

Analysis of Vedaanta in Vishishtaadvaita and the comparative aspects in Devadaasi Nartanam (Bharatanatyam)

Roopa Vijay¹

1 Research Scholar, Karnataka Samskrit University, Bangalore, India

Abstract:

Background: Nartanam has been an art promoted since the Vedic times and likewise Vedaanta has been a subject people have had the quest for since centuries. But the study of some of the literature reveals how nartana was studied in the past and that it had certain philosophical values. With the objective of analysing Raamaanujaacaarya's opinions and study its relevance to the perspective of nartana, having collected many books, online matter, papers, various data were studied and analysed.

The word 'devadaasi' has a bad name in general. As we Bharatanatyam dancers are taught the similar study material what they were taught, the knowledge gained has provoked me to tell that the Gurus taught only good values, which deserve a praise. If errors went on sometimes in some places it does not mean that the Gurus or their knowledge given was not right.

Materials and Methods: Having explained nartanam, nruttam, nrutyam, naatyam, devadaasi paddhati and Bharatanatyam, Naatyashastra and Abhinayadarpana, which are mainly followed are considered. To analyse Vishistaadvaita, Vedaanta, Bhagavadgeeta and Brahmasootra are also considered. After analysing Raamaanujaacaarya's ideas, it is found that the devadaasi system seemed to be based on some of those ideas.

Results: The main concept of devadaasi system seems to be based on the ideas of Vishishtaadvaita. In all these facets there is similarity – the routine, training and qualities of disciples, karma, jnaana, bhakti, guru bhakti, emotional control, self-realisation etc. This paper is an attempt to analyse Vishishtaadvaita and the comparative aspects in Devadaasi Nartanam, presently called Bharatanatyam.

Conclusion: It has been concluded that concepts in Vishishtaadvaita were used to conceptualise the devadaasi system and that nartana and vedaanta are inter-related. It was not aimed to be a social evil.

Key words : nartana, vedaanta, Vishishtaadvaita, devadaasi, Bharatanatyam

Acknowledgement: I thank Dr. Rishidev Bhargav, Head of Dept. of Alankarashastra, K.S.U for his guidance.

Date of Submission: 16-02-2021

Date of Acceptance: 02-03-2021

I. INTRODUCTION

Samskruta vanmayam is full of great scriptures including one of the greatest comprehensive shastra named Bharataagama of which the present Naatyashastra seems to be a part. (Rao) Abhinaya Darpanam is another important creation that gives information on Nartana and values Bharata's ideas. The other grantha considered is Vishishtaadvaita, the Ramaanuja Darshana, which has a unique concept with pluralism and monism, unlike the Shankaraacaarya's Advaita and Madhvaacarya's Dvaita. After substantiating from shrutis, smrutis, itihaasas, puraanas, the prasthaanatrayas, Ramaanujaacaarya devised a synthetic approach according to logic and nyaaya.

Considering the various aspects in ancient dance or drama, the words Natanam and Nartanam are used to indicate acting and dance in general. Nartanam/ Natanam is of 3 types namely,

Nruttam – This is a dance form done without emotion or abhinaya.

भावाभिनयहीनं तु नृत्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥ १५॥ (Ghosh)

This is done during coronation of the King, in Utsavas, yatra, devayatra, at marriages, child-birth, nagarapravesha, etc. when people unite at functions, arranged by people who seek auspiciousness.

Naatyam - This is drama itself with a respectable ancient story.

नाट्यं तन्नाटकं चैव पूज्यं पूर्वकथायुतम् । (Ghosh)

This is specially performed in festival times.

Nrutyam - This is a dance form with emotions and rasa as its condiments.

रसभावव्यञ्जनादियुक्तं नृत्यमितीर्यते ।

(Ghosh)

एतन्नृत्यं महाराजसभायां कल्पयेत् सदा ॥ १६ ॥

This is specially performed in festival times and also done always in the royal court.

Present example in Kolar style bharatanaatyam- नाट्यं – parts in devaranaama, नृत्य नाटकम्,

नृत्यं- शब्दम्, वर्णम्, पदम्;

नृत्तं- अलरिप्पु जतिस्वरम्

Devadaasi Paddhati refers to a traditional custom where some people or parents dedicate their child to the temple for various reasons. They have a specific adhyayana paddhati and poojaa vidhi to be followed. They are brought up to be dedicated, sincere, hardworking, good in classical music and dance, samskrutam, telugu, kannada and other languages. It was called Daasiattam in the south, sadir in the north, mela/ bhogamela/ taphemela by devadaasis, aasthaananartakiyaru and sabhanartakiyaru in Karnataka.

देवदासी पद्धतिः प्रत्यक्षे न अपश्यम्। परोक्षे किमपि जनामि तदेव लिखामि। अत्र गुणांशाः एव लिखिताः। (Roopa)

This word refers to the true devadaasis, who are sincere and devoted to God and does not apply to those who call themselves 'devadaasis' at the recent times.

It was crucially a woman's dedicated status that made it a symbol of social prestige and it was a privilege to maintain her. They were given a high value in public. Till 1910 the dedication rituals were public and detailed ceremonies were publicised. At her death, life honours were granted and flowers, sandal-paste and garland from the God (temple deity) were sent for last rites. (Srinivasan)

Bharatanatyam is the popular classical dance form where the bodily gestures (aangika) are involved with aahaarya, the vaacika as vocal and instrumental music and the saatvika emotions. This name was conferred only about a century ago to the 'nartanam' performed by devadaasis and other nartakis called mela, saadir or daasiaattam.

E. Krishna Iyer sought to give the dance form 'saadir' a measure of respect by renaming it as 'Bharatanatyam' in a meeting of Madras Music Academy. All the similar classical dance forms came under the name Bharatanatyam, which got national importance. (Amanda.J.Weidman)

Vedas being the most ancient literary corpus including the Samhitas, Braahmanas, Aranyaka and Upanishads are well-known to constitute 4 types Rig, Yajur, Saama and Atharvana Vedas.

- **Naatyashastra** - The tradition of Sanskrit scholarship regards Naatyashastra as a fifth Veda, containing the essence of the above four Vedas and is a compendium of performing arts, drama, music, dance, and fine arts. This is an excellent treatise attributed to Bharatamuni along with his sons and disciples written in the form of dialogue between him and Atreya muni and others. This encompasses all the topics शास्त्रीयकलासाहित्यविचारः related to Naatyaa.

It is the oldest detailed work on Indian poetics and deals with all aspects of classical theatre. (Bhatia)

The content in Naatyashastra useful for dancers or dramatists including origin of naatyaa, naatyagruha/ ranga, taandava, poorvaranga, rasa, bhaava, abhinaya, caari, mandala, gati, dharma, vrutti, pravrutti, words, metres, language, siddhi, svara, vaadya, gaana, characters / roles and conclusion.

- **Abhinaya Darpanam** – A monumental work which is simpler and more concise by Aacaarya Nandikeshwara is now-a-days sought after by dancers, as it is an important contribution to mankind.

- **Vedaanta** -The term Upanishad means – to sit near / उप + नि + destroy / loosen - the sitting down near the teacher to receive information about the highest reality which loosens the knot-like doubts and destroys ignorance. This is also known as Vedaanta (the end portion of the Vedas) and contains information on Aatman, Brahman, Aakaasha, theory of evolution (pancakoshavidya), world and moksha. This is the first shrutiprasthaana of the prasthaanatraya.

The two other sootra and smruti prasthaanas of vedaanta are Baadaraayana Vyaasa's Brahmasootra and Bhagavadgeeta in Veda Vyaasa's Mahabhaarata.

- **Brahmasootra or vedantasootra (Uttara mimaamsa)**, a systematic presentation of philosophical and theological views in Upanishads. This is based on ideas in nyaaya.

Some differences of opinions with respect to these views exist -

- a) भेद (द्वैतमतम्) by Madhvaacaarya
- b) अभेद (अद्वैतमतम्) by Shankaraacaarya
- c) भेदाभेद (विशिष्टाद्वैतमतम्) by Raamanujaacaarya

After describing the Bramhan and the Aatman, the world, saadhana and phala are considered. Phalaadhyaya gives info on how the soul reaches God. The way of thinking, good qualities give power to the soul but individual soul does not have power to create, rule or destroy the universe.

• **Bhagavadgeeta** is a part of Mahabhaarata by Veda Vyaasa and is the perfect example as in Upanishads, dealing with aatman, yoga, jnaana-karma-bhakti yogas. The aatman continues to remain even after person's death and is controlled by the infinite Brahman. Yoga is a unique combination of mainly karma, bhakti and jnaana catering to the human need. A person in the state of स्थितप्रज्ञ and does निष्कामकर्म is given value.

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन। मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥ २.४७

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मध्याजी मां नमस्कुरु। मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे॥

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज। अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥१८. ६५-६६

Actions are the necessary results of 3 gunas sattva, rajas and tamas. Renunciation of action is not advised but निष्कामकर्म is considered. Bhakti is considered selfless service to God and the devotee gets confidence. Jnana yoga is the path of knowledge and this helps to obtain आत्मसाक्षात्कार. (Goyandka)

• In India it is not mere mental quest for truth but the spiritual endeavour emphasizing its realisation – this gives it the name of 'Darshana'.

दृश्यते अनेन इति दर्शनम् दृश् + ल्युट् = दर्श् + अन्

Ramanujaachaarya (1017-1137 A.D) was moved by the devotion of the Alvaars, challenged the advaita of Shankaraachaarya and Dvaita of Madhvaachaarya and supported bhakti maarga where devotion to personal God idol as Sriman Naaraayana was encouraged.

(paramahamsavishvaananda.com)

Ramanuja Darshana or विशिष्टाद्वैत - This is also called shaareeraka mimamsaa where shareera - shareeri bhaava supports bheda and abheda srutis, also relies on ghataka srutis. In this the three factors of reality are acit (matter), cit (individual soul with body) and Eeshvara (That which pervades in individual as well as the whole space). Acit and Cit depend on Eeshvara. The individual souls form the body of Eeshvara. Acit and Cit are the body (shareera) for Eeshvara (shareerin). There is inseparable unity between them. The Acit and Cit are visheshana for the visheshya Eeshvara, the complex whole (vishishta) in which they are combined is regarded as unity. So the name विशिष्टाद्वैत.

विशिष्टान्तर्भाव एवैकत्वम्। ex. blue lotus – blueness is not lotus but its quality, but with it. The complex whole of lotus with the quality is the unity. Ramanuja feels that Upanishads and sootras teach this.

Vishishtasya advaitam – the non-duality of the qualified Brahman / the Cit and Acit are its prakara not separate from Him, which is substantive (vishishta). it does not mean that there is no difference between matter and matter, matter and cit, cit and Brahman and so on.

चिदचिद्विशिष्टब्रह्मन्।

vishishtayoh advaitam – identity between 2 qualified Brahman, one which is the cause (subtle form) and one which is the effect (gross form), that is the same oneness (vishishta) of both.

It shows a philosophy as well as religious and systematic way of lifestyle to reach the ultimate goal.

In pralaya state, Eeshwara, is the cause and includes subtle matter and unembodied souls. The nature is withdrawn from transformations. He is karanaavastha. He is Nirguna Brahman and Prakruti does not possess qualities.

In srushti and sthiti state subtle turn into gross matter and unembodied souls get embodied. He is kaaryaavastha. He is Saguna Brahman and Prakruti has gunas– sattva, rajas and tamas. (Rajagopalachar.K)

II. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

Natanam or Nartanam including nruttam, nrutyam and naatyam, are introduced along with the texts Naatyashastra and Abhinaya Darpana. Devadaasi paddhati and the word Bharatanaatyam are considered as the devadaasis were the only propagators of the art in the past. On the other hand in order to analyse Vishishtaadvaita, those which Raamaanujaachaarya used as reference material is considered like Vedanta - upanishad, Bhagavadgeeta and Brahmasootra.

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With the objective of analysing Raamaanujaacharya's opinions and study its relevance to the perspective of nartana, many books, online matter, papers, various data were collected, studied and analysed..

The ideas in Vishishtadvaita were analysed. Some of the ideals can be compared to the concepts in devadaasi system. Also, in all these facets, there was comparison done – the routine, training, qualities of proper disciple, pursuit of karma, jnaana, bhakti, Guru bhakti, emotional control, self-realisation, purusharthas, rasa etc.

a) Raamaanujaacharya's Ideas –

Eeshvara is the one Absolute. He is Brahman and savishesha. He stands all over the universe as matter and cit form parts of His body, being under His control. Concept : shesha/ surrendered under Sheshin/ controller. Antaryamin – changeless inner controller

Cit (jnaani, karta, bhokta) include nityamuktas, muktas and baddha types. Real knowledge is not verbal knowledge but that which is obtained from bhakti, prapatti(self-surrender) and constant memory of God (dhruvaa smruti).

Acit includes -

- 1) Prakruti(Mishra Sattva) –the cosmic matter with evolutes in material universe
- 2) Transcendental spiritual universe (Nityavibhooti) including Saatvika substance (Shuddha Sattva)
- 3) Kaala or time

The main ideas in Vishishtadvaita are –

- type of advaita - identity with quality
 - qualitative monism quantitative pluralism
 - no jnana, ananda taratamya
 - Eeshvara and prakruti are instrumental causes
 - there is chance for all to have liberation
 - A true vedantin – realises Him in all beings and all beings in Him.
 - Pancaraatra – word of God, leading to supreme goal is as good as Vedas.
 - Highest proof is anubhava of godly people (alwars).
 - The world is real and not illusory
 - Jnaana is not pure consciousness and self is required for it to exist.
 - Soul is made up of anu or minute particles.
 - gunas of Bhagavaan – jnaana, bala, aishvarya, veerya, shakti, tejas
 - main topics in Vedanta are tattva (reality/philosophy), hita (good)and purushartha (the four goals)
- studied all that and understood in own way and showed way to others.
- jeeva gets capacity to think and act by god's grace.
 - every soul has one purpose and that is to get liberated in a play/ sport.

लोकवत्तु लीलाकैवल्यम्। – superior form of moksha in solitude.

- dravya and adravya are different
- apruthaksiddhi exists
- go towards goal of self surrender to supreme God , consider oneself as 'daasa' – to supreme Naarayana or Paramapurusha
- removal of ego and development of faith in god
- serve God in some way in the form of person or humanity and also the bhaagavatas – Bhagavat and Bhaagavata kainkiryam
- Naaraayana's consort goddess Lakshmi was also to be worshipped. There was importance given to the divinity in women.
- Karmayoga informs to discord sense of attachment to worldly pleasures. Nishkaamakarma involved in actions done to God
- selfishness to be replaced by selflessness – must not be proud that he is the doer.
- Jnana yoga aims at the realisation of the inner self by rigorous moral and spiritual discipline.
- maintainance of spiritual equanimity or samatva.
- Dvandvas or opposites like happiness and sorrow, pleasure and pain, like and dislike, success and failure –leads to dilemma. The moral self has to have equanimity of mind and include virtues like endurance and detachment.
- he has freedom to put into action what scriptures say.

b) Religious Routine -

Five-fold religious routine called Aahnikam as according to Raamaanujaacharya – Abhigamana (movement towards Lord) entering the place of worship after bath, reciting the prayer (sharanaagati gadya or 2 stanzas meaning self-surrender to God) and deerghadanda namaskaaram for man / prostration.

- Upadaana – Collection of flowers and other ingredients for worship, sometimes study or listen to vedaanta.
- Ijyaa – Actual worship of the Lord ‘Bhagavadyaaga’ during ijyakaala. Preparing and offering Naivedya is a must.
- Svaadhyaaya – study of sacred and religious texts. Also can attend philosophical doctrine and religious discourses.
- Yoga – after evening prayers ‘sandhyaavandanam’ before dinner and contemplate on the lord before sleep. (Rajagopalachar.K)

Devadaasi’s initiation and daily routine –

Children of age 5-7 years were initiated the saampradaayika shikshana krama –during uttaraayana (not on budha/guru/shukra days) on good days. Vidyaarambha stars – pushya, hasta, anuradha, shatabhisha, revati. Morning abhyanjana, pooja to Ganapati, Sarasvati, Gauri, Shiva, Vishnu, Lakshmi poojas Lokapaala and Vidyaadhara pooje, vaadya pooje, Guru pooje and gifts to guru wer to be given. (Kaushik)

In Kolar style, the ‘Kaashi pooja’ also included : Astamoole rangoli was put and the 6 year old was asked to put the steps on rice with the husk for a long time – she had to continue even if feet were bleeding. Only then she was chosen to be ‘Devadaasi’. (Roopa)

At first the namaskaara step and the shloka are taught, then some teach adavus and some anga sadhane- head movements, shoulder/hand movement, bending and touching toes, sitting on the knee, stretching leg while sitting on the knee, neck, eye and eyebrow movements, jumps turns and kneeling moves were taught if the child learnt to present it in front of the Guru. (KrishnaRao.U.S)

It was encouraged to get up early in the morning about 4-30 or 5-00 a. m and after bath, drinking a glass of water or lemon juice, practice angasaadhane. After breakfast, for about 1 to 2 hours the adavus and nrutta, nrutyabandhas were practised and new compositions learnt from the Guru. Shaastra adhyayana, Guru shusroosha, vicaara vinimaya were also done by some devadasis.

eg Jatti taayamma learnt samskruta saahitya, vyaakarana and alankaarashaastra, from Shrungeri Subramanya Shaastri. Some devadasis learnt samskruta from some Kaashi pandit. But this was not very common. Sometimes classical music practice and learning was done in the evenings. More practice was done for the sake of group-performances. Temple chores were also a part of some of their lifestyle. Mostly they remained indoors. They would fully cover themselves and go out very early in the morning, if needed.

c) Shikshana paddhati –

➤ Shikshana for Vedanta followers –

Lot of information is given with regard to Vedas, Vedaangas, Upanishads, Brahmasootra, Bhagavadgeeta, Advaita, Dvaita, Vishishtadvaita and other darshanas. They will be taught adhyayana, adhyaapana and research too. They are taught to recite Vedas, conduct religious rites and so on. This helps in karma yoga and jnaanaayoga. Development of bhakti is a practical aspect – a real emotion which they may get based on their life-style.

According to Ramaanujacharya,

When the bhakta seeks God, God also seeks him, and they are finally united in the realm of mukti. **Bhakti** is not merely the act of pleasing God by external worship, but is an inner spiritual attitude enriched by the eight virtues, atmaganas. When bhakti deepens into parama-bhakti or ananya-bhakti, absolute devotion, it becomes a deep yearning for God. God also yearns for communion with such bhakta. God and the bhakta are thus united together forever in love.

Prapatti-yoga - Prapatti is devotion and self surrender to God as Radha-Krushna. This method of attaining salvation, known as ‘prapatti sadhana’ and is most importantly, available to all. Men and women of all classes and castes (or non-castes) are permitted to seek liberation through this sadhana. It is referred to as sadhana (apara) bhakti - devotion through regulations. This in turn leads to para-bhakti - the highest devotion characterized by madhurya-rasa, the sweet emotions of devotion experienced by those perfected in saadhana bhakti. This is in the nature of yoga. The Upanisads prescribe prapatti and bhakti for the mumukshu leading to the grace of God, brahma-prasada, as the prerequisite for mukti. The supreme merit of prapatti lies in the universality of its appeal to all castes and classes, the guarantee of salvation to all jivas who cannot follow the arduous path of bhakti. Prapatti has an intrinsic and independent value as means (upaaya) and the naturalness in securing immediate effect. (K.R)

➤ **Shikshana Paddhati for Dancers** – During childhood the fundamental steps ‘adavus’ are taught compelling them to dance in only a particular way in a performance. Then taught are the nrutyabandhas like alarippu, jathisvara which are mainly footwork and hand movements, emotions not required. Smile is encouraged in some styles of dance. Then are bhakti-oriented nrutyabandhas – shabdham, ‘Always worshipping you in my mind, I truly believe in you. Only you are your equal. The whole world is you for those who believe you....’ and tillana... where the song is –‘I believe that you are my only resource. Why are you averse? Please protect me....’ and those Devaranaamas, etc. which praise the Lord’s characteristics –of Krishna, Vishnu.... After this are the pada, jaavali, varna, astapadi where the Naayaka Naayikaabhaava is taught. ‘The young lady is enamoured by you. It would not be nice if you delay. Come and take her, Sree Venkateshvara residing in Sheshaacala....’ in the varna. Later the person performs whatever learnt in the first performance or ‘Rangapravesha’. The next performances follow. Yajaman Kittanna was the Guru for more than 300 Devadaasis, Aasthaana and Sabhaa Nartakis. Abhinaya is based on the capacity of the dancers. As children they do not understand anything. First the hand and leg movements are taught. First they learn to continuously smile and later are taught all other emotions of Navarasas. Shrungeera is the bhaava to be understood and presented. So it is taught after some dance-experience.

तत्र त्वभिनयस्यैव प्राधान्यमिति कथ्यते।.....॥ ३८॥

(Ghosh)

चतुर्विधश्चैव भवेन्नाट्यस्माभिनयो द्विजाः। अनेकभेदाह्वयं नाट्यं ह्यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ ८-८॥ (R.S.Nagar)

Abhinaya is the main way of communication, an art, where four types are involved – physical(footwork, postures, gestures), verbal(song, words), dress and decor and the emotional.

भरतमुनेः अनुसारं ‘अभि’ उपसर्ग पूर्वकस्य ‘णीञ् धातु’ पदस्य मुख्यार्थं अभिमुखमिति। नाट्ये अभिनयात् अर्थः प्रेक्षकानामभिमुखमिति मन्यन्ते।यस्मात् शाखाङ्गोपाङ्गसंयुक्तप्रयोगतः नानार्थान् विभावयति तस्मात् अभिनयः।

(Roopa)

Drama and dance are a way of imitating the people in the world. The actors tend to involve themselves into that role and show emotions as realistically as possible. Sometimes they have to enact more than one person and show two or more different types of emotions. Thus, emotional control is learnt by the actor and also its continuous presentation.

d) Qualities of a disciple-

Eligibility for a person studying Vedaanta –

अभिरुचिः च जिज्ञासा, अभिनिवेशः, भाषाज्ञानम्, भाषादक्षता, लेखननैपुण्यम्,

वैषयिकदृष्टिः, निष्पक्षपातः. (पाण्डुरङ्गी)

Capacity to recite mantras in the right way, conduct religious rites, etc may add to their qualification.

In nartanam – अभिरुचिः, जिज्ञासा, अभिनिवेशः, भाषाज्ञानम्, सङ्घशक्तिः अवगमनशक्तिः गुरवे गौरवं बुद्धिशक्तिः, आङ्गिकबलम्, स्मरणशक्तिः, सहनशीलता, समतोलनं श्रमसहनशक्ति अभ्यासप्रवृत्तिः शिष्टाचार स्थितप्रज्ञत्वम् स्थिरत्वं न रङ्गस्य भयम् सङ्गीतज्ञानम् मनोबलम् साहित्यज्ञानम् तालज्ञानम् च। (Roopa)

जवः स्थिरत्वं रेखा भ्रमरि दृष्टिरभ्रमा। मेधा श्रद्धा वचो गीतं पात्रप्राणा दश स्मृताः॥ २७-२८॥ (Ghosh)

Among the physical gestures or postures, there should be ‘Angashuddhi’ with respect to head, neck, eye, hands, bhanga and leg movements. The ‘ardhamandala position, mudras and expressions must not only synchronise with the Guru’s taala or nattuvangam but also with both vocal music and vaadyas. She must have the capacity to understand and correlate withall this if needed do continuous practice.

e) The concept of Bhakti –

• **As in Vishishtaadvaita** - In devotion, the devotee finds happiness in thinking of God and doing his works. Naama sankeertana is given importance. Saadhana in doing upaasanaa includes – controlling passion, constant practice, calm mind, to contemplate on indwelling self/ god form, sacrificial ideas, cleanliness, internal purity of thought, suppression of excessive joy or sorrow and saatvika food intake. Bhakti is the direct means of knowing the Lord = Brahman (Upanishad) = Vasudeva (BhagavadGeeta) = Arca (alwaars)= Naaraayana (Vishishtaadvaita)

Bhaktiyoga – direct pathway to perfection.

भक्तिः उत्कृष्ट अभिनिवेशः। आत्मगुणाः इति – शौचः, क्षान्तिः, अनसूया, अनायासः, अस्पृहा, अकार्पण्यं, मङ्गलं, सर्वभूतेषु दया च। शरणागतिः एव हितः वा उपायः। मुमुक्षुः यः तत्त्वज्ञानिः भक्तः च बुद्धिं अष्टरीत्या शिक्षितः - ग्रहणं, धारणं, स्मरणं, प्रतिपादनं, ऊहा, अपोह, विज्ञानं तथा तत्त्वज्ञानम्। अपि च अहिम्सा, इन्द्रियनिग्रह, सर्वभूतदया, क्षमा, ज्ञानं, तपस्, ध्यानं, सत्यं - एतेषां सर्वेषां अनुसरणं as an offering to God.

नारायणः, the ground of all existence and the giver of good, is immanent in the नर, and is also the goal, (नरस्य अयणः)

• As in the study of Nartana - All these concepts are informed. Bhakti is given value and taught via dances and singing.

आस्येनालम्बयेद् गीतं हस्तेनार्थं प्रदर्शयेत् । चक्षुर्भ्यां दर्शयेद् भावं पादाभ्यां तालमाचरेत् ॥ ३६ ॥

यतो हस्तस्ततो दृष्टिर्यतो दृष्टिस्ततो मनः । यतो मनस्ततो भावो यतो भावस्ततो रसः ॥ ३७ ॥

Lot of concentration is required for depicting proper emotions. While pure nrutya is being done especially fast there is no emotion. But in other nrutyabandhas Saatvikabhaava, Saatvikaabhinaya are the main aspects. Manodharma in abhinaya is used – acting how the person would have done that herself. This needs Satataabhyaasa. An actor has to be willing to act and sthitaprajna in nature. These factors help in Siddhi or in producing Rasa.

Other opinions like - नवविधभक्तिरिति - श्रवणम्, कीर्तनम्, स्मरणम्, पादसेवनम्, अर्चनम्, वन्दनम्, दास्यम्, सख्यम्, आत्मनिवेदनम् च। (www.divyapracaram.wordpress.com)

According to Sripaadaraajaacaarya – God is seen in the form of infant, child, master, servant, father, mother, brother, friend, husband /beloved.

Even in dance God is observed as a child in Devaranaamas, as God form in shabdham, varnam, as naayaka in padam, seesapadya and goddess in some compositions.

f) Shaastra – prayoga - phala –

Shaastra of Vedaanta – In Vedaanta Darshana, there is analysis of sentences depicting Brahma, including the upaasana and jnaana related in the Samanvayaadhyaya. Then is Avirodhaadhyaya where there is tarka considered including non-opposition of Shrutis, smrutis, etc. In the Saadhanaadhyaya, the differences between eeshvara and jeeva along with upaasana svarupa and external and internal saadhanas are informed. In phalaadhyaya, the fruit of knowledge and brahmapraapti is mentioned. Some have tried prayoga and succeeded and obtained phala.

Shaastra of Naatyaa - In the first chapter of Naatyaa Shaastra, Bharatamuni explains the origin of Naatyaa - When Lord Indra and devas requested their pitaamah Brahma thus-

महेन्द्रप्रमुखैर्देवैरुक्तः किल पितामह । क्रीडानीयकमिच्छामो दृश्यं श्रव्यं च यद्भवेत् ॥ १-११

न वेदव्यवहारोऽयं संश्रव्यः शूद्रजातिषु । तस्मात्सृजापरं वेदं पञ्चमं सार्ववर्णिकम् ॥ १-१२

नानाभावोपसम्पन्नं नानावस्थान्तरात्मकम् ।

लोकवृत्तानुकरणं नाट्यमेतन्मया कृतम् ॥ १-१२

नाट्यं लोकजीवनकलात्मकाभिव्यक्तिः मनोरञ्जनादि उपयोगार्थं कृतं अत्युत्तमप्रदर्शनकला भवति ।

Like many other shastras it has a divine origin. Brahma considered पाठ्यं from Rig veda, अभिनयं from Yajur veda, गीतं from Sama veda and रस from Atharvana veda and created the 'Naatyaveda'. Thus it has some important aspects from all the 4 Vedas.

जग्राह पाठ्यमृगवेदात्सामभ्यो गीतमेव च ।

यजुर्वेदादभिनयान् रसानथर्वणादपि ॥ १. १७ (R.S.Nagar)

As it is bhaavaanukaranam of 3 lokas, it involves all types of fields.

सर्वशास्त्रार्थसम्पन्नं सर्वशिल्पप्रवर्तकम् । नाट्याख्यं पञ्चमं वेदं सेतिहासं करोम्यहम् ॥ १-१५

In a shaastra's prayoga to obtain specialisation, tattvas and study experience adhyayanaanubhava is used. All shaastras are involved in nrutya, nrutya, naatyaa, geeta prayogas and so on. After saadhana is obtained. done phala is

व्यरीरचच्छास्त्रमिदं धर्मकामार्थमोक्षदम् ॥ ८ ॥

कीर्तिर्प्रागल्भ्यसौभाग्यवेदगृह्यानां प्रवर्धनम् । औदार्यस्तैर्यथैर्याणां विलासस्य च कारणम् ॥ ९ ॥

दुःखार्तिशोकनिर्वेदखेदविच्छेदकारणम् । अपि ब्रह्मपरानन्दादिदमप्यधिकं मतम् ॥ १० ॥ (Ghosh)

दुःखार्ताणां श्रमार्थानां शोकार्थानां तपस्विनाम् ।

विश्रान्तिजननं काले नाट्यमेतद्भविष्यति ॥ १.११४

आयुः हितम् , बुद्धिः, यशः - तेषां वर्धनम्, धर्मस्थापनं; लोकोपदेशार्थं, सुगुणदोषादि दृश्यार्थं नाट्यमेतद्विष्ये उपयुक्तं भवतीति ब्रह्मा उक्तवान्। (R.S.Nagar)

The uses of Naatya have been listed by Bharata, Nandikeshvara and many other scholars. It encompasses all fields and helps people from various walks of life.

g) The concept of Guru bhakti –

Vedaanta considers Lord Naaraayana as the greatest aacaarya and Vishishtaadvaita informs to have indebtedness to the lineage of teachers.

They valued porvajaanaam matam in Abhinaya Darpana. NaatyaShaastra also quotes and values the aarya shlokas of the predecessors.

Devadaasis also valued their Gurus. In Kolar style of Bharatanaatyam Yajamaan Kittanna, who is supposed to have been taught by Kanci Sadaashivayya and Mysooru Venkata Subbaiah had his chief students Puttappa, N. Gundappa and many others. His students Bharatakalaamani Radhakrishna and Smt. Meenakshi Radhakrishna are my Gurus.

h) Control of emotions -

In case of Vedanta followers - Emotional control, removal of ahamkaara and arishadvarga, sthitaprajnatva are also informed in Vedaanta, Bhagavadgeeta and so on. A person who keeps control of his emotions in life is always appreciated.

In case of nartana, sattva related topics include -

- **भाव - भू** इति करणे धातुः भावितं कृतं इत्यनर्थान्तरम्। भवतीति भावः। अपि च भावः इति - वाग्ङ्गसत्वोपेतान् काव्यार्थान् भावयन्तीति भावाः।
- भावेभ्यः रसानामभिनिर्वर्त्तिः भवति।
- **विभावः -** विभावो विज्ञानर्थः। कारणं निमित्तं हेतुरिति पर्यायाः। विभाव्यन्ते अनेन वाग्ङ्गसत्वाभिनिया इत्यतो विभावः। यथा विभावितं विज्ञातमित्यनर्थान्तरम्। विज्ञान इति विशेषज्ञानः।
- **अनुभावः-** अनुभाव्यन्ते अनेन वाग्ङ्गसत्वकृतभिनयः इति। अनु इति उपसर्गः भू इति करणे धातुः
- **वाग्ङ्गाभिनियेनेह यतस्त्वर्थानुभाव्यते।**
शाखाङ्गोपाङ्गसम्युक्तस्त्वनुभावस्ततः स्मृतः॥ ७ -५ ॥
- **सात्त्विकभावाः -** सत्त्वं नाम मनः प्रभवम्। मनसः समाधो सत्त्वनिष्पत्तिर्भवति। सत्त्वं यत् दुःखितेन सुखितेन दर्शितव्यः ते भावाः सात्त्विकाः।
- **व्यभिचारि / सञ्चारिभावाः -** वि अभि इति उपसर्गो चर इति गत्यर्थं धातुः। विशेषेण अभिमुखेन रसेषु चरन्तीति / च रसेषु विविधमभिमुख्येनरन्तीति व्यभिचारिणः। वाग्ङ्गसत्वोपेतान् रसान्नयन्तीति व्यभिचारिणः।
- **स्थायिभावः-** बहनाश्रयत्वात् स्वामिभूतः स्थायिनो भावाः। विभावानुभावव्यभिचारिणः स्थायिभावानुपाश्रिता भवन्ति। स्थायिभावाः एव रसत्वमाप्नुवन्ति।

रतिहासश्च शोकश्च क्रोधोत्साहो भयं तथा।

जुगुप्साविस्मयश्चेति स्थायिभावाः प्रकीर्तिताः॥६- ८॥

(R.S.Nagar)

All these definitions show that sattva is a part of each emotion, its cause or result – bhaava, vibhaava, vyabhicaaribhaava, sthaayibhaava and rasa. This sattva has involment with the spiritual aspect, there by the physical aspect. Vedaanta also informs regarding this topic.

Being influenced by Vedanta – artist becomes saadhaka, as he shows emotional control in drama and in life and obtains rasa as phala/ siddhi of naatya. This helps in the ‘saatveekarana’ of the person who acts. (Gupt)

i) Happiness - In case of Vedaanta, they value ‘aananda’ as important and brahma is considered ‘sat-cit-aananda’. They speak of aananda or bliss, which is studied in naatya by the scholars.

In case of Nartana -

Rasa - रस इति आस्वादयत्वात्। Rasa, the combination of Vibhaava ,Anubhaava and Vyabhicaarihaava is surely influenced by sattva and this leads to higher level of consciousness. Rasa is spiritual.

Like how the connoisseurs of food savour the tastes of the rice-dish, well prepared by various condiments and sensitive-minded people additionally feel the harsha and other (bhaavas), similarly, the sensitive-minded viewers savour the sthaayibhaavas, which contain as condiments the various bhaavas and abhinayas and which

possess vaak, anga, sattva elements, additionally feel the harsha and other (bhaavas). Thus they are explained - due to that are the naatyarasas (generated). (R.S.Nagar)

Bharata explains to others with this analogy, more in detail.

अष्टरसाः – These 8 rasas may be produced during the naatya but shaanta from sthaayibhaava shama is a rasa to be obtained in real life.

शृङ्गारहास्यकरुणा रौद्रवीरभयानकः। बीभत्साद्भुतसंज्ञौ चेत्यष्टौ नाट्ये रसाः स्मृताः॥ (R.S.Nagar)

Rasa is a concept that introduces the body to higher consciousness. Shrunagaara is the peak among rasas and has more effect than other Rasas. The creation of Rasa in the viewers is supposed to be siddhi.

j) Self-realisation –

In Vedaanta – Self-realisation is a chief topic in vedaanta. There is lot of information about various ideas on atman, Brahman and so on. Yoga-learning is encouraged. Some seers with yogic ability are supposed to have realised their self.

When all the heart’s desires are cast away the mortal becomes immortal - Brhadaraanyaka (4.4.7)

(www.hinduwebsite.com)

In nartana - During the training of the basic steps or adavus one trains to control the body in a systematic way. head, eye, neck, hands, legs – all angas, upaangas and pratyangas are controlled via various movements. This is not only done as per taala but later according to music. Other simultaneous movements, with footwork and singing along with emotions makes a person well-controlled and will realise that, which was not under control. Nartana is also considered a yoga.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1) The devadaasi concept seems to have been designed based on the following ideas in Vishishtaadvaita-

- God was the main form for which the lady was married, though it was an idol spiritually invoked by aavaahanam. ‘Nityasumangali’ showed that her husband was the everlasting God himself. She should consider herself ‘married’ and not aspire for more than required.
- Involvement in classical dance and music, where a person is taught bhakti/ faith and praise of God.
- Service to the deity and the temple is like service to God.
- Practice in performing emotions would give her the emotional control and self-control in order to handle life.
- Removal of ‘arishadvarga’ like ego, jealousy, desire, greed would make her a better individual.
- Stree was valued as a person and the divinity in woman was also considered important.
- Both idol worship and non-idol worship is supported.

Nartanam has been from ancient times. Inscriptions show from 100A.D. The word ‘Ganikaa’ in Aagamashastra may be a date before this but the present dating may be wrong.

गीत नृत्य’ (Vijayendra)

‘नृत्त गीत वाद्य’ ‘नृत्य गीत वाद्य / वाद्य

The young ladies who had learnt this from childhood would perform this as ‘pooja’. As a part of the षोडशोपचार geeta, vaadya and nrutta were first considered, as naatyashastra recommends nrutta over nrutya. Later inscriptions show geeta, vaadya and nrutya. about 1070 -1190 A.D inscriptions use the word, ‘paatraa’. In temple Nityotsava they would perform as an offering to God.

2) Routine -

Five-fold religious routine called Aahnikam	Routine in case of devadasis,
Abhigamana (movement towards Lord) entering the place of worship after bath, reciting the prayer sharanaagati gadya and prostration	same type (entering the place of worship after bath) is followed but place of worship is the practice or performing area.
Upaadaana – Collection of flowers and other ingredients for worship, sometimes study or listen to vedaanta.	singing and dancing for God is best form of worship more than just reciting shlokas as the whole body is used. Doing pooja-related work or temple chores helps to be physically and mentally close to God.
Ijyaa – Actual worship of the Lord ‘Bhagavadyaaga’ during ijyakaala. Preparing and offering Naivedya is a must	Daily poojas are a must in their own house, which was followed. Sometimes allowed in temples also
Svaadhyaaya – study of sacred and religious texts.	Dance and music were related to sacred texts and their

Also can attend philosophical and religious discourses.	study was done directly or indirectly.
Yoga – after evening prayers ‘sandhyaavandanam’ before dinner and contemplate on the lord before sleep	To contemplate on God was easy for people, who were always involved in such arts.

3) Training - A person who is first trained in bhakti, then the navarasas, then naayaka-naayikaabhaava learns not only to control emotions on stage but also in life. She learns to be devoted to some form of God. Influenced by Vedanta the artist makes himself like a saadhaka of kalaa. It is assumed that saadhana leads to good phala.

4) Qualities required and encouraged - अभिरुचिः च जिज्ञासा, अभिनिवेशः, भाषाज्ञानम्, सङ्घशक्तिः अवगमनशक्तिः, गुरवे गौरवं, बुद्धिशक्तिः, स्मरणशक्तिः अभ्यासप्रवृत्तिः शिष्टाचार are some of the common **characteristics** for students in both the fields.

5) Bhakti is encouraged in both nartana and vedaanta , especially in Vishishtaadvaita.

Bhakti is the direct means of knowing the Lord = Brahman (Upanishad) = Vasudeva (BhagavadGeeta) = Arca (alwaars)= Naaraayana (Vishishtaadvaita)

Bhaktiyoga – direct pathway to perfection.

Prapatti is the main type of bhakti promoted by vishishtaadvaita.

Many songs are taught where the craving of lord is the main emotion.

6) Sharanaagati tattva i.e to obtain a surrendering attitude was given importance both in Nartana and in Vedaanta.

7) Idea of Vedaanta in Nartana –

शास्त्रे त्रायते इति शास्त्रम्। Every shaastra has prayoga and after saadhana of prayoga, phala is obtained. Even in case if nartana, the shaastra is naatyashaastra and other books supportive of it, the prayoga - there is creation of performance, after practice the fruit is the effect of the production. Similarly, with self control and emotional regulation, some people who study vedaanta feel that after prayoga of shaastra and saadhana, phala of moksha can be obtained.

8) Purusharthas – From those verses we understand -

- क्रीडानीयक - a play of characters that is entertaining,
- दृश्यं श्रव्यं both heard and seen at same time
- it is the only Veda for all varnas- braahmana, kshatriya, vaishya, shoodra and stree
- also easily understandable than other vedas.
- it contains content of all the shaastras and promotes all kinds of art
- it contains some dharma, artha, kaama, kreedaa, haasya, fights ...so on. This effects ordinary people and helps in teaching people good values, virtues, etc. in a simple way.
- It is created by Brahma to give as well as to control the purusharthas Dharma, Artha , Kaama and Moksha.

Many types in Vedanta and Vishishtaadvaita give information, believe and give value to purusharthas Dharma, Artha , Kaama and Moksha.

9) Guru Bhakti – God is considered as the greatest Guru. The Gurus of the past and present are always valued and respected in both the fields.

10) Control of emotions – Sattva is an important aspect in emotions, which has something associated with the Truth. Emotional control, removal of ahamkaara and arishadvarga, sthitaprajnatva in life are also informed in Vedaanta and Nartana and so on. Saatveekaranam is considered. A person who keeps control of his emotions is always appreciated.

11) Rasa in life is a concept that introduces the body to higher consciousness both in case of Nartana and Vedaanta.

12) Self – realisation is a topic in both vedaanta and nartana.

13) There is a kind of ethical discipline in both nartana and vedaanta to keep the body fit for the acquirement of knowledge of the Absolute Some people who can perform vedic sacrifices / rituals, can earn the merit by conducting them. Action is always favoured till death.

14) Nartana also helps to develop faith in God among people – this also the aim of vedaanta.

15) In taana 'anantaananta' is used which indicates the name of Vishnu and this is danced using mudras. The jatis 'thajjam', 'tadanam', etc. have beejaaksharas which are used for worship.

(Kaushik)

16) Music and dance involves breath and is considered a dhyana maarga to concentrate on God. The recitation of Vedas, etc. also have different utterances which involve breath and use of hand gestures. To concentrate on God has been a part of Vedaanta too.

17) In dance and music, the saguna saakaara and niraakaara upaasane of God is considered. This concept of God or Bramhan being omnipresent is there in Vedaanta and upaasana has been a way of life.

IV. CONCLUSION

- After analysing many of Raamaanujaacarya's ideas, it is found that the devadaasi system seemed to be based on some of those ideas.
- The routine of both nartana and vedaanta as students, showed full time dedication to activities related to God and worship.
- Disclipline in training and encouragement to virtuous lifestyle was there in both the fields.
- Students interested in pursuing the field, devotedness and pursuit of karma, jnaana, and bhakti was given importance.
- Guru bhakti, control of emotions and self-realisation was considered in both the fields.
- Aims like the purusharthas and rasa are considered in these fields.
- Vishishtaadvaita has intrinsic merit and is unique in its universality,

From 1300 to 1900 A.D hundreds of inscriptions use the word 'devadaasi'. Temple activity was considered a means of dedication. The last inscription using the name in 1890 A.D is found in the Melukote temple. (Nandagopal)

This was after the spread of Vishishtaadvaita. Before this the words ganikaa, paatraa ... were common in inscriptions.

- Some kings, scholars, patrons, vedaantins may have found the vishishtaadvaita ideals suitable and in order to take care of women and children, who are dedicated to the temple, the devadaasi system would have been started. Initially the financial support from the kings and the patrons would have been sufficient for people to spend full-time on arts. The word 'daasi' would be used to denote that she had a surrendering attitude according to Vedaanta, etc. It was not aimed to be a social evil.

- Misuse, abuse, lack of child legitimacy, financial instability and lack of normal family life caused problem to their life-style. To dedicate one of their children to the temple was also in some cases enforced. Some of the tantric practices which victimised the easily-available ladies to become equated to prostitution - was one of the major problem they faced. The British Government, in order to uplift women and protect them from the social-evil, banned the system. (Nandagopal)

- Vedaanta is philosophy. Naatyashastra is not mata or philosophy but protects and rules over people indirectly via the actors.

In Vedaanta a lot of importance is given to attaining Moksha. It is just mentioned in Naatyashastra.

It is also said that the 'devadaasis' did not fully follow many religious rules that people would insist upon and did not believe in moksha.

- The concepts of Vedaanta and Nartana are one involved in the other - This is the shloka used on a daily basis at the start and end of the practice or performance.

आङ्गिकं भुवनं यस्य वाचिकं सर्व वाङ्मयम्। आहार्यं चन्द्रतारादि तं नुमः सात्त्विकं शिवम्॥१॥ (Ghosh) This shloka, the mangala shloka of Abhinaya Darpana by the Aacaarya Nandikeshvara indicates both nartana and vedaanta in it.

- शिवः चत्वारिभिनयान् प्रदर्शितुं महा नटः इव दृश्यते। महानटः यस्य नटने उपयुक्तं अङ्गोपाङ्गप्रत्याङ्गाः एव आङ्गिकं, यस्य श्रव्यदृश्यज्ञानं शब्दनिश्शब्दस्वरवर्णपदवाक्यभाषाः जतिगीतवाद्यादि च वाचिकं, वेषाभूषणमुखलेपनादि आहार्यं, (अन्यवेषाः include Shiva, Ganesha, Vishnu, Krishna, Raama, Lakshmi, Paarvati, Sarasvati, Christ, Allah...), यस्य मनसि सत्त्वसम्बन्धितभावाः सात्त्विकम् च।

- नर्तने मुख्यानां चत्वारिभिनयानां उपयोगं कर्तुं सामर्थ्यं दृश्यते। The four words- aangikam, vaacikam, aahaaryam and saatvikam (dance terms) are made use of in the shloka.

अन्यार्थः -

- Salutations to the aspect of saadvik wellbeing of the universe, for which the physical aspect is the parts of the universe, vaacika aspect is all the study material and aaharya related is the aspect of those that can add decor to life.
- it refers to the overall physical, spiritual, mental - (study aspect and life aspect) and social wellbeing. – as the World Health Organisation states.

अन्यार्थः -

- शिवस्य शरीराङ्गाः चिदचिदीश्वराः इति। स्वरवर्णपदवाक्यभाषाः सर्वे वाग्भागाः (knowledge from basics to very higher levels) निशब्दमपि वाचिकं इति। आहार्यमिति (ये परिवर्तनं कर्तुं शक्यन्ते - चन्द्र, ताराः, ग्रहाः, गृहाणि... प्रलयं) अस्थायिविचाराः ये मायां सूचयन्ति। सात्विकमिति सत्त्वसम्बन्धितम्।

- अत्र भगवद्रूपारूपचित्रणं दृश्यते। (Roopa)

Nartana and vedaanta are inter- related as they deal with the same body.

In one of the nattuvanaar's words – ‘The parts of vedas, vedangas, upaangas, vedanta ... are related to bharatanaatya, the fifth veda - this is known by sampradaayika prayoga and fundamental aspects in shaastras. It is left to the scholar's intelligence to find the relationship’. (Kaushik)

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