

Bhoot Cola

Why in discussion?

Recently a folk art 'Bhoot Kola' has been depicted in a famous Kannada film 'Kantara'.

About Bhoot Kola

In Tulu language, 'Bhoot' means 'soul' and 'Kola' means 'Game'. Kola is also called 'Nema' which means 'ceremony'.

It is basically a religious ritual observed by Tulu speaking people in southern Karnataka and some districts of Kerala. According to the belief, those local spirits are worshiped in it, who protect villagers from calamities.

Bhoot Kola is an annual ritual performance. The ritual is performed only by skilled person, who belongs to lower caste of the society. The performer behaves like God and gives answers to the problems of villagers.

The performer wears a skirt made of palm leaves and begins his performance with the onset of evening. His face is painted with many colours and oil. He is treated with high respect in the society.

According to Tulu tribal tradition, Bhoot Kola or God Kola is a "non-Vedic" ritual in which idols representing 'ghosts' are taken out in procession with beating drums and firecrackers. With swords and bells the performer imitates the 'demon' and the rituals also include walking on burning coals.

Bhoot Kola is influenced by Yakshagana, the most popular folk dance performed in the coastal region of Karnataka.



Yakshagana dance

Yakshagana is a traditional folk dance practiced in Karnataka. It is believed that it originated between 10th century and 16th century. **It has a distinctive style of music which is different from both the Carnatic and Hindustani styles of Indian classical music. It consists of rich mixture of music, dance, singing and attire. In this art, moral education and public entertainment are important aspects along with performing art.** It is heavily influenced by the Vaishnava Bhakti movement. Its themes are basically taken from Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagwatageeta and other Hindu epics.

Instruments like Mridangam and bells etc. are used in this art. Ramchandra Hegde and Sheni Gopalkrishna Bhatt are its main actors. It is sung in Kannada language and staged in Malayalam and Tulu languages also.

Recently, more than 900 manuscript of Yakshagana have been digitized by some Yakshagana lovers under the Yakshavahini Trust.

Tulu language

Tulu is a Dravidian language that is mainly spoken in the two coastal districts of Karnataka- Dakshina Kannada and Udupi and also in Kasaragod district of Kerala. Tulu speaking people are informally known as Shetra Tulu Nadu due to their spread over a limited area.

Tulu has a rich oral tradition in form of Paddana and folk theatre Yakshagana.

Currently, Tulu is not part of Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. But efforts are being made to include it in the Eighth Schedule. Members of Parliament and MLAs can speak in Tulu in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies respectively. Aspirants of Competitive Exams can write All India Competitive Exams like Civil Services Exam in Tulu.



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