaganda sourivacche”

The above *Daru* describes the charm of *Lord Mahaa VishNu* who holds the *Sankha, Chakra* and comes on *Garuda vahana* (the Garuda bird as a vehicle) and comes to the court present in the *Champaka* garden. Then a *Maathangi sthree* arrives to that place, to serve the Lord. Her beauty is described in a *Paatra pravesa/VarNana Daru* written in *Aahiri raaga*.

“*Pallavambula bolu bhaamapaadamulu*
Pillaandlu mettelu birudu pendembu
Gajjelu nandelu ghallu ghallanaga—
Thinnagaa kaatuka deerchi ninnuduta
Thelivonda Kasturi tilakambu diddi—
Chelulirugadalanu sevalu seya
Saarasalochanotsavamulu chuudanga
Garimatho maathanga kanya thaa vedale”

The above *Dwipada* describes the beauty of *Maathangi* woman. She appears to be a traditional village woman. She offers her prayers to the Lord and returns. A *Brahmin* named *Morobhattu* comes to that place along with his disciple which is described in a *Paatra pravesa Daru* set to *Madhyaaavathi raaga* and *Aadi taaLa*.

“*Veda saastramulu chaduvuchu vishNudevuni thalachuchu*
Modamutho vedalenu mukhyudaina moro bhattu”

On the way, this *brahmin* sees this *maathangi* woman. He falls in love with her and speaks to her in a rubbish way. This is mentioned in a *Daru* set to *Aadi raaga* (the *raaga* not mentioned).

*“Kommo puula remmo bangaaru
Bommo maruni serammoo leka
Maruvampu molako rati cheti chiluko
Muddula kaliko”*

Later, a lot of arguments take place between the *Guru (brahmin)* and his disciple in which the disciple offends the acts of his guru. But the *guru* still cannot turn his mind away from her. After several arguments, the *disciple* gets vexed with his *Guru* and accuses his *Guru* for his ill thoughts towards the woman. Then, the *Guru* finally approaches the woman and asks about her details, in a *Daru* in *Naadanaamakriya raagam* set to *Aadi taaLam*.

“Sakala sobhanamasthu santhathaabhi vruddhi rasthu—”

In this *Daru*, the *Guru* asks her details. Besides this, the disciple curses the *Guru* in many ways. Then the woman replies in a *Daru* in *Naadanaamakriya raaga*.

*“Antaraanivaaramayya –
Para duushithulamayya baapanayya—
Kallu trragudumayya kadajaati vaaramayya
Malina dehulamayya mariyaada heenulamayya”*

In the above *Daru* the woman says that, they belong to the lower caste and are treated as untouchables. They drink *Kallu* (unrefined alcohol). They do not maintain physical hygiene and they are not treated with respect, in the society.

Even after listening to her words, the *brahmin* doesn't give up his desire for her. She replies to this, in the form of a *Daru* in *Ghanta ravan* set to *Aadi taaLam*.

*“Bammanayya vaareelaagu brathimaaludu raa
Immaaletha vesamu – eesamu kaadaa”*

In the above *Daru*, the woman asks the *brahmin* not to get mesmerized for her beauty, and she tells about all her dirty habits to him.

The woman and the disciple try to convince the *Guru* in several ways, but he doesn't pay heed to them. The woman also tries to teach him philosophy saying that, the body is transient, and one should give respect to *Dharma*. She also says that she is already married. She mentions all this in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Samsaari kaanataraa baapanayya*
Samsaari gaana ee sarasamela naatho—”

Then the *Brahmin* starts accusing her husband. As a reply, she describes the *valor* of her husband in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Pathinedabaaya raadayya Oo baapanayya*
Satulakidi dharmamu kaadayya

- 1). *Pathini vanchimpa ihaparaminthaina ledayya*
Kulaheenudainanu kaani Oo baapanayya
GuNa rahithudainanu gaani – ||
- 2). *Kallu traaguvaadaina gaani gadusu vaadaina gaani*
Kalimi leni vaadaina gaani Oo baapanayya
Balimi leni vaadaina gaani ||
Tuluvaina gaani balu dushtudaina gaani
- 3). *Magade praana bandhund gaadaa.o baapanayya*
Magade pennidhaaname gaada
Agadela yanedidi tagavaa, Oo baapanayya II

In the above *Daru*, she describes about the rules to be followed by a *Pathivratha*. She says that, the husband may be a *Kulaheena* (one who disobeys the rules of a community), *guNarahitha* (one who has no morals), one who consumes alcohol, one who doesn't possess any physical strength and wealth, but still a husband is the very life of a woman. One cannot accuse her husband Infront of her.

Still the *brahmin* does not realize his mistake. His argument with the woman takes place in the form of a *Samvaada Daru* in *SankaraabharaNa raaga* set to *Aadi taaLa*.

Brahmin: “*Vagalela chesave naathona nagaraadatave paducha*”

Maathangi: “*Nagavulu endaina Oo baapanayya*

Maganaaliki tagunaa—”

After listening to the cheap and lustful words of the *Brahmin*, the *Maathangi* gets vexed and admonishes him.

Baapanda yeraa, yituvale - Balukanga meraa..

1. Kula heenamaina gunaseelamu vidichi

Yalaru nillaalu velyaalaunaa

Ila janulaku jaatulecchu koladulintee gaani

Talacha dharma bhedamu gaadaa verri II

She continues to give an account of her husband’s physical strength. The brahmin replies to her in the form of a *Daru* in Todi raga set to *Chaapu taaLa*.

“—*Japa thapamulu snaana sandhyalu kalavaada*

Kupithudaithe vaani sepiyunthu anthe kaani ||

Taruniro vaaniki nenu veratunatave—”

The brahmin says out of pride that, he is an orthodox brahmin who performs *Japa*, *Thapa* and *Sandhyaavandanamu* and he has the power to curse to her husband.

On the other hand, the *Sishya* (disciple) tries many ways to convince his guru not to behave in such a manner with the woman. But all his efforts to motivate his Guru goes in vain.

In another scene, the husband of *Maathangi* comes to the *Chempaka vanam*. His arrival is described in a *Paatra pravesa Daru* described in *Pharaju raaga* set to *Adi taaLa*.

“*Ide maadiga vaadu vacche--*

Kallu traagi sokkuchu mellane ---”

The above *Daru* describes the appearance of *Maathangi’s* husband. He comes in a drunken state after consuming alcohol.

The husband says that he searched extensively for her in many places. This is written in the form of a *Daru* in *Vasantha bhairavi raaga* set to *Aadi taaLa*.

Later, she explains whatever has happened to her husband, in the form of a *Daru*.

“Veravaka telipeda vinu naa theragu

Kari

Varadu thirunaaLLaku vacchithinoyi

Theravuna nee baapana devara nannu juuchi

Paraga doraga thiruga palikenoyi—”

In the above *Daru*, the woman says that she has come to offer her prayers to the Lord *Mahaa VishNu*. On her way back this *brahmin* confronts her. The *brahmin* expresses a lustful attitude towards her which she rejects and tries to avoid him in several ways.

The husband talks to the *brahmin* in the form of a *Daru* in *Raamakali raaga* set to *Ata taaLa*.

“Maganillaalitho neeku maataletiki raa

Thagunaa baapana saalle dharmamu those—

Parasathula ponduta paapam kaadaa

Sarasa saastramulella chaduvaledatara--”

In the above *Daru*, the husband warns the *brahmin* not to have bad desire on a *Parasathi* (any woman other than one’s own wife). He gives two instances from the epics where a person with a lustful attitude towards a woman was subjected to death. The first instance is about *Keechaka’s* misbehavior with *Draupadi* in *Mahaabhaaratha* which lead to his own death. The second instance is about the cause of *RaavaNa’s* death in *RaamayaNa*.

Then the *Maadiga* (husband) becomes furious and prepares to beat the *brahmin*. Immediately the *Sishya* intervenes and pleads the *Maadiga* to spare his Guru and punish him instead.

From the next conversations, the *Maadiga’s* knowledge in the scriptures and his command over the *Dharma saastras* is known, from the way he speaks.

The *Maadiga* speaks to the *Sishya* and quotes a *sloka* from the *Dharma Saastras* and explains its meaning as well.

“*Prakruthi siddham idam hee mahaathmaanaam*”

It means, scholarly people who possess extensive knowledge in their field of education have many good qualities, but sometimes have a single negative quality in them which brings a black mark their character. In this manner, both of them converse about many righteous conducts and moral values mentioned in the scriptures.

In the meanwhile, the *Guru* speaks about his desire towards the woman, in the form of a *Daru* in *Bhairavi raaga* set to *Ata taaLa*.

“----

Kaama saastramureethi memu naduvagaanu
Manasunchinapude adi thana sathi kaadaa—”

In the above *Daru*, the *Guru's* words speak of his lustful attitude towards women. We (the brahmins) perform rituals merely to seek pleasure from the angels (*Rambha*, *Urvasi* and *Menaka*).

In this context the *Maadiga* teaches essence of all the scriptures. He says that with sense control, a person can achieve anything in this world. He further says that a *brahmin* is highly virtuous and knowledgeable person and such a person's desire should always be focused on the *Parabramham* (the ultimate state to be achieved).

In another context, the *Maadiga* teaches *Vedantha* and *Vairaagya* to the *Brahmin*. He says that this body is transient. As it grows, it loses its beauty. It is merely a skin covered with flesh and blood. The physical body can be compared with pot with a hole, and a dirty hut. He says that, they reside inside the untidy and muddy huts whereas you (i.e., the brahmins) reside in clean places and you should stay away from such ugly thoughts and should not go behind the sensory pleasures.

The *brahmin* replies saying that *Moksha* (liberation) is only associated with the body but not beyond it. He further says in a *Daru* in *Devagaandhaari raaga* set to *Ata taaLa*.

“*Ee haayi kannu mari ye haayi yunnadi*
Aahaa deeninokka saari yeshananga valadaa—
Neevemi chesinaa ne veravanu raa”

The *Guru* says that he is fearless and does not compromise. He is ready to face anything to satisfy his desire.

Then the *Sishya* says that, a person of your stature is capable to doing penance in the *Himaalayan* mountains even in such severe cold weather and remains in union with the state of *Bramhan*. In such a highest state, the person is not even aware of the presence of wild animals that roam in the nearby regions. You are such a meritorious person and you should not succumb to such worldly desires.

The *Sishya* further says that, you are like a yogi who always possess *Vairaagyam* (dispassion). He finally says to his *Guru*, knowing what is good and what is bad, and having the knowledge of all the *Sastras*, is it right on your part to become a slave for such worldly pleasures.

Even after listening to all these morals and values, there is no change seen in the behavior of *Brahmin*. After listening to the arguments of both the *Guru* and *Sishya*, the *Maadiga* realizes that this *Brahmin* is even prepared to give up his life but cannot control his desire on *Maathangi*. Thinking in this manner, he comes to a conclusion that the only way in front of him is to give away his wife to the *Brahmin*, in the form of charity. By doing so, he at least gains the *Daana phalamu* or *Daana suram* (the merit of donation) for offering it to the *brahmin*. In this way, he feels that his sacrifice and fame exist forever on this earth and speaks the same with the *Brahmin* in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Brathimaala valadayya baapanayya
Sathi dhaara poseda saami baapanayya--
Daana maanamu thamavaarike kaladu
PraaNamadiginanitthu bhaamanadigedi heccha
Thanuvu samsaaramu dhanamasthiramu chuuda
Thana keerthi sthiramu dhaara pattumi neevu ||”*

In the above *Daru*, the *Maadiga* says to the *Brahmin* that, he is prepared to do a *Daanamaanam* (sacrifice the woman) to him. He also gives an instance of the King *Harishchandra* who sells his wife to keep up his promise. He says that, you (the

brahmin) are a learned person. If you ask me, I am even prepared to give up my life and sacrificing my wife for charity (*Sathidaanam*) to you is not a matter.

The *Sishya* finally teaches his *Guru*, some moral values in an ironical way. He says that, as per *Maadiga*'s sacrifice, you accept his wife so that your desire gets satisfied. You better get contented with it and do not long for any more such evil desires. From now at least get satisfied with what you have, lead a virtuous life in a way as prescribed in the *Veda Sastras* (scriptures), understand the subtleties mentioned in the scriptures, focus towards attaining *Moksha* (salvation) and lead a life respected by everyone.

After having heard the words of *Maadiga* and the teachings of the *Sishya*, a ray of realization arises in *Guru*'s mind. The *Guru* repents for his bad thoughts and bows to his *Sishya*. This is said in a *Sanskrit slokam*:

*“PreeNaathi yessucharithaihi pitharam saputraha
Yadbhartureva ithamicchathi tatkaLatram
Tanmitra maa padi sukhecha samakriyam ya
Dethathrayam jagathi puNya krutho labhanthe”*

The meaning of the above sloka is as follows: A son, who, with his virtuous character makes his father happy, is said to be a real son. A woman who thinks of the welfare of her husband, is a true wife. The one who stands as a support and shares the difficulties and happiness of a person is said to be a true friend. The one who is associated with such meritorious people is known as a *PuNyaathmaa* (Virtuous).

In this way, the *Guru* praises his *Sishya* in many ways and salutes him for preventing him to commit any mistake.

The *Sishya* in turn apologizes his *Guru* for what he has said.

Then, the *Guru* speaks to the *Maadiga* and repents for his mistake. He praises the great qualities of the *Maadiga* that is described in a *Daru*, in *Bhoopala raaga* set to *Aadi taaLa*.

*“Ila neevanti vaaninindu ne gaana
Thalapa puNyudaveeve dhanyuda veeve—”*

In the above *Daru*, the *Guru* praises *Maadiga* that he hasn't seen a person with such noble qualities till now. A person generally gives charity in the form of *Dhana* (wealth), *Dhaanya* (paddy). But, the type of charity that you prepared to give is incomparable. Though you said many times that you belong to low caste. As you are a pure-hearted person, no impurities will harm you. The *Guru* further says that he is a *brahmin* and studied many *Veda-s*. Now I got realization, and cannot accept *Sathidaanam* (i.e., charity of wife).

The *Maadiga* replies to him in the form of a *Dwipada*.

*“Vinu baapanayya ee viswambulona
 Vinayambu meeranga vipramukhyulaku
 Nicchedanannadi yeeya lekunna
 Necchaina sampadalellanu tharugu
 Yashamulellanu maayu, napakeerthi vodamu
 Viduvaka paapambu vembadi dodaru—”*

The *Maadiga* explains many *Dharma suutraas*. He tells about the sin of not keeping up the promises given to a *Brahmin*. Such a person loses all his wealth. He loses his respect and fame. He remains sinful forever. He also says that, the *Guru* desired for his wife, at first. Upon his request, the *Maadiga* promises to give away his wife in charity and now he cannot go back on his promise. In such a condition, unable to decide how to proceed further, the *brahmin* prays to lord Parameswara. This is described in a *sloka* and a *Daru*.

Daru *“Kata kata emi sethu paramesa—
 Vitudanaithi mohinchithi paramesa—ee
 Vetha tholagajeyave paramesa
 1. Maadiga vaadaithe paramesa – ee
 Maguvanu kommaneni paramesa
 Kaadante bedirineni paramesa –
 Nannu kaavumeeveLanu paramesa
 2. Velimi poyenu paramesa
 Vedamulu poyenu paramesa
 Maala gaakundaanu paramesa – abhi
 Maanamu gaavale paramesa”*

In the above *Daru*, the brahmin conveys to Lord Parameswara with devotion, all the above things that had happened, and prays to Him.

The *Maadigaa* also prays to *Parameswara* in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Buddhi ga mosamaayane
Boochula yekimeeda
Koddi baapadu sati gori icchedanante
Duddu petti vaddaneni—
Baapure naa satyabhangamu valanenu
Paapamu vadame kadaa
Kori daana bhangamu gaakunda cheyumu
Kondaveeti jangamma—”*

In the above *Daru*, the *Maadiga* conveys his worry to the Lord and prays Him that his *Sathidaanam* (charity of wife) should happen uninterruptedly.

Then the *Maathangi* woman prays to the Lord *Parameswara* and explains her condition to Him and seeks refuge.

*“Ibbandi brathukaaye – dabbu baapani maata
Thabbibbaaye naa magadu – mabbu kaadai nannu
Dobbeni nebovanante – debbateeyaga vaccheni –
Kattadi baapanayya titteni raavaddani
Ottu vetteni magadu, pattenu kommapoye
Mettina komma poye – gattu vilthudaa kaavave
PraaNamu kannanu maaname ekkudu
Naanaavidhamula chuudanu
Maanamu heenamaina maanini brathukela
Deenuraalanu kaavave”*

In the above *Daru*, the *Maathangi* lady expresses her sadness and prays to Lord *Parameswara* through this *Daru*. She feels that, for a *Pathivratha* (an orthodox traditional woman) character is more important than life. So, she cannot leave her

husband and go with another man. She prays Lord Parameswara to protect her from this situation.

In this way, all the three people pray individually, expressing their grief and seeking refuge at the Lord. Impressed by their devotion, Lord *Parameswara* along with Goddess *Parvathi* appears in front of them.

Firstly, the Lord addresses the *Maadiga* in the form of a *Dwipada*.

“*Vinavoyi maathanga veeraagraNya*
Ninu bolanevvaru neraru jagathi—
Polathiyu neevunu pudami vardhilla
Evvaru neekadha nerpada vinina
Nevvaru nee kadha nelimi chuuchinanu
Vaariki thanayulu vaibhavonnathulu
Gaaravambuna nitthu kalyaaNamuganu”

In this *Dwipada*, Lord *Parameswara* says to *Madiga* that no one can match you in *DaanaguNa* (act of charity), as you were prepared to give away your wife as well, for charity to a *Vedic Brahmin*. For having such a pure mind, you are blessed, and all your sins are washed away. As a *Phalasaruthi*, those who listen to this story will be bestowed with wealth and will reach higher positions.

The Lord says to *Brahmin* in a *Vruttha Daru*.

“*Vinavayya Oo vipravarya –*
Thanara saayujyamichcheda nee veLa—”

Lord *Parameswara* asks the *Brahmin* as to why did your mind get polluted to such an extent. In spite of it, you have not committed any sin, and so you are blessed. As you have not deviated from following your *Dharma (DharmaBhanga)*, you are blessed with *Saayujya*. The Lord also blesses *Maadiga*, since his vow of charity is not broken (*Daanabhanga*) by granting him *Saaruupya*.

Then the Lord blesses the *Maathangi* lady with *Saameepya*, as she remained herself without losing her character (*Pathivrathaa bhanga*).

At last, the Lord blesses the *Sishya* and praises him for protecting his *Guru* from committing a sin, even though he is a child. *Parameswara* blesses the *Sishya* with *Saalokyam* (stay in the place of Lord) which is even desired by Lord *Brahma* and other Gods.

In this way, Lord *Parameswara* blessed with the *Brahmin* with *Saayujyam*, *Maadiga* with *Saruupyam*, *Maathangi* with *Saameepyam* and the *Sishya* with *Saalokyam*.

In this occasion, *Narada* and other *Kimpurushaas* sing *MangaLam* written in a poem.

“*Meti saaha raja virachitha*
Naataka rathnamuna melagu nalugurilonan
Paatimpa pedda yevvaru
Tetaga vidvaamsulaara telupaga valayun”

The moral of this *Yakshagaana* is that, the character is more valuable than one’s birth i.e., the caste, creed and community. This is proved in many occasions. during the conversations of *Maathangi* and *Maadiga*. On the other hand, a highly learned person like the *Guru*, unable to control his senses had to learn lessons from his disciple. This is depicted beautifully by *Shahaji*. The *Sishya* is described as the one with high respect towards his *Guru*.

In this manner, all the four characters have performed their duties sincerely and for this reason, they are granted liberation by the Lord *Parameswara*. This brings an end to the *Yakshagaana*. This is a completely an imaginary story (*Kalpitham*). *Vulgarity* in seen in some occasions of this *Yakshagaana*. The main *rasa* of this this *Yakshagaana* is *Srungaaram*. The explanation of *Dharma Sastras* by *Maadiga*, and *Pathivratha dharmas* by *Maathangi* exhibit *Shahaji*’s command over the *Vedic* scriptures and traditional values.

18. SACHI PURANDARAM:

The story of this *Yakshagaanam* is taken from the *PuraNas* which is not a very popular one. Similar to other *Yakshaganaas*, this also begins with a *MangaLaacharaNam* in *Naata raagam* set to *Jhampe taaLam*. Following it is the

IshtaDevatha praardhana in the form of slokas, and the *Naandi* part in the form of a *Dwipada*. The *Kathaa sangraha Dwipada* gives a summary of the story.

*“SriPurambuna munisishyundokkarudu
Thaapasula nupanatthari vakradanthu
Danuvaadu vedka tho narudenchutayunu
Anuvonda Kapila kaNvaadulacchatiki
Thapamonarimpaga tharali vacchutayu
Kupthudai yappudu kumbhodarundu
Munula thapovignamulu seya vaaru
Kanali kumbhodaru garvamaNachutayu
Nadiyella vini pulomaasurudegi
Mudamuna munulanu mardinchutayunu
Munulu devendrunitho moralida nathadu
Vini pulomanu jampa vedalu Margamuna
Devendrudunu Sachidevi anyonya bhaavamul
Mikkili paraga chuuchutayu
Sachi kanyakaku nindra sachivuna kapudu—
Pani vadi aanandabharithudai chaala
Ghanudu sahendrudu gaavinchu bhuvini
Sarasa sathkavi varul sannuthi seya
DharaNi lo naachandra taaraarkamuganu”*

The meaning of the above *Dwipada* is as follows. The Sages *Kapila*, *KanVa* and others prepare to do penance at *Sripuram*. *Kumbhodara* being angry with them, creates many obstructions to their penance, and in turn the sages defeat him. By listening to it, the demon named *Pulomaasura* becomes furious and he too creates hurdles to the Sages’ penance. The Sages pray to Lord *Indra* for protection. *Indra* defeats *Pulomaasura* and marries his daughter *Sachi devi*. Their marriage is performed in *Thanjavur*, which is ruled by *Shaahaji*. This is the brief summary of the *Yakshagaana*.

This follows the *GaNesha Paatra pravesa Daru* which is same as that in the other *Yakshagana-s*. Then the story begins with the *Suutradhaara vachanam*.

The *Maharshis* (sages) *Kapila*, *KaNva* and others, order their *Sishya* (disciple) *Vakradantha*, to search for a convenient place to do penance. This is depicted in a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

“*Gunisi aaduchu chaala gonkuchu beduruchu*
Panasalu chaduvuchu paka paka naguchu
Munula dalachi thappu mrokkulu mrokkuchu
Thanaraga nitu vakradanthudu vedale”

While searching for a suitable place, *Vakradantha* meets the *Suutradhaara*. He tells the *Suutradhaara* the reason for his arrival. The *Suutradhaara* tells about a place in the Kingdom of *ChoLa* located on the bank of the river *Kaveri*, which consists of several pilgrims. Then *Vakradantha* decides to go to that place and check its suitability to perform penance. There, he could feel the sacredness of that place and describes the pilgrims in and around that region. He decides to go and convey his *Gurus* about the place that he has seen, in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Vinaroi vedkatho vinnavinchedanu*
Jenulella mikkili sannuthi seya
Manjula navaratna mayamaina yeti
Thanjaapurambuna thanruchu nundu
Sakala Saahitya lakshaNa saara vidulu
AkaLanka maanasundathi dayaa parudu
Satya sandhudu sadaachaara sampannu
Dathyantha nayasaali yathula sadguNudu
Baagugaa Saaha bhoopaala sekharudu
Bhoga devendrudai poluponda nelu—
Laalithamagu kamalaanagarambu
Adi thapoyogyamounani nischayinchi
Mudamuna poyeda munula pilvaganu”

In the above *Dwipada*, *Vakradantha* describes the glory of the *ChoLa* King *Shahaji* and his majesty. He determines that the region *Kamalaapuram* is a very suitable place to perform penance and conveys the same to his *Gurus*.

The appearance of *Maharshis* is beautifully described in the form of two poems.

“*Siramuna kemjedal cheluvu meeraga jutti*
Poluponda menula bhuuthi puusi
Peda peda rudraaksha perulu dhariyinch
Vilasillu japa sarambulanu batti
Maanugaa danda kamandaluvulu puuni
Sarasa kaashaya vasthramulu gatti
Malayuchu vyaaghra chermambulu chankanu betti
Sankaru dalachuchu santhasamuna”

With their long hairs tied on top of their heads, smearing their body with the sacred ashes, wearing *Rudraakshaas* (sacred beads), holding *Danda Kamandalaas* (the traditional objects used by a sage), wearing orange clothes, holding a roll of tiger’s skin, chanting the name of Lord *Sankara* in their mind, the *Sages* arrive to *Kamalaapuram*, to perform penance.

These sages begin doing penance, desiring the welfare of the world.

In another scene, *Pulomaasura*, a demon, appoints his assistant, *Kumbhodara* to disturb the penance of the Sages. This is described in a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

“*Suulamu chetha batti sottamuuthi ega betti*
Kolaahalamu seyuchu Kumbhodarudu vacchenu”

Holding a trident in his hand, and making a lot of noise, the demon *Kumbhodara* arrives to the place where the Sages are doing penance.

Kumbhodara troubles the Sages in that region to stop chanting the name of *Hari*. He then sees the *Kapila*, *KanVa* and other *Maharshis*, and asks them to stop their penance otherwise he would kill them with his trident. He says this is the form of a *Daru*.

“*Orori munulaara ugrathapambu*
Meeru chesedarela menulu mariachi—
Mee raktha maamsamul medadu tho guurchi
Boranu bhujjyinthu bhuuthamul pogada”

In this way, the demon frightens the sages.

The angry sages come out of their penance and punish him with their *Dandam*. The injured *Kumbodhara* runs away and reports this matter to his master *Pulomaasura*. Then, the demon *Pulomaasura* becomes furious and comes to punish the *Sages*, which is described in a *Daru*.

“*Ghora ruupamuna vacchenu Pulomudu—*”

The demon *Puloma* with his ferocious looks comes and asks his followers to punish the *Sages*, disturb their penance, destroy all their belongings. His assistant *Kumbodhara* and other followers torture all the *Maharshis* in several ways. Unable to bear the sufferings put by the demons, all the sages headed by *Kapila* and *KaNva* start to the abode of Lord Indra seeking refuge. At that time, Lord Indra arrives to his court. His charm and arrival are described in a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

“*Cheluvu meeragaa vacchenu devendrudu*”

Then arrives *Rambha*. Her arrival is described in the form of a *Paatra pravesa Daru*. As this describes the beauty of her, this is also a *VarNan Daru*.

“*Rambha vacchenapudu sourabhamu nanu—*”

Then comes all the *Sages* running towards Lord Indra, to protect them from the demons. The *Sages* appear to be injured and disturbed from their normal appearance. Then Lord Indra asks them the reason for their condition, in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Vinumu maa vithamella vinnavinchadamayya Nirjarendra—*”

The *Sages* express their sorrow in this way. For the welfare of the world, they are doing *Tapas*, and their penance is disturbed by the demons under the leadership of *Pulomaasura*. These *Sages* request Lord Indra to protect them from the demons and see to that their penance continues without any disturbance. Then Indra gives assurance to them, in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Thaapasa varulaara nenepuna mee bhayamella*

Baapedamu balamu chuupedanu –

Chanudi mee thapovanamu cheragaa vedka meeraga

Having got the assurance from the *Devendra*, they return to their place. Then, Lord Indra asks the *Deva Senaadhipathi* (*Lord Kumaaraswamy*) to come to his court. The glory of *Lord Kumaaraswamy* is described in the form of a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

“*Panthamu meera vedalenu baagugaa nemali nekki—*”

Indra explains the situation stated by the *Sages*, to *Kumaraswamy*. *Indra* also calls all the thirty-three crore gods along with Lord *Chandra*. The arrival of *Chandra* is described in the form of a *Paatra pravesa Daru* in *Asaveri raaga* set to *Ata taala*.

“*Pacchani duppati gatti pasidi paavaalu metti*

Vacchenu chandrudu puula vanki chetha batti—”

In another scene, *Sachi devi*, the daughter of *Pulomsara* comes to *Sringaara vanam* along with her companions to play *Kolatam*. This is described in a *Paatra pravesa Daru*.

“*Voyaaramuga vedale nandamu meera—*”

The way she plays *Kolatam* with her companions, is described in the form of a *VarNan Daru*.

“*Neri kurulanu viri saramulanu velayanu*

Sarasatha paiyeda jaaraganu—

Sarasudaina yeti Saaha rajendruni pari pari vidhamuna paaduchunu”

Lord *Indra* sees *Sachi devi* and falls in love her. He says to *Chandra* in the form of a *VarNana Daru* in *SankaraabharaNa raaga* set to *Aadi taaLa*.

“*Kanugonti ve Chandra kanyaneeveLa*

Manasija seramu ee baala—”

Indra describes the beauty of *Sachi devi* in the above *Daru*. He also sends *Chandra* to find out the details of that girl and let him know about it.

In the meanwhile, *Sachi devi* sees *Indra* and falls in love with him. She feels the pain of separation from him which is expressed in the form of two *Darus*.

“TaaLa jaalane cheliyaro

TaaLa jaalane muddugumma”

In the meanwhile, *Chandra* approaches her and asks about her details. Their conversation is in the form of a *Samvaada Daru*.

Chandra: *“Ichata nee trova boyina indrudaathaniki ne
Sachi undaa naa peru chandrunde sakhiya”*

Sachidevi: *“Indrudippudu vegame echata bovuchunnaadu
Chandraa telpumu naaku sarasatha meeraa—”*

In the above *Daru*, both introduce with each other.

Later, she comes to know that Lord *Indra* has come to fight with her father, *Pulomaasura*. *Sachi* knowing this, requests *Indra* not to kill her father.

In another scene, *Indra* notices *Pulomaasura* and roars in anger that he would kill *Pulomaasura* for the sins he has committed towards the sages. His conversation with *Pulomaasura* is described in a *Samvaada Daru* in *Mohana raaga* set to *Aadi taaLa*.

Pulomaasura: *“Chaalura ee maatalelara Devendra
Suulamuche ninnu kuulakrummeda”*

Devendra: *“Ee laagu garvamuletiki puloma
Vaalaayamuga ninnu vadhiyinthunori—”*

In this way, the both fight with each other. In that war, *Devendra* defeats *Pulomaasura* and is about to cut his head. At that time, *Chandra* stops him from killing the demon. He gives an advice to *Indra* not to kill him, as his daughter is in love with you. Then *Indra* says that, he would first kill *Pulomaasura* and then marry his daughter. *Chandra* replies to him in the form of a *Daru*.

Chandra: *“Danujuni champina tharuNi praaNamulicchu
Munulakai veenini champanela”*

In the above *Daru*, *Chandra* says that if *Pulomaasura* is killed, *Sachidevi* also gives up her life. So better do not kill him.

Indra: *“Munulendu bothenemi danujundendu bothe nemi
Vanajaakshi kaligithe chaalu--”*

In the above *Daru*, *Indra* doesn't show any concern either towards the *Sages* or towards the demon *Pulomaasura*. He merely shows interest and love towards *Sachidevi*.

Then *Indra* asks *Chandra* to get him married to *Sachidevi*.

On listening to this proposal, *Pulomaasura* feels happy and agrees to get his daughter married to *Indra*. This is said in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Dhanyudanaithi neeveLa vannemeeraganu
KanyaamaNi nicchedanu gaikonumindra”*

In reply to the demon, *Indra* asks him to perform the marriage in *Thanjavur* which is ruled by the King *Saahendra*.

All these marriage discussions are conveyed to *Sachi devi* through one of her companions. She feels immensely happy.

In another scene, *Devendra* prepares to go to *Thanjavur* along with his relatives and friends. This is described in a *Daru*.

*“Suralu khecharulu kinnarulu sannuthi seya karinekki vedukanu
Aruduga Sachi ni pendlaadaga vedalenu puruhuuthudunu thanjaa puramu
cheraganu—”*

Then *Pulomaasura* arrives to *Thanjavur* along with his daughter. This is described in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Thanaranga thana bandhu thathulella koluvagaa
Thanayanu pucchukonighana vibhavamuna
Ghanudu pulomudu Garima meeraganu
Chanudenchenipudu tanjaapuri cheranu”*

Then *Devendra* contemplates on Lord *Parameswara* and requests Him to perform his marriage. Then Lord *Siva* appears along with His consort *Gouri devi*.

*“Deva devudu vedale srimahaadevudu vedale
Devudu sri sankarudu Teevi meeraga nipudu*

Sri vrushabha vaahanamupai vedukatho nekki

Ganga jedalalo tarangamulu meera

Angaja harudu divya mangaLaa kaarudu ||

Naaga charmothhareeyamu naaga bhuushaNamulamara

Naaga mada mardanudu naaga sobhilluchu ||

Baala chandra chandrikalu phaalamura velasilla

Laalitha rudraaksha maalika lalara ||

Suula Damaru chaapamuluc kela avadharinchi bhaktha

Paaludaina Sree Saaha bhuupaalu daivamaina yaadi ||

|| Deva devudu vedale ||

On the prayers of *Devendra*, Lord *Siva* arrives to *Indra*'s wedding. Lord *MahavishNu*, *Brahma* and others too arrive to the wedding. The *Devarshis* chant *MangaLaashtakaas*. *Narada*, *Kinnera* and *Kimpurushaas* sing *MangaLa geethaas* on *Sachi-Devendrulu*.

“Gouri ki ramya vihaariNi ki – korikalosagedu guNa nidhi ki || Sobhaane

Devuniki mahaa devuniki bhaashaadhipanutha bhaavunaku

Shree vaibhavamula paavanudai thagu sevaka nidhi yagu sivunikini ||

Bhosala saahaaji bhuvibhuni bhaasillu premanu paalinchu

Vaasiga shobhana vaibhava santhathi dheesampadalidu devunaku ||

Sobhaane

In this manner, the *Sachipurandara kalyaana naatakam* written by the King *Shahaji* gives happiness to the scholars and bestows happiness to all those who listen to this. This is the *Phala shruthi* of this *Yakshagaana*. *Shahaji* dedicated this *Naatakam* to Lord *Tyagesa*. He says that in the form of a concluding line.

“Sri tyagesa saamab sivaarpaNamasthu”

In this *Yakshagaana*, the prose content is more compared to the poems. A bit of vulgarity is included in the story for the sake of humor. For many *Darus*, the *raagas* are not mentioned, and for some others it is mentioned that the *Darus* are to be sung as a *Maatraka* (?).

19. RATHI KALYAANAM:

This is a story based on an epic which is not so popular one and belongs to the *Prasiddha* category. The *MangaLaacharaNam* starts with the *Jaya sabdam*. The *MangaLa geetham* in this *Yakshagaana* is written in praise of *Lord KrishNa*. Following the *Ishta devatha praardhana*, a special type of poem known as *Naandi Dwipada*, is present in this *Yakshagaana*. After this, the *Kathaa sangraha dwipada* begins.

“*Mahithamou tatkathaa Marga metlanina*
Rahini manmadha mahaaraaju vacchutayu –
TaraLaakshi ratee devi daadiyu sakhulu—
Shaaha naadhudonarinche navya naatakambu
Aa chakra vaaLaacha laachalaachakra
Maa chandra taaraarkamai yoppu gaatha”

It means, the *Manmadha maharaja* arrives to the court followed by *Chandra*, *Vasantha* and *Pavana* respectively. The spies get the information about *Rathi devi* and convey it to the King *Manmadha*. *Chandra* gathers the complete information from the maids of *Rathi devi* and arranges *Manmadha's* marriage with her. This *Nataka* is written by the ‘*Udaara srungaara vesha bhaashaa vibhuushitha*’ King *Shahaji*. It contains the *Vighneswara Paatra pravesa Daru* as in the other *Yakshagana-s*. The story begins with a conversation between *Suutradhara* and *Katika*.

The King *Manmadha* arrives to his court. This is described in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Puvvula vankee chebatti – puvvula duppati gatti*
Puvvu vilthudu vacche deva – puvvu boNi surati veeva
Pongaaru manmadhudu vacche – Bangaaru sommula thecche”

Then arrives *Chandra*, *Malaya maarutha* and *Vasantha*, the followers of the King. Their arrival is described in three *Paatra pravesa Darus* respectively.

Chandra: “*Chandanamula vannela chandaala nigguleena*
Chandamaama chittajuni sabhanu cheravacche”

Malayamaarutha: “*Thaavulu vedajallunatti puuvula kommalu patti*
Bhaavajuni koluva niccha – pavanundu badalika lallaraa”

Vasantha: “*Vintha puuvula needu lenna -- koka vallevaatu*
Kaanthulu dikkula heccha – ghanudu vasanthudu vacche”

Then arrives the *Vesyaas* (*Koluvu bhogaalu* – the court dancers) followed by *Katika vaadu*, *Gundodarudu* etc. to the court. Next comes the *Vegulu* (spies) who report the happenings in the Kingdom, to the King. They say that their country is prosperous with timely rainfall, enough availability of food, and people are happy under your rule.

At one place, there is a beautiful woman doing penance. Her beauty is described in a *Dwipada*.

“*Vinavayya deva ee viswambunandu*
Kanugonti vinthayokkati apuurvamuganu
Chanduru kannu Prasanna mou vintha
Indevarammula niinuvismayamu—”

The same is described in a *Daru*.

“*Ayyaa vinavayyaa yevvathoo – aa bangaaru bomma—*
Bhoja kanyakayo deva – raja kanyakayo
Raja kanyakayo bhogi – raja kanyakayo—”

She is a stunning beauty who is following *Mouna vratham* (taking the vow of silence) and is in a deep penance. Another woman is providing the materials required for her worship.

Then, the King replies, in the form of a *Daru*.

“-- *Vaarini chuuchina vaaralu leru*
Naa mahimalerungaka – naadu viswaamitrudaa
Menakaku daasudaayegaa Chandra”

The King shows interest to see that lady and boasts himself by saying that he possesses the ability to change the mind of anyone and turn her towards him.

He along with his three companions viz., *Chandra*, *Vasantha* and *Malayamaarutha*. This is described in a *Daru*.

“*Saari vedale maarundu hoyalu meera—*”

In this situation, a funny scene is added to the story in the conversation between an old woman and an old *Vedic* brahmin. This is due to the *Pushpa baaNam* (i.e., an arrow of flowers) shot by *Manmadha* on the old couple. This scene is added to exhibit the power of *Manmadha* and his capacity to attract anyone irrespective of their age.

As *Manmadha* along with his companions move forward, they notice this girl along with her friends playing *Bommalaata* (a game of puppets). She is described in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Vacchenu kanya thana nicchelula thoda vintha*
Mucchatalaaduchu nipudu – bommala peLLi seyaga”

In this context, some influence of Kannada Yakshagaana is seen the *Suutradhaara vachana*. *Rathi devi* performs a *Basavani nomu* (a worship native to Karnataka region).

After the *Basavani nomu*, she plays *Kolaatam* which is written in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Neri kurulanu viri saramulu merayanu –*
Paruvadi giri raja padamulanu
Sarasudaina yeti Saahendruni
Pari pari vidhamuna paaduchunu”

The above *Daru* describes the way they sing and dance during the *Kolaatam*. In this game, some girls dress themselves as a boy, and then play the game.

“*Brahmachari kattuu gatti – paina darbha munja gatti*
Brahmachari vedale chetha – patina pusthakamlara”

The above *Daru* describes the way the *Baalika bramhachaari* (the girl in the guise of an unmarried boy) plays in *Kolaatam*.

The King *Manmadha* sees the *Baalikaa brahmachaari* and says to his companions that he is going to shoot *Manmadha baaNam* (an arrow of attraction) on these girls and display his power once again.

Due to the power of *Manmadha*, the girls and the disguised boys gets attracted to each other. This is described in the form of a *Samvaada Daru*.

In another scene, the arrival of *Rathi Devi* to the *Srungaara vanam* along with *Daadi* (maid), which is described in a *Daru*.

“*Mutthela kamma chaaya chekilla*
krotta vennela gaaya
Chittaru bomma chaaya vacchenu
Srungaaramu heccha vedukanu - Sree Rati devi daaya”

There she performs *Gouri puja* along with her maid *AliveNi*. It is described in a *Mangala geetham*:

“*Jaya jaya MangaLam Subha mangaLam----*
Aa Chandra mukhi momu – ne juuchinadi modalu
Naa chittamu vasamayenu –”

From his spies, *Manmadha* comes to know about the *Gouri puja* being performed by *Rathi devi*. He then orders *Chandra* to find out the details of the girl.

On his order, *Chandra* visits the *Srungaara vanam* to see the girl and gets mesmerized by seeing her beauty. He returns to *Manmadha* and conveys it to him.

To see the beauty of *Rathi devi*, *Manmadha* himself comes to the garden. This is described in a *Daru*.

“*Paccha viltundu vacchenu – hoyalu meera –*”

Her beauty is described by *Manmadha* in a *Dwipada*.

“*Aurauraa! Yee komma yaparanji bomma –*”

The same is described in a *Daru*.

“*Sommoo puvvula kommoo chittaru
Bommoo ee muddula gummo –*”

Rathi devi sees *Manmadha* and becomes astonished by his charm. She shares it with her maid in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Chuudave Cheliya, yee vagakaani*

- 1). *Indrudo kaaka yupendrudo eethadu*
- 2). *Narudo kaaka kinnarado eethadu*
- 3). *Nalakuubarudo kaaka naludo eethadu*
- 4). *Kanthudo kaaka jayanthudo eethadu*

In the above *Daru*, *Rathi devi* amazed by his charm compares *Manmadha* with some of the handsome persons described in the epics i.e., *Indra* or *Upendra*, *Nara* or *Kinnera*, *Nalakuubara* or *Nalaa*, *Kanthu* or *Jayanthu*.

Her maid asks *Rathi* to prepare to go back to their home as they are already late. With a lot of unwillingness, she accompanies her maid. This is described in a *Daru*.

“*Vagakaadau maruni nagavu – mogamu tirigi juuchuchu—*”

Unable to forget her memories, *Manmadha* shares his feelings with his three companions in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Chelikaada! O Chandrayyaa – chelini juuchinadi modhalu—*”

Manmadha out of deep feeling of love towards *Rathi*, expresses his feelings to his companions and says that, his *Manmadha baaNas* (love arrows) are affecting him in turn. His companion *Pavana*, unable to see the pangs of separation of *Manmadha*, suggests *Chandra* to find out the details of *Rathi*.

Then *Chandra* enquires the details of *Rathi* from her maid. She replies saying that, *Rathi* did penance and *Gouri pooja* to be blessed with a good husband. Then she takes him to *Rathi* where he directly conveys the feelings of *Manmadha* to *Rathi*.

Chandra says this to *Rathi devi* in the form of a *Daru*.

“*Ratidevi! vinumammaa – Ratanaala bommaa...*”

After listening to *Chandra*'s proposal, *Rathi* agrees to it with a feel of shy on her face. *AliveNi* who understood her feelings says to *Chandra* in the form of a *Daru*.

*“Manasaara pendli kumaaruni bandhu
Janula thodi themmu Chandrudaa
Raajillu shree saaha rajendru thanja
Raajadhaaniki vega raavayya ||
Ala sobhana dravyamula thoda memu
Chelagi thanjaapuri cheremu
Memu maa chuttalu premanu saaha
Bhuumeesu cheremu mudamuna”*

Then *AliveNi* asks *Chandra* to come along with the groom (i.e., *Manmadha*) to *Thanjavur*, the place ruled by King *Saheendra*. She says that she along with the bride and other relatives will arrive there and make all arrangements.

Chandra returns to *Manmadha* and explains all that has happened, in a *Samvaada Daru*.

Manmadha: *“Nee vanti chelikaadu nenaruna kaluga
Nee vedka chekuude ninnela kaluga”*

Chandra: *“Ve vega sree rathi devi kalyaNa
Mee veLa nagunu rammee panchabaaNa”*

Manmadha: *“Alaage neevu chuttaala pilipinchu
Laalitha leela kalyaana monarinchu”*

In the above *Daru*, *Manmadha* firstly thanks *Chandra* for his key role in arranging his marriage. He orders his companion, *Malayamaarutha*, to invite all the Gods and relatives to his marriage.

Lord *Devendra*, *Bramha*, *VishNu* and *Parameswara* along with other Gods come to attend *Rathi-Manmadha Kalyaana*. On this occasion, all the Gods sing *MangaLa geethas* as mentioned below.

*“Gouri ki ramya vihaariNi ki – chaaru krupaa rasahaariNi ki
Meerina premanu – dheerula brochuchu
Korikalosagedi guNanidhi ki
Devuni ki mahaa devuniki devaadhipa nutha bhaavuniki
Sree vaibhavamulu thaga paavanudai thagu
Sevaka nidhi yagu sivuniki ni
Bhosala Sahaaji bhuvu vibhuni – bhaasilu premanu baalinchu
Vaaniki sobhana vaibhava santhathi
Dhee sampada lidu devuniki sobhaname sobhaname”*

This YakshagaaNa written by King *Shahaji* is completely based on *Srungeera rasa*. In this, *Shahaji* mentions about *Basava vratham*, a worship usually performed in Karnataka. In this context, he also mentions few lines of Kannada language which shows his knowledge on the other languages of South India.

7.1.1 Daruvu-s and other Compositions of Shahaji

Songs in Operas or Dance Dramas or Yakshagaana-s are known as Daru-s. The term *Daru* is derived from Ancient word ‘*Dhruva*’. The *Dhruva Gaanam* has been explained in Bharatha’s *Natya Sastra*. He mentioned that the songs sung during the *Natyam* (Drama) are known as *Dhruvas*. He classified *Dhruva* into 5 categories. They are: *Praavesika Dhruva*, *Aakshepika Dhruva*, *Praasaadiki Dhruva*, *Antara Dhruva*, *Nishkraamika/Naiskraamika Dhruva*. He specified a raaga, *Jaathi Gaandhaaroo Dichyeva* for singing the *Dhruva Gaanam*. The theme of the *Daruvu* may be a praise, related to love or a description or a person’s invitation etc. The words are as simple as a normal conversation. A *Daruvu* has many *Charanaas* (stanzas with similar music). But in Operas (or *Sangeetha Naatakas*) such as *Prahlaada Bhakthi Vijayam*, *Noukaa Charitram* of Tyagaraja, the music is highly classical. Based on the Theme or meaning of the *Sahityam*, the *Daruvus* can be classified as:

1. *VarNana Daruvu*: a song on a location or person or a character
2. *Paatra Pravesa Daruvu*: a song of a character as it enters the stage
3. *Swagatha Daruvu*: a song on a character talking to himself

4. *Swaagatha Daruvu*: a song on inviting a character on to the stage
5. *Kolata Daruvu*: songs on *Kolatam* or stick-plays
6. *Samvaada Daruvu*: it can be called as *Uttara-Pratyuttara Daruvu* (i.e., a conversation between two persons or two groups in the form of songs)
7. *Jikkini Daruvu*: It is a song containing *Jatis* with *Sahityam*

All the above types of *Darus* can be seen in Shahaji's Yakshaganas.

The *Daruvu-s* or *Daru-s* in Shahaji's Yakshagaana Prabandha-s are very unique. Through these Works, the expertise of Music, Literature and Dance is clearly understood.

1. Sallaamu Daru: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

"Karpooora DhavaLaanga " in *Bhairavi raga – Ata taaLa*

2. Prabandha daru: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

"Indu kaLaadhara " in *Bilahari raga – Adi taaLa*

*The same Daru with minor changes is used in Tyaaga Vinoda chitra Prabandhamu as a JikkiNi daru.

3. Padaabhinaya daru: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

"Deva devesa nannepudu " – in *Saaveri ragam – Adi taaLam*

4. Avyaapasavya samapadaru : Tyaaga vinoda chitra Prabandhamu

" Kanaru teeru teeruna " – *Regupti ragam – Adi taaLa*

5. Kramasaptasvara varNaardha Lilaadaru: Tyaaga vinoda chitra Prabandhamu

"Tarunu levvaru" in *Ata taalam* (Raga name is not mentioned)

6. Moharam: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

Taalam is not mentioned, just Muktaayis have been given

7. GaNapati Kautham : Pancharatna Prabandham

“*Karimukha hara sura*” – Raga and TaaLa are not mentioned.

8. Sollukattu: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

9. Trikala svaram: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

10. VarNa trikaala Sollu: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

11. Jathi: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

12. Svarajati : Tyaaga vinoda chitra Prabandhamu

“*Naayaka bhuvana vidhaayaka*” - Raga and TaaLa are not mentioned.

13. Svara sollu jati: Pancharatna Prabandhamu

14. VarNa sollu jati : Pancharatna Prabandhamu

15. Pancha ghaatam: Tyaaga vinoda chitra Prabandhamu

“*Saa padavvaaho* “ - Raga and TaaLa are not mentioned.

16. Layagraahi: Vishnu Pallavi Sevaa Prabandhamu

“*Keeramulu cheruva vacho ruchulu....*”.

**Ganapathi Kautham*: In *Sangeetha Sastram*, it is mentioned as a *Vaadya Prabandham* and looks similar to the composition, *Kavitham*. In *Sangeetha Ratnaakaram* (12th century), the characteristics of *Kavitham* is mentioned as below:

Sl: ‘*Ithyudgraaha Dhruvou krutvaa svodgraahaantya dale athavaa*

Svodgraahē yatra mukthistham kavitham kavayoo viduhu’

Apart from these, *MangaLaas*, *DhavaLaas*, *Ashtapadis*, *Keerthanaas*, *Ashtakaas*, *Heccharikaas* and several other compositions are used in *Shahaji’s Yakshagaanas*.

CHAPTER 8

YAKSHAGANA PRESENTATION IN AUDIO & VIDEO FORMATS

Unfortunately, among the 20 Yakshagana-s of Shahaji, neither notation nor tunes are available for any of the songs in these Yakshagana-s. As a result, some of the music experts have set their own tunes for the songs. In a similar manner, some Dance experts have also composed Music and choreography for some of the Yakshagana-s. Late. Dr. Uma Rama rao is one such expert Dancer who choreographed and performed the Yakshagana-s '*Sri Vighneswara KalyaNam*' and '*Seetha KalyaNam*' of King Shahaji. Prof. P.Sambamurthy has composed notation and published them in a book '*Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham of Shahaji*'. The same tunes were sung by Dr. Suguna Purushotthaman and her team. This is released and popularized in the form of an Audio CD. Similarly, some All India Radio stations such as Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam have taken up Project works of bringing the Telugu Yakshagana-s of various authors into limelight. For this purpose, they invited the expert composers of Music, made them set Music to these Yakshagana-s, perform it with several artists, record and archive them for posterity.

In this regard, the researcher has searched for Telugu Yakshagana-s in the AIR stations such as Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Cuddapah, Hyderabad and Chennai. One such Yakshagana of Shahaji, the '*Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham*' is composed by smt M. Sudharani and her team and archived at AIR, Visakhapatnam.

The researcher being a native of Visakhapatnam, approached smt M. Sudharani to set Music and perform for her Audio CD, as a part of her Project work.

'*Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham*' is the only recorded Yakshagana available in Audio format. This Yakshagana is released and popularized by Dr. Suguna Purushotthaman. In this Yakshagana, the notation for the songs are composed by Prof. P.Sambamurthy as the original tunes and notations are not available.

8.1 VIDEO CD – KIRATHA VILAASAM:

“The Yakshaganam plays are often linked to *Kathakkali* plays of Kerala or Kuchipudi plays of Andhra. The latter, in the country of its origin (Andhra) is called

Yakshagana though its style of Music has now been replaced by the Carnataki style⁴⁰. For this reason, the researcher has chosen a traditional Kuchipudi Dancer for composing Dance for the Video Yakshagana.

Submitting a Visual CD of a Yakshaganam that is recorded and presented before the audience at Kalabharathi auditorium, Visakhapatnam.

This was choreographed by a traditional Kuchipudi Dance artist and Central *Sangeetha Natak Academy* awardee Smt. A. B Balakondala rao, a disciple of the legendary Dance Guru (late) Sri Vempati Chinna Satyam. She is also the founder director of *Kuchipudi Kala Kendram*, Visakhapatnam. Music composed by Smt. M. Pavani, AIR artist and also Kuchipudi Yakshagana Music composer and Dancer. Sri A. A. B Aditya, an internationally reputed artist and the assistant choreographer for this program.

This Yakshagana is performed in an auditorium and is released in the form of a CD by the Hon'ble Registrar of Andhra University Prof. K. Niranjan. The special invitees are Sri Pasumarthi Kesav Prasad, Founder Secretary, Akhila Bharatha Kuchipudi Natya Kala Mandali, Kuchipudi, Sri K.V. Satyanarayana, Vice Chairman, Andhra Pradesh Sangeetha Nruthya Academy, Andhra Pradesh and Dr. Sri Tadepalli, Director, Yakshagana Center Member, Sangeet Natak Academy, Ministry of culture, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

Photos of CD release function and the Yakshagana program



⁴⁰ "Yakshagana" (p-83)





8.2 AUDIO CD – VISHNU PALLAKI SEVA PRABANDHAM:

This Yakshagana is being submitted in the form of an Audio CD. The music for this Audio Yakshagana is composed and performed by *Vidushi* Smt. M. Sudha Rani and her team. Smt Sudharani is a Top graded artist in AIR and a performing artist of international repute. All the participants in this Audio recording are AIR artists. The list of songs in this Yakshagana are composed in the following ragas:

S No	Name of the song	Raagam	Taalam
--	Introduction speech		
1.	Jaya Ramaa Puravaasa	Naata	Khanda chapu
2.	Sharanu Sharanu	Aarabhi	Mishra chapu
3.	Dwipadha	Suddha Dhanyasi, Mohana, Hindolam, Saraswathi, Kambhoji (slokam),	Khanda chapu
4.	Mudhamuna	Hamsadhwani	Aadi
5.	Kanakabhushana	Aahiri	Mishra chapu
6.	Koluy Unnade	Pantumarali	Aadi
7.	Jaya Daitya	Tilang	Khanda chapu
8.	Kuluku	Athaana, Aarabhi (paraaku song)	
9.	Kanugonave	Amruthavarshini	Mishra chapu
10.	Akkaro	Dhanyasi (slokam), Kambhoji (song), Kaanada (slokam)	Khanda chapu
11.	Vedanele	Vasantha	Aadi
12.	Yemani Vinnavinchevel	Bilahari	Mishra chapu
13.	Maa Manavi	Kannada	Aadi
14.	Anjaneya	Kaanada	Aadi and (khandagathi)
15.	Sri Ramadhava	Behaag	Aadi, Mishra chapu
16.	Sogasu Pallaki	Kaapi	Aadi
17.	Akkatika Seyavayya	Saindhavi	Aadi (trisra gati)

18.	Iru dikkuala & Choodave cheli	Kalyani	Aadi
19.	Mellaney	Ananda bhairavi	Khanda chapu
20.	Hecharika	Mohana (sloka), (song)	Khanda chapu
21.	Padaka Intini	Khamaas	Khanda chapu
22.	Mandarodharu	Kedaragoula,	Khanda chapu
23.	Kalaya Toorupu	Kambhoji	Khanda chapu
24.	Keeramulu	Hindolam	Khanda chapu
25.	Kaavave	Saveri	Aadi
26.	Haarathulu	Punnaagavaraali	Aadi
27.	Jaya Mangalam	Surati	Khanda chapu
28.	Laali	Neelambari	Khanda chapu
29.	Aaragimpumu Raavayya	Naadanaamakriya	Aadi
30.	Minchi vennudu	Maand	Khanda chapu
31.	Daya Seyumu	Behaag	Aadi (trisra gati)
32.	Melukonave	Malayamarutham	Khanda chapu
33.	Mangala Dwipada	Madhyamavati	Khanda chapu



The Researcher with the participants of Audio Yakshagana

CHAPTER 9

PROJECT REPORT

The Researcher has very interestingly chosen this topic for the UGC-MRP. The present topic is about the Theatrical works (*Yakshagana-s*) of King Shahaji. Shahaji is a Maratha ruler who ruled the Thanjavur region. These Maratha rulers are great admirers of Telugu literature and language. Though the rulers are the native of Maharashtra, they showed interest towards the Telugu language, learnt it and in this way patronized the Telugu language. It is highly appreciable to take deep interest in a foreign language and write literary works in it. As a gratitude towards them, the researcher has opted this topic.

METHODS FOLLOWED IN DATA COLLECTION:

I. Interviews of Subject experts and Artists

Interviewed the following Subject Experts and Performers

- i. Padmasree Dr. Umramarao, Hyderabad
- ii. Smt. Bala Kondala rao, International reputed artist & Sangit Natak Academy Awardee.
- iii. Dr. Bhagavatula Sethuram, Faculty in Dance, PS Telugu University, Hyderabad.
- iv. Dr Maha Lingam, a Senior choreographer, Dance Director & performer of Dance dramas & Yakshagana-s, Melattur village, Thanjavur, TamilNadu.
- v. Sri N. Ramarao, A senior teacher in Yakshagana-s, Selia Mangalam, Tamil Nadu
- vi. Dr. Kesav Prasad, Dance Faculty in Krishna University, Machili patnam & a Senior teacher in Kuchipudi Academy, Kuchipudi.
- vii. Sri M. Hari Rammurthy, Director, Kuchipudi kalakshetram a popular choreographer, Visakhapatnam.

viii. Sri Pasumarti Venkata Ramana, popular artiste & guest faculty, Dept. of Music & Dance, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam.

ix. Smt M. Sudharani

x. Smt N. P Radhika

xi. Smt Vijayaveni

1. Attended festivals on Yakshagana-s :

i. National Yakshagana festival, Kuchipudi, Andhra Pradesh in April 2016.

ii. A festival in Hyderabad on the occasion of Nrusimha Jayanti in August 2016.

2. Yakshagana centers:

- Mangalore Yakshagana center in Mangalore University, M'lore.

II. AIR stations:

Visited All India Radio stations at Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Hyderabad and Chennai for collecting data and to visit the archives library.

III. Libraries:

i. Saraswathi Mahal Library, Thanjavur

ii. Dr. V. S Krishna Library, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam

iii. Sri Potti Sriramulu Telugu Viswa Vidyalayam branch, Bommuru, Rajahmundry

iv. Sri Potti Sriramulu Telugu Viswa Vidyalayam, Hyderabad

v. Gouthami Library, Rajahmundry

vi. K R Sundaram Iyer Memorial Library, Music Academy, Chennai

vii. Madras University Library, Chennai

viii. Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts library, Chennai

i. Saraswathi Mahal Library, Thanjavur: They established the Saraswathi Mahal Library in Thanjavur which is a treasure containing several books, noble works and literature of different languages including Telugu. This collection also includes several precious works of foreign languages as well. This library can be regarded as a Temple of Knowledge. By establishing such a wonderful library, they have rendered a marvellous service to the aspirants of literature and academics. The researcher is a great admirer of the Saraswathi Mahal Library and the Maratha rulers who established it. The most ancient and valuable Sanskrit scripts including Vedas, Lakshana Granthas like Bharatha's Natya Sastras (4th century BC) etc., are digitalized by the library authorities. The Researcher appreciates the efforts of Tamil Nadu Government for taking up such a noble activity.

The Researcher visited this library several times to get the information about the King Shahaji. Most of the material related to the King Shahaji is collected from this Library.

ii. Dr. V. S Krishna Library, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam:

The researcher found some books on '*Yakshaganamulu (Thanjavuru)*' in Telugu language. These books are edited by Prof. Kakarla Venkata Rama Narasimham, HOD, Dept. of Telugu, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. Interestingly, among these books, very few Yakshagana-s of King Shahaji are found in this library.

iii. Madras Oriental Manuscripts Library, Chennai

This is also a treasure of knowledge where a vast collection of manuscripts and books are available.

The remaining material is collected from the other libraries as mentioned above.



The Researcher studying a Telugu Manuscript at Madras Oriental Manuscripts Library, Chennai

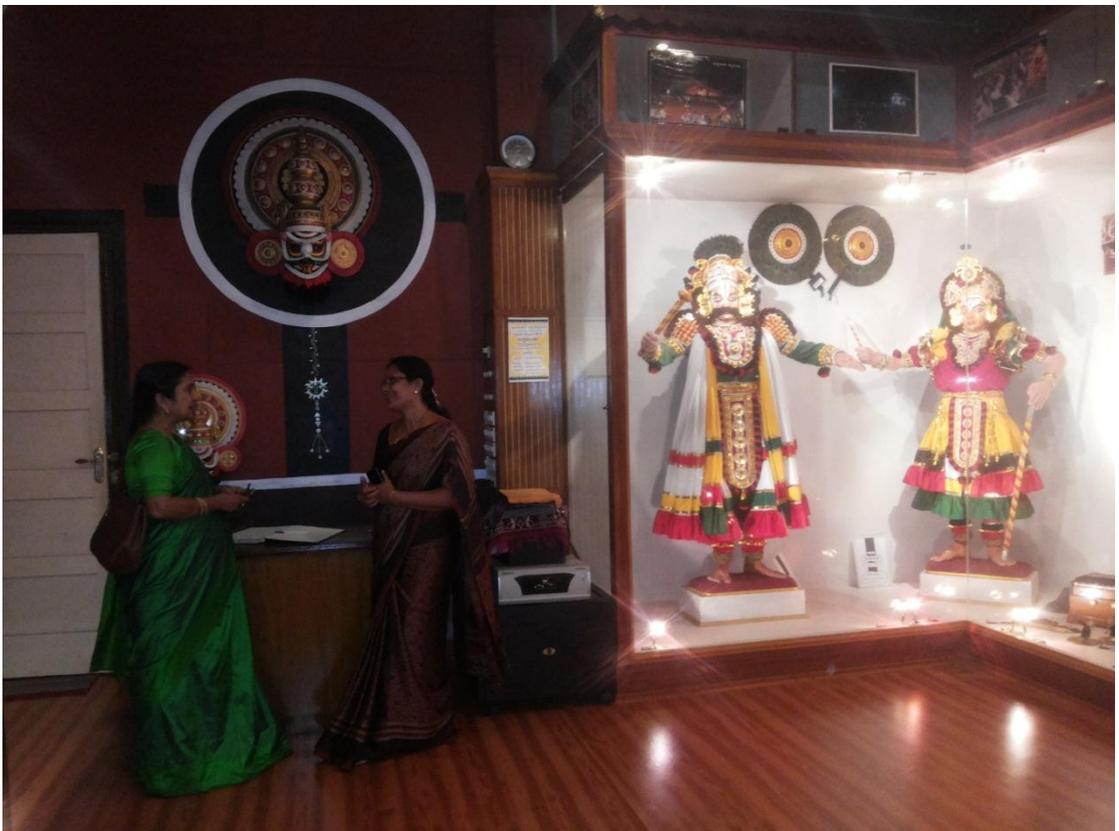
iv. Yakshagana Kendra, Mangalore

Karnataka is regarded as the birthplace of Yakshagana-s. Several Yakshagana centers took the initiative of preserving these art forms.

There is a Yakshagana Research Center in Mangalore which encourages the students to do research in these art forms. A beautiful auditorium dedicated for conducting Yakshagana performances and a museum with a huge collection of idols, weapons, ornaments etc. used in Yakshagana-s, are displayed. In addition, a library with a good number of books on this art form, is also constructed. The Director of the Yakshagana kendra patiently explained many aspects about that Kendra and their activities in promoting the Yakshagana Art form.

The researcher is very much impressed by the well maintenance of the center by the University authorities.









v. Attended Programs

The researcher has attended some special programs which are related to the research topic. They are:

1. Prahalada Charitra Yakshaganam performed by Bhagavatha Mela of Melattur, in Ahobila Matam, Hyderabad in 2016.
2. Valli KalyaNam Yakshaganam performed by Bhagavatha Mela of Melattur, in Melattur village, Tamil Nadu, in 2017.
3. Tholu bommalata performed by Appanna and troupe in Bodapadu village, West Godavari Dst., Andhra Pradesh in 2017.
4. Chindu Bhagavatham performed at Nizamabad in 2018.

5. Seetha KalyaNam performed by Bhagavatha Mela of Melattur, in Melattur village, Tamil Nadu, in 2018.
6. Thoorpu Bhaagavatham performed in Vizianagaram, 2018.
7. Bhaama kalaapam performed by Sri Vedantam Radhesyam at Vijayawada in 2017.
8. Lalitha – Bhandasura vadha yakshaganam performed by Smt A. B. Balakondala Rao and team at Visakhapatnam in 2018.
9. SowgandhikaapaharaNam Yakshaganam performed in Bangalore in 2017

D. Interviewed the following artists related to Folk Dance Dramas

- Sri Kompella Srinivas, Bairagi pentapadu, West Godavari Dst., Andhra Pradesh
- Sri Appanna, Jagannatha puram, West Godavari Dst., Andhra Pradesh

Influence of Sanskrit dramatists and Bhagavata Mela-s on the Theatrical works of Shahaji

There is a significant position for the *Yakshagana-s* of Shahaji, in the history of Indian Visual art forms. Shahaji's works are greatly influenced by the *Bhagavatha Mela* tradition. He is well versed in *Puranas*, which can be seen in his works. Some of his *Yakshagana-s* are based on very rare mythological stories. For example, *Sachi Purandaram*, *Santha Kalyanam* and *Rati kalyanam* etc.

Shahaji's works contain the below format:

1. The *Yakshagana-s* begin with a *Jaya sabdam* and *MangaLaacharanam*.
2. The names of Deities to which this work is dedicated to.
3. A brief summary of the story and *Phalasruti* introduces a *Dwipada* (a kind of poem).in the beginning of the Yakshaganam.
4. Following it is the prayer to Lord Ganesa.

5. The entrance of Lord Ganesa Character (with Ganesa) in the beginning of the *Natakam* is a main item in Bhagavata mela Natakas. Over Centuries the performers have been following the same tradition.
6. Every character enters the stage with a *Patra Pravesa Daru*. Their entrance is preceded by a brief introduction of their role by the *Sutradhara* in the form of a poem or a *Daru*.
7. Generally in Yakshagana-s, the characters speak for themselves instead of a playback voice behind the curtain. *Sutradhara* coordinates the drama.
8. Finally, conclusion of the drama takes place with an auspicious ending that includes a brief note about the author followed by *Phalashruthi* in a Song or a Poem.
9. *Varnan Darus, Paatra Pravesa daru-s, Samvaada daus, Svagata Darus, Svaagata darus, Jikkini darus etc.* all kinds of *Darus* can be seen in *Shahaji's Yakshaganas*.
10. *Prosody* is well maintained in his poetry.
11. *Rasa Avuchityam* (Suitability of Rasas for the context) is well maintained.
12. Several kinds of rare *Daru-s* such as *Sallamu Daru, Savyaapa savya Sampaada leela Daru, Sangeetha Sahitya prayasa leela Daru, Mukta padagrastha leela Daru* etc. are seen in his works. They are a feast to the scholars.
13. Some linguistic patterns such as Palindromes and others which add beauty to the meaning of the phrases, are present in his Yakshagana-s.
14. An example for his scholarliness on Music and Literature is the *Saptasaagara Suladi Prabandha leela Daru* in Marathi language. It contains *Suladi Saptha tala-s* and seven raga-s viz., *Narayana Goula, Kedara goula, Malava goula, Kannada Goula, Reeti Goula, Poorva Goula* and *Chaya Goula*.

It is understood that, Shahaji's *Yakshaganas* are completely based (in the way / stream of) on early traditional Sanskrit *Roopakas*. The above format is seen in *Naandi, Prasthaavana, Naayaka LakshaNam, Sutradhaara vachanaas* etc.

'*Aasthaana Santoshi*' is a character acts as a servant to the King, and also as a comic character in the play. In his *Yakshagaanas*, few rude conversations can also be seen. In all his theatrical works, a traditional rule is perfectly maintained. The rule is that, *Mangala Aadi* (Auspicious beginning), *Mangala Madhya* (Auspicious in the middle of the story) and *Mangala Anta* (*auspicious ending*). He dedicated all his works to his beloved deity, *Natavitanka* Tyagesa of Tiruvarur.

In this way, King Shahaji as a multi-faceted personality, occupied a prominent position in the history of South Indian Music.

***.

CONCLUSION

Several Classical and Folk-Art forms existed in South India. Among them, Yakshagana is one such popular Dance drama known with different names in different regions of South Indian languages. In Telugu language, very few Dance dramas such as *Sri Krishna Parijatham*, *Prahlaada Charitram*, *Usha PariNayam*, *Sugreeva Vijayam* etc. are popular. Unfortunately, no artist of Tamil Nadu or Andhra Pradesh have not focused on the Yakshagana-s of Maratha rulers or Shahaji. Even the present Bhagavatars of Melattur (Thanjavur region), whose ancestors were patronized by the rulers of Thanjavur, and the Telugu artists of Kuchipudi have not focused on the Thanjavur Yakshagana-s. In recent times, the researcher could find only (late) Dr. Uma Ramarao, who worked on few Yakshagana-s of King Shahaji. She has choreographed for few Yakshagana-s and brought them into light. Sri Padmavathi Mahila University, Tirupathi has introduced '*Sankara Pallaki Seva Prabandham*' in their M.A Music syllabus. With the efforts of the researcher, the '*Sankara & Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandha-s*' of Shahaji have been introduced as optional subjects in Andhra University.

Saint Tyagaraju is known as the '*Geya Naataka Maargadarsi*'. He has written three '*Geya Naataka-s*'. It is said by Prof. Sambamurthy that, the popular *Geya Nataka* of Saint Tyagaraju, '*Prahlaada Bhakthi Vijayam*' has been written by the inspiration of King Shahaji's Yakshagana-s. The researcher expresses her deep concern for such invaluable Yakshagana-s of Shahaji, which were an inspiration to Sri Tyagaraja, who is regarded as one among the Musical Trinity.

While studying the theatrical works of King Shahaji, the researcher felt that they are very suitable to be performed as Visual Yakshagana-s by adding Music and Dance to them. As a part of this project, the researcher is submitting 2 Yakshagana-s. One is a Visual Yakshagana with the name '*Kiraatha Vilaasam*', another is an Audio based one with the name '*Vishnu Pallaki Seva Prabandham*'. These 2 works are done as a justification to the above statement.

The researcher is very happy that, the language used by King Shahaji in all his Theatrical works is pure Telugu which is very simple and can be easily understood by everyone. The language contains many prosodical beauties and literary

embellishments. Shahaji's command over the Telugu language and *Puranic Ithihaasa-s*; his usage of expressions in the language; his moral values; his respect towards the culture and tradition of South India are all clearly seen in his works. His vast knowledge over the Theoretical and Practical aspects of Music is clearly understood from his selection of Raga-s set to the Daru-s in his Dance dramas.

The researcher opines that, a lot of scope is there to do research work on the Yakshagana-s of the Maratha rulers and their contribution to the languages viz., Telugu, Tamil and Sanskrit. Similarly, there are hundreds of works authored by the court poets of Tanjore rulers whose contribution to the fields of Literature, Music, Dance and Art forms are highly commendable.

Need to preserve the great Art Form:

During this Project work, the researcher observed that the tradition of Yakshagana is well promoted and practiced in the state of Karnataka. The government of Karnataka is encouraging the Yakshagana Kala Kendra-s and Bayalata academies for the protection of this Art form. In this regard, it has established a "*Yaksha Gaana Parirakshana Kendra*". The Universities such as Mangalore, Mysore etc., have also introduced Yakshagana Research Centres. The Govt. of Karnataka has established centres to study about Yakshagana-s in Uttara Karnataka, Dakshina Karnataka and Udupi. They are organizing Seminars, Conferences, Workshops and Projects at National and Internationals levels to encourage this tradition.

In other states of South India, much importance is given to their regional Dances such as *Bharatanatyam* in Tamil Nadu, *Kuchipudi* in Andhra Pradesh, *Kathakali* and *Mohini Yattam* in Kerala. But the Telugu based Yakshagana-s are not given much importance. In the region of Andhra, there are other valuable folk art forms such as *Toorpu Bhagavatham*, *Tholu Bommalaata* etc. These art forms are becoming extinct, as proper care is not taken by the government and the people, for preserving and promoting this art form.

During data collection, the researcher has come across many performing artists of folk and classical art forms. Their livelihood in a stake as there is no proper recognition for these art forms. Their love and respect towards their art and tradition made them to stick on to their art inspite of their severe poverty.

The researcher is very much moved by the pitiable state of these artists. Through this work, the researcher would like to make an appeal to the government to provide proper facilities and look into the welfare of these artists.

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Internet and Youtube channels

1. '*Prahlada Bhakti Vijayam*' by Sadguru Sri Tyagaraja Swami – conducted by Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna AIR Vijayawada and broadcasted in January 1959.
2. Photographs taken from Wikipedia and Youtube

APPENDIX

Practice session pictures for Video Yakshagana





Practice session pictures for Audio Yakshagana



