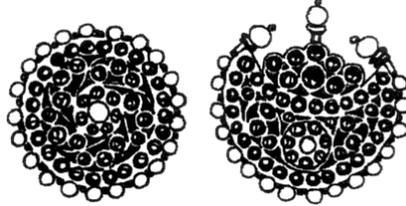


# *DASI ATTAM - 'dance of the Devadasis'*

*an integral course in hereditary music, dance and poetry from temples and royal courts of Tamilnadu*



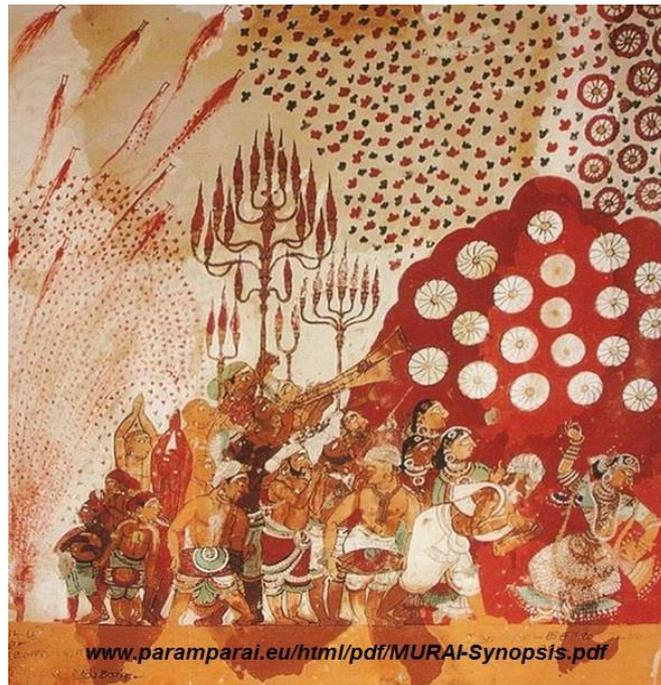
*offered by : Paramparai Foundation, Hungary / India*

*[www.paramparai.eu](http://www.paramparai.eu)  - Dr. Saskia Kersenboom*

*certified by: International Dance Council CID-UNESCO*

*[www.cid-portal.org](http://www.cid-portal.org)*

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



*[www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/MURAI-Synopsis.pdf](http://www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/MURAI-Synopsis.pdf)*

*SASKIA KERSENBOOM studied with Smt. Nandini Ramani the courtly repertoire of Smt. Tanjavur Balasaraswati, and with Smt. P. Ranganayaki the ritual traditions at Tiruttani temple. Her dissertation 'NITYASUMANGALI - Devadasi Tradition in South India' has seen its fifth 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 survive in Hindu temples and sophisticated contemporary culture.*

*PARAMPARAI proposes its graded, intensive 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?*



*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 the village of LEGEND, a hilly countryside north of Budapest, Hungary. A dance-floor under the plum trees and an indoor studio accommodate all classes: <https://vimeo.com/144119281>*



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



## **GENERAL INFORMATION for CID *DASI ATTAM* Residency in Legend, Hungary**

**WHO:** this Summer Residency addresses students who already have a firm practical experience in the South Indian dance form *Bharata Natyam*. Musical sensibility is required to successfully study and master the rhythmical and melodic aspects of *Devadasi* repertoire.

**WHEN:** Residencies of one full month (75hrs. CID credits) or two full months (150 hrs. CID credits) start on the first day of June, July or August. The daily program involves four hours teaching, five days a week. Morning classes: vocal music/ *vina* and dance technique; afternoon: Tamil language & Culture, followed by mimetic dance/ composition. *Course Levels* I, II, III, IV (and V in India) are outlined below.

**CAPACITY:** the nature of this *Gurukulavasa* residency requires a flexible approach to the development of each student. Therefore, the maximum capacity is 4 students, the minimum 2 students. Shared and individual classes are scheduled during five days of teaching and allow free days for individual practice, study, rest and sight-seeing.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Lodge is included in the course fees; a kitchen, living, terrace and large garden are available for shared use.



**COURSE FEES** include: one month (75 hrs. CID credits) or two months (150 hrs. CID credits) Tuition fees, Course materials, Lodge (single or double occupancy) at Legend Guesthouse, Pick-up/ drop Budapest International Airport- Legend v.v.

**CONTACT:** [info@paramparai.eu](mailto:info@paramparai.eu) for questions, **rates, application** and timely **reservation** (TWO months before the start of your preferred course).

*RESIDENCY during winter is set in TIRUPUGALUR, Tamil Nadu, during the month of TAI (mid January-mid February). Here, the present merges with the continuous past of devadasi performing arts.*



*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/140105118>*



## *COURSE DESCRIPTION: Grades I, II, III, IV, V*

see: *Marapu Curriculum* [www.paramparai.eu/flash/flash.htm](http://www.paramparai.eu/flash/flash.htm)

### *Grade I: 'BASICS' - 150 hrs., Legend, Hungary*

*Gurukulavasa Summer Residencies* - [info@paramparai.eu](mailto:info@paramparai.eu)

*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, 4th edition 2011

\**Bharata Natyam*, 1955 (Tamil), 2010 (English) Dr. V.Raghavan and

Smt.T. Balasaraswati; \*DVD *A Tradition Continues*, 2012, Chennai:

[www.drvraghavancentre.com](http://www.drvraghavancentre.com)

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

## *Grade II: 'REPERTOIRE.1.' -150hrs: Legend (HU)*

*Gurukulavasa: Summer Residencies - [info@paramparai.eu](mailto: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: from *Cankam* Tamil poetry to *devadasi* lyrics

**Grammar:** *col*: noun and verb; translation

**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*

\* see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8SZMor0f4s>

*End Exam: CID Certificate 'Dasi Attam Repertoire.1.'*

*Grade III: 'REPERTOIRE.2' -150 hrs:Legend (HU);  
Gurukulavasa: Summer Residencies - [info@paramparai.eu](mailto:info@paramparai.eu)*

*Music:* **Exercises:** Karnatic melody and rhythm – vocal 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); *paddhati*:

songs and dances for daily and festival ritual (temple)

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

*Poetry:* **Composition:** recitation of *varnam*, *padam*, *javali* texts

**Grammar:** *col* & *porul* – 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:* CID Certificate 'Dasi Attam Repertoire.2.'

*Grade IV: 'CONCERT' - 150 hrs: Legend (HU);  
Gurukulavasa: Summer Residencies - [info@paramparai.eu](mailto: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 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](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak_a1RJ2DZc)

*End Exam: GAJJAI PUJA 'Worship of the Dance Anklets'  
followed by a full Solo MARGAM 'Dance Concert' to  
recorded music in Legend (HU) for an invited  
audience: \*see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfp9puUMITA>*

*CID Certificate 'Dasi Attam Concert'*

*Grade V: 'Stage' - 150 hrs.: YATRA -Winter Residency in Tamilnadu, South India; four weeks (mid-January to mid-February) based in Tirupugalur*  
for upcoming YATRA see: [www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/YATRA.when.pdf](http://www.paramparai.eu/html/pdf/YATRA.when.pdf)

*Intensive workshop:* music and dance training with (guest) teacher(s)  
from both court and temple traditions

*Travel: (In) tangible Cultural Heritage 'DASI ATTAM'*

. *arcana* - daily rituals in Tirupugalur and Tiruvarur

. *bani* - famous music and dance lineages (a.o. Tiruvarur, Pandanallur, Valuvur, Kumbhakonam). Excursion: 4 x 1 day

. *triloka* - the 'triple world' of major temples, royal court and village shrines: Tanjavur temple & palace, Tiruvaiyaru and the Kaveri river. Excursion: 3 days, 2x overnight in Tanjavur

. *ananda* - Ananda Tandava: 'Shiva's Dance of Bliss'  
Excursion: 2 days, 1 x overnight in Chidambaram

*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, by Davesh Soneji, University of Chicago Press

**Intangible Cultural Heritage:** visit [www.unesco.org/culture/ich](http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich)

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