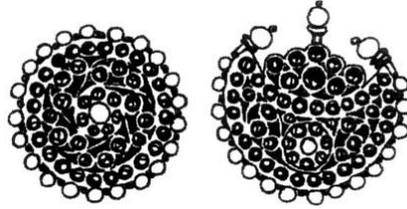


DASI ATTAM - 'dance of the Devadasis'

an integral course in hereditary music, dance and poetry from temples and royal courts of Tamil Nadu, offered by:



Paramparai Foundation, Hungary / India

www.paramparai.eu  - Dr Saskia Kersenboom

certified by: International Dance Council CID-UNESCO

www.cid-portal.org

DASI ATTAM refers to the Cultural Heritage of devadasis - ritual specialists and performing artists of yesteryear-. Longstanding apprenticeship with these communities yielded an acute awareness of their refined expertise and sophisticated legacy:



www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/MURAI-Synopsis.pdf

PARAMPARAI proposes this graded, intensive nine months' course 'DASI ATTAM' to students of South Indian dance, now known as 'Bharata Natyam'. What was its hereditary, Devadasi past? Who were the Devadasis, what did their dance look like? How does their repertoire differ from contemporary forms? *SASKIA KERSENBOOM* studied with Smt.Nandini Ramani the courtly repertoire of Smt.T.Balasaraswati, and with Smt.P.Ranganayaki the ritual traditions at Tiruttani temple. Her dissertation 'NITYASUMANGALI - Devadasi Tradition in South India' has seen its sixth edition since May, 1984.

As a result, she integrates training in music, dance and poetry as basic professional requirements. Moreover, Paramparai Foundation sees this HERITAGE as 'alive': its (in)tangible traces continue in Hindu temples and ritual performing arts.



These and similar questions will be addressed in daily, practical training where Music, Dance and Poetry merge into a creative SYNERGY. Theoretical issues on the function and form of Devadasi Heritage are discussed on the basis of reading and of historical audio visual recordings. Paramparai houses an extensive library of secondary literature as well as primary Indian texts and various multimedia. RESIDENCIES called GURUKULAVASA 'living in the home of one's teacher' take place during three summer months in LEGEND - a small village in the hilly countryside north

of Budapest, Hungary. A dance-floor under the plum trees and an indoor studio accommodate all classes:

<https://vimeo.com/144119281>



A separate guesthouse with its own vegetable garden, terrace, kitchen and living, offers a well-deserved rest.



for further questions, contact: info@paramparai.eu

RESIDENCY during winter is set in TIRUPUGALUR, Tamil Nadu, during the month of TAI (mid January-mid February): www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/YATRA.when.pdf



YATRA - 'travel' to historic sites in the Kaveri Delta, to former colleagues like priests, singers and musicians enables cultural encounters, workshops and eventually joint artistic creation: <https://vimeo.com/107884166>



COURSE DESCRIPTION: Grades I,II, III , IV and V

see: Marapu Curriculum www.paramparai.eu/flash/flash.htm

Grade I: 'BASICS' - 150 hrs., two months, Legend, Hungary (HU)

Gurukulavasa Summer Residencies - info@paramparai.eu;

current schedule: www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/DASI-ATTAM.when.pdf

Music : **Exercises:** *Karnatic* melody and rhythm - vocal or *vina* (lute)

End terms: all *svara varicai*, two *tala alankaram* in two tempi

Composition: *gitam*

Dance : **Coordination** of feet, arms and hands, recitation, memorisation

End terms: all *atavu* groups in three tempi (courtly tradition)

Composition: *alarippu, jatisvaram, shabdam*

Poetry : *Tamil* alphabet **memorisation** : *eluttu* - reading, writing

Grammar: *col* – noun

End terms: **reading** aloud and comprehension

Literature: *Tamil* among Sanskrit and Telugu in temple and court

Theory: **Devadasi Heritage:** read * *Nityasumangali, Devadasi Tradition in*

South India, Saskia Kersenboom, 1984; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass,

1987, 5th edition 2016; **Bharata Natyam*, 1955 (Tamil), 2010(English),

Dr. V.Raghavan and Smt.T. Balasaraswati; * DVD *A Tradition Continues*,

2012, Chennai: www.drvraghavancentre.com

End Exam : CID Certificate '**Dasi Attam BASICS**'

Grade II: 'REPERTOIRE' - 150hrs., two months, Legend (HU)

Gurukulavasa: Summer Residencies - info@paramparai.eu

Music : **Exercises:** *Karnatic* melody and rhythm - vocal or *vina* (lute)

End terms: all *svara varicai*, all *tala alankaram* in two tempi

Composition: *kirtana*

Dance : **Composition:** *varnam* (court), *puspanjali* (temple)

Analysis and by-heart memorisation of repertoire learnt so far

Comparison: *devadasi/rajadasi*: temple and court repertoire

Poetry: **Texts:** Tamil verbal arts: from *Cankam* poetry to *devadasi* lyrics

Grammar: *col*: noun and verb; translation of *Varnam* and *Padams*

Texts: *course materials* for music, dance and poetry will be supplied

Theory: **Tamil Verbal Arts:** read * *Word, Sound, Image, the Life of the Tamil*

Text, by Saskia Kersenboom, 1995, Oxford/ Washington: Berg

Publishers, with *interactive CD 'Bhairavi Varnam'*, Philips Media

**Music in South India, Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture*, 2004,

T.Viswanathan, Matthew Harp Allen, New York, Oxford, Oxford

University Press, with *audio CD*

End Exam: CID Certificate '**Dasi Attam REPERTOIRE**'

Grade III: 'CONCERT' -150 hrs., two months, Legend (HU)

Gurukulavasa: Summer Residencies - info@paramparai.eu

Music : **Exercises:** *Karnatic* melody and rhythm – vocal and/or *vina* (lute)

End terms: all *svara varicai*, all *tala alankaram* in three tempi

Composition: analysis of (*pada*)*varnam*

Dance: **Composition:** *padam, javali, tillana* (court/ *Margam* concert suite);

Devadasi Koyil Paddhati: songs and dances for daily and festival ritual (temple)

Analysis: *Muttamil*: the 'Threefold Tamil' synergy of *iyal* (poetry), *icai* (music) and *abhinaya* (mime) in *Margam* 'Dance-Concert Suite'

Poetry: **Composition:** by heart and recite *varnam, padam, javali* texts

Grammar: *col & porul* – translation and interpretation in their cultural contexts

Analysis: application to *abhinaya* 'improvisatory mime'

Texts : *course materials* for music, dance and poetry will be supplied

Theory: **Recent History:** read: * *Bharata Natyam, A Reader*, ed. Davesh Soneji, 2010, New Delhi: Oxford University Press

End Exam: Completion of *Margam* - CID Certificate '***Dasi Attam CONCERT***'

' **Grade IV: 'GRADUATION'** - 150 hrs., two months, Legend (HU);
Gurukulavasa: Summer Residencies - info@paramparai.eu

Music: **Exercises:** *Karnatic* melody and rhythm – vocal and/or *vina* (lute)

End terms: rehearse all previous *svara varicai* and *tala alankaram*

Composition: analysis of *padam*, *javali* and *tillana*

Dance: **Composition:** intensive, daily rehearsal of full *Margam*

'Dance-Concert'

Poetry: **Aesthetics:** *Aucitya* 'delight' and the development of *RASA*

'aesthetic experience' in performance

Texts: *course materials* for music, dance and poetry will be supplied

Theory: **Transmission:** '*Bani* – style'; *read: *Balasaraswati, Her Art & Life*,
Douglas M. Knight Jr., 2010, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press

*see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak_a1RJ2DZc

End Exam: ***GAJJAI PUJA** 'Worship of the Dance Anklets' followed by a
* Solo Performance of a full **MARGAM** 'Dance Concert' to recorded music
in Legend for an invited audience; see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfp9puUMITA>

CID Certificate '**Dasi Attam GRADUATION**'

Grade V: 'STAGE' – YATRA- Winter Residency in Tamil Nadu; 150 hrs., four weeks (mid-January to mid-February) www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/YATRA.when.pdf based in Tirupugalur (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsIDxOQ_1FM)

YATRA 'travel' takes **DASI ATTAM** back to its cultural roots in temples and royal courts along the Kaveri Delta. Local hereditary communities of musicians, priests, dance masters and royalty continue to provide the functional context from where 'global Bharata Natyam' migrated. The entire *Marapu Curriculum* studied so far 'falls in place' in this last Grade 'STAGE': travel, fieldwork, training and eventual performance. Check its detailed

AGENDA at <https://vimeo.com/140105118>

Week 1 - Tirupugalur: the temple song and dance repertoire of *devadasi* Smt.P. Ranganayaki (1914-2005) reconstructed into the daily and festival worship in Agnishvara temple.

Week 2 - Tiruvarur: ritual music continues; even today hereditary temple musicians play *devadasi* repertoire: one of their *Padams* enables artistic co-creation.

Week 3 - Tanjavur: the courtly heritage of Smt.T. Balasarasvati and the Tanjore Quartet continues among contemporary descendants. Tanjavur town, its palace-complex and various temples bring the *Margam* repertoire alive.

Week 4 - Chidambaram: the *Padam* "Teruvil varano..." leads to the ultimate shrine of ritual dance and its *Rahasya*: the 'secret' of *Shringara* that is so central to *devadasi* heritage.

THEORY: Heritage and Social History: read **Bharata Natyam*, ed. Sunil Kothari, 2007, Mumbai: Marg Publications; **Unfinished Gestures, Devadasis, Memory and Modernity in South India*, 2012, Davesh Soneji, University of Chicago Press
Intangible Cultural Heritage: visit www.unesco.org/culture/ich

END EXAM: CID Certificate '*Dasi Attam Cultural Heritage*'