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**Subhashree Pattnaik**

Lecturer in Art & Culture

College, Sarakhia, Dhenkanal,

Odisha, India.

## Sapta Tandav uses in Indian Classical Dance

**Subhashree Pattnaik**

### Abstract

The 'Tandav' Dance is designated as the anger of Hindu deity 'Lord Shiva'. While He destroys some of the devils in the universe, this dance was performed by Him as described in mythological stories. The different forms of this dance are included in Indian Classical dance in recent days. Though different poses for this dance are aggressive types, still it is used by Indian dancers and introduced in classical dance. This article describes the methods, poses of different 'Tandav' dances named as 'SAPTATANDAV' used in classical dance and can be well attracted for this audience. It has been implemented in many of the instances. The article will help the practitioner, academia and researcher for practice, study and implementation.

**Keywords:** Tandav, Lord Shiva, Parvati, Roudra, Tripurasur.

### Introduction

The Tandava dance form was originated by Lord Shiva. He has been credited with many dance forms of these foremost is Tandava dance. According to 'Shivopasnadak', after killing the demon 'Tripurasur' went into rapture (ullas) and danced violent way. This dance form was re-enacted by his disciple, 'Tandu' Muni who popularized it. This dance form, practised by Tandu Muni, came to be known as 'Tandava'. This dance form involves expressions reflecting Courage (Veerta), Extreme anger (Roudra), Hatred (Vibhatsa), Enjoyment (Anand) and Anger born out of grief and sympathy (Karuna Janit Krodh). To express these rasas, the dancer twists his limbs aggressively, which is considered appropriate for the women. In the course of this dance, the fire of anger seems to peak, the earth seems to tremble as if the whole world is going through a process of destruction. [1-4]

Shiva is believed to assume two states the samadhi state and the tandav or lasya dance state. The samadhi state is His nirgun and tandav or lasya dance state is His sagun state. Body movements performed to depict a particular event or issue is known as natan or natya. The one who performs this natan is a nat. Traditionally, it is believed that Nataraj is the promoter of dance. Since Shiva is the pioneer amongst actors, the title of Nataraj is accorded to Him. The Nataraj plays the role of bringing about activity in the universe through the commencement of His dance and merging the visible and invisible Creation into Himself when He stops it. Thereafter, He remains alone, engrossed in Anand. In short, Nataraj is the manifest form of all activity of God. Nataraj's dance is considered to represent the five actions of God, namely Creation, Sustenance, Dissolution, the covering of the Great Illusion and initiation. [5-6]

The Shiva remembered and showed the uddhat dance to Sage Bharat through the chief of His attendants known as Tandu. He also made Parvati perform the lasya dance with great enthusiasm in front of Sage Bharat. Lasya is a dance performed by women, wherein the hands remain free. Realising that the dance performed by Tandu was tandav, Sage Bharat and others later taught these dances to mankind. The dance form in which the sound emitted by every cell in the body is Shivatattva-predominant is known as the tandav dance. It is a dance performed by males and consists of mudras for instance, the dnyanamudra is performed by touching the tip of the thumb to the index finger. [7-10]

### Correspondence:

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The SaptaTandav is described as follows.

1. AnandTandava
2. Sandhya Tandava
3. Uma Tandava
4. GauriTandava
5. KalikaTandava
6. TripuraTandava
7. SamharTandava

#### Method of Indian Classical Dance for SaptaTandava

'AnandTandava' After Shiva had slayed 'Tripurasur', Goddess Uma performed 'Lasya' dance which is an embodiment of Pleasure (Ullas) and Excitement (Umang) which pleased the angry Shiva. This dance is known as 'Anand Tandava'. The Ananda Tandavam is the well-known form found in every temple. Shiva has an ash-besmeared body. He has four arms; the right back arm holds the 'utukkai' or the hour-glass, like drum; the left back arm holds the fire or the fire-pot; the right front arm with a valaya of sarpa with 1, 2, 5 or 7 hoods (the corresponding valaya of serpent on the other hand according to Havell has fallen down) is the abhaya pose or the pose of protection, i.e., the palm, level with the straight fingers in close contact, raised up showing the palmside to the front; the left front arm is in gajahasta pose, i.e., is bent at the shoulder joint going straight across the chest to the right side with its fingers gracefully pointing below towards the left leg which is raised in a dancing posture. The ecstasy of the dance, in whirling on one leg is shown by the matted hair sweeping out on both sides of the head in 5, 6, 7 or 11 divisions, standing horizontally or forming a circle. 'Erukku (Madar) and 'Umattam' (Datura) flowers, snake, crescent moon, grinning human skull are on the left matlocks; Ganga is on the right.

'Sandhya Tandava' After the death of his wife 'Sati', Shiva carried her dead body on his shoulders and danced. This dance starts with Karuna Rasa and ends with expressing Roudra (Extreme anger) and Bhayanak Rasa (Terrible). This dance form is known as 'SandhyaTandava'.

Sandhya Tandav The left hands hold peacock feather and vismaya pose in which the palm is held up but is bent forward a little curved, the first and the second fingers being bent forward together whilst the third and the fourth fingers and the thumb stand separated. 'Placing the Mother of the three worlds upon a golden throne, studded with precious gems, Sulapani dances on the heights of Kalias, and all the gods gather round Him'"Sarasavati plays on the "Vina", Indra on the flute, Bhrama holds the time-marking cymbals, Laksim begins a song; Visnu plays on a drum and all the gods stand round about Gandharvas Yaksas, patagas, siddhas, sadhyas, vidyadharas, amaras, apsara sand all the beings dwelling in the three worlds assemble there to witness the celestial dance and hear the music of the divine choir at the hour of twilight". "This evening dance is also referred to, in the invocation preceding the katha Sarit Sagara""In the pictures of this dance, 'Shiva is two handed, questions this) and the cooperation of the gods is clearly indicated in their position of chorus. There is no prostrate asura trampled under Shiva's feet". 'Uma Tandava' This dance form stresses the conjugal affection, love and attraction in its purest and simple form.

Uma Tandava. Shiva has six hands, i.e., two more to what had been already mentioned. The additional right hand holds Trisula the additional left, a skull. The left leg is

placed on apasmara. The right leg sweeps to the right. Umadevi stands on the left of Shiva. The Purva Karanagama, in the enumeration of the seven dances mentions Muni Tan dava instead of Uma Tandava. The Dance of marriage is spoken of as a separate dance and this is called the Dance of the Dances, the Uma Tandava. In describing the Sandhya Tandava,

'GauriTandava as in' dance form, Shiva and Parvati dance together in 'Shringar Rasa'.. This is like the Ananda Tandav. The important feature is the holding of the serpent in one of the left hands. Some of the dances are characterisd by the persons standing by the side of Nataraja. In this dance Nandi stands on the right side and Gauri on the left. If the mother's presence is taken as an inevitable concomitant, the presence of Nandi seems to be the characteristic feature of this dance. Mayamata describes this as Bhujanga lalita, probably because of the playing with the serpent held in one hand. It further states that in the position of the legs, the fire in the hand is blown into a blaze and the braided locks are spread out into 5, 7 or 9. It places Nandi on the right but Visnu on the left instead of Gauri.

'Kalika Tandava' In order to destroy evil and wicked, Shiva dances expressing his Bhairav form, which is known as 'Kalika Tandava. Shiva has two eyes only but 8 arms of which the three, on the right, hold the Msula, Pasa and Utukkai, the three on the left hold Kapala, fire and the bull, whilst the remaining right arm is held in an abhaya pose and the left in gajahasta pose. Shiva stands on the right leg, raising up the left, whilst the abhaya pose and the gajahasta pose are held by the right and left arms respectively.

TripuraTandava dance as in, performed by Lord Shiva after killing the demon Tripurasur reflected Courage and Extreme anger. The 'Bols' of this dance form are mostly in 'AdiLaya' and is performed. Tripura Tandava. Shiva has 16 arms. There is the mother on the left and the child Murukan on the right. According to Silparatna however, the child stands on the same side as the mother holding her by the hand and expressing fear, love and wonder in his face. This dance we had already described in describing Tripura Dahana.

#### The Samhara Tandava

Samhara Tandava is the dance of involution. God has 3 eyes and 8 arms. The left leg crushes down apasmara and the right leg is raised. The right hands are holding the Utukkai, the pas a, the trisula and the abhaya pose and the left hands hold the fire, the skull, the vismaya and gajahasta poses. Here also Nandi stands on the right side and Gauri on the left. The eight hands differentiate this from Gauri Tandava form. The destruction of entire universe is reflected in 'Samhar Tandava'

#### Conclusion

The concepts of Tandava and Lasya represented Shiva and Parvati have been the source of inspiration for most dancers across Indianclassical dance forms and across generations as it encompasses the entire cycle of cosmic evolution and stands for the dual personification of the Absolute.

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