

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/dancing-odissi/>

This video discusses Ori, a classical dance form from the Indian state of Odisha, which gained recognition from the Indian government around 1960. Ori is a blend of various artistic traditions, including the Mahari dance, UA technique, modern Oriya theater, and stylized everyday movements. The dance showcases a complex combination of choreography and performance influenced by ancient texts like the Natyashastra and the region's artistic heritage.

Throughout the mid-20th century, efforts were made to reconstruct and develop Ori as part of India's cultural renaissance post-independence. The dance is characterized by signature positions that create an "S-curve" in the body and emphasizes both lyrical and rhythmic patterns. Additionally, Ori includes storytelling elements and maintains a continuous flow of movement.

The author's motivation for researching Ori stemmed from a personal inquiry into its intricate histories and narratives, further driven by formal training under respected Gurus. The research reveals that Ori's roots may trace back to ancient dances like Ra Magdi, and it contests the notion that classical Indian dances solely serve religious purposes, highlighting multiple religious and secular influences.

The author notes that throughout history, dance in Odisha has had political significance, reflecting relationships between the state and the art form. The Mahari tradition and its transformation over time demonstrate the interplay between dance, power, and cultural identity. The book aims to illustrate the complex interplay of dance and politics and encourage a broader understanding of Ori as both an aesthetic and politically significant form, revealing its historical narratives and aesthetic possibilities.