

Kathak is a solo dance with mime. In the dual role of Krishna and Radha the dancer alternately depicts the lover and the beloved, passing with admirable ease from mood to mood and pose to pose. Interpolated pure dance provides a vivid climax to each dramatic theme. Kathak is animated by contrasting emotions and brilliant dance patterns of quick movements and staccato beats of the feet.

Foot rhythms are regulated by basic syllables : called ' *That* ' :

Ta tai tai tat-a Ta tai tai tat-a

Footwork is called ' *Tatkar* , '

Abhinaya interprets the theme of a song and this is shown by gestures and rhythmic action, in which facial expression plays an important part.

The dance begins with a conventional pose with the right arms raised vertically above the head and the left arm extended horizontally. One foot is crossed behind the other. The head moves rhythmically with *sundari* neck movement while the eyes exhibit *sthayee drishti* in *sringar rasa*. The hands are in *Arala* pose.

This is followed by a preliminary *Torah*, a patterned dance sequence ending with a brilliant finale—and the *namaskar* with *anjali* hands. (In the Muslim courts the salutation was a ' *salami* ' with one hand).

The *Torah* is based upon rhythmic syllables such as :

Ta-tu ta-ran-ga ta ka-ten-tun.....

combining rhythmic gestures with foot rhythms and usually ending in a series of fast turns accented by the fæet, on which bells are tied.

The *Paran* is a verse describing an incident of Radha or Krishna play with the Gopis, in the form of a recitation and supported by rhythmic syllables. The *Paran* is danced with gestures and *abhinaya* in strict rhythm and usually ends with a pure dance sequence or finale of rapid turns called *Chukra*.

Religious themes also find expression in the *Stotras* describing the appearance and activities of various deities. They are vigorous and dramatic with striking poses. The accompanying *mridanga* or *pakhwaj* with its deep tone like distant thunder adds grandeur to the exposition.

The various kinds of rhythmic progression or travelling steps are called *Gat*. *Gat bhao* is a rhythmic gait combined with *abhinaya*. *Gat* is usually a lyrical sequence expressing gentle grace and rhythm and links the various parts of the dance together.