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# Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam to Padmaavat: AnEpitome on Traditional Indian Folk Dance inSanjay Leela Bhansali's Movies

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***Abstract:*** ***India is a country with diverse culture. Indian folks reflect the way of life in India. Bollywood, the name for Indian films had marked its signature in music and dance with the influence of traditional Indian folk. It had begun in the 1940s with the song "Diwali Phir Aa Gayi Sajni" from Khajanchi (1941) and coloured by the later generation of directors. Sanjay Leela Bhansali is one of the grandiose filmmakers in Bollywood who had glorified Indian folk, culture and aesthetics on screen. This paper titled "Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam to Padmaavat: An Epitome on Traditional Indian Folk Dance in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Movies" is a close study on the folk dances employed in Bhansali's movies such as Gujarat's Garba in Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam (1999), Uttar Pradesh's Kathak in Devdas (2002), Garba in Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela (2013), Maharashtra's Jugalbandi, Lavani, Kathakin Bajirao Mastani (2015), and Rajasthan's Ghoomar and Kathak in Padmaavat (2018). Evaluating all these songs trace back its relation and devotion to North Indian cultures which marks the bond between people and the culture of our society.***

***Keywords:*** ***Bollywood Movies, Culture, Dance, Garba, Ghoomar, Jugalbandi, Kathak, Lavani, Songs, Traditional Folk.***

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bollywood, the voice of Indian films is a portmanteau of two names Bombay (current Mumbai) and Hollywood. It is the world's largest film industry which releases an 'n' number of movies every year, which is far more than Hollywood. Bollywood songs and dances have awide range over the world, people from different parts of the world dance to the tunes of Bollywood and appears on-screen through YouTube. Drid Williams in her Bollywood: Postmodernism's Legacy to the International Dance World (2009) opines that "Bollywood dance is a debased version of traditional Indian culture that is both nihilistic and meaningless"(20). The evolution of dance in Bollywood is from the classical, folk dances in India which hadattained a change in the '70s when the dance forms like Disco, Cabaret became an influential part of mainstream Bollywood movies. People who don't give a step to those songs were rare. Later comes the Free-style. After 1980s Bollywood began to recollect its beautiful days of old classical dances

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and replaced the traditional folk to the forefront, which again began to rule over the dance numbers of Bollywood.

Sanjay Leela Bhansali is one of the grandiose filmmakers in Bollywood who had glorified Indian folk, culture and aesthetics on screen. One who searches for Bollywood and its portrayal of Indian culture spins around the commercial classics of Bhansali. He had a tryst with music and dance, whose mother is an Indian folk dancer and father an eminent Musician and filmmaker. Bollywood has an enormous influence on Indian folk dance. There are many movies like Mission Kashmir, Devdas, Bhool Bhulaiya, Chennai Express, Jab We Met etc which portrayed a mixture of Indian folk dance such as Rouff, Kathak, Odissi, Kathakali, Bhangra etc with relevance to the modern context of its performance. Bhansali's movies stand unique in making dances and songs in which these songs narrate the emotions of the characters and bring a cessation to their plights by revealing the major twist of the movie. This paper titled"Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam to Padmaavat: An Epitome on Traditional Indian Folk Dance in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Movies" is a study on the folk dances in Bhansali's movies such as Gujarat's Garba in Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam (1999), Uttar Pradesh's Kathak in Devdas (2002), Garba in Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela (2013), Maharashtra's Jugalbandi, Lavani, Kathak in Bajirao Mastani (2015), and Rajasthan's Ghoomar and Kathak in Padmaavat (2018).Garba

Garba is an Indian form of dance which took its origin in Gujarat. This form of dance is performed by the Gujarati women during the nine nights of Navaratri. The word Garba means womb of a woman which symbolises life. Garba dance is performed as an honour to the goddess Durga, placing the statue of the goddess at the centre of the dancing floor. It is performed around a lighted clay lantern called Garba Deep which represents the life inside a mother's womb, where they dance around the Deep symbolises the footstep of goddess Durga with which the men and women dances with a divine spirit and energy. Garba has its own dressing style in which women wear bright colour Gagras which is embroidered in Gujarati fashion, whereas men wear Kediyu, a Gujarati dress where kurta on the top and dhoti or chorno on the bottom.

Garba in modern times can be classified into Gauff, Hinch, Dodhiyu, Paanchiyu, Dandiya, Taali etc.

(a) Dandiya is the most popular form of Garba which can be seen in festivals, marriage ceremonies in North India where the dancers dance using sticks.
(b) Dodhiyu is one of the elegant forms of Garba in six steps where the dancers move forward and backward with different steps and styles.
(c) Hinch is the form of Garba which emphasis on stretching the body according to the music. It often begins with stretching hands with the count of Garba, right hand at the right side and the step goes on with the claps and beats of the music.
(d) Gauff is the most beautiful form of Garba where the dancers dance by winding and unwinding dupattas, move forward and backward with steps in feet and dupattas in hand.
(e) Taali is seen in every forms of Garba which can classified into Ek Taali, clap once in a step; Bey Taali, claps twice in a step and Tran Taali, claps thrice in a step.

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Fig. 1 A. Dhol Baaje (Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam)

Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam (1999) a filmi adaptation of Maitreyi Devi's Bengali novel Na Hanyate (1974), a triangle love story enacted by Salman Khan, Aishwarya Rai and Ajay Devgan. It is a tale of happiness, love and sorrow with a happy ending which is rare in Bhansali movies. Bhansali had made her character Nandini a traditional girl in a village in Gujarat and the movie is filmed in the Gujarat-Rajasthan border regions. Bhansali had employed Garba in two of his songs with a mixture of Dandiya and Kathak.



Fig. 1 B. Dhol Baaje (Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam)

Dholi Taro Dhol Baaje is one such song in the movie choreographed by Vaibhavi Merchant, granddaughter of the famous choreographer B. Hiralal, which had given her the National Film Award for Best Choreography. Merchant has mixed the beats of Garba to that of Dandiya and drums in Dhol Baaje with a simultaneous slow, then fast, then faster beats and steps of Garba with quick movements. Merchant has portrayed the dance in four styles of Garba where she retained the Dandiya (dancing with sticks) and Hinch (dancing with claps) in Ek, Bey and Tran Taali when it goes for fast, fast, and faster movements in these lines:

**Nachenge prem rogi dham dhama dhamDham dham datilal datilal**
**Dhidkit dhidkit dhilaal**
**Baaje mirdang dhana dhan dhana dhan baaje Cham cham cham chamat jhanjhar jhamjhamatGhungroo ghamghamat chamak cham chamakeHey baaje re baaje re baaje re baaje re**
**Dhol Baaje** (Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam 1999)When the lovers will dance
The drums are beating

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The drums are beating The drums will thump The goglet is jingling The anklets are chiming
It's beating and beating and beating
The drums are beating. (Bollymeaning 2013)



Fig. 2 Nibooda (Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam)

Nibooda, another song in the movie Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam is performed by Aishwarya Rai as a custom at the night of her cousin sister's wedding in front of a large audience. Unlike Dhol Baaje, Merchant has used Dodhiyu, where rather than bringing dancerstogether, they have been divided into three small groups dances separately around Aishwarya Rai. Nibooda focuses more on expressions and three claps steps in Dodhiyu with moderate speed than the fast spinning steps of Garba. The dance with Dodhiyu and a small number of kathak steps accompanied by the music of Taal and Sarangi makes the performance a delight one.



Fig. 3 A. Lahu Munh Lag Gaya (Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela)

Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh are Bhansali's favourite couple whom he alwaysgave sad, desperate endings in his movies. One can see two different streams of Garba in Bhansali's Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela (2013), the love story of Ram and Leela. Bhansali had capture two emotions of Ram and Leela, where one occupies adulterous love and the otheranger. Lahu Munh Lag Gaya is a slow-paced song in the movie choreographed by Samir and Asha Tanna which evokes the love between Ram and Leela. It is one such song where two forms of Garba occupies equal priority in it. Samir and Asha have used both Taali and Hinch where they focus more on spinning and emotions of the characters expressed through their

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looks and actions. It is dashing, flamboyant and too loud to attract spectators and performersto its beats. The steps of the dance changes in every four beats of the music.



Fig. 4 Nagada Sang Dol Baaje (Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela)

Nagada Sang Dol Baaje is another song from the movie Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela which shows the folk madness of Bhansali in his movie. Bhansali had portrayed Leela enacted by Deepika with anger and frustrations, her emotions are unveiled through the song and her steps in the Dol Baaje. Samir and Harsh Tanna have choreographed the Gujarati rich culture on screen. The song begins with four beats of a drum where a teary Leela lights the lamps of Navaratri and ends with her mother offering to Goddess Durga spinning around with the lighted lamps brings the essence of Garba in Nagada song. The Dhak-dhak sound in the song replaced the toughness and beats of Aishwarya's Dhol Baaje and fell into the hearts of dancers:

**Re khat-khat, haan khat-khat Baaje dastak wo naa ab tak aayaRe tab se, haan tab se Haan dekhi raahein**
**Ki ab tu khol baahein aajaUmad-ghumad ghoome, re machle re mora mann Goonje re baalam ke bol**
**Nagaade sang dhol baaje, dhol baaje**
**Dhaayn dhaayn dham dham dhaayn** (Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela 2013)There is knocking on the door,
but he hasn't yet come. Since then, yeah, since thenI've been waiting,
now open your arms and come.
my heart roams here and there in joy,getting all restless..
The words of my beloved speak out loud…drums beat with the kettle-drums*
with huge sounds.. (Bollymeaning 2013)

Kathak

Kathak is one of the most popular Indian, North Indian dance form believed to be originated from Uttar Pradesh with Islamic roots. Like many other folk dances, Kathak is performed as a devotion to the god. Like Garba, gagra was the costume used for Kathak which later paves the way to churidar, angrakha etc. It is believed that the migration of a group of dancers and musicians to West Bengal and Calcutta in the 1850s had spread the art forms of North India everywhere around the world and made Calcutta the city of artists.

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Fig. 5 Dol La Re (Devdas)

Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Devdas (2002) is one such movie which set in Calcutta, portrayed the life in Calcutta, where he portrayed the life of courtesans, dancers and Kathak employed here as a style for presenting the culture of Bengal and Calcutta as well as India. Bhansali began to screen Kathak from Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam onwards where he made a song Nibooda with a slight adaptation on the expressions of Kathak. While coming back to the movie Devdas, Bhansali had captured two moods of Kathak, one with joy as Dol La Re with Madhuri Dixit and Aishwarya Rai and other the performance of sorrow, anger by Madhuri anda group of dancers in Maar Daala which brings the life of the courtesans in forefront on the silver screen.

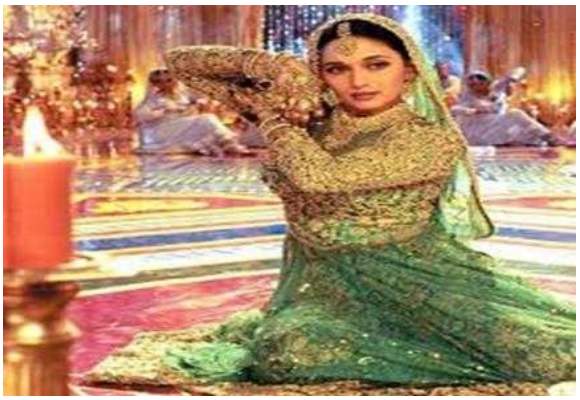


Fig. 6 Maar Daala (Devdas)

Dol La Re and Maar Daala had brought a lot of appreciation to Saroj Khan who choreographed both songs. Even though the song Dol La Re picturises the Durga Puja, the dance employed here is not Garba but a mixture of Kathak and Bharatanatyam which is not evident in front of Kathak. Saroj Khan called it as Nautwary, a blend of Kathak and Bharatanatyam in an Indian language. The steps of the dances truly blend with the beats of Dhol, a music instrument and the sounds of the ghunguroo anklets. Maar Daala is a dance performed in the house of courtesans where the character Chandramukhi, draws out her veils and pains as a dancer as well as a courtesan in the city. It employs the steps of kathak when Madhuri Dixit turns around and bend down on her knee and bow and looks at the audience andsings 'Maar Daala". Her performance of Kathak pieces on the floor, the taal beats and the musicwith Sitar and Sarangi highlights the life of women in Bengal in these lines:

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**Haan magar dua mein jab yeh haath uthaaya**
(But when I joined my hands in prayer)
**Oh haan magar dua mein jab yeh haath uthaaya**
(Oh, but when I joined my hands in prayer)
**Khuda se dua mein tumhein maang daala, oh maang daala**
(In the form of blessings from God, I asked for You)
**Allah, maang daala, allah, maang daala, oh**
(Oh God, I asked)
**Hum pe yeh kisne hara rang daala**
(Who has thrown green colour on me)
**Khushi ne hamaari hamein maar daala** (Devdas 2002)(The happiness of mine has killed me) (Bollynook 2010)



Fig. 3 B. (Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela)

Even though the song Lahu Munh Lag Gaya is composed of Gujarati Garba, it is a mixture of Kathak with Garba where in the second stanza, the footnotes of Deepika marks Kathak in the movie Goliyon Ki Rasleela Ramleela.
Kathak is one of the favourite dance forms of Bhansali for which he makes settings which exactly look like Indian monuments. One such setting was made for the movie Bajirao Mastani where he as an art director, recreates the visual extravagance of Taj Mahal for the songDeewani Mastani. The Fig. 7 depicts the image of Mastani with a sarangi in the movie in her entry song into the palace of Bajirao.



Fig. 7 (Bajirao Mastani)

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The music and Kathak in the song Deewani bring an oriental feel with an Indian flavour.The song choreographed by Remo D' Souza had made elegant steps like turning around and spinning at the centre with the Sarangi and with the hands pointed upwards like listening to thetune of love marks the love for music as well as Bajirao Mastani. The Claps and Taal, 'ThadanThak' sounds and 'Thak Thak' beats in the dance bring the soul of Kathak on screen:

**Mash'hoor mere ishq ki kahaani ho gayi Jo jag ne na maani to maine bhi Thaani Kahaan thi main dekho kahaan chali aayiKehte hain ye deewaani mastaani ho gayi**
**Diwaani haan diwaani deewani ho gayi** (Bajirao Mastani 2015)The story of my love has become famous,
when the world didn't agree, I also decided (to do this)and see where I have come today..
It is said that this mad one has become Mastani.Yeah, I've gone crazy.. (Bollymeaning 2015)

**Sab noor noor sa bikhra hai**
**Ek tu hi khayaalon mein utra hai**
**Bas jhoom jhoom jhoom jhoom jaata hai dilTu mastaani hai..**
**Tu deewani hai.. Paakeezah hasti hai teri**
**Tu noorani hai..** (Bajirao Mastani 2015) Everywhere there is a divine light spread, you alone have descended into the thoughts,the heart dances and dances,
you are Mastaani,you are crazy,
your personality is pious,
you are divine.. (Bollymeaning 2015)

Mohe Rang Do Laal is another song from the movie Bajirao Mastani in which Pandit Birju Maharaj have sparked Kathak in the choreography with a magical touch to the movie. It's a fine-tuned song with slow pace rhythm and kathak appears here in mudras in her hands and facial expressions:

**Mohe rang do laalNand ke laal**, **laal**
**Chhedo nahi bas rang do laa**
**Mohe rang do laal…** (Bajirao Mastani 2015)Color me red,
O son of Nand (Krishna),don't tease me,
just color me red, color me red.. (Bollymeaning 2015)**Dekhoon dekhoon tujhko main ho ke nihaal Dekhoon dekhoon tujhko main ho ke nihaal**
**chhoo lo kora mora kaanch sa tan**
**nain bhar kya rahe nihaar…**(Bajirao Mastani 2015)I see you, enraptured,
I see you, enraptured,
touch my glass-like, untouched body,
why do you just keep looking at it… (Bollymeaning 2015)

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Fig. 8 (Padmaavat)

Mastani expresses her love to Bajirao in these lines with mudras and expressions whilesitting at the floor. Though Bajirao is married before his meeting with Mastani, according to the Maharashtrian culture, she is not considered as the second wife of Bajirao, instead as his courtesan. The song is a recreation of Maar Da La where both the songs bring about the emotions of women who are regarded as courtesans and doesn't have the rights on the men in their life. In that sense both remarks same situations, comparatively same kind of expressions with slow pace movements.

Lavani

Lavani is a traditional Maharashtrian dance performed with the beats of Dholki, a two-headed hand drum, in which the Marathi women wears a nine-yard saree and heavy anklets. It is performed as a chant to goddess Durga. Lavani, the term denotes 'beauty'. It was a dance form which is erotic in a way to entertain the tired soldiers, performed popularly in Malwa, West-Central India. K. Ayyappapanicker in his Medieval Indian Literature: An Anthology (2000) wrote:

The main subject matter of the Lavani is the love between man and woman in various forms. Married wife's menstruation, sexual union between husband and wife, their love, soldiers amorous exploits, the wife's bidding farewell to the husband who is going to join the war, pangs of separation, adulterous love are all the different themes of Lavani. The Lavani poet out-steps the limits of social decency and control when it comes to the depiction of sexual passion. (375)



Fig. 9 A. Pinga (Bajirao Mastani)

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When Sanjay Leela Bhansali made a song choreographed with Lavani in the movie Bajirao Mastani (2015), it had created some controversies relating to its authenticity with the Maharashtrian culture and identity. It is one such song like rest of Bhansali songs, which took around nine nights to shoot. Lavani portrayed by Bhansali is a colourful sketch with the beats of Dhol, Dholaki, Duf, Manjeera, and somewhere Harmonium. Pinga is a fast number with quick movements mixed with the slow pace in Dhak-Dhak sounds. One can see the steps of Priyanka Chopra in the first part in fast movements whereas Deepika showing mudras in a slow pace resembling Bharatanatyam. Sanjay and Remo D' Souza had choreographed the dance bymixing the ordinary and traditional folk-dance forms of Lavani to create a masterpiece in Bollywood.
Lavani is generally performed to express the emotions of women like love, devotion, happiness and sorrow. Pinga is a dance form that expresses the sorrow of Kashibai and Mastani,two wives of Bajirao which later changed into happiness, joy and at last devotion. Megha Ghadge, an eminent Lavani dancer in Maharashtra argued:
When you perform Lavani, it is necessary that one celebrates Maharashtra's culture and understand the sensitivity with which this is to be celebrated. There is no study done by the choreographers and it does send a wrong message to the future generation. (BollywoodLife.com 2015)



Fig. 9 B. Pinga (Bajirao Mastani)

At the same time, Amruta Khanvilkar, a Lavani dancer praised the song:
There are no specific norms to how a song could be done or danced on. I thinkthe makers have done a fabulous job and I specifically adore Priyanka Chopra's performance. (BollywoodLife.com 2015)
Ghoomar
Ghoomar is an Indian traditional folk dance that originated in Rajasthan which later becomes the signature of Rajputs. The dance is performed by the khil tribes to worship goddessSaraswathi which later accepted by the Rajasthan community and become a part of Rajasthan culture. The word 'Ghoomar' came from the word 'Ghoomna' which means 'to twirl'. Traditionally Ghoomar is performed by the bride on her 'Griha Pravesh' i.e., welcoming ceremony at groom's home. It is performed in according to the beats of Dholak and the tunes of Sarangi and Shehnai. Unlike any other folk dances, Ghoomar needs high energy to performwere at the final part of the song women spin with fast beats with lighted lamps in hands. Ghoomar is performed as a symbol of royalty by mostly royal women.

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Fig. 10 Ghoomar (Padmaavat)

Bhansali had framed the royal folk dance in his movie Padmaavat (2018), an adaptationof Malik Mohammed Jayasi's epic poem Padmavati (1540). Like many of his movies, Padmavat too came across many controversies in which two are related to the song Ghoomar. One is that the Rajput women won't appear in front of a large audience and perform in front of them. The other was Deepika's hips are exposed in the dance Ghoomar whereas the traditional women in Rajputs cover their body as well as the face. When Bhansali visualised the rajputian dance madness, he made a set in the Chittorgarh fort in forty days, with Rajasthani paintings on the walls and four hundred deeps lighted around the fort. Like the traditional dancers, Deepika has to wear the traditional Rajasthani lehenga weighed thirty kilograms and a three kilogram's jewellery made by Tanishq with Borla and Bajuband worn by the Rajasthan women. As the name suggests the song majority of the steps in the song is spinning in different styles. The song was choreographed by Kruti Mahesh Midya and Jyothi D. Tommar and it became a masterpiece of the choreographers.

## 2. CONCLUSION:

Bollywood had beautifully portrayed the elegant frames of Indian folk dances. Sanjay Leela Bhansali had portrayed the charismatic beauty of folk dance through his movies which gives an oriental feel in the traditional dance forms by recreating the paintings which represents Indian culture. Those songs and dances in his movies remark the Indian flavour in his movies as well as in Bollywood, fine-tune and spread Indian folk dances in and around the world acrossthe vast sea.

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