



INTACH

FOLK DANCES OF INDIA: KOLI



Koli Dance is a dance form of the Koli fishermen community belonging mainly to the coastal areas of Maharashtra and Goa. It is known for its ethnicity and tradition. This colourful dance has several variations in its dance patterns which are performed in different parts of the coastal areas. The Koli people are known for their distinct identity which reflects in their unique dance. The dance incorporates elements of the main occupation and livelihood of the community - sea and fishing. This lively dance also serves the purpose of unwinding after a hard day's work as the fishermen face so many hardships out in the sea.

Performance

These dances are performed in two ways - by men only or by both men and women together. The dancers form a single line or stand in pairs. One



characteristic style of this dance is that the fishermen stand in a row holding their oars. They sway their oars in a forward and backward motion creating an illusion of rowing a boat tossing on the waves of the sea. A lot of coordination is required during the dance performance as they are performed to form a structure of the moving waves of the sea as well as the movement of a boat. The women form a separate row linking their arms and approaching the men folk in a teasing way. As the music intensifies, the separate groups of men and women come together and dance in unison. One of the most important characteristics of this dance is the simulation of rowing of boats, the movement of waves and act of catching fish. The dance varies from region to region. The people who form the audience cheer the dancers to encourage and appreciate them. Another variation of the Koli dance has the women jumping between sticks held by the men. It is the dance form which represents the culture and living occupation of this fishing community.



DID YOU KNOW...

Me Dolker, Aga Pori Sambhaal, Dol Doltai, Paru Go Paru and Valav Re Nakva are some of the popular songs of Koli folk dance that the dancers perform.

Costumes



While performing the dance, women generally dress up in green-colored saris that are draped up to their knee while the men wear *lungis* around their waists that form a triangular shape. The women adorn themselves with ornaments like necklaces, ear rings and bangles.

The dance form of Koli is considered as a lively dance because of the jolly and lively nature of the Koli community.

ACTIVITY

1. What is the popular folk dance of your region? Also, explain how it is performed.
2. Find out some popular folk dance songs of your region.
3. Make a group of 8-10 people. Select one song and choreograph a performance of your folk dance and record it. You can document your performance and send a recording to us at INTACH.

References

<http://www.maharashtratourism.net/culture-lifestyle/dances/koli-dance.html>
<http://www.discoveredindia.com/maharashtra/culture-in-maharashtra/dance/koli.htm>
http://www.indianetzone.com/54/koli_dance.htm
<http://www.indiamapped.com/folk-dance-in-india/goa-koli-dance/>