Name of The Element: Qawwali

Community/ies: Muslim, Mirasi : The community which traditionally sings Qawwali music is the Mirasi Muslims. A trend has also begun of musicians of the Hindu community taking to singing Qawwali, Since Qawwali is now also entering in the field of entertainment in the films and theatre and at social occasions, these Qawwals do not restrict themselves to caste and creed or identifiable groups.

Region: Delhi, Bara Banki, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, Rampur, Jaipur, Bareilly, Ajmer, Fatehpur Sikri

Some performers and teachers belonging to these traditional communities have also migrated to urban areas where they are teaching and practicing their art.

Since the performances are both of a religious and, more recently, of entertainment value, the performances take place in many towns and villages spread all over India.

Brief Description: Traditionally Qawwali is devotional Islamic music. It belongs to a tradition of Islamic mysticism and contains the compositions of the Sufi Saints. The salient feature of Qawwali is an elaborate verbal code sung to the beat of the Dholak. Its repertoire comes from the different saintly lineages, and also those which reflect regional styles and languages and extends to the larger network of its social and ideological base. Apart from religious functions, it is also sung during the birth and other lifecycle ceremonies. The singers are supported by musical instruments such as the Harmonium, Sarangi, Sitar, Tabla and Dholak. The rendition starts with Hamd (in praise of Allah), Qual (the sayings of the Prophet Mohammad), Naat (in praise of the Prophet). (in praise of the Saints) and ends with Rang (in praise of the Chishti lineage). The rhythm and music have a powerful impact on the listeners, and create an atmosphere of piety. The singing is an offering (haazri) to Allah and the Pirs (saints). The knowledge and style of singing is transmitted orally, from generation to generation, and that is how the tradition has been kept alive. The singers quest is for unity with God, a spiritual experience which transcends his consciousness with mystical love, and transforms him into a state of ecstasy. The rhythm and poetry culminates in a vibrant performance. It combines in itself the religious, mythological and festive aspects of the community, and is an expression of its aesthetic and creative aspirations of the community.

Photographs

Video

Community Consent
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