



Kathak

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- It is one of the **classical dances of India.**
- The word Kathak has been derived from the word **Katha** which means a **story**. It is primarily performed in **Northern India.**

◦ **Evolution:**



- It was primarily a **temple or village performance** wherein the **dancers narrated stories from ancient scriptures.**
 - Kathak began evolving into a distinct mode of dance in the **fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the spread of the Bhakti movement.**
 - The **legends of Radha-Krishna** were enacted in folk plays called **rasa lila**, which combined folk dance with the basic gestures of the kathak story-tellers.
 - Under the Mughal emperors and their nobles, Kathak was performed in the court, where it acquired its present features and developed into a form of dance with a distinctive style.
 - Under the patronage of **Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Awadh**, it grew into a **major art form.**
- **Dance Style:**
- Usually a **solo performance**, the dancer often pauses to recite verses followed by their execution through movement.
 - The **focus is more on footwork**; the movements are skillfully controlled and performed straight legged by dancers wearing **ankle-bells.**
 - Kathak is the **only form of classical dance wedded to Hindustani or the North Indian music.**
 - Some prominent dancers include Birju Maharaj, Sitara Devi.

Bhakti Movement

- The development of Bhakti movement **took place in Tamil Nadu between the seventh and ninth centuries.**
- It was reflected in the emotional poems of the **Nayanars** (devotees of Shiva) and **Alvars** (devotees of Vishnu). These saints looked upon religion not as a cold formal worship but as a loving bond based upon love between the worshipped and worshipper.
- They wrote in local languages, Tamil and Telugu and were therefore able to reach out to many people.
- In course of time, **the ideas of the South moved up to the North** but it was a very slow process.
- A more effective method for spreading of the Bhakti ideology was the **use of local languages.** The Bhakti saints composed their verses in local languages.
- They also translated Sanskrit works to make them understandable to a wider audience. **Examples** include Jnanadeva writing in Marathi, Kabir, Surdas and Tulsidas in Hindi, Shankaradeva popularising Assamese, Chaitanya and Chandidas spreading their message in Bengali, Mirabai in Hindi and Rajasthani.

Source: TH