

## Unit – 3 FOLK AND MARTIAL ART

### 1: What is Therukoothu?

Therukoothu is a traditional Tamil art form and street play that has its roots in the ancient Tamil culture. It is a preferred form of folk drama.

### 2: What is Karagattam?

Karagattam is a traditional Tamil art and dance form where women perform intricate steps with pots balanced on their heads. It is a celebratory and festive dance.

### 3: What is Villu Pattu?

Villu Pattu is a traditional form of storytelling in Tamil culture, where stories are narrated through the use of a bow-shaped instrument called "Villu" (bow).

### 4: What is Kaniyan Koothu?

Kaniyan Koothu is a traditional folk art form in Tamil Nadu that involves storytelling through song and dance, often performed during festivals and special occasions.

### 5: What is Oyillattam?

Oyillattam is a traditional dance form in Tamil Nadu where dancers perform intricate footwork and body movements to the rhythm of folk music.

### 6: What is Leather Puppetry?

Leather puppetry is a traditional form of puppetry in Tamil culture where puppets made of leather are used to depict stories from mythology and folklore.

### 7: What is Silambattam?

Silambattam is a traditional Tamil martial art that involves the use of a long stick or staff called "Silambam." It combines self-defense techniques with artistic movements.

### 8: What is Valari?

Valari is a traditional martial art form in Tamil Nadu that focuses on the use of weapons, particularly the sword. It has historical significance and is a part of Tamil martial traditions.

### 9: What is Tiger Dance?

Tiger Dance is a traditional folk dance in Tamil Nadu where dancers mimic the movements of a tiger. It is often performed during festive occasions and cultural events.

### 10: What falls under the category of "Sports and Games of Tamils"?

Traditional Tamil sports and games include activities like Silambattam, Valari, and other martial arts, reflecting the rich cultural and historical heritage of the Tamil people.

### 11: Give examples of "Performing arts"

Therukoothu, karagattam, kaniyan koothu, puliyattam, villupattu

### 12: Give examples of "Martial Arts"

Valari, Silambam

### 13: What are the benefits of playing Pallankuzhi?

**Pallankuzhi** is a traditional South Indian board game played mainly in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka. It is typically played on a wooden board with **14 small pits (kuzhi)** and two larger storage pits, using **cowrie shells, seeds, or stones** as game pieces. The game is usually played by two players who take turns distributing the shells or seeds into the pits based on a set pattern. The objective is to capture as many pieces as possible by strategically placing and moving them around the board.

Pallankuzhi helps improve math skills, strategic thinking, and concentration, while also being a fun way to connect with Indian cultural heritage.

## **1. Explain about Therukkoothu**

**Therukkoothu** is a traditional folk theatre form of Tamil Nadu, India. The term "Therukkoothu" translates to "street play," as it is typically performed in open spaces, like streets or village squares, often during festivals and temple celebrations.

### **Key Characteristics of Therukkoothu:**

- Storytelling:** Therukkoothu primarily involves storytelling through a combination of dialogue, song, and dance. The stories are usually drawn from Indian epics like the **Mahabharata** and **Ramayana**, as well as local folklore and legends.
- Costumes and Makeup:** Performers wear elaborate costumes, including vibrant and ornate clothing, jewelry, and large headgear. The makeup is exaggerated, with bright colors and bold designs to highlight the characters' emotions and make them visible to the audience, even from a distance.
- Music and Instruments:** The performance is accompanied by traditional instruments like the "**mridangam**" (a percussion instrument) and "**harmonium**." The music plays a crucial role in setting the mood and rhythm of the play.
- Characters and Acting:** Therukkoothu features a mix of characters, including heroes, villains, comedians, and narrators. The acting style is often exaggerated and dramatic, with performers using expressive gestures and facial expressions to convey the story.
- Audience Interaction:** One of the unique aspects of Therukkoothu is the interaction between the performers and the audience. The actors often engage with the viewers, making the performance more lively and engaging.
- Social Themes:** While traditionally focused on mythological stories, Therukkoothu also addresses social issues, offering commentary on contemporary problems like politics, justice, and morality, making it a powerful medium for community education.

Therukkoothu remains a vibrant and integral part of Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage, preserving the region's rich traditions and continuing to entertain and educate audiences.

## **2. Explain about the 'Karagattam'**

Karagattam is a traditional folk dance form of Tamil Nadu, India, that is performed in honor of the rain goddess Mariamman. It is a vibrant and energetic dance that showcases the performers' skill and balance as they dance with decorated pots, or "**karagam**," balanced on their heads. This dance is often performed during temple festivals and community celebrations.

### **Key Features of Karagattam:**

- Balancing Act:** The highlight of Karagattam is the dancers' ability to balance the karagam (a pot decorated with flowers and other ornaments) on their heads while performing intricate dance movements. The pots are usually filled with water or rice, symbolizing prosperity.
- Music and Rhythm:** The dance is accompanied by traditional Tamil folk music, with instruments like the "**thavil**" (a type of drum) and "**nadaswaram**" (a wind instrument) setting the rhythm. The music is lively, adding to the festive atmosphere.
- Costumes:** Performers wear colorful traditional attire. Women usually wear sarees, while men wear dhotis and turbans. The costumes are often adorned with bright colors and intricate designs, enhancing the visual appeal of the dance.
- Types of Karagattam:**
  - AattaKaragattam:** Performed to entertain, it involves various dance movements, including spins, jumps, and balancing acts.
  - SakthiKaragattam:** A more spiritual form, performed as a ritualistic offering to the goddess Mariamman. It is usually performed during temple festivals.
- Symbolism:** Karagattam is not just a dance; it is a symbolic representation of devotion, gratitude, and the hope for good rainfall, which is crucial for agriculture in Tamil Nadu.
- Modern Adaptations:** While traditionally performed in rural settings, Karagattam has also found its place on urban stages and in films, often blending with contemporary dance forms to appeal to a wider audience.

Karagattam remains a significant part of Tamil culture, reflecting the region's agricultural roots and spiritual traditions.

### **3. Explain VilluPattu**

**VilluPattu** is a traditional form of folk music and storytelling from Tamil Nadu, India. The term "VilluPattu" means "bow song," as the primary instrument used is a **bow-like musical instrument** called the "villu."

#### **Key Features of VilluPattu:**

- Musical Instrument:** The **villu** (bow) serves as both a musical instrument and a prop. It is made of a large, curved wooden bow with strings attached, which are struck with small sticks to produce rhythm. Other percussion instruments, like "**udukkai**" and "**murasu**," are also used.
- Storytelling:** VilluPattu is primarily a narrative art form, where stories from Hindu mythology, folklore, and historical events are sung and narrated. The lead performer, known as the "**Othuvar**," sings and narrates, while the supporting artists play instruments and sometimes act out parts of the story.
- Themes:** The stories often convey moral lessons, religious teachings, and cultural values. Common themes include tales of gods and goddesses, epic heroes, and legendary saints.
- Performance Style:** The performances are interactive, with the narrator engaging the audience, making it both entertaining and educational. The rhythm and music add to the dramatic effect, enhancing the storytelling.
- Cultural Significance:** VilluPattu has a strong cultural and religious significance, often performed during festivals, temple events, and community gatherings. It serves as a way to preserve and transmit Tamil culture and traditions.

VilluPattu is a unique and cherished folk art form that combines music, narrative, and cultural education in an engaging and entertaining way.

### **4. Explain about KaniyanKoothu**

**Kaniyan Koothu** is a traditional folk art from Tamil Nadu, performed mainly by the Kaniyan community. Here are its main features:

- Ritual Performance:** Done during temple festivals to honor deities and seek protection.
- Storytelling:** Based on Tamil mythology, featuring gods, goddesses, and saints with moral messages.
- Costumes and Makeup:** Performers wear elaborate costumes and dramatic makeup to depict divine or mythical characters.
- Music and Instruments:** Traditional instruments like the "udukkai" and "tharaithappattai" enhance the performance.
- Dance Movements:** Vigorous, expressive dance and gestures to convey the story's intensity.
- Community Participation:** Engages the whole village, strengthening social bonds.
- Cultural Value:** A vital part of Kaniyan identity, preserving and passing on their traditions.

Kaniyan Koothu is a lively, meaningful art form that showcases Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage through dance, drama, music, and ritual.

### **5. Explain about oyilattam**

**Oyilattam** is a traditional folk dance from Tamil Nadu known for its grace and rhythm, performed mainly in rural festivals and celebrations. Key features include:

- Group Dance:** Typically performed by a line or circle of dancers moving in sync, creating a harmonious display.
- Simple, Expressive Movements:** Involves swaying, clapping, and footwork that, though simple, express themes from folklore or daily life.
- Musical Accompaniment:** Accompanied by Tamil folk music with instruments like the "thavil" drum and "nadaswaram" wind instrument.
- Traditional Costumes:** Women wear colorful sarees, men wear dhotis, with jewelry and accessories adding visual appeal.
- Use of Props:** Props like handkerchiefs, fans, or sticks are used in some variations, adding coordination and skill.
- Cultural Significance:** Fosters community bonding and collective joy, reinforcing social ties and cultural identity.
- Narrative Element:** Movements often depict stories from epics or daily life, blending dance with storytelling.

## **6. Explain about Leather puppetry**

**Leather Puppetry (Tholpavakoothu)** is a traditional South Indian shadow puppetry art, blending storytelling, music, and visual artistry. Key features include:

1. **Puppets:** Made from treated animal hide (often goat or deer skin), intricately cut, painted, and adorned with vibrant colors, depicting characters from Hindu mythology.
2. **Shadow Play:** Performed behind a translucent screen with puppets between the screen and a light source, creating moving shadows.
3. **Storytelling:** Drawn from epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, often conveying moral and cultural messages.
4. **Music and Narration:** Accompanied by traditional music, with puppeteers narrating the story and voicing characters.
5. **Cultural Significance:** Often performed in temple festivals and religious ceremonies as an offering to deities and for community entertainment.
6. **Puppeteers:** Skills are passed down through families; puppeteers are skilled in puppet-making, manipulation, and storytelling.
7. **Visual Artistry:** The detailed design, colors, and movements of the puppets create a visually engaging experience.
8. **Regional Variations:** Styles vary across India; in Tamil Nadu, it is associated with Bhadrakali worship and temple rituals.

Leather puppetry preserves South India's rich heritage in storytelling, music, and visual arts, remaining a cherished cultural expression.

## **7. Explain about Silambattam**

Silambattam, also known as Silambam, is an ancient martial art form from Tamil Nadu that primarily involves the use of a bamboo staff for combat and self-defense. It is one of the oldest traditional martial arts in India, dating back over 2,000 years, and was historically practiced by Tamil warriors.

Key Aspects of Silambattam:

1. **Weapon:** The main weapon used is a bamboo staff called silambam, usually around 1.68 meters long, which is wielded with both hands for striking, blocking, and defending.
2. **Techniques:** Silambattam includes various techniques such as swift movements, spins, thrusts, and footwork patterns. It emphasizes speed, agility, and precision.
3. **Training:** Practitioners are trained to handle multiple weapons, but the focus remains on mastering the staff. Other weapons include swords, spears, and knives.
4. **Cultural Significance:** Historically, Silambattam was used in warfare and self-defense. Today, it is often performed during festivals and cultural events to showcase Tamil Nadu's martial traditions.
5. **Physical Benefits:** It helps improve reflexes, balance, coordination, and flexibility, making it a complete physical workout.

Silambattam remains an important part of Tamil Nadu's heritage, embodying the state's rich tradition of martial arts. It continues to be practiced both as a competitive sport and a means of self-defense.

## **8. Explain about Valari**

**Valari** is a traditional weapon and martial art technique from Tamil Nadu, historically used by ancient Tamil warriors and hunters. It consists of a boomerang-shaped weapon made from wood or metal, designed for throwing. The shape of the **valari** allows it to travel through the air with speed and accuracy, and skilled practitioners could use it to hunt or defend against enemies.

6. **Weapon Design:** The valari typically has a curved or boomerang-like shape, crafted from wood or metal, with sharp edges. It is designed for throwing, either to strike targets or return to the thrower.
7. **Usage:** Traditionally used in hunting and combat, valari was effective for bringing down small animals or disabling opponents from a distance. Its aerodynamic design allowed for precise, long-range attacks.
8. **Martial Practice:** Valari throwing required strength, skill, and aim. Practitioners would train to throw the weapon accurately, using their wrist and arm strength to generate momentum.
9. **Cultural Significance:** Valari is not only a weapon but also part of the rich martial traditions of the Tamil people. It symbolizes the agility and tactical skill of Tamil warriors.

Though valari is no longer used in combat, it remains a part of Tamil Nadu's historical and cultural legacy. It is sometimes demonstrated during martial arts displays to preserve the tradition.

## **9. Explain Tiger dance**

Tiger Dance (PuliAttam) is a traditional folk dance from Tamil Nadu, India, where performers dress as tigers and mimic their movements. It is celebrated during festivals and cultural events.

Key Aspects of Tiger Dance:

10. **Costumes and Makeup:** Performers paint their bodies with tiger-like stripes in vibrant colors and may wear tiger masks or headdresses.
11. **Dance Movements:** The dance involves energetic and vigorous movements mimicking a tiger's behavior, such as crouching, leaping, and stalking.
12. **Accompaniment:** The performance is set to lively beats from traditional drums like the parai or thavil, enhancing the rhythm and energy of the dance.
13. **Cultural Significance:** Performed mainly during temple festivals, it honors the deity Ayyanar, symbolizing power and protection, and is believed to ward off evil spirits.
14. **Entertainment:** It is both a cultural and entertaining spectacle, showcasing dramatic and captivating performances.

The Tiger Dance is an integral part of Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage, celebrated for its vibrant display and symbolic significance.

## **10. Explain Sports and Games of Tamils.**

The sports and games of Tamil Nadu are deeply rooted in the state's rich cultural heritage and traditional practices. Many of these activities are linked to festivals and social gatherings, showcasing the physical prowess, agility, and competitive spirit of the participants.

1. **Jallikattu:** A traditional bull-taming sport played during the Pongal festival, particularly in rural Tamil Nadu. Participants try to grab the hump of a bull and hang on as it runs, aiming to subdue it.
2. **Silambam:** A traditional martial art that involves using a long bamboo staff to demonstrate agility, precision, and combat techniques. It dates back centuries and is often performed during festivals and cultural events.
3. **Kabaddi:** A popular team sport where players take turns invading the opponent's side of the court, trying to tag members while holding their breath and chanting "kabaddi." It is widely played in rural and urban areas alike.
4. **Valari:** A traditional martial game where participants throw boomerang-shaped weapons called *Valaris*. It was once used for hunting and defense but is now performed as a sport or cultural display.
5. **Uriyadi:** A game typically played during Krishna Jayanthi celebrations where participants try to break a clay pot filled with prizes while blindfolded, similar to the piñata.
6. **Rekla Race:** Bullock cart racing is a popular traditional sport in rural Tamil Nadu. Teams race their carts pulled by bulls in a competition of speed and control.
7. **Adu Puli Aatam:** A strategic board game resembling chess, where the goal is to capture the opponent's pieces. It has been popular in Tamil households for generations.
8. **Kambala:** Similar to Jallikattu, Kambala involves a buffalo race in slushy fields and is often organized during harvest festivals.

These sports and games not only promote physical fitness but also reflect Tamil Nadu's cultural values, social customs, and historical traditions. Many of them are closely tied to local festivals and rural life, creating a sense of community and entertainment.

## **11. Write about the games played by children in villages during sangam period**

During the Sangam period (approximately 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE), children in Tamil Nadu, like in many ancient cultures, engaged in various games and activities that were both entertaining and educational. These games reflected the rural lifestyle and cultural practices of the time and were integral to the social and physical development of children.

### **Games Played by Children During the Sangam Period:**

1. **AaduPuliAttam:** This game, also known as AaduPuliAttam, involved a symbolic battle between a goat and a tiger. It was played on a board with pieces representing the goat and the tiger. The tiger's goal was to capture the goats, while the goats aimed to trap the tiger. This game taught strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.
2. **Pallankuzhi:** Pallankuzhi was a popular traditional board game involving the placement and movement of small seeds or pebbles in a series of holes. It required strategic thinking and calculation, and was often played on a board carved into the earth or made from wood.
3. **Uriadi (Pot Breaking):** Uriadi, or pot breaking, was a game where a clay pot filled with treats was hung from a height, and blindfolded children took turns trying to break it with a stick. The game was part of festival celebrations and tested accuracy and strength.
4. **Sundal (Bean Toss):** In this game, children tossed small beans or seeds into a circle drawn on the ground. The objective was to accurately toss the beans into the circle while avoiding obstacles. It helped in developing hand-eye coordination and precision.
5. **Kolaattam (Stick Dance):** While primarily a form of entertainment for adults, children also participated in simpler versions of Kolaattam, or stick dance, involving rhythmic movements with sticks. This dance helped develop coordination and rhythm.
6. **Chidambaram (Hide and Seek):** Hide and seek, known as Chidambaram, was a common game where children hid and sought each other within a designated area. This game encouraged physical activity and problem-solving.
7. **Ponnaiya (Ring Toss):** Ponnaiya involved tossing rings onto a peg or a stick. Children used rings made from vines or other materials, aiming to land them on the peg. This game developed dexterity and aiming skills.
8. **Kolam (Rangoli Drawing):** While primarily a cultural activity, children participated in creating Kolam (intricate patterns drawn on the ground with rice flour). This activity enhanced creativity and fine motor skills.