

For CMAT Exam

INDIAN DANCE FORMS

Background

- Natya: amalgamation of dance, drama & music
- First formal mention of dance is found in Bharata's famous work Natyashastra (200 BC-200 AD)
- Bharata Muni describes dance as the complete art encompassing within its scope all other forms of art- music, sculpture, poetry and drama

Aspects of Dance

- As per Natya Shastra, two basic aspects:
 - Lasya- symbolic of feminine features of dance
 - Tandava- symbolic of the male aspects of a dance form
- As per Abhinaya Darpan, there are three basic elements:
 - Nritya- rhythmic dance steps, devoid of expressions
 - Natya- dramatic representation through dance recital
 - Nritya- sentiments and emotions evoked through dance
- Nandikeshwara elaborates that there are 9 rasas or emotions expressed through dance: emoting through the use of mudras (hand gestures + body postures). There are 108 fundamental mudras.

Rasa (emotion)	Symbolic of
Shringara	Love
Roudra	Anger
Bibhatsa	Disgust
Veera	Heroism
Shaant	Peace and tranquility
Haasya	Laughter and comedy
Karuna	Tragedy
Bhayanak	Horror
Adbhuta	Wonder

Indian Classical Dance Forms

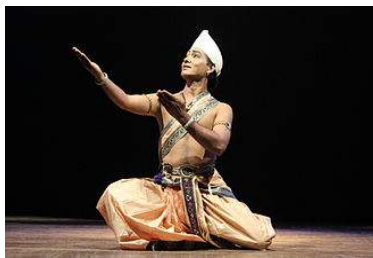
- The Guru-Shishya Parampara forms the core of Indian classical dance form: Guru passing knowledge to the disciples
- Presently, as per Sangeet Natak Akademi, there are 8 classical dance forms- Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Mohiniattam, Odissi, Manipuri, Kathak, Sattriya



Nataraja



Kathakali



Sattriya



Manipuri

Bharatnatyam

- Oldest among all dance forms
- Derives its name from Bharata Muni
- Origin: Sadir, the solo dance performance of temple dancers or devadasis in Tamil Nadu (referred to as Dashiattam)
- Early 19th century- four dance teachers of Thanjavur, known as 'Thanjavur Quartet' (Chinnaiah, Ponniah, Vadivelu, Shivanandam), defined elements of recital:
 - Alarippu: basic dance postures accompanied with rhythmic syllables
 - Jatiswaram: Nritya component
 - Shabdam: Abhinaya component
 - Varnam: Nritya component
 - Padam: mastery over the abhinaya
 - Jawali: short love lyrics, performed in a fast tempo
 - Thillana: concluding stage; pure nritya
- Insights:
 - Also known as fire dance, as it is the manifestation of fire in the human body
 - Equal emphasis on Lasya and Tandava
 - Knees are mostly bent during dance recital
 - Characterized by Ekcharya Lasyam style- one dancer playing many roles

Kuchipudi

- Origin: name derived from the village of Kusselavapuri or Kuchelapuram in Andhra Pradesh. Formalised by Siddhendra Yogi in the 17th century
- History:
 - Central theme of the recitals: Bhagavata Purana
 - Dancers came to be known as Bhagavathalus
 - Gained prominence under the patronage of the Vijayanagara and Golconda rulers
 - Remained confined till the advent of 20th century
- Features:
 - Involves difficult foot movements, usually performed as a team
 - Predominance of Shringara rasa
 - Involves all three components of nritya (Sollakath or Patakshara), natya and nritya (Kavutvams)
 - Manifestation of the earthly elements in the human body
 - Both Lasya and Tandava elements are important
 - Popular solo elements:
 - Manduk Shabdam (story of a frog)
 - Tarangam (performed with feet on the edges of a brass plate)
 - Jala Chitra Nrityam (dancer draws picture with the toes while dancing)
 - The recital- in Telugu language, is generally accompanied with Carnatic Music
 - Principal instruments- violin & mridangam

Kathakali

- Native to the temples of Kerala; Katha means story and Kali means drama
- Generally an all male group performance
- Minimal use of props, but elaborate facial make-up along with a headgear
- Each color has its own significance:

Color	Significance
Green	Nobility, divinity & virtue
Red	Royalty
Black	Evil and wickedness
Yellow	Saints and women
Completely red painted face	Evil
White beard	Beings with higher consciousness

- Most recitals are a conflict between good and evil, where themes are drawn from epics and puranas
- Language used is Manipravalam- Malayalam + Sanskrit
- Importance of eye and eyebrows- Nine important facial expressions are called Navarasas
- The arrival of dawn, accompanied with a continuous sound of drums, chhenda and maddala marks the beginning and end of the recital
- Symbolizes the element of sky or ether

Mohiniattam

- Also known as the Dance of the Enchantress
- Essentially a solo, performed by women
- Combines grace and elegance of Bharatnatyam with the vigour of Kathakali (footwork is gentle)
- Generally narrates the story of feminine dance of Vishnu
- Lasya aspect is dominant
- Appearance: white and off-white are principal colors, no elaborate make-up, the dancer wears ghungroo
- Symbolizes the element of air
- Musical instruments used: cymbals, veena, drums, flute etc.

Odissi

- Earliest examples found in Udaygiri-Khandagiri caves
- Name is derived from 'Odra nritya' mentioned in Natya Shastra
- Young boys who dressed as females and performed came to be known as 'Gotipuas'
- A variant practised in royal courts- Nartala
- Similar to Bharatnatyam in use of postures and mudras
- The Tribhanga posture- the three bended form of the body, represents masculinity
- Lower body is largely static and there is movement of the torso
- The dancers create geometrical shapes and patterns with the body. Hence, known as mobile sculpture
- Elements:
 - Mangalacharan- flower is offered to Mother Earth
 - Batu Nritya- comprising of the dance
 - Pallavi- facial expressions
 - Tharijham- pure dance before the conclusion
 - Moksha and Trikhanda Majura are the conclusion- the former includes joyous movements signifying liberation, and the latter, in which the performer takes leave from the gods
- The dance is usually accompanied by Hindustani music- instruments used are Manjira, Pakhawaj, Sitar, Flute etc.
- Symbolizes the element of water
- Appearance: elaborate hairstyle, silver jewellery, long necklace

Manipuri

- Finds its mythological origin to the celestial dance of Shiva and Parvati in the valleys of Manipur along with the local 'Gandharvas'
- Central theme- Krishna, and mostly performed by females
- Lays emphasis on devotion and not sensuality
- Hand gestures and gentle feet movement are given more importance than facial expressions
- Both Tandava and Lasya are included, but the latter is given more importance
- Appearance: women wear long skirts
- Nagabandha mudra: body is connected through curves in the shape of 8
- Recurring theme is Rasa-leela (Radha-Krishna love story)
- The drum- Pung- is an intricate element of the recital
- Thang-Ta and Sankirtana are also influenced by Manipuri dance

Kathak

- Origin: Rasa Leela of Brijbhoomi, traditional in Uttar Pradesh
- Derives its name from 'Kathika' or the story-tellers who recited verses from epics, with gestures and music

- An important feature is the development of different gharanas:
 - Lucknow: reached its peak under Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. more emphasis on expressions and grace
 - Raigarh: developed under the patronage of Raja Chakradhar Singh. Emphasis on percussion music
 - Jaipur: initiated by Bhanuji, lays emphasis on fluency, speed and rhythmic patterns
 - Banaras: developed under Janakiprasad. Sees a greater use of floor and lays emphasis on symmetry
- Elements:
 - Ananda: introductory item
 - Thaata: soft and varied movements
 - Todas or Tukdas: small pieces of fast rhythm
 - Jugalbandi: competitive play between the dancer and tabla player
 - Padhant: dancer recites complicated bols and demonstrates them
 - Tarana: pure rhythmic movements before the end
 - Kramalaya: concluding piece, with intricate and fast footwork
 - Gat Bhaav: dance without music or chanting
- Generally accompanied with Dhrupad music

Sattriya

- Derives its name from Vaishnava monasteries known as Sattras
- Inspired by the Bhakti movement
- Amalgamation of various dance forms prevalent in Assam- mainly Ojapali and Devdasi
- Focus is on the devotional aspect and mythological stories
- Includes Nritya, Nritya and Natya
- Generally performed in groups by males known as Bhokotos
- Songs are compositions of Shankaradeva known as 'borgeets'- accompanied with khol, cymbals, flute etc.
- Great emphasis on rhythmic syllables and dance postures along with footwork (Tandava + Lasya)
- Costumes:
 - Males- dhoti and paguri + waist cloth
 - Females- traditional Assamese jewellery, ghuri and chador + waist cloth
- Modern times, Sattriya has two streams: Gayan-Bhayanar naach and Kharmanar naach
- Ankia naat: type of sattriya, involves musical drama. Originally written in Brajavali. Another similar form is Bhaona: based on stories of Lord Krishna

Dance form	Famous proponents
Bharatnatyam	Yamini Krishnamurthy, Lakshmi Vishwanathan, Padma

	Subramaniam, Mrinalini Sarabhai, Mallika Sarabhai
Kuchipudi	Radha Reddy and Raja Reddy, Yamini Krishnamurthy, Indrani Rahman
Kathakali	Guru Kunchu Kurup, Gopi Nath, Kottakal Sivaraman, Rita Ganguly
Mohiniattam	Sunanda Nair, Kalamandalam Kshemavathy, Madhuri Amma, Jayaprabha Menon
Odissi	Guru Pankaj Charan Das, Sonal Mansingh, SHaron Lowen (USA), Anandini Dasi (Argentina)
Manipuri	Jhaveri sisters- NAYana, Suverna, Ranjana and Darshana, Guru Bipin Singha
Kathak	Birju Maharaj, Lacchu Maharaj, Sitara Devi, Damayanti Joshi
Sattriya	-

NOTE: APART FROM THESE 8 DANCE FORMS, THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE HAS RECOGNIZED A 9th CLASSICAL DANCE FORM- CHHAU

Folk Dances of India

Name	Place	Remarks
Chhau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saraikella Chhau- Jharkhand Mayurbhanj Chhau- Orissa Purulia Chhau- WB 	Mask dance with vigorous movements to narrate mythological stories
Garba	Gujarat	Held during Navratri, circular movements with rhythmic clapping
Dandiya Raas		Polished sticks and dandiyas are used, mock fight between Durga and Mahishasura
Tarangamel	Goa	Celebrated youthfulness of the region, during Dussehra and Holi
Ghoomar or Gangore	Bhil tribe of Rajasthan	Pirouetting movements of women, brings in the multi-colored vibrancies of the ghagra

Kalbelia	Kalbelia community of Rajasthan	Sensuous performance by women, costumes and dance movements are similar to serpents
Charba	Himachal Pradesh	Performed during Dussehra festivities
Bhangra/Giddha	Punjab	Highly energetic, popular during festivities. Giddha is female counterpart of Bhangra
Dadra	Uttar Pradesh	Semi-classical dance form, accompanied with same kind of music
Jawara	Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh	Harvest dance, including a basket full of jawar on the head
Matki	Malwa region	On occasions of weddings and other festivities, performed solo, while balancing a number of earthen pots on the head
Gaur Muria	Muria tribes of Chhattisgarh	Ritualistic dance form, imitates movements of a bison, performed by both men and women
Alkap	Jharkhand, West Bengal	Generally associated with the Gajan festival of Shiva, performed in troops
Biraha	Bihar	Portrayal of the pain of women, whose partners are away from home. Performed solely by males
Paika	Orissa	Signifies battle, martial folk dance, performed with a long spear
Bagurumba	Bodo tribe of Assam	Related to nature or environment. Instruments- Sifung, Kham, Serja
Jat-Jatin	Bihar	Representation of tender love and quarrels between a married couple
Jhumair	Jharkhand and Orissa	Harvest dance
Danda-Jatra	Orissa	Oldest folk art of the country, narrates stories about Shiva, theme is brotherhood and social harmony

Bihu	Assam	Celebrate pomp and gaiety, with rapid hand movements and brisk footsteps
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Thang-Ta	Manipur	Martial dance, performers enact a fight sequence- leaping to attack and defend
Rangma	Nagaland	War dance of the Nagas
Singhi Chham	Sikkim	Mask dance, performers are dressed in furry lion costumes symbolising snow lion and paying tribute to the Kanchenjunga peak
Kummi	Tamil Nadu and Kerala	Performed by women, absence of any accompanying music
Mayilattam	Kerala and Tamil Nadu	Young girls are dressed as peacocks
Butta Bommalu	Andhra Pradesh	Dancers wear masks and entertain through delicate music and non-verbal music
Kaikottikali	Kerala	By both men and women during Onam to celebrate the harvest
Pandayani	Kerala	Martial dance, dancers wear huge masks known as kolams, and present divine narratives. Performed to worship Goddess Kali
Kolkali-Parichakali	Kerala and Lakshadweep	Martial dance, dancers use mock weapons and enact fight sequence
Pata Kuniitha	Mysore	Religious dance form by men, who use long bamboo poles decorated with colorful ribbons
Chakyar Koothu	Kerala (traditionally performed by the Chakyar community)	Solo performance, where the performer dresses himself as a snake
Jhoomar	Punjab	Performed during harvest season, in circles. Movement of arms is most important part, on the tune of drums
Karma Naach	Chotanagpur plateau	Dancers form circles and dance with arms around each others' waists
Raut Naach	Yadav community of Chhattisgarh	Performed during diwali
Dumhal	Jammu and Kashmir, by Wattal tribe	Involves colorful costumes with a tall conical hat for men

Fugdi	Maharashtra and Goa	Women dance in varied formations, mostly in circles and rows
Cheraw	Mizoram	Performed using bamboo sticks
Dalkhai	Orissa	Performed during dussehra, events from epics and mythological stories are represented
Hulivesha	Karnataka	To honour Goddess Durga, during Navratri, involves male dancers painted like the tiger

Tippani	Gujarat	Exclusively by women, who beat the floors with tippani (long wooden sticks joined by square wooden or iron block)
Garadi	Puducherry	Performed to celebrate victory of Lord Rama, dancers wear 10 iron rings on each of their legs
Tera Tali	Kamar tribe of Rajasthan	Women sit on the ground and cymbals are tied to different parts of the body
Hojagiri	Tripura	Movement of only lower half, by a group of 4-6 women, performed during Lakshmi puja