



INTACH

FOLK DANCES OF INDIA: JHUMAR



Jhumar is a folk dance from Punjab performed during the harvest season. There is a version of the dance that is popular in Haryana as well. And one that is popular in Jharkhand and surrounding regions that referred to as 'Jhumair' also.

In Haryana, this traditional dance is specially performed by the young girls who are married. The dance is performed to the beats of the musical instruments such as dholak and thali and in some parts of the state, also popularly known as the 'Hariyanvi Gidda'. We will be focusing mainly on the Punjab region of the dance form.

Origin

It is believed, the dance takes its name from the ornament named Jhumar which is worn by women on their forehead or from "Jhoom" that means swaying. The folk dance originated from the Balochistan and Multan which is in Pakistan today. Originally a Baluchi tribal dance, it was carried to India by traders. It has become a part of Punjab folk heritage. The songs associated with Jhumar performances evoke qualities that reminds the artist and audience to sway with its tunes.

About the Dance

Jhumar dance recreates the gait of animals and birds - their movement of ploughing the field, sowing of seeds and harvesting are shown in the original progression. Performed in Punjab mainly by men, three generations of father, son and grandson can be seen together. It is a dance of happiness and men can be seen dancing especially during Melas, weddings and other major functions and celebrations.

The dancers dance around a single drummer who stands in the centre. The main step is the movement of the arms and the dancers' feet are moved forwards and then backwards, in unison, while turning to the left and to the right to the beat of the singers and drummer. At times, the dancers place their left hand below their ribs on their left



hip as they gesticulate with their raised right hands while circling the drummer. People who perform solo, move toward the centre and showcase their skills. As this dance is related to harvesting, dancers also move to the centre and mimic planting seeds - bending forward and then straightening up and throwing their left arm in an arc over their head and in the next move they mime threshing grain.

The dancers make a "chzi chzi" sound (which sounds very much like a tambourine being shaken) in tune with the beat of the dance which adds to its grace. The costumes used in Jhumar are similar to that of Bhangra. They wear a coloured Patka on the head, a lungi, a long tunic and a waistcoat.

Types

There are different types of Jhumar, each of which has a different mood. They are -

- Satluj Jhoomar
- Beas Jhoomar
- Chenab Jhoomar
- Multani Jhoomar
- Jhoomar Taari

DID YOU KNOW...

It is believed that Jhumar dance has originated from Sandalbar, now situated in Pakistan, but is very much a part of Punjab folk heritage.

ACTIVITY

1. Find out some songs and dancers associated with Jhumar Dance.
2. Trace the history of the folk dance and how it reached and India and spread further. Also, find out if other folk dances of similar names are similar to the dance form of Punjab.
3. Try and learn a few steps of Jhumar dance. See if you can sway to the beats as the name suggests.

References

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