COMPOSITE HERITAGE

for

PEACE, HARMONY AND DEMOCRACY

TRAINING HANDBOOK
for FACILITATOR *and* ACTIVISTS

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

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KHURSHID ANWAR

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Training Handbook for Facilitator and Activists

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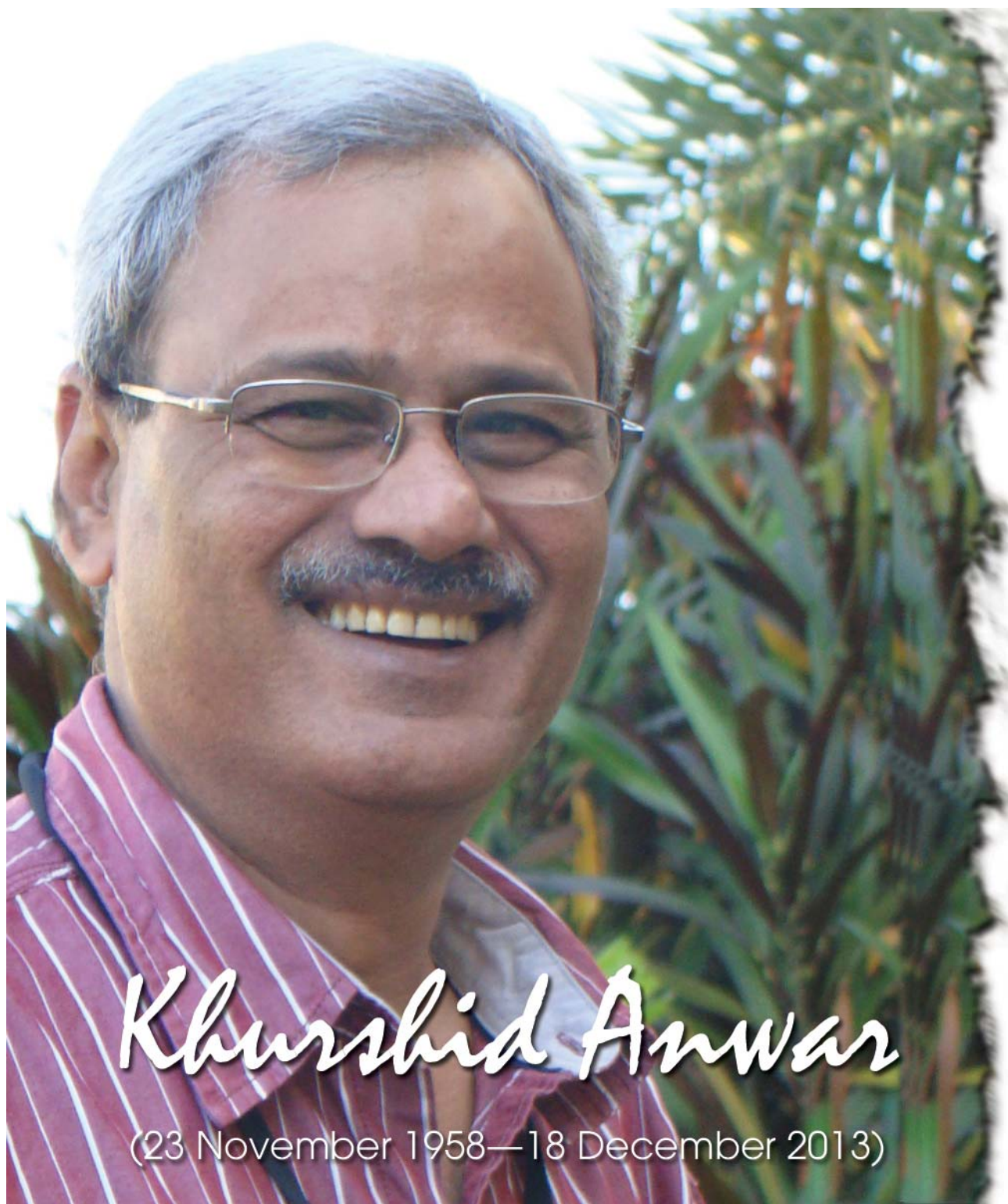
Khurshid Anwar

(23 November 1958—18 December 2013)

देख ज़िंदा से परे रंग-ए-चमन जोश-ए-बहार
रक़्स करना है तो फिर पाँव की ज़ंजीर न देख

मजरूह सुल्तानपुरी

CONTENT

About the Handbook

The whole of South Asia has traditionally been a region with a variety of violent conflicts. One would rarely find any variety or form of conflict, which cannot be traced in this region. But surprisingly we have never had a sustained secular movement in any part of South Asia. We do have peace movements but they are largely anti-war and anti-nuclear and other forms of weapons. But when it comes down to sectarian violence our response is only reactive. Consequently, we have been in and seen, end number of anti-communal campaigns. Time and again the religious extremism shows its ugly face and results into violent conflicts of worst kind. These are the times when we are shaken-up. We take to streets to resist these sectarian hatred and violence. Once the flame of violence gradually calms down, our anti-communal platforms and fronts die a gradual death. In other words, our work agenda is determined by others. We rarely take initiative to launch sustained and durable secular campaigns. If at all we initiate such movements, they turn into an intellectual debate among those who are already committed to the cause of secularism. But the real need is to educate the people who are not consciously and deliberately committed to this cause and are vulnerable either in the way of being at receiving end or in the way of being used as pawns to perpetuate violence. There is also urgent need to educate social activists who spend their time and energy to restore secular ideas, harmony and democracy in the society and arm them with tools of carrying out their work effectively.

In her renowned work "Do No Harm", Mary B. Anderson underlines that Local Capacities for Peace are inherent in all the societies. She names them as systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, shared values and interests, shared experiences and symbols and occasions. She emphasises the need to strengthen the connectors and weaken all that which falls in the category of dividers. In the context of South Asia, we can easily identify various forms and shades of systems and institutions, attitudes and actions, shared values and interests, shared experiences and symbols and occasions that could be categorised as the Composite Heritage of the region.

There are many organisations and individuals who are putting into use many tools and methods to establish peace and harmony according to the needs of their regions through their own methods. The present handbook strives to add into already existing tools of educating people on peace, harmony and democracy through training inputs.

This handbook has three sections. The first section presents exercises with facilitator's note with each one of them to enable the trainer/facilitator to conduct the sessions with desired results. The exercises illustrate the objective of the exercise, various steps and processes, training material required and expected time frame for the exercise. The facilitator's note for the exercise, further elaborates the processes as well as do's and don'ts of the exercise. It also contains some amount of input essential to properly conduct the exercise.

Section two, contains further readings on concepts and various forms of Composite Heritage. This input material is for the benefit of the facilitators and the participants both. Some of the articles are directly related to particular exercises, hence it is imperative that the facilitator reads them before conducting exercises and photocopies of the same could be distributed to participants after the exercise to provide them additional input. The remaining parts of reading material could be made available to the participants either at the end of the workshop or if there are queries during any of the sessions, after the reflection exercise.

The last section is a set of additional/optional exercises, which could be conducted if participants themselves seek clarifications on aspects related to these exercises. It also depends on time available during the schedule workshop. The normal duration for the workshop should be six full working days.

It will be advisable (not a condition) that those putting this manual into practice go through a training of trainers (ToT) programme on Composite Heritage for Peace, Harmony and Democracy.

Khurshid Anwar
New Delhi
April 2007

Foreword

Celebrating Composite Heritage

When I was introduced to India and its many forms of social action in the early 1980ies, I was impressed by the high importance given to training and capacity building of activists, the learning spaces provided by those promoting social change. The fact that social activists in South Asia approached social analysis with an intersectional approach most probably before this term was becoming important and intensively debated in social sciences lies in the historical realities that have shaped colonial politics and the unfinished post-colonial nation building projects in South Asia. Religious, gender-, caste-related and ethnic identities have defined communities, and these identities have been continuously used by political and economic interest groups to establish access to resources, control labour, people and markets and, with representative democratic structures, secure votes keeping them in power positions to pursue these interests.

The interface of identity and politics is therefore nothing new to South Asia. However, it is today shaped by an international discourse. The increasing power of international capital worldwide in controlling political decision making leads to clearly visible changes in this arena. To ensure that these economic interests of making and concentrating profits in the hands of a few, the disadvantages masses need to be distracted and divided. The battlefield for control and power therefore increasingly can be found the symbolic and cultural realm, using people's identities in order to divide and rule.

The trend is marked by features of ensuring a sense of belonging to some by excluding others, divisions are created and cater to the myth of religiously or ethnically 'clean' nation states. Complex and often syncretic religious and cultural practices and beliefs, as widespread in South Asia, are rather immune to the underlying power games: either are very local and have only a very limited outreach or they blur and transgress the borders between different identities. These are therefore not useful for a political project of divide and rule, but bear strong potential for peace and mutual understanding. Only reductionist definitions of 'us' against the 'other' serve the purpose of giving a meaning in life of particularly the losers of the current economic system, tapping their emotions to turn violently against other communities rather than against powerful economic and political actors.

In this training manual, the approach centres around the concept of ‚composite heritage': instead of focussing on what divides society, ISD chooses to explore what unites people of South Asia beyond the assigned identities. It contains the wisdom of several workshops from all over South Asia that have unearthed a huge wealth of cultural practices where people are coming together in their everyday life, transcending their identity based divides,

be it folk traditions, languages, poetry and theatre, dances, festivals, agricultural practices or food habits, just to mention a few.

Strengthening Composite Heritage is contributing to conflict sensitive analysis and action, as it reduces conflict and violence by focussing on what connects rather than what divides.

The new manual carries forward the cause of strengthening and celebrating a collective pluralistic and inclusive South Asia and beyond. A composite understanding starts from the personal and moves to the public. Reflecting on one's own identity is probably the most effective starting point to contribute to societies not falling victim to power games through identity political mobilising, particularly, when taken forward into collective action. This manual will help us in this journey. Let us continue to live and celebrate South Asia's Composite Heritage.

Edda Kirleis
Bread for the World
Berlin, 9.8.2019

Friends,

This handbook was published for the first time in 2007. During this period, the patterns of training have been changed and its scope is also expanded. Starting from the Hindi-dominant areas in the northern part of India, the training has travelled from there to south, north-east and later even to some of the countries of South Asia. At the same time, a beginning was made to address the groups separately. Such training activities are taking place in the villages, backward areas of the cities, schools and colleges. At the same time, over this issue, the training was imparted to the trainers.

On the basis of the experiences and the feedbacks obtained from the trainees, the team of the I.S.D. felt the need to make necessary changes in this handbook without making any changes in the basic concepts. There were three parts in the original handbook but some changes were made here and there while maintaining the same number of parts. Along with the exercises and the facilitator's note, the related reading material or the reference material is given in the first part. The facilitators may make its use as per the condition of the group, his convenience and the availability of the time.

The second part is comprised of tableaux of festivals, choice of dresses, textiles, local instruments, handicrafts and some of the ways. These are being followed by its brief description which will give support to the facilitators.

The third part is consisted of some literature relating to the composite heritage and some literature about the South Asia and both of them will help the reader to develop a wider understanding about the subject. It is our suggestion to go through this part of the handbook and you can share this with the participants.

With all humbleness, we wish to say that we have given you a sketch of the programme which is not the last one. It can be further developed with our mutual experiences. Feel free to make use of additional reading materials, reference materials and relevant activities as per your need. Please share your experiences with us.

ISD Team

Syncretism and Plurality

The twin elements of South Asia's social heritage – syncretism (Syn-together, cretein-to believe) and plurality- are not synonymous or interchangeable. It is possible, or certainly conceivable, for societies to contain features of syncretism without being plural, and vice versa. The strength of the traditions contained in the South Asian social structure is that they are plural and syncretic. Plurality here refers to multiplicity of traditions articulated mainly in terms of religions and languages. And *this* plurality is syncretic in the sense that they all share common elements; they interpenetrate each other like overlapping circles; they merge into each other at the edges; and yet they retain their separateness. Again this plurality is not inherently syncretic or composite; it is a uniquely Indian (undivided) feature. It is precisely this Indian uniqueness that has baffled western scholars since the last century. The British ethnographers, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, looked only at India's plurality, overlooked the interconnectedness of these traditions, and declared India to be a fragmented society. They focused only on the tip of the social structure, from where Sub-continent's plurality was visible to them, but the interconnections were not.

It is also not the case that *certain* institutions of South Asian social structure have been plural whereas certain others have been syncretic. Two instances would demonstrate how South Asia's social institutions have combined the two features. It is a truism to state that South Asia is a land of many religions. Whereas the indigenous ancient traditions of Brahminism, Buddhism and Jainism continued, many others arrived from different shores, like Zoraastrianism and Christianity. Christianity, it may surprise some, arrived in South Asia before it took roots in Europe. Islam and Sikhism added to the list in the medieval times. The important thing is that whereas *all* (with the possible exception of Jainism) these traditions have remained intact, they have all developed common features. According to the *People of India Survey*, all the major Indian religions have a caste structure: Hinduism has about 3000 caste groups, Islam around 500, Sikhism and Christianity have 150 the same number of caste groups. Caste has therefore emerged not just as a Hindu institution, but rather as an *South Asia* institution. This alone makes *South Asia* Islam different from the classical Arabic Islam; it is more *Indian* than Arabic, yet it remains *essentially Islamic*.

Language is another area where both syncretism and plurality are manifest in a combination. According to the famous *Linguistic Survey of India*, conducted (by the leading linguist George Grierson) in the late 19th and early 20th century, Indians spoke a total of (at least) 179 languages that reached out to include 544 dialects. This alone made India a truly multi-lingual society. But all the dialects and languages, it was pointed out, were products of only four language families (Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austric and Sino-Tibetan). What is more, most of the major Indian languages have sprung from a similar linguistic stock and share many common features. Yet there has been no linguistic fusion and it would be absurd, even today, to talk of only *one* Indian language.

It is *this* tradition, which has come under a systematic assault for the last two decades.

This assault is geared towards undermining, and eventually destroying, all those institutions that have nurtured the elements of India's Composite Heritage. Hence the desecration of over 268 Sufi shrines in Gujarat. In order to protect and nurture this heritage, it is necessary (though far from sufficient) to first capture its essence, and this can best be done through the rubric of language and literature; Sufi and Bhakti traditions; fine arts, architecture, music and painting; and the freedom struggle.
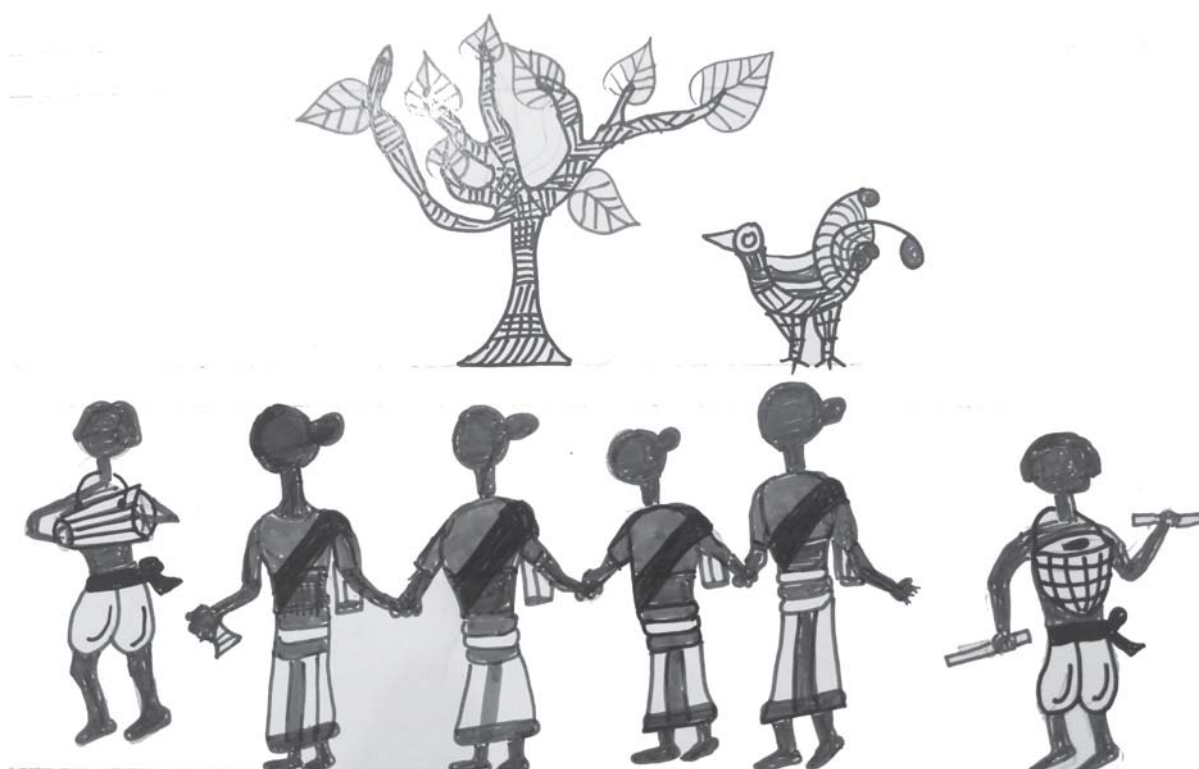
The world of literature and language bears a testimony to our composite culture, more than anything else. From the 12th century onwards, Indian literature flourished in most parts of the country in a continuous and unbroken chain. It was difficult, if not altogether impossible, to identify this literature on the grounds of religion and nationality. The only distinction that could be made was between the classical literature, written in Sanskrit and Persian, and the rest. Amir Khusro (1254-1323), the earliest and one of the most distinguished poets of the Hindavi tradition, wrote in both Persian and Hindavi/Hindui (a name designated to a cluster of languages/dialects spoken in the area of Hindustan from 11th-12th centuries onwards) but took great pride in his literary creations in Hindavi/ Hindui. In one of his verses meant for his Persian speaking audience, he wrote: "*Chuman tooti-i-Hindam, ar rast pursi; Ze man Hindui purs, ta nagz goyam* (I am an Indian rose finch, if you want to speak to me; speak to me in Hindui, so that I may tell you beautiful things.)". Baba Gorakh Nath, a saint from the 12th-13th centuries, described himself quite matter of factly in these words: "*Utpati Hindu jarna jogi akal pari Musalmani* (I have a Hindu origin, jogi appearance and a Muslim wisdom)". Many poets of the Belgram region (part of present-day U.P., near Hardoi), like Mir Jalil, Raskhan, Abdul Wahid Belgrami, Mir Miran among others, wrote poetry that would simply not allow any religious stamp. One of them wrote: "*Pemi Hindu turak mein, Hari rang rahyo samaay; Deval aur maseet mein, deep ek hi bhay* (I am both Hindu and Muslim and completely engrossed in my God; Only one lamp is appropriate for both temple and the mosque)".

Instances like this can be easily multiplied. It is important to recognise that the composite literary tradition that is generally identified with Kabir, was not confined only to him. Kabir certainly represented its high point and also its finest expression. But, it was a general pattern of popular literature from the 12th to the 18th century. Similarly in the field of languages, a number of speeches had overlapping boundaries and often a number of expressions were employed (Hindi, Hindui, Hindavi, Dehalvi, Zaban-e-Hindostan, Dakhani, Bhakha, Zaban-e-Urdu-e-Mualla, Zaban-e-Urdu, and simply Urdu) for the same linguistic stock. It would be unwise to trace a separate history for Hindi and Urdu, prior to the 18th century, for the simple reason that no such separate history existed. Modern Hindi and Urdu were created in the 18th- 19th century out of a common language pool, and their separateness, often taken for granted today, was not a part of a normal linguistic evolution but a rather unnatural and artificial creation. (For instance, which language did Amir Khusro write in, Urdu or Hindi?). Very similar trajectories of such composite characters can be drawn in the realm of art and architecture, music and paintings.

Our syncretic and plural traditions got an impetus in the modern times by our anti-imperialist national movement. Sub-continent's movement, in a larger sense, emerged as more than a battle against British imperialism. At a time when India's plurality was threatened under the homogenising impulses of modernisation, the national movement stood up to preserve our social heritage. Out of this heritage was constructed the fabric of secularism and nationalism. Thus the traditional values inherent in our syncretism and

plurality did not have to be sacrificed for the sake of modern impulses of secularism and national unity. Thus we were able to embark on the path of political modernity (and take on the alien rule) without abandoning our traditional reservoirs. Our society was thus able to enter the first phase of modernity without paying too much of a price in terms of its traditional resources. If we have preserved our syncretism and plurality thus far thanks to the freedom movement, used it to our advantage, we simply must not allow this wealth to be destroyed now.

Appendix-1

Exercise and Facilitator Note

Beginning of the Dialogue

The participants do not feel comfortable in the beginning with each other. Hence, the initial atmosphere uses to be very formal, all are under pressure. Some activities can be taken up to bring the participants out of this shell.

ACTIVITIES

- Facilitator should ask the participants to walk in the hall. While doing this, they should welcome each other through gesture or in words and move ahead. This may be continued till each and everybody welcomes each other. The facilitators may also become part of this activity.

- After pasting different types of paintings, colors etc. on each corner of the hall, ask the participants to stand by the painting they liked the most and talk over in groups which they have formed after standing beside paintings on some issues like uniqueness of taheir cities, the weather of their cities so on and so forth.

- While playing slow music, keep walking in the hall and when the music stops, facilitator may announce any number such as 3-4 so that the participants may divide themselves as per the number announced by him and he/she should ask them to discuss about each other or introduce oneself from the place where they are standing.

The facilitator may take up any other activity to make the participants to feel at ease.

MATERIAL REQUIRED
Coloured Chart or Drawn Painting, Laptop, Speakers, CD of Music.

⏰ **TIME**
20 to 30 Minutes.

⊙ OBJECTIVE :

Mutual introduction and make the participants feel at home.

Personal Introduction

After the activities of the first part, it is expected that the participants will be having the homely feelings. Now, the mutual introduction can be initiated.

PROCESS
The introduction may be made on the following points :
- Your name
- What do you do?
- Your field of work
- Your interests/hobbies
- Your expectations from the workshop

Apart from this, you may add some more aspects as per the need of the hour :
- Your dream
- What do you want to do?
- Important moment of your life
- Famous thing of your area
- Something interesting about your companion

SUGGESTION
It is possible that this session might happen with different groups in different conditions. Hence, necessary changes can be made in the questions.

MATERIAL REQUIRED
Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape

🕐 **TIME**
01.30 Hr.

Facilitator's Note

It has been observed that sometimes during a conference, seminar, workshop or training programme, the introduction part turns out to be a simple formality. Having come to know the participants' names and nature of work, we tend to move to the next part. The reason is that most of us do not attach much significance to the introduction part. Sometimes we are not even aware as to why we are going through the process of introduction.

In fact, it is not enough to know merely the participants' names and nature of their work during the introduction part. More important task is to make them feel at ease. It is, therefore, extremely essential to view the introduction part in the context of the situations in which the group is placed.

This is possible only when the participants know and understand each other, trust each other's intentions and appreciate each other's personality. The introduction is the only way to achieve this goal. The more detailed and multifaceted introduction, the easier will be the understanding and opening up among the participants. Consequently, quicker will be the resolution of the questions that agitate each one and faster will be the movement towards the objective.
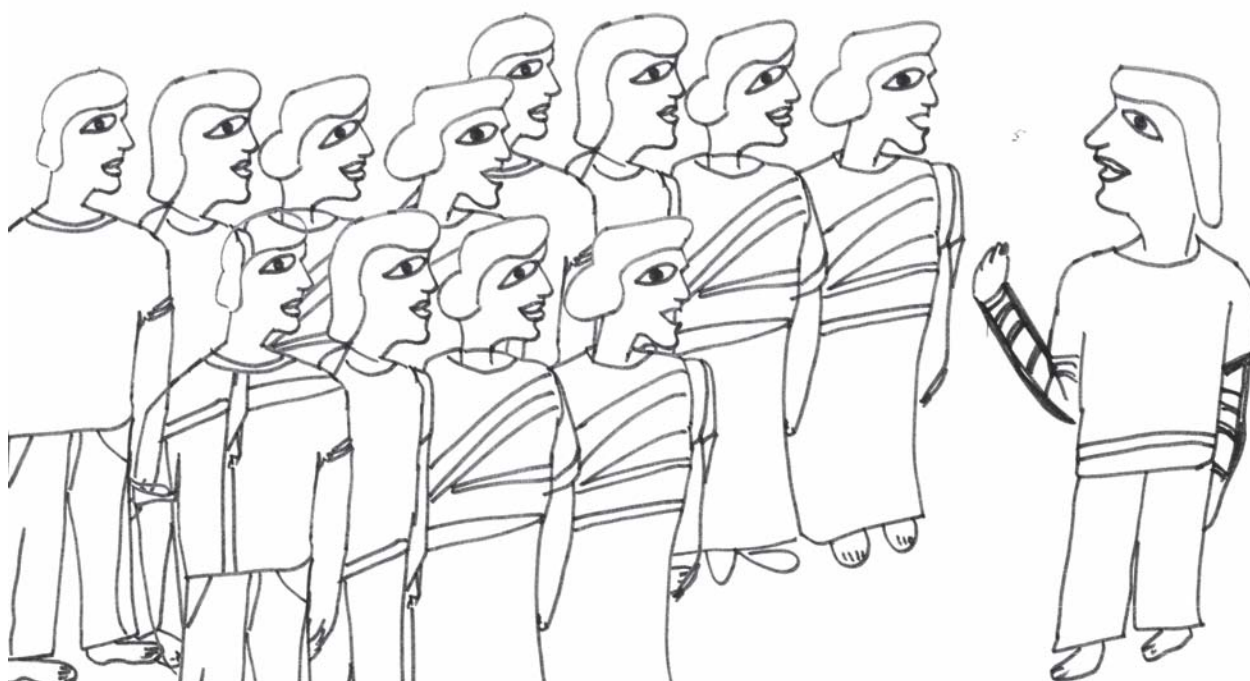
Notes

Notes

Concept of

Composite Heritage

PROCESS

- A suitable environment for the program should be prepared by the facilitator.
- Setting the stage, outlining the objective of the exercise by the facilitator(s).
- Asking the participants to note down their understanding of the concept of Composite Heritage. Give them 15 minutes.
- Form small groups at random. This work can be done by counting.
- Ask the participants to share their ideas on Composite Heritage individually. Listen to others and then come to a common understanding on Composite Heritage.
- Note it down on the flip chart.
- Presentation

SUGGESTION

The Facilitator should pay special attention to the fact that he must clarify to the participants that the purpose of this session is not to restrict the Composite Heritage into just definition.

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Flip Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape.

☻ TIME

2 .30 Hours

Facilitator's Note

THE first two exercises are always important in any workshop. It sets the stage for things to follow. This exercise can make or mar the whole process, irrespective of howsoever rich the content of the workshop promises to provide. The facilitator(s) should keep reminding himself/herself about adult learning principle. He/she should make the participants feel that it is they who will define the concept of Composite Heritage and not the facilitator(s).

To begin with, the exercise should be clearly explained to the participants. It is not a very common subject that the participants keep reflecting about it in their day-to-day life. The moment you spell out Composite Heritage, their mind may immediately turn towards heritage that is taught in schoolbooks such as building structures of historical importance. Some of the participants may think of places of common reverence. But it will be too much to expect to reflect deeply on the concept without being made to do so. The facilitator(s) has to explain the work in different ways. Asking the participants to note down their understanding of the concept of Composite Heritage will not be sufficient. The facilitator(s) will have to use several expressions such as, 'how do we visualise Composite Heritage', 'what are the things that come to our mind when we say Composite Heritage', 'what is our idea of Composite Heritage', 'how do we define Composite Heritage', etc. Apart from these expressions, the facilitator(s) has to drop hints in the form of some generalised examples without going into any kind of details. The examples have to be generalised, as being specific will be falling into a trap. The participants might pick those specific examples and confine themselves to that or those examples. The facilitator(s) has to keep repeating that this is just one of the numerous aspects of Composite Heritage. They are interwoven in everyone's life.

Meaning of Composite Heritage is how do people meet and communicate, how do they cooperate, how do they behave with each other and how do they express themselves. Our community life is a living example of composite heritage. Our language, costume and food everything reflects Composite Heritage and on the basis of this, we connect our future from the past our culture and literature. These are the modes which reflect in our beliefs and thoughts.

Once the individual work is over, the participants will form smaller groups for sharing and coming to a common understanding. Once the group presentation is over, the facilitator(s) has to consolidate the presentation with inputs coming from him/ her.

NOTE
For developing a better understanding on issue read facilitator reading material 1 (page no 20 and 21)

What is Composite Heritage :

How is it Formed?

You would notice that whenever any culture is discussed both in terms of time and space (historically in terms of present-day spread) words like tradition, heritage and legacy are often employed. What do these words imply? And what do we really mean by culture? What is the relationship of culture with Composite Heritage? Is every culture essentially composite or is there also such a thing as a non-composite culture or a non-composite cultural heritage? How do we *inherit* culture?

Words like heritage (heritage is something that is inherited) and legacy (a legal term again referring to inheritance of wealth or property) inevitably convey a sense of a past and a carry-over of some or all of the past into the present. When we talk of cultural heritage, we generally refer to those features of the culture of the past which are either with us or which are of importance to us. These features of the culture constitute our wealth and resources. The word composite refers precisely to the *nature* of that culture. A culture can be composite or segregated (or fractured or non-composite). In other words, we need to recognise that no culture in its totality is either fully composite or fully non-composite. All cultures have some elements that are composite and some that are fractured.

Culture may be defined as the complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs and morals, laws, customs and various other capabilities and habits that are acquired by humans as members of society. Another way of looking at culture would be to understand it through **life-style** (food, dress, speech, rites and rituals, etc.), **cultural products** (art and architecture, music, dance, aesthetics, etc.) and **morals** (ethical conceptions, ideals, conceptions of good and bad, desirable and undesirable, etc.). All the three forms are parts of the complex whole which may be called culture. All the three, it may be noticed, can only be practiced or upheld by humans only as members of society and not in isolation. We can therefore say that culture is not an individual but a group or a societal phenomenon. When we talk of composite culture we mean that all the attributes of culture, mentioned above have retained a composite quality.

The Composite Heritage of Indian culture is a very unique product of Indian history and circumstances and it has been handed over to us through the long continuity of history. This heritage should be seen from the perspective of both 'power values' and 'human values'. In other words, both the rulers and the people have contributed to the making of this heritage. An important feature of this heritage is its syncreteic (Syn-together, cretein-to believe) character and its plurality.

Notes

Notes

Formation of

Coamposite Heritage

⊙ OBJECTIVE :

To make the participants understand how Composite Heritage is formed.

PROCESS

- Briefing the participants on the previous exercise.
- For detailed discussion and understanding development of Composite Heritage, it is necessary that facilitator should provide inputs to participants. The facilitator can use visual mediums, documentary films and reading materials for making their inputs more lively and interesting.
- Group Work.
- Presentation.

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape, Documentary, Projector, Reading Material.

⊕ TIME

2 .00 Hours

Facilitator's Note

This exercise will be difficult for any group since it is not a very common issue. The issue is complex and has been a point of contention even among the intellectuals. The participants will be anxious and may ask you several times to clarify the objective again. It is not that they don't understand the question. The problem will be that many participants would start reflecting on the problem but will have no clue to the answer. Proactive facilitation is very necessary at this juncture. The facilitator(s) has to give some input here. One example from the previous exercise can be picked up and the facilitator(s) could explain how this particular aspect of composite culture could have been formed. It should be mentioned here that formation of Composite Heritage is both spontaneous and deliberate. During the course of interactions and day-to-day activities, people living in a certain area or region, develop a certain pattern of life that is shared and common to all. Composite culture is nothing but a set of norms, behaviour, way of life, shared beliefs and shared wisdom. It also has a lot to do with geography, climatic conditions, seasons, cropping pattern and literary and intellectual traditions. All these factors put together shape a particular culture and traditions out of which develop various forms of art, beliefs, rituals, events, festivals etc. Based on these, a shared history starts taking shape. This could be categorised as unstructured, spontaneous development of Composite Heritage. Then comes peoples' own creativity. They add new dimensions to the already developed forms as well as help in creating new forms.

This is perhaps the most crucial exercise, as this will become the basis and reference point for the next five exercises. This will require a lot of facilitation during the group processes. The facilitator(s) has to think of some examples related to the exercise. It is advisable that same examples are not repeated in different groups. This will help extracting as many ways of formation of Composite Heritage as the number of groups. Still the facilitator(s) should not expect wonders from the participants. He/she should keep reminding himself/herself that this is probably for the first time that they are dealing with this subject.

NOTE 1.
For developing a better understanding on issue read facilitator reading material 1-2 and 3 (from page no 24 to 36)

NOTE 2.
Films - Urdu Hai Jiska Naam, Hindustan ki Kahani, Our Shared Culture Heritage, Formation of Indian Identity.
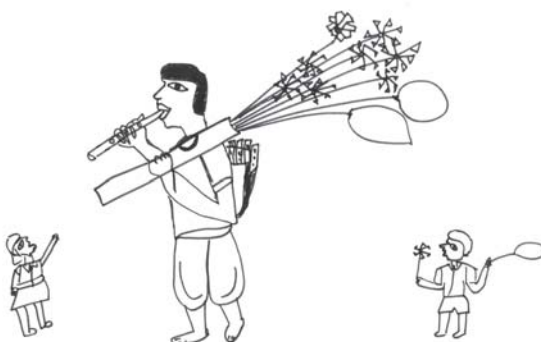
Syncretic Traditions Prior to Medieval Times

Quite often discussions on subcontinents syncretic and Composite Heritage begin with the arrival of Islam and these traditions are seen as functioning in the Sufi and Bhakti movements that started during the medieval period. This was probably because of our exposure to a new type of culture and civilisation that may have provided the impetus for syncretistic possibilities. But from this we should not assume that these elements were missing from our society during the ancient times. The pre-medieval syncretism in our society on different forms had manifested itself in religious and other social institutions.

We all know that Islam was not the first religion to come to subcontinent from outside the Indian shores. Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity all made their presence felt at various points in the first millenium. Christianity in fact came to subcontinent much before it established itself in England. All these movements, mobility and cultural interactions created an atmosphere in which a spirit of assimilation became a general norm. But quite apart from the context that facilitated syncretism, the nature of our religious and philosophical traditions was such that they could receive and incorporate external influences, thus creating composite possibilities.

Man's relationship with the realm of faith and other worldliness has, generally speaking taken two forms since earliest times – some form of monotheism (belief in the existence of one God) and some form of polytheism (belief in the existence of many deities and gods at the same time and within the same cosmic order). According to some scholars, the pattern of religious observances among humans has seen a kind of transition from idolatry to theism, or in other words from polytheism to monotheism. Some others have observed a 'flux' and 'reflux' in human societies between polytheism and monotheism. But they all agree that there is much to distinguish one from the other: the semitic religious traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) are all monotheistic; Indic religious traditions are polytheistic. But the philosophical development of Indic religions (Brahminism, Budhism, Jainism) has interestingly included strong elements of monotheism, while remaining polytheistic.

Rig Ved, perhaps the oldest available text in the world, contains statements and references that can contribute to a human rights perspective even today. Two statements in the Rid Ved are: "**Truth is one. Wise men interpret it differently**" and **"Let noble thoughts come from everywhere."** These two statements might well represent the oldest philosophical acknowledgement of the plurality of *ways* in which the universal truth can be interpreted and understood. The second statement in addition attempts to create a pool of wisdom to which everybody can contribute and which is in the end beneficial to all.

Along with Brahmanism, Budhism and Jainism were traditions that ran parallel to it. Budha (564 BC- 480 BC) rejected the infallibility of the Vedas and the Brahmin and provided their critique. According to him *Nirvana* (liberation from the cycle of life and death) was to

be attained in this very world and could be attained by *anyone* should he or she follow the right conduct.

Similarly the Jain philosophy too contributed towards plurality and the possibility of attaining the truth only after a coming together of multiple traditions. A famous Jain philosophy **Syadvad** argued that truth cannot be perceived in totality by anyone an so one should always provide enough space for the possibility of a different understanding and interpretation of truth.

Thus a spirit of plurality pervaded all the religious traditions. This plurality existed both at the real and the normative level. That is to say, plurality existed both as reality and as a preferred norm. General religious life recognised and incorporated plurality and also looked upon it as a superior way of organising social and religious affairs. To return to mainstream Brahminism, it is now recognised that from the beginning of the Christian era most educated Hindus were either Vaishnavites or Shavites. With the standardisation of Hinduism in modern times, this division now seems redundant and has lost its focus but it was a crucial division within Hinduism in the first millenium AD. Although other gods were acknowledged but they were accorded the position of saints and angels. Sometimes the differences between the two led to friction and also some degree of persecution, but generally the two great divisions of Hinduism rubbed along happily together in the conviction that in the end both are equally right. Leading historian of Ancient India A.L.Basham says: "Hinduism is essentially tolerant and would rather assimilate that rigidly exclude. So the wiser Vaisnavites and Saivites recognised very early that the gods whom they worshipped were different aspects of the same divine being. The Divine is a diamond of innumerable facets; two very large and bright facets are Visnu and Siva, while the others represent all the gods that were ever worshipped." (Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, p. 309).

It was in this manner that Indian religious traditions remained open and receptive to both the monotheistic and polytheistic influences. A strong streak of monotheism can be seen in the *Bhagwat Geeta* where Krishna tells Arjuna :
If any worshipper do reverence with faith
To any god whatever
And in that faith he reverences his god
And gains his desires
For it is I who bestow them.

With this background attempts were made to harmonise Vaishnavism and Shaivism. Around the sixth century a trinity (trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh) was evolved which subsequently became popular among Hindus. Yet another element of syncretism was in the form of the god *Harihar* (Hari being the title of Vishnu and Har of Shiv), worshipped in the form of an icon which combined characteristics of both gods. The cult of *Harihar* developed in the middle ages and was successful in the southern part of the country where *Harihar* temples were patronised by the Kings.

It was largely because of these characteristics of *internal* plurality and syncretism that Indic religious traditions were able to interact with external religious forces with cordiality and maintain a spirit of dialogue. In the medieval times this spirit can be seen in popular interactions between Hinduism and Islam that manifested, among other things, in the

Bhakti and Sufi movements. But in the ancient period also, interactions with Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism were characterised by a spirit of mutuality.

By all accounts, Christianity arrived in southern parts of India before it went to Europe. St. Thomas, a disciple of Christ, came from Syria to India. When Marco Polo visited India at the end of the 13th Century, he saw the tomb of St. Thomas (at a Cathedral at Mail Pur, a suburb of Madras) and remarked on its popularity as a place of pilgrimage. Many Hindu customs had been adopted by the Christians and the Malabar Christians, like the Budhists and Jains before them, were in a process of becoming a heterodox Hindu sect.

Like the Christians, small communities of Jews (followers of Judaic religion, having originally migrated from a mythical land called *Yahuda*, therefore *Yahudi* in Indian languages) also settled in Malabar. India sources mention a 10th century charter according to which the King Bhaskara gave land and other privileges to a Jew named Joseph. This was followed by the settlement of the community. But the Jewish tradition refers to a large Jewish settlement in an area in present-day Cochin as early as the first century AD. In any case a small Jewish community has existed in India for well over a millenium (possibly two). One branch has mixed so closely with the local Malayali inhabitants so as to be completely identified with them. The other branch has retained its purity and is still visibly semitic. Likewise Zoroastrian (now called Parsis, named after their Persian homeland) merchants settled in the west coast of India very early. After the Arab conquest of Persia, many more refugees came to India and have lived on its soil. Like other groups they have enriched Indian culture and have been enriched by it. The dominant pattern of interaction has been that of dialogue rather than complete merger.

Thus the subcontinent, though always loyal to her indigenous cults, gave a welcome to those coming from outside. There is generally no evidence of any persecution, leave alone a religious war, of any no-Indic sect or religion. The followers of these sects and religions quietly pursued their own cults and made their small but significant contributions to the general religious life of the western coasts. The larger body of Hindus were aware of the alien faiths but were in no way antagonistic to them. This capacity for toleration and co-existence contributed to the characteristic resiliency of the Indic religious traditions.
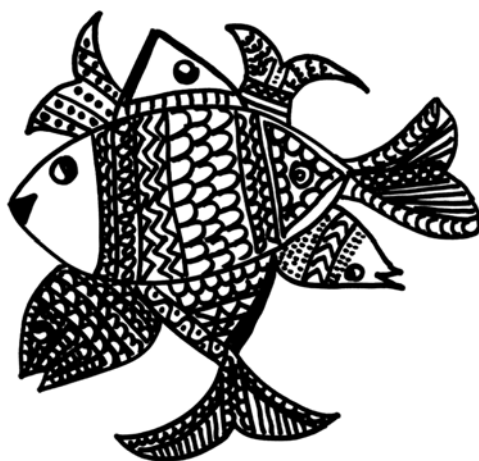
Syncretic Traditions in Medieval South Asia

When Turks and Mughals made India (to be read sub-continent hence forth) their home – they introduced many new things which they had learnt from the Persian, Arabic and Turki traditions. The rulers who came as conquerors were hostile to the native kings and religious practices initially. Sometimes they destroyed temples too. However, once they settled down they tried to negotiate with the native princes and priests. There is an interpretation that kings and emperors of the Sultanat or Mughal period promoted Islam and persecuted Hindus. While this might hold true regarding a few rulers, it is untrue in most of the cases. These kings were here to rule. If some Islamic law prevented them from getting more taxes or getting more power they were quick to revoke those laws. What is equally important is the fact that these kings needed the help of Hindu princes, merchants and landlords to collect revenues and run the administration. That is why they had to ally with these groups. These Hindu landlords became the officials of the Turks and Mughals because it benefited them. Turks and Mughals could exercise power because they got the support of the Hindu landlords. The landlords in turn became more powerful because they were supported by the powerful armies of the Turks. These Hindu landlords effectively became patrons of Hindu traditions. Many Rajput kings who allied themselves with Mughal kings gained more power because they got lucrative positions in the Mughal bureaucracy. They built a large number of temples. For example, the Kachwahas of Jaipur built many temples in Amer.

Many Muslim rulers of smaller kingdoms patronised local language and cultures. For example, the Ramayana and Gita were translated in the Bangla language under the patronage of a Muslim ruler.

FORMATION OF A COMPOSITE CULTURE

Rulers ruled. However, apart from the rulers many other people migrated to India too. There were saints, merchants, scholars and common soldiers. There have been two strains of Islam: one, the rigid canonicdoctrines of the Quran and Hadees, and the other of mystics, sufis and saints. It is the latter strain which proved to be their guiding principle. Once they settled down they had to make a living. This meant finding food and clothing. They had to build homes to live in. They had to get married to raise their families. They had to interact with the people. All these things together led to the emergence of a new tradition. Place names like Ghazipur or Muzaffarpur indicate the spirit of the age. While the words Ghazi and Muzaffar have Arabic origin, Pur is a Sanskrit word. New food habits, new buildings, new languages and new religious traditions came into existence. In fact, most of the rulers were unable to understand these changes. They were deeply suspicious of these changes. They sometimes punished Muslim or Hindu preachers for heresy. They looked down on the Indian Muslims. However, the popular culture formed by the needs and visions of common people were too powerful for the rulers. We shall discuss some of these developments.

FOOD AND DRESS

Roti the most popular form of wheat bread consumed by the Indians, is a Turki word. This means that the most popular form of Indian food has its origins in the Turkish tradition. In North India the most popular breakfast is *Jalebi*, *Kachuari* and *Alu ki Sabji*. *Jalebi* was brought by the Turks, *Kachauri* was invented by ancient Indians and *Alu or potato* was brought from America by the Europeans. Our evenings are incomplete without Halwa, Samosa and a cup of tea. *Halwa* and *Samosa* were introduced by the Turks. Tea had been discovered by the Chinese. It was the British who introduced tea in India. *Paratha,* was invented by the Turks in India. *Biryani, Kabab* and a whole lot of non-vegetarian delicacies were introduced by these settlers.

Today, when a smart girl turns out wearing *Salwar Shamiz* and *Dupatta,* she represents the commingling of the two traditions. While Salwar and *Shamiz* are derived from the Turko-Persian traditions *Dupatta* is derived from the ancient Indian tradition.

POPULAR RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

There are a number of people in every human community who ask questions related to larger issues like "What is Life? What happens when one dies? What is goodness and evil?" These spiritual people give their own answers to these questions from time to time. Generally, they have a small following. However, in certain phases of history in the life of a community these issues become critical to the concerns of a very large number of people. It is in these times that popular religious movements emerge. The North Indian Brahminical tradition after the first millennium was characterised by the hierarchical four caste structure. After the tenth century, very large areas were brought under cultivation. These lands had been reclaimed by the migrant Jat communities. In many areas, the forest dwellers too had taken to agriculture. They had a strong tribal tradition of equality. It was in the backdrop of these newly emerging peasant groups that new religious traditions emerged. Islam with its message of equality came to India during this period. The mutual interaction of the native traditions and Islam produced noble experiments in religion in this period. If we study the preachings of saints like Nanak, Kabir, Raidas, Dadu etc., they have one thing in common. They all emphasise the equality of humans. A study of their teachings shows that they were familiar with the Islamic tradition. Sikhism is the most well known among them. Guru Granth Sahab, the holy book of the Sikhs contains verses composed by well known Muslim saints like Baba Farid. Saints like Kabir are revered by the Hindus as well as the Muslims. The strong emphasis on equality seems to be derived from the Islamic tradition. On the other hand, their conceptions of god and Bhakti were very clearly derived from the traditions originating from the Tamil speaking areas in the sixth-seventh century. Thus, these saints represented a unique blending of two anterior traditions. The new peasantry with its strong tribal traditions of equality found the teachings of these saints attractive and they embraced these Gurus. It is this heritage of composite culture which is seen in popular worships like the *Satyanarayana Katha*. The *Katha* is inspired as much by the story of Narayana as by the story of Satiya Pir in East Bengal.

The Muslim saints who came here were equally keen to understand the native traditions of India. Moinuddin Chisti or Nizamuddin Auliya represented the Islamic version of the blending of Islam and the native religious traditions. Praying at the tomb of a saint is alien to Islam outside India. Hindus are familiar with the idea of burying saints and building temples around them. Songs in praise of Allah are alien to non–Indian Islam. Hindus have a long tradition of singing in praise of Gods. *Qawwali*, a popular form of singing emerged

in the Sufi places of worship. The tomb of Khwaza Moinuddin Chisti in Ajmer at the time of his Death anniversary (Urs) becomes the centre of great *Qawwali* singing. In Delhi the tomb of Nizamuddin Aulia is another such centre. Songs are sung in Urdu but owe their lyrics to the Persian poetic literature.

In places like Kashmir, the most powerful tradition of Muslim saints is called the *Rishi Silsila*. *Rishi* is a Sanskrit word meaning a saint. When people visited these saints it gave them a spiritual fulfillment. It was immaterial for them whether the saint was a Hindu or Muslim. That is why Guru Nanak or Nizamuddin Auliya had followers cutting across religions and communities.

The *taziya* processions which embody the sacrifices of Hassan and Husain are completely unknown outside India. They are supposed to have derived from the Hindu traditions of chariot festival. Both the *tazias* of Moharram and the effigies of Ram and Ravana in the *Ram Leela* in Delhi are made by Muslim artisans. In Tamil and Kerala folk and traditional performing arts such as *Terukuthu* and *Kathakali,* the participation of Muslim musicians hardly become noticeable as Muslims. The same is true of *Swang, Khyal* and Nach of Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, all of which have a fair sprinkling of Muslim singers, musicians, dancers and actors. The Langas and Manganiyars of Rajasthan present outstanding examples of excellence in their own fields of folk music. Yet they can hardly be distinguished from other Hindu tribal artists of Rajasthan in appearance, dress or language.

THE CLASSICAL TRADITION OF INDIAN MUSIC
The classical tradition of Indian music is one of the most creative gifts of the Indian civilisation to the world. It is in this tradition that we find the most beautiful blending of Hindu and Muslim identities.

RAAG
Amir Khusro is credited with the invention of *Sitar* and *Tabla. Sarod* was invented by an ustad.

The most popular vocal classical music is called the *Khayal* form of singing. This form of singing came into existence in the sixteenth century. The earlier tradition of classical singing was known as *Dhrupad* style. The *Dhrupad* tradition was mostly used for singing songs in praise of God. Some families have retained this tradition of singing even today. The most well known singers of this tradition are Aminuddin and Moinuddin Dagar. Their songs in praise of *Shiva* deeply affect listeners.

The *Khayal* tradition of singing emerged as a result of the blending of the *Dhrupad* and Persian traditions. At present there are various Gharanas who have distinctive styles of *Khayal* singing. These *Gharanas* function according to the *Guru –Shisya* (teacher- disciple) tradition. That is why we find that the two most well known exponents of the oldest *Gharana* of Gwalior are Pandit Krishnarao Shankar and Mushtaq Hussain Khan. The greatest exponents of the Jaipur *Gharana* are Pandit Mallikarjun Mansur and Rajab Ali Khan.

Light classical music derived from the classical forms, shows a similar intermingling. The *Kajri, Chaiti* and *Hori* (songs for Holi) of Rasoolan Bai are matchless. When one thinks of *Bhajans* Bade Ghulam Ali Khan's song 'Hari Om Tatsat' remains the outstanding song of its kind.

In the field of instrumental music Alauddin Khan's Maihar *Gharana* is outstanding. Alauddin Khan was taught the finer points of music by the exponents of Seniya *Gharana* of Rampur The Seniyas claimed to be descendants of Mian Tansen, Alauddin Khan schooled Pandit Ravi Shankar in the art of playing Sitar. When one is listening to the *Sitar* of Ravi Shankar, *Sarod* of Ali Akbar Khan or the flute of Hari Prashad Chaurasia one is listening the composition of Seniya *Gharana*. One finds Hindu and Muslim singers in almost all the *Gharanas*. Songs generally begin with a prayer to the Goddess Saraswati.. Alauddin Khan was a devotee of Krishna. Who can forget Bismillah Khan. The recordings of his *Shehnai* resonate in innumerable Hindu marriages. (For detailed information see the reading material 3 and 4 on page 44-48)

PERFORMING TRADITIONS :

KATHAK
Kathak is the most popular dance form of North India. The word *Kathak* is derived from the word *katha*, or story. It has been primarily a solo performance art. A unique feature of the dance is the relationship each artist develops with the audience through recitation and descriptive commentary. Wandering bards have narrated and performed mythological stories before village audiences in India for a long long time. Their tales are often taken from the great epics, the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, as well as from stories of the *Puranas* - especially those of Lord Krishna and his exploits in his sacred land of Vrindavan.

During the middle ages, the Moguls brought this dance into the court setting. Lavishly costumed and jeweled court dancers entertained kings and noblemen with poetic descriptions as well as technical virtuosity and refined beauty. *Kathak* is thus a fusion of the aesthetic ideals of both the Hindu and Muslim cultures.

In Wazid Ali Shah's court at Lucknow in the middle of the nineteenth century, *Kathak* reached its present form. On the one hand, the devotional ideals of the dance were brought to a new realisation with the incorporation of the Krishna Lila (amorous exploits of young Lord Krishna) which could be performed with the accompaniment of the new light-classical vocal form, the *thumri*. On the other, the exquisite refinement of that court, with its formal dress styles, enhanced the quality of the presentation. As a result, *Kathak* become a subtle mix of Hindu and Muslim cultures, depicting stories from the original Hindu epics as well as themes from Persian and Urdu poetry.

MODERN INDIAN THEATRE TRADITIONS
The credit for the revival of theatre in modern times goes to Aga Hasan Amanat. It was his *Indrasabha* written and produced in 1856 that sowed the seeds of threatre in India after a gap of several centuries. It is said to have been first produced at the court of Wajid Ali Shah in Lucknow, who was himself a poet, composer, creator of *Kathak* and an innovator in *Raas Leela*. In fact, Amanat's musical play written in verse form was inspired by the *Raas Leela* enacted regularly at Wajid Ali Shah's court.

THE PARSI THEATRE
Among the modern theatre movements in India, the pride of place belongs to the Parsi theatre movement. Beginning in the 1850s it experimented with various forms of theatrical presentation of Indian stories. It thrived till 1930s and then gradually merged into the Indian cinema. A whole batch of young Muslim playwrights cropped up around Parsi

theatre. Raunaque, Betab, Ruswa, Hafiz Abdullah Talib, Hubab, Zareef, Aaram, Khurshid and many others were turning out successful plays often based on *Puranic* tales and the two epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. The most well known playwright of the Parsi theatre was Agha Hashar Kashmiri. His range encompassed Firdausi's Persian epic the Shahnama in his *Rustom-o-Sohrab* to Hindu religious legends such as *Bilwa Mangal* depicting the life of Surdas. These playwrights were particularly influenced by the French opera. However, they also carried with them copies of the *Natya Shastra*.

And when talkies came to be made, most of the Parsi theatre actors and actresses took to films. The Indian cinema movement which made movies based on epics like the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* in many languages borrowed heavily from the Parsi theatre. Our notions of the way Gods and Goddesses, heroines and heroes used to dress in ancient times is entirely derived from this theatre movement. The same tradition continued in the television serials like the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*.

Playwrights like Habib Tanvir represent the same tradition of performing arts. His list of plays include Sanskrit masterpieces like Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*, Visakhdatta's *Mudra Rakhshas* and Bhavabhuti's *Uttar Ram Charita* apart from plays like *Agra Bazaar* and *Charan Das Chor.*

LANGUAGE

Convergence has been the hallmark of the Indian tradition. The most obvious example of this comingling of diverse cultures is seen in the field of language. A simple sentence like "Mere chacha return kar rahe hain" (my uncle is returning) has words derived from Sanskrit *(Mere)* Turki *(chacha)* and English (return). The sentence structure of many Indian languages is such that it can integrate foreign words. The North Indian languages are a product of the evolution of last seven to eight hundred years. Many of the words used today can be traced to antiquity. For example the word for our holiest river Ganga is not derived from the Sanskrit language. It is derived from an unknown Mundari language. Same is the case with the word for rice '*Chawal*'. The important phase in the formation of these languages came after the thirteenth century. This can be related to the coming of Turkish rulers in north India. These rulers patronized Persian and Arabic languages. Since, Persian was the language of administration the native speakers also picked up this language. No wonder, the Marathas who fought against Aurangzeb retained Persian as the language of administration. It was the mutual interaction of these languages that led to the creation of Hindi. The first notable person who felt proud of the beauty of this language was Amir Khusro. The Hindi we use today has a structure like the Sanskrit language but its vocabulary is an amazing mixture of words derived from Braj, Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Arabic and Persian. Let us concentrate on some of the words derived from Arabic.

WORDS DERIVED FROM ARABIC

When we use the word *Aadami* or *Insaan* (human being) we are using words of Arabic. These humans should read Kitab (book) and write with Kalam (pen) to improve ones Aqal (intellect). Such a human being should fight for Insaaf (justice) and never tolerate the zurma (crime) of Zalim (cruel person). We should promote Muhabbat (love) and never break ones Vaadaa (promise). Sharaafat (goodness) is always rewarded and Gaddari (betrayal) is always punished – that is the Kissa (story) of all the Hindi movies.

Time (waqt) and tide wait for none in this world (duniya). Death (maut) will come for one and all, there is no point in grieving (gam) about it. Nothing like a glass of sharbat in saaf

(clean) water in the summers of Delhi otherwise one has to take dawa (medicine). The amir (rich) of this country are not bothered about the garib (poor). *Sabji* is good for our health. So is walking in the open fields (maidan).

WORDS DERIVED FROM PERSIAN

Millions of Indians have uttered **Inquilab Zindabad** (long live revolution) after Bhagat Singh's famous slogan–least realising that these words are derived from the Persian and Arabic languages. Revolutionaries would dream of a day when mother earth (jamin) would belong to us all like the sky (aasamaan) is ours.

In our homes we like to read newspapers (akhbar). However, prices (kimat) seem to rise every year. Thus poor people's income (aamadani) is their expenses (kharch). They are able to buy (kharid) less and less nutritious food causing sickness (bimari). One should take care of ones health (sehat). They are not able to buy proper clothing (libas, jama, pajama, salwar, shamiz) too. Jhuggies lacking open spaces (maidan) and clean air (hawa) become hosts to disease (bimari). Children (bachhe) are specially prone to sickness. That is why their condition (halat) is getting worse (kharab). However, rulers do not have the heart (dil) to feel the pain (dard) of the poor (garib). Times (jamana) will change if we come together and use our energies (takat) to break the chain (janjir) of exploitation (julma). What we need is a society based on friendship (dosti). Where there is will (chah) there is a way (rah). One has to ask these questions (sawal) to the rulers (hakim).

Life (jindagi) is not simply wealth (daulat), job (naukari) and rent (kiraya) for the landlord. If one were thinking of these issues morning (subah) and evening (shama), life will lose its magic (jadu). One should think of ones nation (mulka) too.
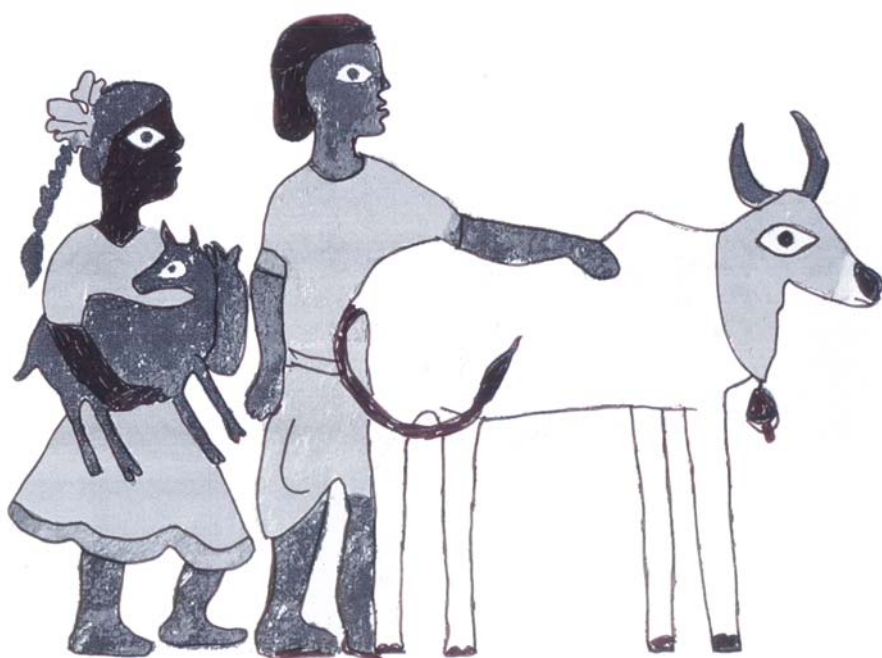
Language Profile :

A Mix of Composite and Plural

Dear Reader,
Wherever you find expression like 'Linguistic Survey of India' or
Language of India, they all have reference of pre 1947. Hence these
linguistic surveys and languages include all region of sub-continent.
This our composite history does not belong to any single nation.

India's language scenario is unique in many senses. On the one hand India is easily the most plural society linguistically speaking, yet this plurality contains, and has contained historically, remarkable interconnections. To begin with, let us try and get a sense of the extent of India's plurality.

According to the mammoth *Linguistic Survey of India* done in the first two decades of the 20th century (prepared by Sir George Abraham Grierson and spread over 19 thick volumes) India was a land of as many as 179 languages which covered 544 dialects. Around the same time the census of 1921 put the total number of Indian languages at 222. The census of 1961 recorded a total of 1652 mother tongues that were classified into roughly 200 languages. More recently, the census of 1991 has put the total number of languages in India at 111 and 216 mother tongues. The great variation in the number of recorded languages is the result, not of any significant change in the language scenario over the last eight decades, but of different methods of classification. This confusion speaks volumes about the enormously complex landscape of Indian languages which has defied attempts at an accurate and scientific enumeration. Likewise, the usage of the terms like language, dialect and mother tongue should also be seen as an unsuccessful attempt to comprehend the complexities of India's linguistic profile.

The important thing about India's linguistic plurality noted by the linguists was a remarkable unity among all the languages at the level of phonetics and morphology. This unity was a result of plenty of mutual borrowing among all the major languages through ages. Moreover all the Indian languages could be traced back to four roots or families: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Sino-Tibetan and Austric. These four language families could be said to have generated all the Indian languages.

It was pointed out that India's great linguistic diversity was the product of waves of human migration into India from very early times. Leading linguist Suniti Kumar Chatterji elaborated the linguistic implications of these migrations. In a paper presented at the Oxford University in 1943, he called India "a great clearing house for various people" and languages. The following is a summary of his narration of the successive arrival of various linguistic groups. The oldest settlers in India were a Negroid or Negrito race from Africa, who died out leaving very little trace, they survive with their language in the Andaman Islands. They were followed by the Proto-Australoids who came to India probably from the west and spoke dialects from which originated the languages of the Austric speech family. Following the Austrics came the Dravidian speakers sometime before 3500 B.C. who supplied the

Dravidian family of languages (four cultivated languages of Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam and a number of uncultivated speeches). Then came the linguistically most important group of the speakers of Indo-European languages from the Eurasian tracts south of the Ural mountains, via northern Mesopotamia and Iran into India. These migrants developed the Indo-Aryan languages. The Aryan speech came in various waves from the west, and it spread over the Punjab and the Ganges valley, Dravidian and Austric speeches receding before it, so that gradually the whole of north India, including Assam and a good deal of the northern Deccan, became Aryan in speech.

The Aryan speech developed in three distinct stages – Old Indo-Aryan (OIA), Middle indo-Aryan (MIA) and New indo-Aryan (NIA). The Aryan speech in its earliest phase in India (OIA) is represented by the language of the *Rig Ved*, compiled probably in the 10th century B.C., but portions of it is much older. A younger form of this Old Indo-Aryan speech in India became established as Sanskrit, the great religious and culture-language of Hindu India, by 500 B.C. The later spoken forms of the Aryan speech, in the stage known as *Middle Indo-Aryan*, are represented by the various Prakrits (including Pali) and Apabhransas of the period 600 B.C. to A.D. 1000, after which these develop into the *New* or *Modern Indo-Aryan* languages of the present day. Sanskrit became the great vehicle of ancient Indian culture, and it spread into the lands of 'Greater India' Burma, Indo-China, Malaya and Indonesia, and Serindia or Central Asia of ancient times – and was studied in Tibet, China, Korea and Japan also. It has been the natural feeder of Indian languages, whenever new words were required, for the last 2500 years. And finally came the speakers of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages from their primitive home in north western China and settled, through Himalayas, in the north eastern terrain of India. Of the four families mentioned above, the Indo-Aryan covered the largest area and a majority of the people (around 75%) followed by the Dravidian family (around 22%). Indo-Aryan also contained speech communities that were large in size. The Sino-Tibetan (or Tibetan Burmese) by contrast have small speech communities but their number is the largest among the four. This linguistic scenario sketched above is indicative of a remarkable linguistic continuity along with plurality. Few societies in the world can boast of such a continuous linguistic flow for the last three thousand years. Changes with continuities has been an important part of India's linguistic development. The same process has continued in the last millenium.

From about the 10th-11th centurie begins a fairly smooth and uninterrupted process of the development of NIA languages and continues till the 18th century. One major feature of this process was the development of a single composite linguistic tradition that reached out to cover a very large part of India (north, centre with parts of south India) and developed a strong literary tradition. This single language has been called by different names but Hindavi, Hindui or Hindi were the most commonly used names. Amir Khusro (1253-1325), a leading Persian poet from Delhi, probably coined the name Hindavi (meaning thereby the language of Hind). In his famous Persian epic *Noor Sip-har* (Nine Skies) written around 1318, Amir Khusro identified the various languages spoken in India and linked them all to Hindavi: "Sindhi, Punjabi, Kashmiri, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu, Gujarati, Tamil, Assamese, Bengali, Awadhi have all been known as Hindavi since ancient times…"

Sindhi-o-Lahori-o Kashmiri-o gar
Dhur Samandari Tilgi-o-Gujar
Maabri-o-Gori-o-Bengal-o-Awadh
Dilli-o-Pairamkash Andar Hamaahad
Ein Hamaa Hindvist zi Aiyyam-e-kuhan
Aamma Bakaarast Bahar Guna Sukhan

Amir Khusro can actually be considered the first enumerator of the major Indian languages, many centuries before Grierson. Khusro also mentioned Sanskrit but distinguished it from Hindavi: "Apart from these there are some other languages also among which the language of Brahmins has a very special place. It is called Sanskrit since ancient times but the common people are not familiar with its intricacies."

Lek Zabaanist Digar Kas Sukhna
Aanast Guzin Nisd Hamaan Barhamnaa
Sanskrit Naam zi Ahad-e-kuhnash
Aamma Nadaarad khabar Az Kun makunash

He also compared Hindavi with Persian and Turkish and considered it more popular because of its "pleasant sounds".

Isbaat Guft Hind Bahujjat ki Rajehast
Bar Parsi-o-Turki Az Alfaaz-e-Khushgawaar

Hindavi, as it existed and flourished through the medieval times, was not a language in the strict sense of the term. It was more of a communication amalgam. It had a great geographical spread and accommodated various speech communities and dialects within its fold. It was a language primarily of communication, market and literature. Sanskrit continued to be a language of rituals and Persian of administration. Hindavi's literary creations ranged from romantic to devotional to allegorical and these were written in both the Nagari and the Persian script, apart from also being circulated orally. For its vocabulary, it freely borrowed words from the classical Sanskrit and Persian in addition to a number of local speeches. At no stage however its lexical dependence on Sanskrit and Persian entail the possibility of Hindavi submerging into either of the two classical literary streams. As a language amalgam Hindavi encompassed a number of dialects some of which (Braj and Awadhi in particular) developed a rich literary tradition. Because of its distance from the classical languages of Sanskrit and Persian, it also came to be employed by the medieval Bhakti and Sufi movements. Kabir (writing simultaneously in Khari Boli, Braj, Awadhi, Bhojpuri and Rajasthani), Tulsi Das (Awadhi), Sur Das (Braj), Bandanawaz Gesu Daraz (Dakhani), Vidyapati (Maithili) and Mirabai (Marwari or Dingal) were some of the most popular poets of the Hindavi tradition who wrote in different styles. Given the absence of standardisation, this language was known by different names in different areas. Apart form Hindavi, it was also known as Dehlavi (after Delhi), Dakkani or Dakhani (after Deccan, the south), Bhakha or Bhasa (literally meaning speech) and many more. Tulsi Das, in his epic *Ramcharitmanas* called his language Bhakha.

Given its reach across different regions and religious communities it also provided a powerful medium for syncretic literature. Poets like Kabir, Malik Mohammad Jaysi and many poets from Belgram (in eastern U.P.) wrote on themes of religious harmony. It was however with the poetry of Nazir Akbarabadi (1740-1830) that the Hindavi tradition reached its climax. Nazir, commonly known as "the great poet of common man" wrote on a whole range of themes concerning the everyday life of his city, Agra. He wrote on fairs and festivals (Eid, Holi, Krishna Leela and local fairs), gods and saints (Krishna, Ganesh, prophet Mohammad, Nanak), local sports (Kabaddi) and ordinary people (artisans, craftsmen, prostitutes, street vendors, shopkeepers etc.) as well as on universalist themes like youth, old age, death and man. Nazir imparted not only a new dimension to Hindavi literature but also vibrancy to the language.

The growth pattern of Hindavi demonstrated the uniqueness of India's linguistic landscape very well. A single language pervaded large parts of India through the medieval times. Unlike the Hindi spoken today, the Hinda vi (or old Hindi) of medieval times had its supporter and lovers spread all over including the southern parts of the country. A good example of the vibrancy of this language is 16th century poet Mian Mustafa from Gujarat who considered one Syed Mohammad Mehdi of Jaunpur (d. 1504), well over a thousand kilometers away, as his guru-saint. Mian Mustafa was apparently not very happy with the contempt with which the Persian poets looked upon Hindavi, and so wrote a poem in defence of Hindi, sometime in early 16th century:

Do not taunt one for using Hindi.
Every one explains the meanings in Hindi.
This Qur'an, the revealed word of Allah,
Is ever explained in Hindi.
Hindi was used by Mehdi [the poet's guru-saint];
It was on the lips of Khundmir [another contemporary poet];
Several *dohras*, *sakhis* and sayings
were pronounced openly by pious saints.
Mian Mustafa [the poet himself] also uses it
What to speak of others, then?

The major strength of the poem is its language. Although written well over four centuries ago, its language can still pass off as the *bazaar* Hindi of the 20th century. Instances of this kind can be easily multiplied. It would not be difficult to find many literary creations from the 12th-13th centuries onwards whose language would find remarkable resemblance with the spoken Hindustani of today. Hindavi, it may be useful to point out, provided not only the linguistic unity but also contributed to much of the cultural unity and continuity of India through the centuries.

Yet another unique feature of India's language scenario is the presence and development of important minority languages in an area marked by one dominant language. India has been called linguistically plural or plurilingual not only in the sense of the presence of many languages in it, but also in the sense that language zones, surrounded by the dominant languages, have remained intact over the centuries without merging into the dominant languages of the area. Such is the case of Saurashtri in Madurai, Marathi in Tanjore, Urdu in Mysore and Madras, Bengali in Benaras, Tamil in Mathura, Malayalam in Mumbai and many more. This uniquely Indian phenomenon is completely unlike the European pattern where minority languages tended to disappear over centuries.

To sum up, India's linguistic profile is unique for its plurality, syncretism and continuity. Its composite character lies in the interconnectedness among all the languages. There has also been a remarkable continuity through the centuries in the sense that the new changes did not create any displacement. The linguistic development took place more in the form of old accommodating the new rather than new displacing the old. This unique compositeness of India's language tradition can be understood with the help of many common phrases used in parts of north Indian *bazaars* that are actually borrowed from diverse linguistic roots. Common usage terms like *dhan-daulat*, *dharam-iman*, *sag-sabzi* represent a popular and innovatively created synthesis between Sanskrit and Persian literary traditions.

Riddle of the New Year

New Year used to begin every year by the spring in most of the civilizations. The spring is the symbol of new life. During this, flowers start growing on the trees and plants in most of the cases. The New Year used to begin by the first day of the new moon rising of the spring in Mesopotamia (which is known as Iran). Beehu (the spring festival of Assam in India), Baisakhi (the festival of harvesting season in Punjab falling on April 13-14), Chaiti Chand (New year of Sindhi community in the month of March or April), Navroze (New Year of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and the countries of Central Asia including Persian community), Poila Baisakh (New Year of West Bengal and Bangladesh), Putandu (New Year of Tamils), Ogadi (New Year of Telugu and Kannar-speaking people), Vishu (harvest festival in Kerala)—all of these festivals are being celebrated in the spring.

Agriculture and the Life

There is a direct link between season and agriculture. To solve the riddle of the season, people started various ways of prayer. In fact, agriculture has become our way of life. Everything has been adopted in accordance with the agriculture. Gradually, the season had been identified by the human beings. He started to foresee things by seeing the direction of the air or smelling the crust. The development in the agriculture was made on the basis of the geographical varieties. People started growing rice where there is plenty of water and in case of scarcity of water, people started growing oilseeds. If the case of India is taken, it grows variety of crops. The art of constructing houses was developed with the growth in agriculture. They start making Kaccha house with dust, stone, wood and cow dung. The roof was made from the remainders of the crops. People used to stitch cloths themselves. Hence, the agriculture became the inseparable part of food, clothing and housing. Man became self-dependent through the agriculture.

Nuakhai

The cycle of the festivals is related with the cycle of the agriculture to a great extent. The festivals are used to be observed either at the time of sowing the crops or during its cutting for praying for good crop or expressing happiness. Nuakhain is one of such festivals. Let us go to Sambhalpur, one of the districts of Orissa to enjoy this festival. People are making preparation with fervor for it. Prayers are offered to the goddess of the village and the goddess of the family. The first crop of the paddy is offered to the goddess. After this, it was brought home for its daily use. But, there was an issue. The paddy for offer was of hybrid produce, i.e., the production of mixed breed. But, it was not accepted for prayer as it was not treated pure. The indigenous paddy was searched with a great deal of effort because all the people have started producing hybrid paddy. This pure paddy was mixed with the hybrid paddy so as to make it pure to offer the goddess. This was akin to make the things pure by sprinkling Ganges water. The prayer was started after this. People working in other areas have also come on this occasion. This made them happier. Both men and women gathered in the night and the elderman served 'Nabarana' to all the people present there. Nabarana is the cooked food from the rice of the new crop. All of them enjoyed nabarana and other dishes. Non-vegetarian dishes were also served during this. Eating non-vegetarian food is treated as the essential part of the food. It is believed that whosoever does not eat non-vegetarian food, will take birth as a crane in his next life.

Notes

Notes

Notes

Exploring Different forms of Composite Heritage

(Creative Expression)

PROCESS

- This is an experimental session to understand composite heritage in depth.
- This is a voluntary exercise. The participants may enjoy this session fully.
- This session needs more time for its completion. Hence, facilitator is supposed to be adjustable.
- The participants should be encouraged to present forms of composite heritage as much as they wish.
- Give more encouragement to collective presentations.
- Each participants should explain about the form which they have covered and why?
- The facilitator should brief the presentations on the following points :
  1. What were you feeling while making presentation?
  2. What are you feeling after the presentation?
  3. What is the difference of your feelings between the first day and after giving the presentation?
  4. Imagine, what kind of society there will be if these various forms of composite heritage are absent?
- At the end, the facilitator should present Two conditions of society which has emerged after the briefing.

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Tell the participants to select the material as per the need of their presentation. Hence, they are free to choose material as per their need.

☻ TIME

Half Day

Facilitator's Note

Create an atmosphere of fun at the outset. Try and do something yourself so that there is no hesitation among the participants.

In this session, the participant will present a few forms of Composite Heritage which they have developed in the earlier session of the concept of Composite Heritage.

Try and make the participants feel that more than work they are having fun. The participants could go into memory lane and recall the songs, stories, epics, theatre, puppetry, folk music, festivals, local fares and many other forms of Composite Heritage. The facilitator(s) should keep in mind that human beings are very nostalgic about their past and most of them have desire to re-live them. They are so nostalgic about their past that sometimes not so good past also feels good. Therefore, if the facilitator(s) can motivate them to re-live their past, the participants will be ready to happily express themselves through performance. The performance will have a greater impact on other participants.

In this session, we will see that the forms which group has selected may have developed in their respective areas and spread in others. It is possible that this form has played a decisive role to bring two different social groups together. Through this practice participants will experience that since ages people have lived together irrespective to their caste religion community and ideological differences. After this practice participants will see Composite Heritage as a link of harmony among communities.

Some Participants might think that these forms have fulfilled their historical roles and they have no role in today's context. Some would think that despite this these forms are still relevant. Others may think that these forms should be protected despite their less relevance. Some will disagree that we live in a modern world. We have ideas and thoughts that are favourable to the needs of the modern world, therefore is it not right to stick to the things of past which are not of any use to us.

The facilitator(s) should carefully read the learning material (write up) and provide the inputs but since it will be very difficult to cover everything at one go, the participants should be provided time to read the learning material (write up) and ask questions to the larger group. The questions and clarifications are more helpful in enhancing understanding than the lecture method. At the end of the exercise, the facilitator(s) would realise that the participants have added new forms and new dimensions to the idea of Composite Heritage that we have. It is a two way learning process where facilitator(s) is bound to gain as much as the participants themselves. The list of forms of Composite Heritage will increase with every session that the facilitator(s) conducts with different participants.

NOTE

For developing a better understanding on issue read facilitator reading material 1-2-3-4-5 and 6 (from page no 40-61)

Fairs and Festivals

It is generally believed that fairs and festivals in South Asia have a predominantly religious base. This however is not entirely true. Whereas religion continues to be a major source of fairs and festivals in South Asia, they are also connected with **folklore, local customs, changing seasons, harvest,** etc. These often cut across religious differences.

South Asian fairs and festivals are as varied in origin as they are in number. They also constitute the essence of South Asia's cultural life. Both the features of South Asia's cultural life – its unity and plurality – can be seen in the manner in which fairs and festivals are observed throughout the sub-continent. Following are some characteristics of South Asia's fairs and festivals.

1. Even though not entirely governed by the doctrinal dictates of high religious traditions, all the festivals have a socio-religious content. Every traditional festival has two aspects-worship and festive participation. Worship tends to be exclusive and confined to a particular religion. For example in Holi, Diwali and Ram Navmi, Hindus worship their Gods and Goddesses at the individual or family level. In Eid Muslims go to the mosque to offer *namaaz* as part of collective worship. On Christmas, Christians go to church for their religious services. However participation in most of these festivals is not restricted to a particular community. Members of all communities participate in the festivities attached to the festival. Holi, Diwali, Eid, Baisakhi and Christmas involve all the local people at some level or the other. Therefore in spite of a strong religious content, these festivals also represent a certain commonness and social bonding among people of different religions.

2. Most of the festivals are seasonal in nature. They represent the change in harvesting season. All the seasonal festivals are celebrated during two harvesting seasons, **Kharif** (August-October) and **Rabi** (March-April). And so different regional festivals like **Bihu** (mid-January), **Onam** (September-October), **Pongal** (mid-January), **Vasant Panchmi** (February), **Makar Sankranti** (January), **Lohri** (January), **Baisakhi** (April) have an agricultural base linked to the harvesting season. Thus a certain commonness can be observed in all such festivals.

3. Being linked to agriculture and harvest in all season these festivals have a strong non-religious or secular aspect at the level of activities. For example, kite-flying is a special feature of Makar Sankranti. *Bihu* dance constitutes the biggest attraction during Bihu festivals. *Kathakali* dance, which is among the classical dances of India, is the chief attraction during Onam festival. Onam is also marked by boat races or *Vallumkali*, where special boats are rowed by about 100 men to the accompaniment of songs and drums. During the Lohri festival, the whole of Punjab comes to life and dances to the tune of *bhangra*. Likewise *garba* dance constitutes the core of Navratri in Gujarat. These instances can be multiplied (Durga Puja in Bengal, Dssehra celebrations in most of north India, Holi in Braj area, Ganesh Chaturthi in Maharashtra). If the forms

of celebration of most of these festivals are studied, it will be found that non-religious, i.e., non-devotional, non-doctrinal and non-exclusive activities occupy the centre-stage in all of them.

4. The fairs, in most cases, are devoid of religious content, except probably the Kumbh Mela which is mainly a religious congregation. The fairs are characterised by buying and selling of cattle, goats, handicrafts and a variety of other activities. We can say that these fairs represent the cultural-commercial life of traditional South Asia. Although in some fairs religious rites do take place, they are mostly peripheral to the commercial aspects.

It can thus be seen that the pattern of South Asia's fairs and festivals corresponds to the major features of its cultural life. The festivals are largely religious but not in the doctrinal or exclusivist sense. They are religious only to the extent that their origin is related to a particular religion. In the method of their celebration, religion ceases to be of utmost importance. Moreover, the great diversity and variety of religions can be reduced to some elementary commonness. Many festivals may appear different in name and forms of participation but they all share the same spirit and origin. Fairs are only superficially religious and are a product of South Asia's cultural-commercial traditions. On the whole, it can be said that even when the festivals have a religious or doctrinal content, the forms are invariably non-religious. In the fairs often the content too is non-religious. All the regional cultural patterns are clearly visible in most of the festivals yet their basic similarities are never in doubt. South Asia's fairs and festivals are indeed a compliment to the Composite Heritage, syncretism and the plurality of the sub-continent.
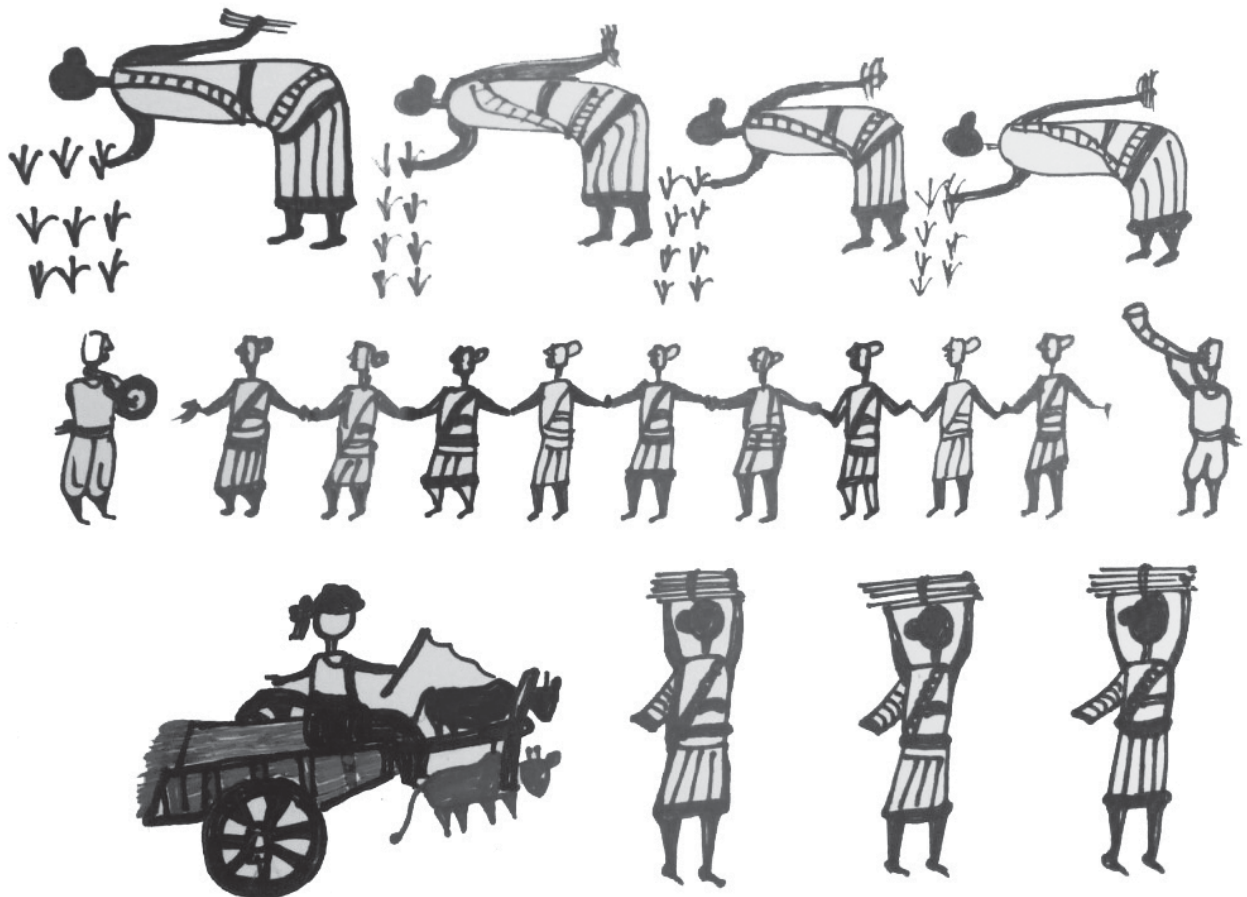
Folk Painting Traditions

Two traditions have existed in Indian paintings- 'Classical' rooted in ancient Silpa texts that flourished under the patronage of royal courts and 'Vernacular' or the folk painting that originated from the tradition and beliefs of the societies, primarily rural and tribal societies. In classical arts you have the painted murals and the miniature paintings and there existed great schools with artisan community and their guilds. Whereas in case of folk painting the whole process is a ritual act and is passed from one generation to another. They decorate their houses with painting on walls and floors.

If classical paintings or temple-arts provide records of the kings and their kingdoms, their lives, their beliefs and their Gods and Goddesses, folk paintings are the records of the lives of the common people, their myths and legends, their Gods and Goddesses. In India, parallel to classical culture that supported Brahminical philosophy and orthodox folk culture have existed accepting all and supporting liberal views. Their prime concerns were with rain and crops and struggles with nature and their belief in life has to be appreciated and enjoyed rather than speculated. Their love for life clearly comes through in their paintings that are vibrant and colourful.

Festivals and fairs have been occasions when the whole village used to come together and celebrate collectively. In painting itself, the participation of the whole community has been important. Most traditional Indian paintings are executed by a number of painters rather than one. The collectively inherited vision and skill are collectively transformed into a work of art.

Some of the prominent painting traditions under this culture have been the Pithoro paintings of the Rathvas of Gujarat, the Warli paintings of Maharashtra, Madhubani paintings of the Mithila region of Bihar, the Phards of Rajasthan, Cherial of Andhra Pradesh and the Pat paintings of West Bengal.

Rathavas are an important community of the Panchmahals and Baroda districts. The folk painting tradition of the Rathvas is to install on the walls of their houses the myth of creation and Pithoro, the most respected God connected with protection and welfare. Several painters, but only men paint Pithoro. When they paint, a group of two or three singers continuously recite the myth of creation, Pithoro and Indi Raja. After the completion of painting, another ritual of approval comes where the *badva* possessed by Pithoro in trance examines the painting in detail. After his sanction is granted, a goat sacrifice is made to the painting, which leads to its consecration.

The Warli tribe dwells mainly in the forests of the Sahyadri Mountains in Thane district of Maharashtra. The name Warli comes from the word "Waral", which means a piece of land or a field. Farming is the main source of livelihood for Warlis. The paintings are considered sacred and without it the marriage ceremony cannot take place. Their paintings are done

in celebration of weddings and are a stylised depiction of the life and activities of the tribe. Warli paintings are quite different from other folk paintings as in others bright primary colours are used in abundance. Instead here they are painted in white on brown or brick red mud base.

The art of Madhubani painting is the traditional style developed in the Mithila region, in the villages around Madhubani, Bihar. Their paintings were traditionally done by only women and are basically of a religious nature. They are done in the special rooms in their homes (in the pooja room, ritual area, bridal room), on the main village walls, etc., for ceremonial or ritualistic purpose. The women offer sincere prayers to the deity before starting the work. The motifs are from nature and mythology. Hindu deities and scenes from *Ramayana* are very popular.

The long scrolls known as *'phards'* are prepared by Joshis attached to the temple at Shahpura in Bhilwara district of Rajasthan. They depict scenes from the lives of legendary heroes worshipped by people. These 'phards' are then taken by the devcotees called Bhopas who move from one village to another singing the story and pointing out the scenes painted on the 'phard'.

The scroll painting tradition from Warangal, Andhra Pradesh, is also known as Cherial scroll painting It illustrates the origin of a particular community and tells stories of their deities, demons and heroes. Nakashi Venkataramaiah's family is perhaps the only family in the Cherial village to pursue this art form. Once upon a time, the Nakashis painted long long stories in the form of scrolls. They used to be in great demand among storytellers earlier. These storytellers displayed the scrolls prepared by Nakashis accompanied by music and dance from village to village.

Pata Painting (*Patachitra*) a traditional art form of West Bengal is characterised by religious and social motifs and imageries. *Pata* is a Bangla word evolved from the Sanskrit patta meaning cloth. The exact origin of this art form is not known. 'Even the stories of the origin of their community are not clear. Patuas are muslims but they have Hindu names and they depict stories of the *Ramayana, Mahabharata* and *Puranas*. The common surname *chitrakar* signifies their profession.The paintings are known as *pats* and the stories are narrated through songs as the *pats* are displayed to the audience.

All these folk traditions of paintings are now held in low esteem owing to rapid urbanisation. Most of these people are taking to other professions like working as labourers and their art is coming to the point of extinction. Today there is an urgent need to encourage and preserve the paintings.
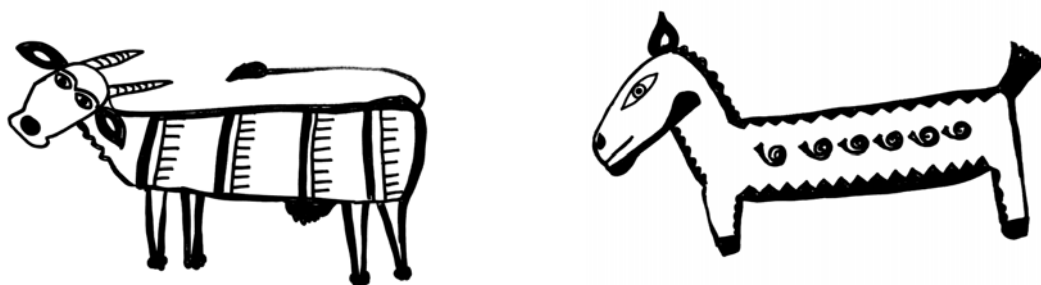
Folk Music

Due to immense cultural diversity, we have a rich tradition of folk music and a wide spectrum of folk styles. Each region is marked by its own distinct style.

Some cultural historians tend to put tribal music under the rubric of folk music. However, both the genres differ. While folk music is a reflection of larger Indian society, tribal music, on the other hand, represents distinct cultures. Though both forms have evolved over centuries, tribal music antedates folk music since tribes or indigenous people were the original inhabitants, residing mostly in the vicinity of dense forests perched on hilly tracts. However, both the tribal and folk music has been transmitted generationally and does not entail a formal period of apprenticeship so that the practitioners could devote their entire life (as in the case of classical music) since exigencies of the tribal and rural life does not permit it . The tribal and folk musicians have to attend to their normal duties of hunting, agriculture or whatever their avowed profession. The village/hamlet elders, in their leisure hours, train the young and encourage them to perform in community functions like weddings, engagements, births, so that they hone their skills. Music also accompanies the planting and harvesting seasons where villagers through songs routinely express their hopes, fears and aspirations. In some regions when a girl has her first menses, the songs also serve an educational purpose, that is, they provide girl first instructions on her emerging womanhood and her marital duties in future.

Musical instruments that accompany folk songs are different from those refined instruments found in classical music. In most cases, the musical instruments used by folk musicians are generally crafted by the musicians themselves. The common instruments (name of the instrument varies according to the dialect or language spoken) that are used like *daf, dholak, nal, nagada* (percussion instruments) and *ektara/dotara, saringda, rabab, santur, penkali*. However, there are innumerable instruments used in particular folk style in particular regions. Generally, folk instruments are fabricated from locally available materials like skin and hides, peritoneum, bamboo, coconut shells, earthen pots etc. A list of some of the important folk musical instruments is given below.

Bansuri	bamboo flute	*Nagada*	kettle drum
Chimta	fire tongs	*Nakula*	bamboo lute
Daf	frame drum	*Pung*	drum
Dholak/Dholki	barrel drum	*Pungi*	snake instrument
Ektara/Dotara	simple lute	*Rabab*	lute
Gettuvadyam	hammered lute	*Santur*	hammered dulcimer
Ghatam	clay pot	*Shankh*	conch shell
Ghunghru	ankle bells	*Gopichand*	one stringed instrument
Kartal	wooden clappers	*Thanthi Panai*	pot drum
Khol	clay drum	*Pena*	one bowed instrument
Magadi Veena	bamboo lute	*Damaru/Idakka/Udaku*	hourglass drums
Murchang	jaw harp		

Vocal Forms

South Asian region has common cultural moorings, traditions, psychology and pattern of behaviour. The emergence of three countries over a period of time has retained and continues to hold to the commonalities except perhaps at a level of psyche. The music is one area in which we find that the commonalities and compositeness are very clearly discernable. With the following description of vocal forms, we hope, we are able to relate to the compositeness that connects the sub – continent.

Classical / SemiClassical

THUMRI
Thumri is a form of semi classical music. Usually, the text is interwoven around romantic love for Krishna and is written in *Brij Bhasha* spoken in Uttar Pradesh. The compositions are mostly set *to Kaherva* (8 beats), *Addha tal* of 16 beats. Thumri became popular from 19th century onwards.

DADRA
Dadra is also a semi classical style and shares many similarities with *Thumri*. *Dadra* is composed loosely, which allows more freedom to the artist. Any light tal can be used and in some cases it is set to *Kaherva* of 8 beats. The *ragas* used are *pilu* or *pahadi* .

DHRUPAD
One of the oldest styles of classical music prevalent in north India which touched its peak during the times of Tansen, the legendary singer in Emperor Akbar's Court, the great patron of culture and learning. *Dhrupad* is known for its pure quality and strict adherence to the *tal*. It is sung to the accompaniment of *pakhawaj* (an ancient *mridang*). The themes of *Dhrupad* vary, but usually revolve around the conquests of great kings, mythological stories or devotional songs. *Dhrupad* is composed in a four-part structure (*sthyai*, *antara*, *sanchari* and *aabhog*) and is usually set to *Chautal of* 12 beats, *tivra* of 7 beat*s, farodast* of 14 beats. It is one of the most difficult styles in *Hindustani* music. Due to its formal structure and rigidity, ordinary people find it difficult to appreciate and now only a few singers practice this form. *Dhrupad* has also an instrumental form which is an imitation of the vocal form.

DHAMAR
Like *dhrupad*, *dhamar* is also a very old style of singing. *Dhamar* has also an instrumental form. Though this style has similarities with *dhrupad*, but it is more romantic in character. The themes revolve around Krishna. *Dhamar* is also called *Hori* (Holi) and is set to 14 beats. *Dhamar* like *dhrupad* has very few practitioners in the present age.

TARANA
Tarana is based on the use of meaningless syllables in a very fast rendition. Legend has it

that Amir Khusrau, the versatile poet and musician invented it. It is found all over India. *Tarana* is called *Tillana* in *Carnatic* music and is commonly used in dance performances.

KHAYAL

Khayal is a Persian word, denoting either 'thought' or 'imagination'. Unlike *dhrupad* which lays emphasis on strict adherence to words, *khayal* has short lyrics since each word is extended and elaborated in various ways according to the felicity of the singer. *Khayal* is based on a two-part structure, *sthyai* and *antara.*

There are two kinds of *khayals*: *Vilambit khayal* (also known as *bada khayal)* and *Drut khayal* (*chhota khayal*). *Vilambit khayal* is performed at a slow pace whereas the tenor of *drut khayal* is fast. The *vilambit khayal* was made popular in the 15th century by the king (*sultan*) of Jaunpur, Hussain Sharki. Later they were patronised by court musicians of Emperor Mohammad Shah 'Rangile' like Sadarang and Adarang who composed hundreds of *vilambit khayals.* The *drut khayal* was invented by Hajrat Amir Khusrau around the 14th century.

TAPPA

Tappa is mostly sung in Punjabi language where the song is interspersed with small pieces of *tans*. *Tappa* has fewer lyrics and is set to a two-part structure – *sthyai* and *antara*. *Tappa* was invented by Ghulam Nabi Shorie (Shorie Miyan*)* during the reign of Mohammad Shah. *Tappa*, a form of light classical music is quite popular in Punjab and Varanasi. In Bengal also one can find beautiful *tappas*. *Tappas* are generally sung in *khamaj*, *kafi*, *pilu*, *bhairavi* ragas.

GHAZAL

Ghazal is a popular form of music in India and Pakistan. However, when g*hazal* was in it formative stage, it was less musical and more a form of poetic recitation. In the present times, g*hazal* is generally considered a musical composition where primacy is given to the lyrics. Historical sources reveal that g*hazal* was introduced in India during the 12th century and was imported from Persia. Indian artistes adapted the g*hazal* form in accordance with local hues and it enjoys widespread popularity among Indian Muslims.

Though g*hazal* was introduced first in the north, it also found a fertile ground in the south as well when Urdu began to be used for literary purposes, particularly in Golconda and Bijapur.

The process of conversion of this poetic form into a musical form was rather slow. The g*hazal*, in 19th century started becoming associated with the courtesans, known as *tawaifs* who epitomised art, literature, dance, music, etiquette (*tehzib*) and everything that came under the rubric of high culture. The courtesans were widely acclaimed for their musical abilities, especially for their rendering of g*hazal*. However, the decline of feudal society and its ethos in the 19th and early 20th centuries also saw a decline in the *tawaif* tradition. Consequently, the change in culture was also reflected in the performance of g*hazal*. But this change did not deter the g*hazal* performers and they continued to build upon its musical content, and g*hazals* began to be heard and appreciated in concert halls. *Ghazal* as a musical form got a fillip in the 20th century with the development of recording and film industries and g*hazal* became a part of the mass media. However, to appease listeners and viewers, the lyrical content suffered. The poetic structure of a g*hazal* is based on a series of couplets woven together by a précise rhyming structure. The first couplet is the most

important and is known as *matla* which delineates the overall form and mood of the entire g*hazal*. Each subsequent couplet is linked to the *matla* in a well defined fashion. The last couplet, which is again quite important is known as *maqta*. It also denotes the pen name (*takhallus*) of the poet. It is usually a personal statement and is different from the rest of the g*hazal*. The common themes that are used in g*hazal* range from love mystical ruminations, revolutionary ideas to social commentaries.

The musical form of the g*hazal,* though variable, is similar to other *Hindustani* light classical forms. The rhythmic form of the modern g*hazal* is usually set to *rupak* (7 beats), *dadra* (6 beats) and *Kaherva* (8 beats).

Devotional Music

QAWWALI
Found in India and Pakistan, q*awwali* is the traditional form of Islamic song. The word *Qawwali* is derived from the Arabic word which means 'axiom' or 'dictum'. *Qawwali* is primarily devoted to the dictums of prophets and paeans to God. The style is closely linked to the spiritual and artistic life of north India and Pakistan.

Qawwali is an integral part of the great *Sufi* tradition. *Sufism* - a mystical philosophy striving to attain truth and divine love through personal communion with the divine – is a unique tradition in the subcontinent, which emphasises that it is possible to reach God in our temporal existence through sheer devotion. And as such, it has strong affinities with various streams of *Bhakti* movement, which stress the same principle of reaching the divine "here and now, and in this life". In contrast to the mainstream Islam, which propounds that God can only be reached after death or the final judgment, *Sufis* believe that human beings can come into touch with God in this life. In Arabic, this stream of mysticism is known as *tasawwuf.*

BHAJAN
Bhajans are simple songs eulogizing the thoughts and deeds of God. The truths of life are depicted in the common day-to-day language of the people. *Bhajan* became popular as a part of the Hindu revivalist movement known as *Bhakti* movement during the medieval period. The message of the *Bhakti* movement was simple, that is, any one can attain spiritual salvation if he is engrossed in the pursuit of selfless love of God. *Bhakti* movement in particular, and *bhajans* in general embody a spiritual empowerment of the common people and are not predicated upon either formalised rituals or knowledge of Sanskrit which were the bastion of educated upper classes and castes. Therefore, working people irrespective of their station and vocation in society, could sing *bhajans*. Many of the leading figures of Bhakti movement popularised their devotional songs like Kabir, Raidas, Surdas though they belonged to lower castes and classes. *Bhajan* cannot be described musically because it is not defined by characteristics, rather by a sense of devotion (*Bhakti*). The spectrum of *bhajans* include musical styles from the simple musical chant (*dhun*) to higher versions of vocal music. The poetic content of *bhajans* encompass a wide array of genres, from quality literature to the lowest poetic form such as *dhun*.

THE MUSIC OF THE *BAULS* OF BENGAL
Baul means madcap and is derived from *bayu* (in Sanskrit *vayu)* depicting a sense of nerve current. *Baul* has become the appellation of those who do not conform to established

societal cannons or customs. They revel only in the gladness of their own welling love. According to them, "in love we rejoice in song and dance with each and all." When *bauls* are asked about the tenets of their philosophy, they do not respond in words but in songs. They move from place to place singing and dancing. The songs have syncretic themes cutting across religion, caste and class divisions. Many *baul* songs do not even have the signature of the composer. They consider themselves travelers of the *shahoj path* (easy path). The musical instruments that accompany *baul* songs are usually *khol* (clay drum), *guba*, cymbals, flute and *ektara/dotara*. Originally, *baul* songs were composed in the local Bengali dialects and were passed on generationally through the oral tradition.

SHABAD

Shabad means literally the "word". It represents the verbal discourse by the *gurus* (the teachers) on the nature of God and impact on lived experience of common people in general and Sikhs in particular. *Shabad* also connotes *Gurbani* which is the literal rendition of the "Word of the Teacher". Both *Shabad* and *Gurbani* come from *Guru Granth Saheb* - the holy book of the Sikhs. Though similar to *bhajans* in style, *shabad* is popular among Sikhs. *Shabad* is integrally a part of spiritual growth for the humankind. It requires intensive study and meditation to comprehend the significance of *Gurbani* since it embraces the infinite qualities of God. Historically, *Shabad* has been performed in traditional musical styles. The *Granth Sahib*, in fact, specifies the austere *ragas* in which various *shabads* are to be rendered. *Shabads* are sung in the classical *ragas* in *tals* like *teental* and *ektal*. Those who perform the duties of singing *shabad* are known as *raagis* who earlier used to be adept in the study of scriptures, musical training and spiritual development. However, over the years, *shabad* is also being performed in lighter or semi- classical forms.

Theatre of Narration

Singing ballads, hymns, hero-lauds, odes, songs and incantations within a ritualistic frame or independent of it is a very ancient tradition. In fact, it has a bearing on the origin and development of theatre. Indian folk theatre's origins could be traced back to distant antiquity. The aboriginal cave paintings, ancient Vedic literature and Buddhist literature have recorded the vibrant functioning of Indian folk theatre. The 'Natyashastra' (sometimes also calle d Fifth Veda) probably composed between the second century B.C. and the second century A.D. by Bharat Muni also records the grandeur of Indian folk theatre. There are signs of the impact of the folk theatre on the classical Sanskrit theatre. However, it was during the 15-16th centuries that folk theatre received a boost and became a forceful medium in different regions. Naturally, folk theatre used different languages of the various regions in which it emerged and prospered. The themes encompassed stories from Sanskrit epics and the *Puranas*, historical tales, folk stories of romance and valour and biographical accounts of local heroes. The narrator or the *Sutradhar* tells the story through mime, music and dance, puppetry, picture scrolls and even shadows on the screen. Mime was used with great finesse to impersonate the characters of the story. Indian folk theatre can be broadly divided into two categories – secular and 'theatre of entertainment' and 'theatre of religion.' Though the religio-mythological oriented forms developed since antiquity they were reinforced during the *Bhakti* movement in medieval India. The secular folk theatre form can be traced to the *Swang* tradition and focused mainly on entertainment. Both the forms functioned together and influenced each other. In various states in India many of the language theatre forms which emerged have been stylised as total theatres blending elements of music, dance and poetry deftly and have all the attributes of a classical theatre.

Some of the region-specific theatres, briefly described, are as follows.

Koottu (Chakyar Koottu)
Chakyar, a community of performing artistes in Kerala well known for their theatrical skills since long, performed *Koottu*. In the ancient period, the *Chakyars* used to narrate stories from mythological sources like epics and *Puranas* where elaborate dance and *abhinaya* was employed. With eloquent declarations and suggestive facial expressions and hand gestures, the stories are recited in a quasi-dramatic style accompanied by musical instruments like cymbals and *mizhavu* (drum) made of copper with a narrow mouth on which is stretched a piece of parchment. The narrator *Chakyar* singly acts the roles of various characters while narrating the story. This narrative form later evolved into the now famous *Koodiyattam.*

Pandavani
The tribals of Chattisgarh region developed *pandavani* to amuse and instruct the people in the form of story telling. The story telling revolves around the five

Pandava brothers of *Mahabharata* fame. A team of *pandavani* performers includes one narrator-singer, one or two co-singers who also play musical instruments like *tabla* and harmonium. The main narrator-singer holds a stringed musical instrument called *tambura* which is decorated with small jingling bells and peacock feathers in one hand and a pair of cymbals known as *kartal* on the other.

Tal–maddale

Tal–maddale is a narrative drama of Karnataka which later evolved into *Yakashagana* - a colourful dance drama of the region. The name derives from *tal,* a kind of cymbal, and *maddale,* a kind of drum. The main narrator is known as bhagavata and his teammates are called *arthadharis*. It is a play which does not use costumes, make-up, dance or acting and is performed in sitting position.

Burra Katha

Burra Katha – a popular narrative form of Andhra Pradesh – is narrated to the beats of *burra* drum. The traditional performers of this form believe that they are descendants of Valmiki, the composer of the *Valmiki Ramayana*.

Gondhal

Gondhal – the dramatic narration of mythological stories, hero-lauds and folk legends in Maharashtra – forms a part of a ritual dedicated to various deities. *Gondhal* has deeply influenced the dramatic and narrative traditions in Maharashtra and its neighbouring regions.

Keertan

Keertan is one of the most popular narratives throughout the country. It is also known as *Kalakshepam, Katha, Harikatha* etc. in different regions. Keerta stands for fame, reputation and its derivative *Keertan* means to laud, extol, worshipping the deity by chanting his praises with music and singing.

Powada

The narrative hero-laud is called *powada* in Maharashtra. The first available *powada* in Marathi was based on Shivaji killing his enemy Afzal Khan. *Gondhalis* and *Shahirs*, the folk singers of Maharashtra, kept the tradition of *powada* singing alive, High pitched melodramatic singing marks *powada*.

Picture Showmen

In ancient India, the picture showman was known as *mankha* and the art of narrating the story through pictures was known as *Mankha Vidha*. This art dates back to 6th century B.C.

Garodas

The members of the *Garoda* community in Gujarat practise the art of narrating stories through painted pictures. It is performed with a paper scroll with pictures painted in water colour one below the other and separated by a thick black line.

Oja-Pali

This art form of Assam uses a host of dramatic techniques to illustrate the narrative and enhance its visual impact. *Oja-Pali* is associated with the worship of deity

Manasa (the serpent goddess in Assam). The performers spend many days to narrate the story which is divided into three parts – *Deva Khanda*, *Baniya Khanda* and *Bhatiyali Khanda*. The main narrator-singer is *oja* and *palis* are the members of his chorous.

Villu Pattu
Villu Pattu literally means bow-song. This form of narration (using bow-shaped musical instrument) was developed in the 15th century in Tamil Nadu. A bow-song party usually consists of eight members who form part of the chorous to support the main singer-narrator. Performed with ballad style songs, the stories from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* are narrated.

Daskathia and *Chaiti Ghoda*
Daskathia is one of the several *narrative* forms that evolved in Orissa. It consists of two performers – *gayaka* (main singer) narrates the stories to the accompaniment of two small rectangular wooden pieces to produce various beats and *palia* who is the co-narrator. The stories are usually taken from *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Puranas* and folk literature. The performance also satirizes and makes social commentaries on the contemporary situation.

Chaiti Ghoda which also evolved in Orissa consists of a troupe of performers made up of two players on *dhol* and *mahuri* musical instruments and three characters. A dummy horse is crafted with bamboo and cloth and the dancer enters into the hollow body and dances, while the main singer and co-singer narrate mythological stories.

Ras Leela
Ras Leela is a generic term that encompasses in its ambit several dances and dance dramas throughout the length and breadth of India based on the Krishna cult. The antiquity of the Krishna theatre, like the Krishna cult predates the *Vedas*. It must be noted that in the oldest Indian dramas, the *samvadas* (or colloquies) were composed in *Prakrit* (a colloquial form of Sanskrit) and not in *Sanskrit*. *Ras* refers to young Krishna's joyous, circular dance with the *Gopis* - the maids and the wives of cowherds of the Braj region – on the bank of river Yamuna on full-moon night. While *Leela* connotes play, both literally as well as God's playful interaction with humans and other earthly beings. In the Krishna cult, *Ras Leela* has special mystical and ritualistic significance.

From time immemorial, *Ras* and other *Leelas* have been part of the living tradition in various regions of the country in different forms. However, *Ras Leela* of Vrindavan is widely popular which developed in the 16th century due to the influence of *Bhakti* wave then sweeping the country.

Ras Leela portrays the incidents from Krishna's early life and the miraculous experiences of friends (*sakhis*) and young women who came into contact with him. The performance begins with the *jhanki* (tableau) of Krishna enthroned with his consort Radha seated beside him. *Sakhis* are seated on the right side of Krishna. Singers and musicians pay their respect to the central figures – Radha and Krishna. Then a series of dances known as *nritya ras* follow. The performance lasts for 2-3 hours till midnight.

Krishna Attam

In Kerala, around the mid-seventeenth century, emerged a colourful dramatic form known as *Krishna Attam*, based on the life of Krishna. *Krishna Attam* had a strong influence on *Koodiyattam theatre* and *Kathakali*. *Krishna Attam* is a compendium of 8 plays performed for 8 consecutive nights to unfold the entire story of Lord Krishna.

Kala

In the picturesque region of Gomantaka situated between the Sahyadri ranges and the Arabian Sea - known for its theatrical arts and music - various forms of theatre based on Krishna legend have survived through the ages. *Kala* in its earlier theatrical form, in fact, laid the basis for later Krishna theatre, which branched out in the form of *Dashavatar Kala*, *Gopal Kala* and *Gaulan Kala.*

Ankia Nat

Ankia Nat arose in the 16th century in Assam in the wake of neo-Vaishnavite movement. This one-act play - an opera delineating the splendour of Krishna legend – is structurally a synthesis of classical and folk traditions of the region.

Gita Govinda

Poet Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda* - a musical opera of unparalleled lyrical beauty occupies a premier place in the tradition of Krishna theatre. *Gita Govinda* written at the end of the 12th century inspired 35 dramatists who composed more than 100 plays between 1600 and 1850. In Vidyapati and Chandidas's devotional songs one can find the influence of *Gita Govinda*. The performance consisting of dialogues among two or more actors accompanied by songs became popular in Orissa, Mithila (northern Bihar), Bengal, Assam, Bundelkhand and Nepal. Even today, highly acclaimed classical Indian dances like *Odissi* and *Bharatanatyam* use the rich lyrical repertoire of *Gita Govinda* in their performances. Deep emotional involvement with the love-mysticism of Krishna cult forms the hub of the poet's compositions.

Ram Lila

The life of epic hero Rama - believed to be an *avatar* (reincarnation) of Lord Vishnu (the preserver) - have been portrayed in the theatrical form in various languages across regions. However, in north India, *Ram Lila* is performed every year for days together during the festival of *Dussehra* celebrating the annihilation of Ravana. *Ram Lila* of northern India is based on Tulsidas's narrative of Ram's adventures, the *Ramchartimanas*, an epic poem composed in *Awadhi*. Passages are chanted from *Ramcharitmanas* interspersed with song, drama and pageantry to unfold the story. According to legend, after the death of Tulsidas in 1624, one of his disciples, Megha Bhagat enacted *Ram Lil a* for the first time. However, in the 19th century the royal house of Banaras undertook the sponsorship of the *Ram Lila* at Ramnagar on a massive scale.

The theme mainly revolves around the interaction between Rama, his wife Sita and brother Lakshmana (who accompanied Rama in the 14 year exile) and Bharat and Shatrughan. *Ram Lila* concludes on *Vijayadashmi* day when he vanquished Ravana, and the stage actors performing the main roles shoot down the effigies of Ravana and his brother with burning arrows. Hundreds and thousands of spectators who watch *Ram Lila* then proceed with the entire cast of the performance in a procession

to witness the burning of effigies.

Khayal
It is a folk art form popular in Rajasthan. Though the origins of *khayal* remains a highly debatable issue, yet it is known that Agra was an important centre. *Khayal* has various styles, each going by the name of the city, acting style, the community or the author, e.g., *Jaipuri Khayal*, *Abhinaya Khayal*, *Gadhaspa Khayal*, and *Alibaksh Khayal*. Each style is marked by nuances and subtle variations.

Acting space is divided into two areas: one is a three to four feet high platform where one side is covered with white sheets to form a lower stage. In some styles of *khayal*, a lower stage known as *Laghu* is also built. The second structure is between twelve and twenty feet high, which is erected behind the platform. This makshift 'balcony' can be reached by ladders. In the four corners, banana tree trunks with colourful flags strung between them are installed.

Though *khayal* creates a festive atmosphere yet the performance is not free from religious undertones. Before the stage is set up, a ceremonial pole is installed at the site and the actual performances begin with hymns to deities. The plays are mythological, historical or creative in content and are marked by romance, brave deeds and sentiments. Festive music is created by *nakkara* or *dholak* drums, cymbals and the harmonium.

The all-male cast is directed on stage by the *ustaad* or the director producer. Every performance has a clown as a prominent character.

Naqal
It is purely a farce with a leader known as *Khalifa*. Through witticisms and antics, the clown determines the action and pace of the performance. *Naqal* is interesting because the all-male cast satirizes the audience as well. Immensely popular in Punjab and Kashmir, *naqal* form is also known as *naqqual* and *nakkal*.

Svanga
Svanga is also known as *sangeet* and its origins could be traced to the late eighteenth century. This folk form, popular in Haryana and Punjab is sourced from the ballads and semi-historical stories. *Svanga* is performed during festivals and family occasions. The play consisting of an all-male cast is performed in the village open area or in the patron's house. Simple costumes with fancy headdresses including wigs are used. Dialogues occupy a predominant place while songs and music have a secondary role.

Nautanki
Nautanki is a form of *svanga*, and is believed to have been names after a popular play *Shahzadi Nautanki* (the story of Princess Nautanki). The folk tale relates to a princess in Punjab called Nautanki was famed for her beauty. Phool Singh, a young man, who wanted to marry Nautanki was consistently rebuffed by her sister-in-law. Enraged, Phool Singh with the help of his gardner, named Princess Nautanki and they lived together.

Contrary to the legend that *nautanki* originated in Punjab, this folk theatre has no trace of Punjabi language. In fact, it is in Hindustani. What is significant is that *nautanki* as a theatrical form primarily catered to the lower and middle classes an d survived for hundreds of years without any court patronage.

The plays are based on historical, mythological or folk stories and are either "narrated or enacted in the grandiose epic style." Singing to the accompaniment of *nagadas* (kettle drums) marks *nautanki* as a genre. The drums are of two sizes and the percussionists have their own method of controlling pitch. The bigger *nagada* is controlled by the use of a damp cloth to its head while the head of the smaller drum is heated over hot coals. Other instruments which are used in the performance are the *dholak* drums, harmonium, cymbals and *sarangi* (a string instrument). Over the years, songs have been based on film music though folk music still plays a predominant role.

Ten to twelve actors constitute the cast under the supervision of the stage manager known as *ranga*. Performances are usually in moralistic overtones interspersed with comic and dialogue sequences to change the momentum of the play.

Hathras and Kanpur have emerged as two distinct styles of *nautanki*. Hathras style is the older version. In the 19th century they set up *akharas* (training centers) where the *khalifa* was the supreme leader. The singing style was high on the pitch and style. The authoritarian way of functioning of the *khalifas* led to a rebellion and the Kanpur version of *nautanki* came into being. The Kanpur style was conceptualised by Sri Krishna Pahalvan and is marked by simple songs and elaborate stage scenery.

The basic verse pattern is divided into three portions : *doha* which is sung free, without a beat; *chaubola* which forms the main stanza; and *daur* or *chalti* or *udhan* which is sung at a great pace but becomes slow by the end. Sometimes innovations like introduction of *kada* between the three stanzas is made. Other metrical patterns which are popular include *behartabeel, sauratha, alha, lavani, jhoolna, dadra, gazal, qawali* and lately film tunes. *Nautanki* is written in Hindustani with a spattering of the dialect of the area where it is played. *Braj nautankis* are mostly in verse, whereas the Kanpur version uses Urdu poetry and lots of straight prose dialogue. The *nautanki* contains certain aspects of the Sanskrit theatre, both in the choice of stories and the sequence wise unraveling of the plot. The impact of Parsi theatre is also visible in the style of enactment, particularly in the Kanpur version.

Most of the *nautanki* artistes belong to families who have been in the profession for generations. Most of them are illiterate or semi-literate. Today, the formal elements of *nautanki*–dance, music, unlimited scope for their improvisation – are being explored for their relevance in contemporary themes. *Nautanki* has always been an open and secular dramatic form in contrast to many traditional theatrical forms. *Bakri*, one of the most successful *nautanki* plays in recent times written by Sarweshwar Dayal Saxena is a scathing social satire and has been performed over hundred times all over the country in Hindi and other regional languages.

Lavani Poetry and the *Turra-Kalagi Akhara*
The ancient practices of public debate on scriptures (*shastrath*), extemporaneous poetic

composition (*Samasyaputri*) and musical dialogue (*sawal-jawab*) - all figure in the unique *Turra-Kalagi* tradition. In the performance, two contending groups direct questions and answers to each other, using the song type *lavani* or *khayal* to the accompaniment of *dholak* and *chang* drums. *Turra* represents the *Shaivite* position while the *kalagi* advocates the supremacy of *Shakti*. Each group is organised as an *akhara* and is marked by distinctive colours, and exhibits its ensign on its drum in the form of a crest (*Kalagi* and *Turra* both denoting the crest or the plume affixed to a turban). The contest between the two parties is known as *dangal*.

This form originated in Maharashtra and was an important popular form of poetry in the 18th and 19th centuries. The contest revolves around the theme of dualities like *Shiva* and *Shakti*, *purush* and *prakriti*, *brahm* and *maya*, or *nirgun* and *sagun*. There are innumerable instances where the debates which began as a metaphysical exchange ended up in verbal abuse and physical violence.

Turra-kalagi troupes and their *lavanis* probably traveled northward from Maharashtra, when these entertainers accompanied the camps of the *Maratha* army in the 18th century. *Turra-kalagi* then took its roots in Madhya Pradesh, where it is still performed as a folk song form. This folk form eventually reached northern India.

In Chittor and Ghosunda in Rajasthan, this form became associated with *khayal* folk theatre known as *Turra-Kalagi khayal* and developed a distinct style based on the stories found in the oral traditions of the region.

Nath Yogis *and Narrative Folklore*
Nath Yogis were ascetics and followers of Guru Gorakhanath of Punjab. Unlike the *Lilas* which focused on divine heroes incarnated in flesh and blood, the *Nath Yogis* on the other hand emphasised their belief in ascetic renunciation, magical beliefs and *tantric* mysticism. Due to the initiatory rite of inserting a heavy earring (*mudra)* into the pierced cartilage of each ear, they came to be known as *kanphata* (having split ears).

Through their popular sayings known as *Gorakh Bani*, the *Nath Yogis* were responsible for disseminating *tantric* beliefs and terminology among the common people of northern and central India. *Yogis* of the *Nath* sect not only functioned as singers, musicians and popular entertainers but had also built up a formidable reputation among the villagers as curers, magicians and masters of the occult. *Yogis* belonging to the *Nath* sect had a substantial geographic reach. The important pilgrimage sites and monastic centers ranged from Hing Laj in Baluchistan, Dhinodhar in Gujarat, Tila in Punjab to sites in Nepal, Bengal and Bombay.

Indrasabha
A drama by Agha Hasan Amanat entitled *Indrasabha* was staged in Lucknow during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah. According to oral tradition, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah played the title role of Indra for the inaugural performance.

Indrasabha, in fact, set a new standard for popular drama in north India. It fuses both Hindu and Muslim elements of plot, metre and language drawn primarily from Awadh region. The drama takes place in the court of mythic Indra, king of the

Hindu pantheon of Gods, who sits in state surrounded by fairies. Sabaz Pari (emerald fairy) loves Gulfam, an earthly prince. Kala Dev, the black genie, out of empathy for the lovers, smuggles Gulfam into Indra's heaven. Taking umbrage on this infraction, Indra throws Gulfam Pari then sings touching songs imbued with pathos in the disguise of *jogin* (a female mendicant) and ensures the release of the lovers. Indra, recognising the ordeal the lovers had faced grants his blessings and the lovers get reunited.

Indrasabha is a multimedia piece incorporating narrative, poetry, dance and music, within the visually lavish sets depicting Indra's abode – the heaven. The *paris* and *devs* including the hedonistic Indra (the lordly human monarch) surrounded by a harem of *apsaras* (beautiful dancing girls) were blended in the *Indrasabha* with the *dastan* (story telling) tradition imported from Persia. In fact, several themes in *Indrasabha* have been influenced by Urdu romances, including Mir Hasan's *Sihr-ul-bayan* and the *Gulzar-e-nasim*.

Indrasabha shot to immediate fame and was staged all over India. The written play also became a blockbuster. The first edition which was published in Kanpur in 1853 touched publishing heights by 1870s when 33 editions were published from major cities of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar as well as Lahore, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The reputation of the work reached Europe and soon it was translated into German by Friedrich Rosen in 1892.

The influence of the newly emerging Indo-Muslim theatre continued till the era of talking cinema. It became common for the theatrical world to emulate the aristocratic Islamic prototypes of costume, scenery, language, music and story line. *Indrasabha* accelerated a process that transmitted court-based styles of music, dance and poetry to a popular milieu.

Urban Theatre and the Parsi Stage
Following the collapse of the court as a social institution, the means of sustaining dramatic activity started getting concentrated in the "economic networks for entertainment developing in the cities". Building on the heritage of Indo-Muslim theatre tradition spawned by the success of *Indrasabha*, the Parsi theatre came into being around 1850. The Parsi theatre got initial boost from Parsi-organised amateur groups in Bombay like Elphinstone Club, which were staging English and Indian drama classics. Soon, Parsi businessmen who were themselves theatrical buffs launched professional companies. Many of the actors who were also Parsis holding shares in these companies went on to form their own companies. For instance, Khurshedji Balliwala, the famous comic founded the Victoria Theatrical Company in Delhi while Khwasji Khatau known as "Irving of India" due to his histrionic abilities established the Alfred Theatrical Company in 1877. Over a dozen companies spread across the subcontinent attaching the epithet "of Bombay" to their names sprang up to show their affinity with the emergent popular urban theatre. Muslims, Anglo-Indians, and a modicum of Hindus joined the companies, though the organisational reins of the companies remained largely in the hands of the Parsis.

In a matter of years, the demand for Parsi theatre spread to all parts of India. Some of the major companies routinely toured between Bombay, Lahore, Karachi,

Peshawar, Delhi, the Gangetic plain, Calcutta and Madras. Some companies like Balliwala and his troupe traversed as far as Rangoon, Singapore and London. The influence of Parsi stage on the development of modern drama, theatrical practice and on folk styles of performance was substantial. It had a major impact on the emerging Marathi, Gujarati and on the new drama in Hindi, Bengali, Tamil and other regional languages.

The Parsi companies later adopted proscenium arch with its backdrop and curtains, Western furniture and other props, costumes and a variety of mechanical devices for staging special effects - clearly a legacy of the material culture of European theatre. Parsi theatre even commissioned artists and technicians from Europe to achieve "the wonderful stage effects of storms, seas or rivers in turbulence, castles, steamers, aerial movements" and so on. The European theatre also influenced advertising and scheduling. The adoption of European techniques and business practices was a characteristics of the Parsi process of assimilation in the 18th century. Parsis, aided by economic prosperity and unhindered by hierarchical social structure and religious taboos, were way ahead of their Hindu and Muslim counterparts.

Early playwrights of the Parsi theatre like K.N. Kavraji, E.J. Khori and N.R. Ranina among others were themselves Parsis and wrote in Gujarati since it was their mother tongue. However, the large companies by 1870s had switched to the practice of employing Muslim *munshis* (scribes) as permanent staff, and Urdu became the principal language of the Parsi theatre. Some renowned companies of Delhi also commissioned the services of Hindu authors who could write in Urdu and consequently a number of Hindi plays like *Raja Harishchandra*, *Gopichand*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Vir Abhimanyu*, *Prahlad* also made their inroads into the Parsi stage. Agha Hashra Kashmiri, the eminent Urdu playwright reworked many of the Shakespeare's tragedies for the Parsi stage.

In north India, both Urdu and Hindi became an integral part of the Parsi plays since these two languages were accessible to the largest number of audiences. However, productions in non-Hindi speaking areas also drew from regional languages like Gujarati, Marathi and Bengali, particularly for comic skits, improvised interludes, and songs. The Parsi theatre was distinctly Indian in character and included Indian subject matter with a great deal of Indian music and dance. The Indian dramatic tradition and the existing folk drama also influenced the Parsi theatre which also had a counter effect on indigenous theatre. Alongwith the stories of Hindu epic heroes and heroines, the stock Islamic romances like *Shirin Farhad*, *Laila Majnun*, *Benazir-badr-e-munir* and *Gul Bakavali* were also dramatised. Many Shakespearean stories and plots were heavily Indianised, characters being reassigned names, castes and communities, geographical settings transferred to Asia, and motivations and story lines adjusted to fit the Indo-Muslim environment.

The musical style employed by the Parsi theatre has been variously described as "tuned to the traditional modes (*ragas*) in the chaste classical style, or 'as consisting of slipshod Parsi and semi-European tunes".

In a path-breaking move, Parsi stage admitted women actresses around 1880 mainly due to Balliwala's insistence and were recruited primarily from the ranks of

professional singers and dancers. The performance of women actresses was a big draw with the audience and solo dancers "were rewarded by the audience with currency notes and coins amidst shouts of Encore". Boy actors gifted with feminine voices, good looks and physical graces were also employed by many companies to play the heroine's role and perform dance items.

Puppetry

The variety and range of puppet movements are used to illustrate the narrative to intimate the audience on the transfiguration of inanimate to animate.

The basic four kinds of puppetry are glove, string, rod and shadow. String puppets belong to Rajasthan known as *kathputli*. Glove puppets on the other hand have their origins in Orissa and Kerala. These puppets are worn on the hand and their heads and arms are manipulated by the puppeteer with his fingers. While the puppets provide the visual foreground, the puppeteer intermingles the story in verse or prose to the movements of puppets.

Glove puppetry in Orissa is known as *kandhei nacha*. In Kerala, the performance of glove puppets known as *para koothu* relies on *kathakali* in their make-up and costume which is colourful and ornate.

Puppetry, in fact, is a projected play. The puppet, in essence, belongs to the creator's idea. The puppets have their own language and animation to come to life and transmit their message.

Historically, puppetry has co-existed with theatre, music, dance and design. While borrowing from these art forms, it has lent its distinct values of objectivity, stylisation and movement. Puppetry art had existed in most ancient civilisations, however, scholars attribute India to be its birth place. This could be traced to the term *sutradhar*, literally meaning the holder of the strings – the place taken by the narrator in theatre performances, in later ages.

Traditional puppeteers generally follow their regional folk theatre. They learn the art and techniques of puppetry from their elders. The puppet theatre has a narrative text (which may be read or sung), but the narrator and the singers are not visible to the audience. Through variations in pitch, colourations to stand out in relief with the décor, the puppeteer gives its own voice to the puppet. Women, too, have been lending their voice to the female characters.

Traditional puppeteers do not have any written script, but they use stories from epics, *puranas*, and the regional theatre. Mostly, stories are memorised. Comic characters are an important ingredient of the puppet theatre.

Puppeteers are adept in the folk dances of the region, as they often dance with their puppets. The *yakshagana* puppeteers of Karnataka are renowned for their dancing footsteps to the accompaniment of the dance sequences of their puppets.

Traditional puppeteers used oil lamps, earthen lamps and lanterns earlier, but now-a-days many of them are using electric light for their performances.

Music is quite important in traditional puppet shows. A single glove puppeteer can sing or play a percussionist instrument with one hand while manipulating puppets with the other. Many puppet groups have an ensemble of musicians. For instance, many rod puppet groups have 4 to 5 musicians. Most of the string puppet groups have at least one singer and one instrument player. Music plays an elemental role in *kathaputli* of Rajasthan, as the singer uses the sound effects for entertainment. Music is either based on regional folk songs and tunes or *ragas*. String and rod puppeteers of Bengal use popular songs from *jatra* (a theatrical form) and films. When these troupes travel to Bihar, they use *Bhojpuri* songs.

Since puppetry has been a medium of entertainment for the common people, many traditional puppet tr oupes are performing plays on social problems like sanitation, health care, girl's education, family planning and environment, sponsored by the governmental agencies or NGOs.

Cinema

The mainstream Bombay cinema has played ever since its birth, and still does, a very crucial role in preserving, promoting and popularising South Asia's Composite Heritage in a variety of ways. In a way this contribution goes beyond preserving and promoting. Bollywood cinema has also helped to create what might be called a pan-sub-continental culture which retains its composite character. In this sense popular Bombay cinema does not just *cater* to a composite culture (by projecting it as a preferred and superior culture) but also *creates* it (by transporting regional cultural traits or patterns onto other cultural terrains with the help of its all-India network).

Here there are some of the ways in which Bombay cinema has popularised South Asia's Composite Heritage.

1. By Depicting Acceptance as a Way of Life : Since its birth, inter-community acceptance within the broad cultural context has remained one of its central thematic concerns. The importance of this mutual acceptance and its role in strengthening inter-community relationships-both at personal and social levels has been repeatedly brought out on celluloid. Placing and equating one's 'self' with 'others' - people belonging to 'other' cultural/ethnic/religious background - on a strong, humane and emotional plane has always been shown in our films as far more crucial in guiding human affairs than the narrow attitudes and hostility towards 'others'. Following are some of the important films in this direction: *Khuda Ki Shaan* (1931), *Padosi* (1941), *Hum Ek Hain* (1946), *Aar Paar* (1954), *Hum Panchhi Ek Daal Ke* (1957), *Chaar Dil Chaar Raahein* (1959), *Kabuliwala* (1958), *Saat Hindustani* (1969), *Nanha Farishta* (1969), *Pandit Aur Pathan* (1976), *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977), *Saza-e-Kalapani* (1997), *Ghulam-e-Mustafa* (1997), *Lagaan* (2001), among many others.

2. Through a positive portrayal of community characters : Our Composite Heritage, as it has been constructed, has rested on the twin pillars of unity and harmony between/among various communities. Thus the portrayal of iconic figures from the minorities practising mutual acceptance and appreciation, compassion and goodwill and bringing comfort and solace to people and society has been an important feature of our popular cinema. Important films in this respect are: *Baazi* (1952, Anglo-Indian character), *Garam Coat* (1952, Muslim character), *Boot Polish* (1954, Christian character), *Pyasa* (1955, Muslim character), *Dhool Ka Phool* (1959, Muslim character), *Anari* (1959, Christian character), *Zanjeer* (1973, Pathan character), *Anjuman* (1986, Hindu character), *Hathiyaar* (1989, Muslim character), *Miss Beatly's Children* (1992, English missionary), *Hukumat* (1997, both Muslim and Christian characters), *Sarfarosh* (Muslim character), among many others.

Yet another important feature of such films is that the roles of community characters are often played by actors and actresses from other community. And so, in *Pandit* and *Pathan*, the role of Pandit is done by Mahmud, a Muslim and that of Pathan by Joginder, a Hindu. This is true of most (though not all) community portrayals in our films. It is interesting to

note that Dilip Kumar (Yusuf Khan in real life), an iconic figure of Bombay cinema, almost never played the role of a Muslim character (except in a semi-historical film *Mughal-e-Azam* and that of a camouflaged Muslim in *Azad*) and the major roles in most of the Muslim socials made through the 1960s were played by actors like Guru Dutt, Ashok Kumar, Rajendra Kumar, Pradeep Kumar and Rajesh Khanna among others.

3. Through Historical Films Exploring the Tenets of Composite culture and Mutual Acceptance : In many historical films the tenets of South Asia's composite culture have revolved around a positive portrayal of Hindu and Muslim protagonists. Epics like Sohrab Modi's *Pukar* (1939), Mehboob Khan's *Humayun* (1945), and K. Asif's *Mughal-e-Azam* were forerunners of this genre. Semi-historical film musicals like *Tansen* (1946), *Baiju Bawra* (1952), *Sangeet Samrat Tansen* (1959), *Rani Roopmati* (1960) and *Meera* (1990) set in the medieval period can be understood for their strong presentation of Indian cultural ethos during the reign of mughal emperor Akbar with the State consciously promoting inter-community cultural assimilation in literature, music, dance and narrative theatre.
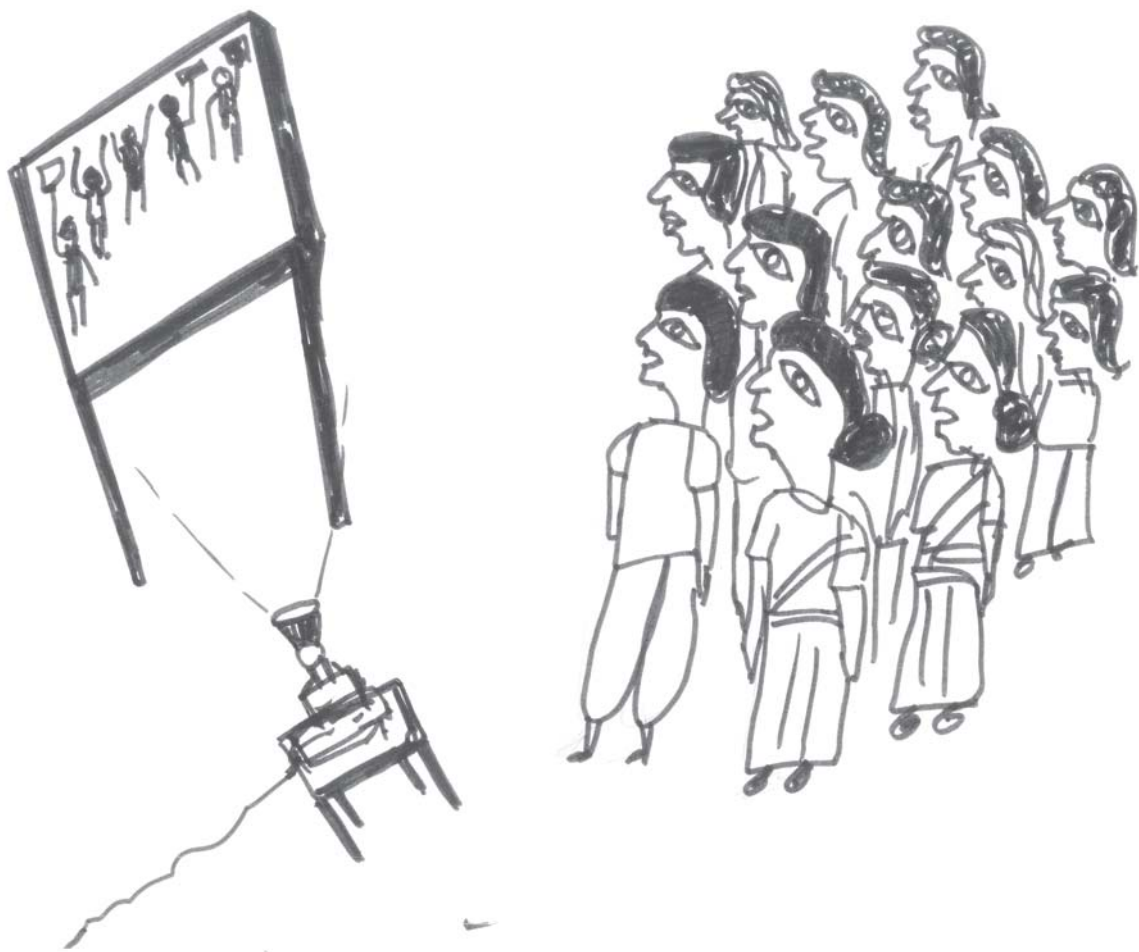
Notes

Notes

Context of Conflict

PUT UP A CHART ON THE BOARD WITH FOLLOWING POINTS :

- Are there any social tensions in your area?
- If so, what is the nature of tension?
- Who do you think are responsible for such tensions?
- What are the forces resisting and working towards reducing these tensions?
- What strategy do they adopt to reduce or eliminate these tensions?

PROCESS

- If participants belong to the same area then the group can be formed by counting otherwise create regional groups.
- Presentation

SUGGESTION

Facilitator keeps this in mind that in context of point five participants begin to develop future strategies, to avoid that situation facilitator should explain to the participants that they have to write about the strategies adopted by the different forces working to reduce the conflict and tensions in their area.

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape

☻ **TIME**
   2 .00 Hours

Facilitator's Note

So far, we have understood various aspects of the composite heritage. But, apart this, there are some harsh realities of this society which have become the part of our tensions and contradictions. In this chapter, we will try to understand these tensions and contradictions, various forces behind it and also understand about those forces which are fighting to do away with this situation.

Through this session, the participants will come across the realities of the areas of each other. As all the participants are coming from separate social, political and economic background, despite having similar tensions and contradictions, its form may differ from each other.

It is pertinent for us to know the reasons of these tensions and contradictions and also to have a look at those forces which are countering them so that it may be useful in developing a viewpoint about this.

The facilitator should make the participators realize that the tensions and contradictions are the byproduct of socio-political and economic conditions of the particular area. The root of the castism, communalism, gender discrimination, racism and other forms of contradictions lies in socio-political and economic conditions.

The facilitator should keep in mind that while doing their work in the society, participants start thinking only in one direction because of which they focus their attention on few problems. Hence, it is expected from the facilitator to encourage the participant to think over about the uniqueness of their areas.

Facilitator is expected to cite the examples of different type of tensions and contradictions along with the description of the forces which are behing it. This will give new direction to the participants. While raising fingers on various forces behind such contradictions, they fail to talk about some important aspects like indifference towards the issues, avoidance and irresponsible attitude of the people. This reveals the fact that even the we, the activists, encourage these contradictions by our attitude of indifference, avoidance and irresponsibility.

Notes

Notes

Negative Role of Composite Heritage

⊙ **OBJECTIVE:**

To make participants understood that some of the forms of the composite heritage have negative impacts as well due to which contradictions and tensions may also take place.

PROCESS
- Draw and outline of the objectives and prepare an atmosphere for the participants.
- Give a story to read or show a movie.
- Discussion in the small groups.
- Presentation

A 10 to 15 minutes activity on negative composite heritage should be conducted for the participant through buzz group programme.

POINTS OF DISCUSSION
- What are the traditions which constitute negative composite heritage from your view-point?
- Why do we adopt these negative traditions?
- How do these negative traditions become our composite heritage?
- What are the means by which these negative traditions become the part of the society?

If you are telling a story or showing a movie, develop the questions on the basis of its actors and the conditions.

FORMATION OF GROUPS
Facilitator should ascertain that no group should be comprised only of either men or women. So far as it is possible, the facilitator should keep in mind that the group should be comprised of the persons from different backgrounds, i.e., religion, group, community, gender, race, class etc.

MATERIAL REQUIRED
Chart, Marker, Tape, Story and Movie.

☻ TIME
2 .30 Hours

Facilitator's Note

When we talk of Composite Heritage as a tool of intervention in the conflict-ridden societies, sometimes we tend to overlook some of the components of Composite Heritage that have for ages been dividers in the society. In fact, they are the ones who are responsible for inflicting violence, exploitation, and sometimes enslaving a large number of people living in a society. Some of these components or the forms of Composite Heritage are gender discrimination, caste and racial exploitation and repression. For example gender-based exploitation is Composite Heritage of men and women across geographical boundaries of nations. Composite Heritage of men because it unites them as the ones who have benefited by virtue of being born as men. On the other hand men all over the globe have always been at the receiving end. This commonality becomes a Composite Heritage of women across societies and borders. This does not end here. There are many instances where it takes shape of Composite Heritage of men and women both. The men ensure that gender-based discrimination becomes a value system for the both men and women. Men consciously work towards that. To make women accept it as fate and a value system for the whole society, including women, various methods are used. The process of upbringing, the way a girl child is treated at home and surroundings, the way their whole social behaviour is moulded, all leads them to accept and behave the way patriarchal society wants them to act and behave. The whole educational process, beginning from the home and family and extending up to the educational system at school and colleges tirelessly works towards this goal. Even the religious scriptures are not spared. By the time a girl attains adulthood, she internalises all 'norms' and 'values' set by patriarchal society. She becomes carrier, preserver and more importantly accountable for these 'values' and 'norms'. She readily and willingly accepts men as superior to women. As a young girl at her parents home, her brothers are supposed to be superior to her. After marriage her husband is her 'master'. As a mother she is supposed to produce male child. The value system that she has been made to internalise compels her to treat her own male and female child differently. In short, she willingly does everything that the patriarchal society expects from her. Once men and women inherit, carry and preserve same sets of values and norms, it automatically becomes Composite Heritage for the whole society.

In Indian context in particular and South Asian context in general, same process applies to the prevailing caste system. Same value system is fed into depressed castes and they accept it as their fate. A person born in so called lower caste known as shudra is made to believe that his job is to serve those born in so called high caste. The system gets its legitimacy from religion. The moment a shudra starts accepting this social order, he/she becomes the preserver and protector of this social order as well. His/her thinking pattern starts matching with those who actually create conditions for shudras to accept it as almighty's wish. Once both the oppressor and the oppressed accept the social order in same way it becomes composite for them and through passage of time it cements its position and place as Composite Heritage. A heritage that has potential of exploding and tearing the society apart.

NOTE 1 : For developing a better understanding on issue read facilitator reading material 1-2-3 and 4 (from page no 66-84)

NOTE 2 : Movies : Sadgati, Dharm, Mirch-Masala, Deeksha, Pink etc.

Rajkishor, My Fast Friend

Rajkishor, My Fast Friend

This is a story of 28 years old. We were living in a town. I was studying in class 4 of a government school. During those days, I had two fast friends in the school. They were: Rajkishor and Kamlesh. They were cousins. Rajkishor was my fast friend, really a true friend. We used to sit side by side in the class. If we go for outing, we go together. There were 40 students and a teacher in our class. After all, how could a teacher take care of 40 students? Hence, we took this responsibility. We used to take care of each other.

Rajkishor had a bicycle. He used to take me around on it. Perhaps, we became very fast friend due to it. But, the teacher and rest of the students did not like him and his brother. (But why should I bother about it?) There might be many reasons for their disliking but I could understand only two reasons and after very recently. First, they were very old in comparison to other students—having the age of 14 to 15. Secondly, they belonged to Basor caste. They were engaged in the piggery work. They pulled out their hair and sell it in the market. They make buckets from bamboo sticks and used to sell it in the streets. Apart from us, others hesitate to touch them.

Once, I went with Rajkishor to his house. The road, which was behind my school and was in front of Allahabad Bank and post office, had shrunk before we entered in the street. At the same time, it was wet with the dirty water. At last, we reached to his house. It was a two room house of thatched roof. There were tiny living spaces outside this house. This was the living space for pigs and its family. Rajkishor went there and brought its two kids. I could play with it for a while. It made a jump and stopped near her mother.

While reaching to his house, I came to know that he is got married some two years before. Rajkishor felt shy when I got this information. He whispered in my ear that I should keep this secret with me. I felt uncomfortable after listening this and I laughed at him internally. Then, I came to know that his young sister has also got married and having a child.

Today, I assess his status. He was having better economic status. He was having a bicycle and money which was earned by him. I was having nothing. Rajkishor could come to the school daily. He was engaged in many works at home like taking care of pigs. If the run away somewhere, he was supposed to trace them and weave the basket from bamboo sticks and sell it in the streets. Then he used to come to the school. When he came to the school, he was having ten to twenty rupees. We started our outings. We used to ride on the bicycle and reached to a kiosk in a corner. We used to eat chaat twice costing one rupee each and have golgappas at the end. My share in this expenditure was zero.

When Rajkishor, my fast friend, used to come to our colony, I found an entire change in his favour. He did not talk to me informally as he used to talk while going for outing. After all, why? Today, I can realize this but during those days I was unaware of it. Rajkishor who was unable to coin a sentence in the class, had he had read the social inequalities including untouchability and its bitter experiences properly. While selling his baskets, he used to stand in the street for selling the baskets and the women of the colony, including my grandmother, used to stand there while taking care of their clothes. To show the baskets, he used to throw it on a place which was at a better height from the surface. My

grandmother asks for discount on the excuse of his being my fast friend and, sometimes, this discount becomes half of the real rate but this discount was desired without touching him.

I visited his house many times but could not bring him to my house through that narrow lane.

There was a place outside the school which was common for both of us and it was a river. It was a thin river flowing at the edge of the village. This was a meeting place for us. We have one river but were having different Ghats (bathing places). His ghat was near to his colony and our ghat was near to our colony. I can take bath on his ghat. But, despite my several requests, he did not come to take dip on my ghat.

Today, I come to know that the river is also aware of castism, higher or lower and untouchability. That is why, even the flow of water take the course of touching our shore and then going to the shore of my friend. Why did it not think to adopt the course of slowing other way round?

I did not remember of any examination during the class four in our school. We reached to class five with gay and happiness. But, a ghost also came with us in this class. It was the ghost of the board examination. We are unaware of this board examination. What was new which would take place in this exam? But this was a powerful ghost. It used to follow us from home to the school. Either it is the teacher or our parents—all were referring this ghost. It is the favour of this ghost which took me for the tuition and it forced Rajkishor not to attend the school. The teacher generally used to say "You have tasted sweet haluva of mung, now get ready to taste bitter stuff of the board." It is possible that there may be some other reasons for Rajkishor and Kamlesh to leave the school. But the role of the treat which he used to give through his horrible gesture cannot be denied in this case. Due to this ghost, my relatives used to make me busy in the studies. It is this ghost which forced Rajkishor not to attend school. Since then, we could not meet each other. But, he is my fast friend even today in my memories.

● **AMBRISH SONI**

चित्रः प्रबुद्ध

Guest

The summer was at its peak. The loo (hot wave) had been rampant for last three to four days and, hence, people were dying in different places. The roads were so hot as if it was being in an oven. The rich people got hanged the khas (cooling) cloth on their doors and their servants were making those cloths with water. The curtains were drawn on the shops. The people who used to sit on the footpath, selling their materials on kiosks and lottery ticket sellers have taken shelter under the bridge and were waiting for evening to approach. People were sitting on the rickshaw so that any of their organs might not get exposed to the warmth of sun. By wiping their perspiration, generally, their handkerchiefs became black. The villagers have covered their faces with towel or a piece of cloth and were seemed to be the dacoits. The pedestrians who did not have umbrella, had kept their bags on their heads. Some of the persons had tied their heads with the handkerchief. The cost of the water which was used to be sold on kiosk had been raised from 5 paise to 10 paise.

In this way, the socio-economic system of the town was under the control of the heat wave. Despite being free, people were slaves and it was interesting that they could not harm the heat. Hence, they kept small pieces of onion in their pockets to save them from the affect of the heat and thanking the god.

There was a small piece of onion in the pocket of Salman Saheb. That was kept in his pocket silently by his wife. Though Salman sahib was aware of this yet he was believing that he was unaware and he was determined on his faith that there is no connection of the onion with loo.

Salman sahib, lifting a suitcase in his hand, was proceeding on the hot road and he was having the feeling to cover his head by keeping something on it or covers his face by a towel or any other piece of cloth but he could not do so because of the inconvenience. Apart from this, he was in a hurry to reach the home of Mishrilal Gupta. He could not get the rickshaw and he was consoling him by thinking that his room was not far from the station. This was told to him by Mishrilal. Salman sahib was going to meet Mishrilal Gupta for the first time in this town. He was knowing the house number, but was unaware of its location. But he was confident that he would certainly search Mishrilal Gupta.

Mishrilal Gupta was his neighbourer and he was such a boy who became famous in his town in no time. He was the first youngster of Gupta family who had started being beaten and had started having tea in the hotels of the Mohammedans. Yes, as the Banaras Hindu University is Hindu and the Aligarh University is Mohammedan, the hotels of his town were Hindu or Mohammedan. It is a different matter that there was no prohibition for the Mohammedans in Hindu hotels and no prohibition for Hindus in Mohammedan hotels. However, the religious people dislike this practice. Jacky, one of the neighbourer of Salman sahib used to get sweets always from the Mohammedan sweet shop because Shivcharan was not maintaining proper standard.

There was only one school in the town during those days and every student has to learn Sanskrit compulsorily, Hence, Salman sahib was also taught 'ramah, ramau, Ramaah', consequently, he could not study Urdu. In the same way, Girdharilal Gupta, the grandfather of Mishrilal could learn only Urdu in his time. He did not get the chance of learning Sanskrit. He was from a family of Vaishya (trader) and there was no arrangement of teaching in madrasa. So, Salman sahib had to learn Sanskrit and when he reached to the city for the higher education, he had to learn only Sanskrit. He was confident that after graduation, he would become the lecturer of Sanskrit in any school. But, it did not happen. Now, he is teaching history in a recently opened Islamia Middle school of his town.

Salman sahib taught him Sanskrit when Mishrilal was studying in intermediate. Hence, he treated him as his teacher and used to touch his feet. Then, he had completed the graduation and was preparing for competition. It was his desire that whenever Salman sahib got chance to visit the city, he must visit his house. To fulfill the desire of Mishrilal, he came to the city without any prior notice. He wanted to give him surprise by knocking his door suddenly.

Salman sahib recollected the name of his area—Gopalganj. Yes, this is the name. House No. 562, the house of Radharaman Misra. It was located about half a mile away from the station.

'Where would be Gopalganj?'

He asked to a shopkeeper, keeping pan (beetle) in his mouth and with a choked throat, he told that he had left the area a little behind. Just go back and enter in a street adjacent to the electric pole.

When Salman sahib came out of the shade of his shop, his cheek was hit by a hot wave and he put one of his palms on it. At the same time, he realized that he was having a piece of onion in his pocket; he had a sigh of relief. Yes, this is the street. He had a look at the electric pole and entered in the street.

There was block A to his right. Salman sahib thought that the Block B should be on the left. But it was Block H on that side. He proceeded farther, thinking that B might be perhaps little farther. But, this was not the case. At the end of A, there appeared Block M. On its left, it was Block C. He got confused.

'Where do you want to go?'

He was thrashing the cot and killing bedbugs. Perhaps, he understood his anxiety. Salman sahib killed a small bedbug with his shoes and asked, 'Where would be 562 of Block b?'

'Oh, the house of Misraji? That is in Gopalganj. Just go ahead from here and take right turn from the temple. You can ask anybody there.'

Salman sahib thanked him and walked away. When he reached to the temple and took right turn, he found that there were four to five buffaloes tied with the rope and a girl was calling a bun seller.

'Is it old Gopalganj?'

But that girl did not pay any heed to him. She was paying his attention on the buns of the seller.

Salman sahib walked ahead. He found the old styled houses of big height. Due to the shadows of the houses, the road seemed to be cooler and the neud children were jumping there. Salman sahib thought to stay there for a while, but he changed his mind without any delay and keeps moving.

A boy was running in front of him and a thick rat was chasing him. The boy had tied his tail with a thread and he was holding it from other side. As was expected by Salman sahib, the boy, without any hitch, trying to pass him, got collided with him.

'Where is b-562? Do you know the house of Misraji?'

The boy looked at him and, pointing towards a house, the boy ran away. The rat was also made to follow him.

Salman sahib took a sigh of relief and stood in front of that big house. Two ladies were sitting outside on a cot and were engaged in solving the Punjab problem in their own way.

'Oh, Bittan's mother, thanks to the god that we are in India. Had we been Punjab, we would have suffered a lot....'

'Is it the house of Radhacharan Mishraji?'

Salman sahib thought that the women would get up from their cot as was the practice in the towns, but they kept on sitting. He realized that it was the city…

'Mishraji do not stay here. He is living in Jawaharnagar. Only his tenants stay here.'—this information was given by a lady and kept quiet.

'What for you are searching him?' another woman asked and started scratching her head.

'A boy named Mishrilal Gupta stays here. I wanted to see him.'

'Go upstairs and he was living in the second room.' The lady who was scratching her head told him and stood up.

Salman sahib entered in the room.

It was dark there and the staircase was not visible. After standing for a while, he saw a tap in the corner, he also saw the staircase. He started to go up cautiously.

During this, he guessed that Mishrilal might be sleeping and I had to make him awakened by knocking the door. He will get up at once and after unbolting the door, will look out

while squeezing his eyes. Finding me in front of him, he will touch my feet.

'Who is this?'

He heard the voice of a lady while reaching upstairs and was stunned.

'Is there Mishrilalji?'

'Wait a bit please.'

The lady said strictly and he felt that the lady must be busy in some important work. He stood to this side of the doorless room and started thinking something. He saw that a middle aged lady wearing a petty coat and brazier rushed to another room and covering herself with sari and wearing blouse, came out.

'Please come!'

On the call of the lady, Salman sahib entered in the room as if he did not saw her. The woman also thought in the same way and kept standing.

Salman sahib saw that a wet sari is lying near the drainage pipe of the veranda and the atmosphere was full of the fragrance of Jay soap.

'Mishrilalji stays in the next room, but he is not there—from where are you coming? Please sit.'

The lady asked gently and laying a cot, went into the room. After some time, she came with a piece of zagree in a plate and a glass of water and stood after keeping the plate on the cot.

'Have a glass of water. It is very hot today.'

Looking at her, thinking something, she went back in the room. She came back with a hand fan and kept it on the cot.

Salman sahib ate zagree along with water and started moving the fan slowly.

'Has Mishri gone out somewhere?'

'He has not gone out, may be somewhere in the city. May have gone for movie or may have gone to see some friend. Daily, he uses to stay back at the room, he has just gone out.'

Salman sahib had a glance at his watch, it was 3 o'clock. He felt tired and lie down on the cot.

The lady brought a pillow.

'Please, take rest a bit, Gupta ji will return by the evening.'

The lady kept the pillow on the head side and, keeping the wet sari in the bucket, she went down.

When Salman sahib lied down, he felt that he was having onion in his pocket. He threw it under the cot. He felt asleep After some time.

While sleeping, he saw a dream that there was a fight between the teachers and the head master is scolding Satyanarayan Yadav badly. Taking his favour, all the teachers started attacking him when Salman sahib moved ahead.

He got awakened.

He got up.

It seems, night has fallen. There was a bulb in the room and its light is also coming in the veranda. There is no bulb in the veranda. A lady was frying the vegetable on the stove. The place wherefrom the fragrance of soap was coming, now it is full of the smell of cumin.

'Has Mishrilal not come yet?'

'What can I tell you where he has gone today? He used to stay back in the room daily.'

The lady responded worryingly and came with a glass of steel filled with tea.

'Why did you take this trouble?'

'It is not a matter of trouble. We use to prepare tea in the evening.'

Salman sahib took glass in his hand. The lady went back to the stove.

A Youngman, covering his body with a thin cloth and rolling the sacred thread came upstairs and after entering in the room, started chanting Hanuman Chalisa. Now, the atmosphere was filled with the mixed smell of cumin and agarbatti.

Peeping inside the room, Salman sahib found that all the household things were kept intact and the photos of Rama, Krishna, Hanuman, Shankar-Parvati, Lakshami, ganesh etc. were hanged on the walls. There was a wooden plate hanging on the other side of the wall. It was a name plate on which the name of Ram Manohar Pandey was inscribed. He was holding agarbatti in his right hand and, holding elbow with his left hand, showing the agarbatti to the photos as if providing smell to them and he was chanting the shlokas of Geeta in between with wrong or right pronunciation. A small but dirty fan was slowly moving in the room.

The lady had cooked vegetable and was preparing chapattis. Salman sahib thought of making a move from there and stay in any hotel, he will meet Mishrilal in the morning because it is very late in the night and there is no certainty about him.

He stood up.

'I will go now and will meet him in the morning.'

He took up his bag.

'Where will you go?'

The lady asked him directly and started looking at him.

'I will stay in any hotel.'

'Why Bhaisaheb, will you stay in any hotel? Is there no place to stay here? Food is ready, have it please. Then, go upstairs and lay down on the top there. Gupta ji will come in the night and if he fails to come in the night, you may go in the morning. I will not allow going at this time. Please put off your shoes and get fresh and have food.'

'No Bhabhiji, why do you take trouble?'

Salman sahib did not find anything wrong while calling her as bhabhiji.

'There is no trouble in it. Please come, and have food.'

Salman sahib had no option and he put off his shoes. After getting fresh, he stood up.

By now, Pandey had finished his prayer and sitting on a wooden cot, was browsing through his papers. He did not get the chance of saying hallo to Salman sahib. He was feeling bad for it. But, there was no relevance of saying halo after such a gap, Hence, he tried to start talking directly.

'Saheb, you also get up.'

'No, you have it, I will take food after some time.'

He responded Salman sahib in a bit unfriendly manner and, without seeing him, kept busy in his work.

'Please sit, you may be hungry since whole the day. He will eat food later on. He has taken some snacks after coming from the office. You were sleeping.'

The lady requested again and, keeping a stool, kept his plate with food. Gave him water in a pot and kept a tumbler.

Salman sahib sat there.

He was very happy from inside because Offering food by a Brahmin without asking his caste was not possible in his town. But it is possible in the city despite the fact that it is not a big city. They were coming from the village culture but they are city dwellers. People of this area use to be progressive. They do not have narrow-mindedness. Despite being religious, they are free from dogmas.

Salman sahib was enjoying the vegetable of brinjal. The pickle of fresh mango which was hard but was tasty. The chapattis were greased with ghee. This type of chapatis was not used to be cooked there. The chapattis at his home used to be prepared on the back side of the griddle and those big and half cooked chapaties were used to be wrapped in a cloth….

The lady put another chapati which was thick due to steam. 'Have you come from the village of Guptaji?'

Salman sahib raised his head. Pandeyji was free from his work and was cutting mangoes. There was toughness in his voice.

'Yes!' Salman sahib responded and licking after picking pickle from the plate.

Pandeyji called her wife silently and gave her the pieces of the mango.

The lady kept those pieces in the plate of Salman sahib.

'He is his brother.' In the same tone.

Salman sahib got angry.

'No, he is my student.'

'Are you a teacher?'

'Yes.'

'Where do you teach?'

'Are you also Gupta?'

'No.'

'Brahmin?'

'No, I am a Musalman, my name is Mohammad Salman.'

He gave his full introduction and started wrapping vegetable in the last piece of chapatti.

Pandeyji has raised his eyes towards his lady and found that she was looking to him. It looked as if both were saying to one another, but do not explain properly.

Salman sahib was waiting for another chapatti, but the lady went inside leaving the stove. She started searching something.

Salman sahib started having mango.

When lady came out, she was having a ceramic tumbler and fear in her eyes.

She picked the steel tumbler and kept the glass.

Salman recollected that the tumbler which he used for having tea, the plate in which he was having food was made up of steel. He became worried for a moment. He picked his plate and sat near the drainage pipe. He started washing his plate.

The lady turned her back and have glance on her and then make her busy instantly in her work.

Mishrilal did not come till then.

● **ABDUL BISMILLAH**

Well of Thakur

Touching the water pot to his mouth, Jokhu felt bad smell in the water. He said to Gangi—what kind of water it is. Due to bad smell, one cannot drink it. I am feeling dryness in my throat and you are giving me this filthy water!

Gangi used to fill the water daily in the evening. The well was far away, it was difficult to go time and again. She brought water yesterday, there was no bad smell in it, and how can there be bad smell today! She touched the pot with his nose; there was really the bad smell. Certainly, any animal might have fallen in the well and died. But, wherefrom do I get fresh water?

Who will permit me to fetch water from the well of Thakur? People will scold me even from distance. The well of Sahu is at the other corner of the village, but who will permit me to take water from there? There is no third well in the village.

Jokhu has not been feeling well for so many days. He kept quiet by controlling his thirst, and then said—now, I cannot control my thirst. Give me some drops of water; I will drink it by closing my nose.

Gangi did not give him water. She was aware of the fact that filthy water will deteriorate his health, but she did not know this fact that after boiling the water, its filth will be gone. She said—how will you drink this water? Nobody knows which animal has died in it. I will bring fresh water from the well.

Jokhu saw her astonishingly—wherefrom will you bring water?

There are two wells of Thakur and Sahu. Will they not permit to fill a pot of water?

'They will beat you. Sit quietly. God Brahma will scold you, Thakur will beat you with stick, Sahuji will charge five times. Who will understand the pains of poor! Nobody visit us even if we die, it is difficult to think of taking to the funeral. Will they allow taking water from their well?'

There was bitter truth in this water. Gangi could not give any answer, but she did not give that water to drink.

(2)

It was 9 o'clock in the night. Tired workers have slept, there were some non-serious people sitting at the doors of Thakur. It is not the period of showing bravery in the war field nor there is any chance of it. They were talking about the legal bravery. How Thakur has bribed police officer in a particular case, and saved himself. How intelligently he got a copy of the decision of the case. All used to say that one cannot get the copy of the

decision. They will ask for the money. He got the copy without paying anything. One should have guts to do work.

At that time, gangi reached to fetch water from the well.

The low light of earthen lamp was falling on the well. Gangi was waiting behind the jagat (the rising wall of the bank of a well) for the proper opportunity. All villagers drink the water of this well. It is not forbidden for anyone except these unlucky people.

The revolutionary mind of Gangi started hitting the traditions—why are we being looked down upon and why they are being treated as upper castes? Is it because they are putting thread around their neck? The people who are present there are notorious. They are engaged in theft, cheating, engaging themselves in false cases. A couple of days before, Thakur had stolen the sheeps of poor shepherd and, after killing, he ate all of them. They have to visit the Brahmins around the year. Sahuji sells ghee after mixing oil in it. They use us as a labour but never pay us its worth. In which sense, they are superior to us, we do not shout in the street about our higher status. If we visit the village, they start giving a sexy look. As if we are a point of envy, even then they have the superiority complex!

She heard the noise of something as if somebody is approaching to the well. The heart beats of Gangi started becoming fast. She thought, had I been by someone, they would make an issue. She should not be seen at all. She took up the pitcher and rope and bending below, she started walking. She stood behind a tree. When do they feel pity on someone! They had beaten Mehto in such a way that blood there was blood clots in his spit for so many days. This happened because he refused to work without payment. Despite this, they claim them to be superior.

Some women came there to take water. They were talking to each other.

'The moment we thought of taking meal, we were ordered to bring fresh water. They do not have money to buy pitcher.'

'Men will feel jealous if we take rest.'

'They do take pain to bring filled pitcher from the well. They just give order to bring fresh water as if we are their servants.'

'If you are not servant, what are you then? Do you not get fooding and clothing? If you get chance, you snatch five to ten rupees. What is special in servants?'

'Don't feel shy, sister! We cannot think of taking rest. Had we done this much work somewhere else, we would be in a comfortable position. He will feel indebted at the top! Nobody take care of even if we die while doing their work.'

They went back after filling the water. Gangi came out from the shadow of the tree and came at the well. The unconcerned people also went from there. Thakur was also going for sleep in the veranda after closing the door. Gangi took a sigh of relief for a while. Somehow, there is no hindrance. The prince, who went to steal alexir, might not have gone with such care. Gangi stepped on the wall of the bank of the well. She had never felt such

feeling of victory as before.

He tied the rope on the upper part of the pitcher. Had a careful look on both sides as if a warrior is going to enter in the fort of the enemy. Had she been caught at this time, there would be no chance of getting any support. Remembering the gods, she put the pitcher in the water courageously.

There was no noise when the pitcher was put into the water. Gangi made a couple of pulls and the pitcher came up to the top of the well. Even an experienced person cannot pull so quickly.

Gangi bent down to hold the pitcher and keep it on the wall of the well, the door of Thakur sahib was opened. The face of the lion may not be more dangerous than this.

Gangi lost the hold of the rope. The pitcher along with the rope fell into the water with a great noise and the atmosphere was filled with the noises of the waves of water.

'Who is there?' Thakur shouted while running to the well and Gangi was running after making a jump from the wall of the well.

Reaching home, she saw that Jokhu was drinking the dirty water from the pot.

● **MUNSHI PREMCHAND**

Sadgati

Dukhi, the Chamar (leatherworker), was brooming at the door and Jhuriya, his wife was dipping the courtyard with dung. Both had finished their work, his wife said, 'Go and invite Pandey baba before he goes somewhere else.'

Dukhi—'yes, I just go. But, just think, what can we provide him for sitting?'

Jhuriya—'Can't we get a cot from somewhere, maybe from Thakurani.'

Dukhi—'Sometimes, you say such thing as make me uncomfortable. Will the family of Thakurani give the cot? She never comes out of her house, how they can provide me cot! Nobody will give me even a pot of water if I ask for it. Who will provide us the cot? It is not our dry dung, wood or fodder are not plenty but anybody can take it. Wash this tiny cot, it will get dried before his arrival.'

Jhuriya—'He will not sit on our small cot. Don't you see that how do they follow rules of their religion strictly.'

Getting worried, Dukhi said, 'Yes, this is true. Let me make a big plate from the leaves of Mahuwa. Even the rich persons eat the food in the plate made out of leaves. That is holy. Give me my stick, I will get some leaves from the tree.'

Jhuriya—'I will make it, you please go. But, we have to give him some extra uncooked food. Let me keep it in my plate.'

Dukhi—'Don't do this. You will loose your food and even the plate will be broken. Baba will break your plate. He gets angry very soon. He even scolds his wife when he gets angry. He had beaten his son so brutally that his hand was broken. Give extra food in the plate of the leaves. Yes, don't touch the things.'.'

Jhuriya—'Take the daughter of Gond and bring everything from the shop of Sahu. There should be ample uncooked food. It should be comprised of one kilo flour, half kilo rice, 250 gram pulse, 125 gram ghee, some salt and spices. Keep four annas on the corner of the plate. If you don't get the daughter of Gond, request Burjin to go with you. Do not touch anything, otherwise he will get upset.'

After giving the necessary advice, taking a wooden piece in his hand and a bundle of grass, Dukhi went to request Panditji. How can he go to Panditji empty handed. He did not have anything to offer him except the bundle of grass. Pandit will scold him if he goes empty handed. Pandit Ghasiram was a great devotee of the God. After getting up, he used to start the prayer. He used to wash his face by 8 o'clock. The real prayer got started then.

Its first part was to prepare Bhang. Then, he kept himself busy for half an hour in rubbing sandalwood, standing in front of the mirror, put tilak with the help of a wooden stick. Between the two lines of sandal, there used to be a small dot of roli. Then, he used to make rings on his chest and hands. Taking out the statue of Thakurji, he gave it a bath, put sandal, offer it flowers, offer prayer and ring the bell. He used to finish this prayer by ten o'clock and after drinking bhang, he used to come out. By then, couple of persons with the requests of invitation used to appear on the door! He used to get the result of the prayer of god instantly. That was his source of earning. Coming out of the room where he used to pray, he found Dukhi, the Chamar, was sitting with a bundle of grass. Seeing him, Dukhi stood up and, bowing in front of him, he stood with folding hands. Seeing his personality, he had a respectful feeling about him! He was like a divine statue. He was a small but healthy person, having smooth head, fleshy cheek, He had the bright eyes. Roli and sandal was giving a divine look. Seeing Dukhi, he said—'How do you come, Dukhiya?'

Bowing his head, Dukhi Said, 'I am doing engagement of my daughter, Maharaj. I want to discuss about its proper timing. When is it possible for you to come?'

Ghasi—'I am not free today. I will come by the evening.'

Dukhi—'No Maharaj, is it possible to come early? I have made all preparations. May I keep the bundle of grass here.'

Ghasi—'Keep it in front of the cow and clean the front side of the door with broom. This sitting room has not been dipped with dung for so many days. Just dip it with the dung. Till then, I will have my food. I will take rest and will go with you. Peal this wood as well. Bring the remainder of the crop from field and keep it in the store.'

Dukhi instantly started obeying the order. He cleaned the front side of the room, dip the sitting room with dung. By then, it was noon. Panditji had gone for his meal. Dukhi did not have anything since morning. He felt very hungry; but there was nothing to eat. His house was a mile away from here. If I go there, Panditji will get annoyed. He suppressed his hunger and started splitting the thick gnarl of the wood. There was a thick gnarl on the wood and many of the devotees have tried to break it. The wood was ready to face the challenge of Dukhi. Dukhi used to cut grass and take it back home. He was not having the experience of splitting the gnarl of the wood. The grass used to accept its defeat in front him. He made hard hit of axe; but there was no mark on the gnarl. The axe got disbalanced. He was wet with perspiration, Started losing his breathe, sat due to the tiredness and got up again. He was feeling problem in raising his hands, his feet were trembling, did not straighten his waist, felt darkness in front of his eyes, felt giddy, could not see properly, but was still busy in his work. Had he get a chance to have hookah with tobacco, he would be rejenuated a bit.

He thought, how can I get chance to have hookah here. It is the family of Brahmins and they do not have tobacco like us, the inferior people. Suddenly, he recollected that there is a Gond who resides in the city. He must be having tobacco and hookah. He instantly ran to his house. His attempt was successful. He gave tobacco and hookah but there was no fire. Dukhi said, 'Don't worry brother, I just go and ask Panditji to arrange fire from there. They were cooking food there.' Saying this, he brought both the things with him to the home of Panditji. Standing on the door of the kitchen, he said, if I get some fire, I can use this hookah.'

Panditji was having his meal. His wife asked, 'Who is this man asking for fire?'

Pandit—'The same stupid Dukhiya Chamar. I asked him to tear apart some pieces of wood. If there is a fire, give him a little bit.'

His wife said, 'While doing your work, you do not have any sense of religious behavior. You permit Chamars, dhobis, pasis to enter in the home as if it is not the home of a Hindu but is an inn. Tell him to go from here failing which I will burn his face with this tong. He is daring to ask for fire.'

Explaining him, Panditji said, 'What is wrong there if he has come here. He did not touch any of your things. It is the holy land. Why don't you give him a little bit fire. He is doing our work. Had any servant been pealing the wood, he would have asked for four annas.'

His wife said in a loud voice, 'Why did he come in the house?'

Accepting his defeat, pundit said, 'He was unlucky!'

His wife—'I will give him fire for this time, but if he will again in the home, I will burn his face.'

Dukhi was hearing all this. He was repenting, I came here unnecessarily. She is telling true. How a Chamar may come in the house of a Pandit. They are very holy persons that are why people pray them, that are why they feel so proud of themselves. We are not just Chamars. I became old in this village; but I never get this wisdom. Hence, when the wife of the Pandit came out with fire, he felt it a gift of heaven. Folding his hands and touching the earth with his forehead, he said, 'Panditain ma, I committed mistake of entering in the house. It was the wisdom chamar. Had we not been so timid, why would we be kicked.'

The wife of Pandit brought fire holding in a pair of tong. She threw the fire while standing five feet away from him. A tiny fire piece hit the head of Dukhi. Taking a step back, he started giving jolt to his head. Had said in his mind, this is the prize of making dirty the holy house. God has given me the result of my misdeed so soon. That is why, the world is afraid of Pundits. People may not return the money if anyone but can they do it with Brahmins! His family may be destroyed; his feet will start getting injured. Coming out, he smoked hookah and holding axe in his hand, he started his work. The noise of hitting wood became audible. The wife of Pandit felt pity on him when she came to know that he was burnt. Finishing his meal, the wife of Pandit said, 'Give Chamarva something to eat. He was working for a long time. He must be hungry.'

Treating this proposal as far away from the area of practice, Pandit asked, 'Is there some chapattis?'

Wife of the Pandit—'Thee are couple of extra chapattis.'

Pandit—'What will happen in the couple of chapattis? He will need at least a kilo of chapattis.'

Putting her hands on air, she said, 'A kilo, then leave it.'

As a lion, punditji said, 'Mixed the flour with some remainders of the produce. Make heavy Chapatis so that he may fill his belly. They are not satisfied with thin chapattis. They need Litta of Jawar.'

The wife of Pandit said, 'Leave it, which is going to cook in the heat of sun.'

After smoking, Dukhi had taken axe in his hands. He was re-energised after smoking. He was using the axe for half an hour. After getting tired, he sat again holding his head in his hands. In the mean time, the same Gond reached there. He said, 'Why are you troubling yourself this much, the old brother, and this gnarl cannot be split by you. Don't take this useless trouble.'

Wiping the sweat from his forehead, Dukhi said, 'I have to keep the remainder of the crop as well!'

'Have you got something to eat? Or they just know to get their work done. Why do you not ask for the food?'

Dukhi—'How do you talk Jekhuri, can we digest the chapattis of Brahmin!'

Gond—'If it is given, one can digest. They twisted their moustaches and went for sleep comfortably. They gave you the order of splitting this wood. Even a landlord also gives something to eat. Even if a master asks you to work without payment, he uses to give some labour. They are a step ahead of them, but still claim themselves as a religious person.'

Dukhi—'Speak in a low pitch, if they listen this, they will scold me.'

Saying this, Dukhi started using the axe on the wood. Chikuri felt pity of him. He snatched axe from him and started hitting the wood for almost half an hour; but there was no change in the wood. Then he threw the axe and went back by saying this, 'You cannot break this, even if you die.'

Dukhi started to think, why baba left this gnarl here. It is not split despite all efforts. It does not show any sign of breaking. How far I should keep on splitting it. There are plenty of works at home. It is a house of customs and every time, there is the need of one thing or the other. Why should they worry about it? Let me go to pick the remainder of the crop from the field. I will tell him that Baba, I could not pierce this wood today I will come tomorrow and cut it. He took up the basket and started bringing the remainder. The field was not less than two furlong away from here. If he filled the basket up to the brim, he may finish the work in less time; but who will then pick the basket. It was impossible for him to lift the basket all alone. That is why he started bringing it in bits. By 4 o'clock, he could manage to bring back the remainders of the crop. Panditji had also got up. Washing his face and eating beetle, he came out. He saw that Dukhi is sleeping while keeping the basket on his head. He spoke loudly—'Dukhiya, are you sleeping? The wood has not yet been split. What were you doing for such a long time? You have taken too much time in bringing remainder of the crop. Now, it is evening. On the top of it, you are sleeping. Take up the axe and tear apart the thick gnarl of this wood. You are unable to tear apart this little bit wood. In this case, you will gate similar time for the engagement of

your daughter. Do not blame me for it! That is why it is being said that if a lower caste gets something to eat, his life style gets changed.'

Dukhi took up the axe again. He forgot everything whatever was in his mind previously. His stomach was empty; he did not even have water since morning. He did not get the time. He felt hard to get up. His heart was sinking, consoling his mind, he got up. He is a Pandit, he may tell the wrong time for the engagement of my daughter. This will become curse to her future. That is why people pay so respect to these people. It is a matter of getting lucky time from the Pandit. He can do badly for anyone by telling wrong time. Panditji stood near the wood and kept inspiring him. Hit it properly, hit it with force. It looks as if you have no power in your hands. What are you thinking while standing. The wood is about to be split! Hit on the same spot. Dukhi was not in his senses. Some secret power making his hands moved. The tiredness, hunger, the weakness—all withered away. He was surprised on the power of his hands. Every time, it was a powerful hit. He kept on hitting for half an hour passionately, the wood got split away from the centre and the axe fell away from his hand. At the same time, he also fell down due to giddiness. His hungry, thirsty and tired body failed to respond.

Panditji called, 'give some more hits so that this wood may get divided into small pieces.'

Dukhi did not get up. Panditji felt unnecessary to trouble him anymore. He went in, had bhang, went to the toilet, took a bath and dressing himself as Pandit, he came out! Dukhi was still laying there.

He called him loudly—'Will you keep on lying Dukhi, Make a move, I am going to your home. Is everything in tact there? Dukhi remained lying there. Now, Panditji got suspected. He came close to him and found Dukhi died. He ran like a mad man and told his wife, 'It seems that Dukhiya is died.'

Getting disturbed, the wife of Pandit said—'He was splitting the wood.'

Pandit—'He is died while splitting away the wood. What will happen now?'

Keeping quiet, his wife said, 'Tell his wife to take the dead body.'

The news reached in the village within no time. Whole village was comprised of Brahmins. There was only one house of Gond. People left that way. The way to well fell on that way; the question was there, how to fill the water! Who will fetch the water while going by the dead body of a Chamar. An old lady said to the Panditji, 'Why do you not ask someone to throw this dead body somewhere. How will we drink water?'

The Gond went to the colony of Chamars and told them not to go for picking the dead body. The police will make investigation now. It is not a joke to kill a poor man. Panditji may be something at his home. If you pick the dead body, you will also be caught. Then Panditji reached there; but nobody was ready to bring the dead body back to their colony; but the wife and the daughter of Dukhi went there and started weeping while reaching at the door of Panditji. They were being accompanied by some other lady Chamars. Some were weeping, some were trying to console them, but there was no Chamar. Panditji threatened, make hem understood and even requested the Chamars; But the Chamars

were afraid of the police, Nobody was ready. They came back sadly.

The weeping continued till midnight, it became difficult for the deities to sleep. None of the Chamars came to pick the dead body and how a Brahmin might pick up the dead body of a Chamar! Is this written in any religious scripture? Show us somewhere. In absurdity, the wife of Pandit said, 'These devils have emptied our head. Their throat did not get tired.'

Pandit said, 'Let them weep, how far they can weep. Nobody ask about him when he was alive. Now, when he is died, all have started shouting.'

Wife of the Pandit—'The weeping of the Chamar is a bad omen.'

Pandit—'Yes, it is really a bad omen.'

Wife of the Pandit—'the foul smell has started coming from there.'

Pandit—'Whether he was Chamar or not. They do not have any thinking of what is to be done or what is not to be done.'

Wife of the Pandit—'They do not feel any hatred.'

Pandit—'All are the same.'

The night had passed away somehow but none of the Chamar went there. The lady Chamars, after weeping, also went back to their homes. The foul smell started spreading. Panditji took out a rope. After making its noose, he threw it on his feet and by pushing it, makes the noose tight. It was little bit dark there. Panditji dragged the dead body and kept dragging till it could be brought out of the village. After coming from there, he took a bath, read the prayer of Durga and sprinkle water of Ganges in the house.

The body of Dukhi, in the field was being eaten by the jackals, vultures dogs and crows. This was the prize of lifelong devotion, service and commitment.

● **MUNSHI PREMCHAND**

Notes

Notes

Notes

Me and
Conflict within Me

⊙ **OBJECTIVE :**
There are many levels of our identities such as caste-based, religious, gender-based, regional etc. Due to these identities, we come across of varieties of experiences. These can be good and bad experiences. This exercise will help the participants to understand that we are influenced by these tensions and contradictions and we also influence them.

PROCESS

- Make the participants sit in a hall for this session so that they may have the feeling of comfort and ease.
- Ask them to sit separately.
- They should be asked to keep away their copies, pen, cell phone, camera etc.
- It is essential that during the session the participant should not talk to each other.

1. It is necessary for the facilitator to be careful about the style of talking during this session so that the participants may associate themselves with these points.
2. As an attempt is made in this session to connect the participants with their past, it is necessary for the facilitator to make the effective rendition.
3. All points should be made with clarity, with a clear voice and in a changing pitch of voice so that the participants may feel connected with the thought provoking point.

- It is a voluntary session and the participant/participants may leave the hall at any time.
- Do not fail to clarify that this contemplation is meant fully for them and no one will understand your feelings without your will.
- Make full use of the space during the session and the facilitator should keep on walking while explaining his points. The participants should be given ample time so that it may reach to all the participants clearly.

After the completion of the discussion, tell them that the exercise is over. Tell them either to sit at their place or go anywhere in the premises where the workshop is being conduct. Give a gap of one and a half hour or two hours before starting the next exercise.

🕐 **TIME**
2.00 - 3:00 Hours

Points for Contemplation

■ **When did you feel for the first time that you have some special identity?**

● It means when did you realized that you are related to a particular caste, religion or community.

● When did you or at which age you had the feeling of attachment with your identity?

● What was the event which gave you the feeling for this identity?

● How did you feel for it and what was your reaction over it?

It is possible that you have gradually developed deep attachment with your caste, religion or community.

■ **What were the reasons for this attachment?**

● Was this attachment reflecting in your behavior?

■ **Did you feel proud of having relations with any particular community?**

● Why did you feel so?

● How did you express the feeling of pride?

■ **Did you have inferiority complex or bad feeling of getting birth in a particular community?**

● Why did you feel so?

● How did you express this bad feeling?

■ **Did you have the feeling of getting insulted by other community?**

● Why did you feel so?

● How did you react?

● Did you try to think why this happened?

■ **Did you have the feeling of hatred or maintaining distance for any other community?**

● What was the reason of your hatred or maintaining distance?

● What did you do then?

● Did you wish to give sharp reaction at that time?

● What was the thing that stopped you to give sharp reaction?

■ **Did you have sympathetic feeling for any other community?**

● Why did you have this sympathetic feeling?

● What was your reaction at that time?

Facilitator's Note

This exercise is very delicate and sensitive in nature. It involves a lot of emotional aspects and is expected to shake the emotion of the participants and at times they feel drained out. It is never easy for any participant to go back to their memory lane and reflect on most sensitive and disturbing aspect of their life. Experience shows that taking up this exercise without building proper environment proves to be disastrous. They may show reluctance to sit through this exercise if there is no trust building between facilitator and the participant as well as amongst the participants. Following are a few things to be kept in mind before and during taking up this exercise.

BEFORE THE EXERCISE
The space used for this exercise should not be the same as used for other exercises and processes. It is advisable to choose a large space such as a big hall where participants have their own space and comfort to sit and reflect. It is better to choose a place where there is no furniture and participants are asked to sit on the floor wherever they feel comfortable. It is preferable that the light in the hall is not very bright. In some cases facilitators during similar exercises also use very soft music being played in background. If the facilitator chooses to use music, it should be very-very soft so that it does not disturb the reflection process. It is meant to create comfortable, non-threatening atmosphere. The music should always be instrumental and not vocal. The facilitator should be sure that the participants sit a little away from each other and leave enough space for each other. As has been mentioned in the process of the exercise, pen and paper create hindrance in the process. Hence, before taking them to the place for this exercise, ensure that they leave behind all writing tools.

DURING THE EXERCISE
The participants should not feel threaten and should not have any apprehensions about this exercise. Therefore, it is important that while setting the context of exercise the facilitator should make it clear that the points involved in the exercise are social problems which all of us face during our day to day interactions within the society. They should not take it personally. While putting forth the points for reflection, the facilitator should neither rush through the points in a hurry nor provide so much time that they loose interest in the reflection. In this case the facilitator has to visualise how much time is needed in a certain point.

Lastly, voice modulation is very important depending on the nature and emotions involved in the points, the facilitator has to module his/her voice accordingly. It also involves the force or the softness of the voice. As well as the pitch of the voice of the facilitator. Therefore facilitator should practice these points alone before the session.

AFTER SESSION
Although this session is about the inner journey and reflection process of participants, it is possible they might want to share their thoughts in a larger group. Therefore facilitator should prepare a suitable environment. Keeping in mind that this experience is very sensitive and it can be painful any kind of discussion and analysis should not be done in this process.

Notes

Efficacy of

Composite Heritage

⊙ **OBJECTIVE :**

To understand the efficacy of Composite Heritage as a tool for unity in conflict-ridden societies.

PROCESS
- Discussion in small groups (Regional Group)
- Presentation
- Inputs by facilitator

POINTS OF DISCUSSION
- An experience in which any form of Composite Heritage has worked as a connecting factor in a conflicted situation.
- An experience in which conflicted communities came together in defence of any of Composite Heritage
- An experience in which different communities have put up their joint efforts to protect and popularise any form of composite Heritage

MATERIAL REQUIRED
Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape

⊕ **TIME**
  3 .00 Hours

The participants come from different backgrounds with different experiences. It is possible that different participants focus on different forms of Composite Heritage. Whatever they recall they are bound to have answers to the points that facilitator(s) has asked them to reflect upon. It is possible that participants recall different forms for different experiences. For example, experience of conflicting groups joining in celebration of a particular form of Composite Heritage may not be the same as experience of people from one community coming in defence of Composite Heritage largely associated with other community. In a way, it is an advantage as there will be a variety of experiences in terms of various forms of Composite Heritage and their effectivity as tool in bringing peace and unity in conflict-ridden societies.

The facilitator(s) has to remember that this exercise would lay the foundation for the strategy planning part which will come later. The number and variety of the experiences unveiled in this exercise will keep coming to the minds of participants when they sit to formulate strategy to be implemented at the grassroots level. The facilitator(s) is free to categorise the experience in terms of forms of Composite Heritage. There are bound to be some experiences which indicate towards Composite Heritage being a reason for divisions and conflicts. The facilitator(s) has the responsibility to seek more and more clarification from participants who have such experiences. During the discussion there is all likelihood that they would agree that because Composite Heritage has been a hurdle in the path of those trying to disrupt unity and instead of bringing harmony among people, the same had been used to divide them. It has been seen everywhere that the disruptive forces first attack the bridges between community to be successful in their mission. Since Composite Heritage has in all societies been one of the strongest bridge and bonding factor among various communities, they become convenient targets of these forces. If the facilitator(s) has successfully driven this point among the participants, it would not only enhance the sensitivity of the participants but would also generate a desire among them to defend and enrich the spirit of Composite Heritage as well as motivate them to use Composite Heritage as a tool to bring about unity and harmony among conflicting social groups. If this exercise is able to provide desired results, the next exercise on strategy planning on use of Composite Heritage to restore peace and harmony will be carried out with a greater degree of interest and enthusiasm. It would also prepare them to implement at the grassroots level whatever strategy they formulate.
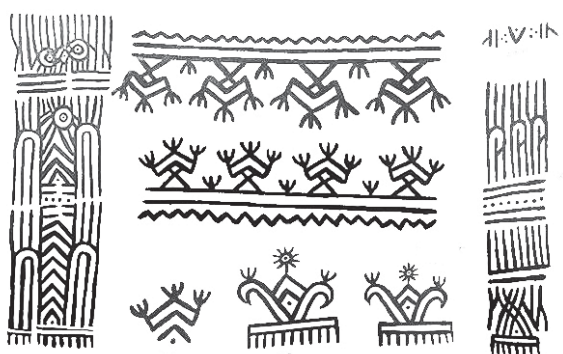
- Gazipur (Uttar Pradesh)—On the occasion of Nagpanchami festival falling in the month of Sawan, a big fair has been organized in the gramsabha of Rajapur for so many decades. It was being attended by all the classes, castes and religions for entertainment and for the purpose of business. The people from other village named Karimuddinpur also used to take part in it. But, due to the local tension (or business rivalry), they started organizing two fairs. Some of the people felt bad as they could not decide to which fair they should go. The people who attend any of the fair were their nears and dears. For this, a discussion was made between both the communities and it yielded positive result. Due to this discussion, the fair has been re-organised at the same place and all felt very happy.

- Baghelkhand (Madhya Pradesh)—it is the story of the Panchayat election of a village of Satana District in 2007. The seat of this village was reserved for other backward classes (O.B.C.). There was dominance of Patel caste in that village under the O.B.C. category. Brahmins had asked a person from nai caste to contest election on their behalf. Consequently, the O.B.C. community was divided within themselves. The tension between Patels and Brahmins started increasing. It reached to the point of no conversation between them. Both the communities stopped observing festivals together. A useful strategy was made to solve this issue. Both the communities were called to sing Fag (a folksong used to be sung in the festival of Holi). Both the communities were not ready to go there together. But, by and by, the ice started melting and both of them sang Fag for whole night. Before the tension, the youth of both the groups used to play cricket together and used to travel together during the time of competitions. But, after the tension, these relations were broken. After singing Fag, the relations between them started re-building.

- Jharkhand—there were people belonging to two different communities living in a village of Khunti district in Jharkhand. Both the communities were having tensed relations. Due to some reason, this tension reached at its peak. During this, rain started pouring. They could have continued their fight but they could not do so because this will destroy their crops for the whole year. If they could not share their plough and the bullocks or other agricultural implements, there would be no produce. Moreover, they could not afford their life in the absence of produce and that was the sole source of their lives. That fight was finished overnight with the beginning of the rain.

- Nati is one of the main folk dances of Himachal Pradesh. Both men and women perform this dance on the occasion of happiness. There are two villages with the name of Bahu and Bhumiya and there occurred a mutual fight in the name of devali because of which people did not speak to each other. Despite this, people visited the fair of Nagani. People from both the villages were avoiding each other. But, when the Nati dance, the main attraction of the fair, began, people started coming closer to each other and that subsided the tension.

- Jharkhand—Koylakaro struggle—there remains always a tense situation between the tribes and the settlers. But the river Koylakaro is the composite heritage of both the communities. When the plan of developing a damn on it was initiated, both the communities not only came closer but started opposing this plan together. This negative plan brought both the communities closer.

- Jharkhand—a fair has been organized in the city named Panchamba of Giridih district. This fair uses to be organized from the next day of Chaath for eight days. It was being participated by all the communities. A communal riot took place and the people of both the communities were killed. Keeping this in view, the administration of the fair decided not to organize the fair this year. After this news, the people from both the societies came forward to organize this fair and approached the administration for its organization. It was a successful fair. At the same time, their hatred was also vanished away.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION (Make a chart and put it on the wall)

- Any aspect of Composite Heritage that you can recall has worked as a uniting factor in a socially conflictual situation.

- Any experience of conflicting groups coming together through any form of Composite Heritage.

- Any experience of conflicting groups coming together in defence of Composite Heritage.

- Any experience of conflicting groups joining in celebration of any form of Composite Heritage.

- Any experience of people from one community coming in defence of Composite Heritage largely associated with other community.

- Any experience of people from various communities putting up joint effort to enrich and popularise any form of Composite Heritage.

- Any experience of Composite Heritage dividing people. If so, were there any external factors inciting people to go against each other.

- Any experience of people jointly giving rebuff to those engaged in making Composite Heritage controversial and dividing people.

These points were given to the trainers and partners in the first edition of the handbook. Facilitator is free to use these points according to circumstances.

Notes

Notes

Threats on

Composite Heritage

PROCESS

- The facilitator should underline the objective of the exercise
- Group formation based on region as different geographical regions may have different sets of threats and forces behind these threats.
- Clarifying that exercise intends to explore not only threats to our Composite Heritage but also the forces that pose these threats.
- Presentation
- Discussion in a larger group

POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- Which forms of Composite Heritage are in threats?
- What are the threats to Composite Heritage?
- From whom Composite Heritage has threats?

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape

⊕ TIME

2 .00 Hours

Facilitator's Note

This exercise has two facets to one objective. The first one is, what is the nature of threat to our Composite Heritage and the second one, the forces behind these threats. After going through so many exercises it will not be difficult for the participants to understand the nature of the threat and the factors responsible for these threats. While explaining the objectives the facilitator(s) should make it clear that the groups have to make two columns for the presentation. In the first column, those forms of Composite Heritage should be mentioned which are in threat. In the Second column they should mention about the nature of threat and in the next column they should note down the factors/forces responsible for that particular nature of threat to our Composite Heritage. A few examples related to nature of threat and factors responsible for those threats should be mentioned by the facilitator(s) so that the participants move on the right track. It will be easy for participants to say that fanatic forces are out to destroy various forms of Composite Heritage so that there is no bridge to connect various communities in order to live in harmony. Hence, they may not mention conscious efforts to destroy and distort the Composite Heritage and simply state that fanatic forces constitute the factors or forces behind these threats. But apathy, negligence, irresponsible attitude, disrespect to Composite Heritage etc. may be missed out as most of these indicate that somewhere we the activists are equally responsible as our attitude towards our own Composite Heritage may not be very encouraging. As a result we also become threat to our Composite Heritage. It is very difficult to reflect upon ourselves and own the responsibility of destroying the heritage and losing a potent weapon to fight against forces who are bent upon disrupting the unity and harmony in the society. Some of the forms of Composite Heritage are direct victims of overall changes taking place all over the globe. Every new system brings with it its own superstructure and culture. This superstructure and culture becomes the lifeline for the whole system to survive. Capitalism and more recently economic globalisation has created its own consumerist culture and does not need the heritage and the culture, which is the lifeline of the people until now. Some of the components of Composite Heritage have been branded as feudal culture and remnants of feudal age and hence they are being wiped out systematically. Every now and then we come to know of a new festival, which was not heard of in the past. How many of us knew about Valentine's Day fifteen years back. It is not to say that these new festivals are good or bad. There is no need of value judgement on these new festivals, which are mushrooming day-by-day. The question is why should these festivals become replacements for the festivals that have been celebrated for over centuries and brought people from cross sections of society at one platform to enjoy and celebrate. The folk forms of art survived the onslaught of new forms of art at various stages of the development of society. Still they survive and remain fresh in the minds of millions and millions of people. Even today they remain relevant as they were centuries back. But if the new forms of art today are emerging at the cost of folk forms it is a threat from the system itself. It is not a natural threat but a mechanical one. At the same time one should acknowledge that through passage of time some forms die their natural death after performing their historical role. Hence, one cannot try to retrieve and preserve whatever does not exist today. Even if we do that the people may not relate to that. Therefore, whatever is existing is our Composite Heritage and any kind of threat to this heritage has to be resisted and defeated. For that it is essential to know the nature of all kinds of threat and the factors responsible for these threats.

NOTE 1 : For developing a better understanding of issue read facilitator reading material 1-2-3-4 and 5 (from page no 94-107)

NOTE 2 : Films: Poison on the Platter, Story of Stuff etc.

Globalisation and Media—

Its Impact on Culture and Composite Heritage

Media, we know that refers to the means of communication like newspapers, radio broadcasts and television. The content of *mass media*—entertainment, news, educational programmes, advertising, projection of images of various kinds—has formidable social impact 'on stabilising or destabilising existing social, political, cultural, economic, legal and moral arrangements'. The question to be probed is what makes the media efficient and what circumstances are responsible for media to have the social impact that it has. The explanation lies in the realm of technological progress and process of globalisation. Although a relationship between both may not be discernible to a superficial observer, they are symbiotic. While growing individually, both *media* and *globalisation* feed on each other and together they are having a greater impact on human existence than ever before. They share an interesting similarity—both are processes that have been in operation since man began to live in social formations. Initially, these processes were very slow and small and were imperceptible. If globalisation is considered as a process of "integration and intermeshing", isolated tribes have been doing the same since ancient times—tribes meeting together for periodic palavers; mercantile communities traveling far and wide in search of new opportunities for boosting trade; missionaries moving across continents for propagating their religious beliefs; or warring tribes venturing out for conquests are all modes of integrating dissimilar communities. There was, in fact, local to regional and regional to national level which had been burgeoning, subject to the constraints of communication and economic activity. The same integrating disposition can be seen discerned in the national-to-global movement today.

Music, Poetry, Dance and Theatre, Religious and Moral values, Painting, Drama, Architectural and Handicraft are considered as human being's cultural creation. Earlier the means of communication and their popularisation was very less and whatever means were available they were all oral. Obviously both geographically and socially they had their limitations, due to which unaccountable cultural diversity developed in society. It happened because most of the communities were secluded from each other and they didn't have effective means of communication. In all over human history, the efforts for keeping relationship with more and more people were either peaceful or they met fierce violence. *When people keep in touch with each other especially in a direct and personal way, they begin to adopt some shared meanings, shared thoughts and definition and shared values. Their emotional relationships and social power also get stronger.* Mass media also helps in bringing their audience and community together through the exchange of shared experience but for doing so these medium adopts the top to bottom strategy of communication. There is no scope for face to face and horizontal strategy.

In this context, there is a need to examine the notion of '*culture*'. Culture is a complex

phenomenon not easily amenable to a singular definition. Some anthropologists have estimated that to date culture, has 164 definitions. By and large, it refers to his 'capabilities and habits' (E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*) acquired by man as a member of society. Culture acts as a defence against chaos and conflict. As such, knowledge systems, language, ideas, beliefs, customs, codes, religion, morals, institutions, family, law, works of art and anything and everything by which man lives and regulates his existence—all fall in its ambit. Culture has a contagious quality because direct borrowing of cultural traits is quite common. Since all elements of culture are interrelated, even a minor change in a cultural system has a profound impact on other cultural systems. According to many humanist thinkers like Diderot, Rousseau, Kant, Mathew Arnold, culture can be either natural, organic, creative, genuine; or artificial, mechanical, stereotyped, superficial, servile, mindless, corrupt and alienated. To digress a bit, it is the first set of attributes which allude to the notion of *Composite Heritage.* Raymond Williams (*Culture and Society 1780-1950*) is of the view that modern meanings of culture appeared in the 18th and 19th centuries since it simply referred to cultivation of soil until then : (1) it came to mean the general state or habit of the mind; (2) it signified the general state of intellectual development in a society as a whole; (3) it denoted the general body of the arts; (4) later in the century, it came to indicate a whole way of life—material, intellectual and spiritual.

The proponents of globalisation have realised that hegemonic colonisation of other nations brings economic advantages only at considerable political costs whereas economic globalisation by the economically strong can be advantageous with only limited political consequences. Globalisation means liberalisation of free movement of goods, services, capital across national boundaries and privatisation of national enterprises. During the last two decades, the revolution in computer and telecommunication technologies has given a tremendous fillip to the integration of world economy. However, these technologies have not catalysed increased productivity. 'While some aspects of processes of production have become more efficient, there is no corresponding increase in overall productivity. To give an illustration, though reservations can be done instantly at the railway station counters, the trains tend to run as inefficiently as before.'

A new trinity takes over from the old conqueror with the sword which consists of the scholar, the priest and the merchant. The first collects information about the field to be conquered, second promotes a *spiritual annexation* and the third collects the profits, roughly corresponding to the '*market researcher*', '*advertisement man*' and the '*capitalist*' in today's context-whether one describes it as '*cross-cultural synthesis*' or modernisation, the fact is that they are subtle variations of '*cultural imperialism*'. According to an UNESCO report on culture and development : "From Ladakh to Lisbon, form China to Peru; in the east, west, north and south—styles in dress, jeans, hair-dos, T-shirts, jogging, eating habits, musical tunes, attitude to sexuality—have become global. Even crimes related to drugs, abuse and rape of women, embezzlement and corruption transcend the frontiers and have become similar. The underlying ideological basis of globalisation and liberalisation can be traced to ideas like 'free market', 'progress' and 'intellectual freedom' implying a certain kind of cultural environment. Hence, one has to get assimilated into a uniform global culture dominated by a few advanced nations to get the optimum results from globalisation and liberalisation. As a result, it creates tension between national culture and the steady penetration of globalised culture. Not only this, what is worrying is the ability of the media to hegemonise regional sub-cultures controlled by the metropolitan centres. The process of globalisation governed by some basic principles : market knows best

(individualism); satisfaction of the individual by supplying 'what he wants' including pornography (hedonism). The point is that it leads to homogenisation of diverse cultures thereby making humanity poorer.

Before venturing further, it would be fruitful to outline some of the deleterious features that boost the process of symbiosis between market and media to produce current global culture.

(1) The target audience is unknown to message giver so that the message can be tailored to suit the audience. Therefore, information being passed on has to be encapsulated in general terms bereft of diversity. A typical media presentation of a folk art would emphasise on the general structure without any reference to the nuances prevalent in different parts of the region and a discerning audience would not be able to learn much. This generalised mode, over a period of time will become the standard to be adopted by every practioner. The same holds true for language. It is common knowledge that language is regional and local specific. Therefore, a neutral type of language is fostered on the media to cater to a wider variety of audience and over a period of time one particular usage becomes the universal model.

(2) Given the heterogeneous character of the audience, the message giver is impelled to bring down the level of discourse to the lowest common denominator. According to an eminent journalist, Carl Bernstein, it results in the creation of a "time idiot culture." As he puts it, for the "first time in history the weird, the stupid and the vulgar are becoming our cultural emblems, even our cultural ideal." To gain wider audience, media hands out slick, pre-digested, easy to understand capsules. In fact, the universe of the TV screen, tabloids and glossy magazines have blown to bits the possibilities of critical examination and reflection. Over a period of time, the audience hankers after only this kind of exposition of information. The audience is induced to seek simple answers to complex problems and interest in complex and subtle phenomenon diminishes greatly and is replaced by soft disciplines at the cost of interest in studies requiring hard analytical effort among the new generation.

(3) Size and scale determined media usually ignores the tastes and interests of minorities and marginal groups. Local elements cannot effectively compete with the globalised media.

(4) Cultural forms that developed organically during the long course of human history have been altered to suit the very different purposes thanks mainly to novel means of communication made possible by mass media. For instance, religion which developed initially as a mode of communion with the Infinite, has become an instrument of political mobilisation.

(5) All traditional cultures were based on the edifice of ethical behaviour. The media operates in a competitive world where all means can be employed to increase coverage and profits. Information that comes through the media is invariably slanted and certain titillating and bizarre aspects of the event are highlighted thus belying any ethical consideration.

Culture, as a way of life is constantly undergoing change. Certain developments in modern

times have helped greatly the process of change leading to paneful consequences : (a) reduction in cultural diversity; and (b) increasing the hegemonic control in the name of *'free trade'* and *'freedom of communication'* at all levels including caste, linguistic, regional, religious and other aspects of multiculturalism that people use in their everyday lives to recognise each other's identity. The implications of this change are varied and there are no indications that they are in any way increasing the social, material or spiritual well-being of humanity. These identities are to be understood on the basis of plurality and multiplicity of Indian society conforming to a broad *'social consensus'*. While certain conflicts of identity are inevitable in the process of social change through modernity and challenges to caste norms, construction of meta-identities related to religion turn out to be full of pitfalls. In the Indian context, thinking or theorising about *'individual identity'* is an onerous task given the social primacy of group identities in everyday life.

Unable to anchor themselves in the world of standardised and homogenised consumer culture and having no means to gratify their tastes coupled with tenuous linkages with their age-old heritage, the poor youth are being mobilised on the basis of ethnic, religious and national identities. This has given rise to social conflicts on an unprecedented scale. An examination of these conflicts reveals that they emarate from unequal distribution of wealth and power. Massive job losses and unemployment due to global economic restructuring has accentuated economic inequalities and social unrest. These circumstances, in turn, have given rise to an atmosphere where the identities are perceived to be under threat. With the downturn in class-based politics, the innocent youth has become an easy prey for fundamentalist movements in their single minded pursuit. Fundamentalist movements are thriving by mobilising the losers of globalisation process in the above-mentioned configuration of forces. It is no wonder that the social base of fundamentalist movements, by the large, consists of the poor and disadvantaged sections of people who are forced to join such movements to retrieve their lost identity and economic stability by capturing state power.

Breaking Base of Employment

The open game of unemployment has been started by finishing those industries which have been providing maximum employment like handloom industry, cottage industry, small scale industry and the employment opportunities based on forests. Decentralisation will provide more employment in lesser capital. The law which was supporting this view has been made crippled fully. Under the production policy for small scale industries, there are only twenty items were left. The Janta Government of 1977 had reserved 807 items for small and cottage industries through its clear policy so that these could not be produced by the big industries. This policy put hindrance in the conditions of the World Bank, hence, the items under this list had been reduced after 1991. It was a precondition that there would be no check on the quantity of production while giving foreign money and the 'reform' in the balance of credit. Due to this condition of the World Trade Organisation, 643 items were removed from the reserved list on April 1, 2000.

Have a look at those items which were removed this year from the list so that it has become non-existant. It includes Pickle, bun, rapeseed oil, groundnut oil, wooden furniture, Notebook or copies for exercise and register, candlestick, agarbatti, crackers, utensils of stainless steel, domestic utensils of aluminum, bangles, iron almirahs, iron chairs, iron tables, all types of iron furniture, rolling shutters, pulses, clothes, washing soaps and matchsticks. These small scale industries will be swallowed by the big capital, aggressive advertisements and the indigenous and foreign players who are giving preference to the machines instead of human labour. The steps have also been taken too defunct the government purchase policy for the things from the small scale and cottage industries. Have a look at the conditions. There uses to be the history of changing laws in favour of the big industrialists. Amongst the main examples of supporting their favourite industrial houses can be seen in the laws through which the Ambanis were permitted by the then Congress to import raw material from abroad to produce synthetic fabric. Through this, the attempts were made to defunct the policy of reserving various categories of cloths produced by the handlooms. It is a point to be noted that the cotton cloths were cheaper than the cloths made by the artificial fabric which is being produced by this biggest industrialist. Through this step, the persons engaged in the handloom industries have lost their employment. Initially, the plain clothes were permitted to be prepared through power handlooms and varieties of designs were made by the handlooms.

This law was made in 1985. At that time, 22 types of the cloths were reserved to be produced by the handlooms. The power loom lobby had kept this law postponed under one or the other legal objection and when this law came into force, the reserved list was shrank into 11 items only. As per an authentic study, it is revealed that the 70% cloths which are claimed to be produced by handlooms are the products of power looms.

About 3 million people have got the job in information and technology sector while 200 million people are associated with the work of handloom. Franquet de Berard Lavalle, the

French traveler, has informed in his travelogue that the people who were residing in the southern Africa to China used to cover their bodies with the clothes produced by the Indian handloom. 5 million tone Dutch cloths were being exported from only one port of the East India.

After the genocide of Gujarat in 2000, it was criticized by the industrialists of Confederation of Indian Industries like Rahul Bajaj, Ajim Premji and Godrej. Against this, some industrialists developed a group with the name of Resurgent Gujarat and supported Mr. Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister of Gujarat. This Resurgent Gujarat was led by Gautam Adani of Adani Group and Sudhir Mehta of Torrent Company of manufacturers of medicine. Misusing the provisions, the company of Mehta was given relaxation of five years from controlling the cost.

Major banks of the world have refused to give loans to Gautam Adani for coal mines in Australia, the State Bank of India had given the loan of 6000 crore for the same purpose. This is the biggest loan for any foreign project. Adani group has the long term loan of Rs.55,364.94 crores and had short term loan of Rs.17,267.43 crore on September 30, 2014. In the year 2002, Adani group had the business of Rs.3,741 crore and in 2014, it was risen up to Rs.Rs.75,659 crore.

Adani group was provided the land costing from 1 rupee to 16 rupees per square metre for constructing a port in Mudra of Kutch, which was very less than the market rate. As per the report of Controller and Auditor General, there were irregularities of rs.25,000 crore. It was included the undesirable profit of rs.1,500 crore. Adani group is running the pipeline gas and C.N.G. in Gujarat state.

In response to a question in Rajya Sabha, the Minister of Environment told that 343,000 hectare forest area had been vacated doing the year 2003 and 2013 for various projects. There is a supplementary question to it how many families were dependent on these forests.

The current government (this article was published in the year 2015) is not in favour of community-based production; it is in favour of bulk production. 'Mass' is the only word for 'people at large' and 'production in bulk'. This policy is an anti-thesis of the philosophy of Gandhi which says that there should be 'production by the masses not the mass production'. The governments in the age of globalization (May it be the government of UPA or Rajad) are having the same policy over this issue.

The slogan of 'make in India' is given only because of the fact that it wishes to invite the foreign companies to come and make production in India for which it is necessary to put an end in a planned way to the opportunities of production by the masses. The amendment in the labour law brought by these governments is inhuman and its sole aim is to increase the production through the exploitation of the workers. It seems that through the proposed 'reforms', the condition of the workers in India will be similar to the Chinese workers.

To compete with China in terms of the percentage of development, the atmosphere of the workers is made similar to the Chinese. China has the provision of engaging the workers for 3 to 4 days constantly.

During this period, the workers are supposed to stay in the factory for the given time and they are given time to take meals and their routine work. Under these conditions, the death tolls of the workers have been sufficiently increased. America has established its big factories in China keeping this exploitation in view. 14 workers of the fexicon company which is making a supply to meet the requirements of Apple of China and is the branch of the American Apple which is producing computers and mobile phones, have committed suicide after getting fed up from this atmosphere in 2010. The B.B.C. had sent some reporters to this company and the company which was making supply to it in the form of workers. Non-stop engagement of the workers for 18 days with the shift of 16 hours, engaging the children of the age group of 13 to 14 as the labourers and unwilling overtime— were   some of the facts brought into light.

The direction of the proposed reforms in the labour laws assures the big companies to enforce rules and regulations on the lines of Chinese workers. The government has made the proposal of bringing reforms in the labour laws which have been supporting workers for last 6 decades. If we look at the proposed amendments made in the Industry Act 1948 which was having the provision for the adult worker to work for 9 hours a day during which he is entitled to take rest for half an hour after 5 hours.

Keeping these facts in view, the limited provision of overtime was made in the Industry Act, 1948, but there is no rationale to reform these provisions without taking into account the health issues. In the recent time, 50 hours overtime has been given in the period of 3 months but the government wishes to increase this overtime to 100 hours. Through this, maximum work will be done by the minimum workers.

Till now, the women and the minors cannot be engaged in risky works, but, through the amendment, it is proposed that the pregnant woman and the persons with disability cannot be engvaged in the risky works. This reveals the fact that the government is willing to engage the minors and the women in the risky works.

The idea of economic decentralization has been replaced by the blind following of 'make in India'. To lay the foundation of the interests of multinational corporations, the process of digging grave of handloom, small, cottage industry and the interests of workers has been begun.

● **AFLATOON**

From Where the Shoes are Brought?

You may say, is it a question? The shoes are brought from the shop. But the question emerges from where the shoes are brought in the shop.

However, this question was liked by Northwest Watch, an institute situated in America. That is why, it becomes necessary to know that from where the shoes which are being put on by the general public are brought. The instinct of this small inquiry forced this institute to around the world. How…

Let us begin the travel of the shoe…

Take an example of a pair of shoe which has got the stamp of one of the famous company of America. But, this pair of shoe has not been made by it. This company has made an agreement with an unknown company. It has taken some time to trace this unknown company. It involved hard work because it was far away—they reached South Korea for it. Despite this fatigued travel, they were happy with the feeling that at least the story of the pair of shoe is over. But, they found that it was not the end of the story.

This was the beginning. Even, the company of South Korea does not make the shoe. It gets this shoe made by an unknown company of Indonesia situated in Jakarta. This company is situated in the industrial area of that city. The name of this place is—Dangerang.

The interesting thing is that even the whole work is not done here. The interesting fact is that the high designs of the shoe are sent through computer to an unknown company of Taiwan.

This design is comprised of three parts. Its first part is the upper portion which covers the toe. The second part is the inner side of the shoe. The third part is its sole which touches the ground during our walk. Now, these are not the ordinary organs of the shoe. Therefore, these main organs are further divided into 20 parts.

The main component of this shoe is—leather. This is the leather of the cow. These cows are brought in Texas of America for this particular purpose. They are being killed through the machines in the slaughter houses developed with the modern technology. The leather is separated from their body minutely. To maintain the softness, it is processed through many chemical processes. Then, it is treated by the salt water. In this process, a piece of the leather passes through 750 chemicals.

Hence, this leather is put in the goods trains and is sent to the Los Angles of America. The travel of this processed leather begins through sea route. These big bundles are taken to the place known as Pusan of South Korea. Here, these are cleaned in a better way.

There are strict laws in America on the issue of environment. The contaminated water cannot be thrown in the river without cleaning it. They maintain strict standards for clean

water and air. In case of any mistake, they have to pay heavy penalty. They are paid high salary for this work. Moreover, they have been looked down upon by the society as they are related with the leather work. The Americans have found a way to escape themselves from these difficulties—throw this dirt in any of the Asian country. After paying the money for planes, it was cheaper to do all this in America. Apart from this, one will get better profit on the shoe.

The colouring and finishing of the leather is done in the factories of Pusan. For this, each piece of the leather has to be passed through 20 types of chemical processes. During this, the dirt of the leather, dust, bad smell, upper layer—all are separated finally and these fugitives are left in the river Narctong. This light, very costly and pure leather is taken to Jakarta by air.

Leaving this leather here, let us talk about the lower part of the shoe. The foam is used in the upper portion of the lower part of the shoe. This light but durable foam saves from the affects of heat and cold. One of the materials used in making this foam is made from the patrol of the Saudi Arab. Now, it is the turn of the sole. It is made from the starine nutrine rubber. Some of its part is made out of the patrol of Saudi Arab and rest is made out of the benjin extracted from the mines of Kotala. The factory which extracts benjin is run by the electricity of the atomic power house of Taiwan.

The outer lower side has also been made. There remains the work of developing the pair of shoe in various shapes and sizes by cutting with the help of dyes. These are being kept in the high pressured and heated dyes so that it may get the desired shapes. After this, these parts are stuck to the rest of shoe.

In sum, we came to know that the shoes of all the famous companies are made in these places. There is no difference in all of these shoes. The difference lies in the labeling of the names—the name of the brand. These shoes are being stamped by the big companies.

The travel of the shoe kills the animals barbarously, destroys the environment, affects the health of its makers and even swallows the priceless energy. This travels is not finished even after the shoe is made.

This shoe is supposed to be wrapped in the light tissue paper which made out of the trees growing in the rainy forests of Sumatra. In the early time, the box of the shoes was made of the fresh card board. Now, many of the shoe manufacturing companies have started thinking in terms of saving the environment. These boxes are made out of the old recycled papers.

The unique travel of the shoe takes the time of 3 weeks. One should not raise this question how far this shoe is used by the pedestrians despite its unique travel.

The story of the shoes does not belong to any specific country. There is a similar position of the shoe manufacturing companies of Canada, England, Australia and Europe and almost all the parts of the world as is depicted about America.

If we fail to take any attention over this issue, we will also have to face the same consequences. We will have to pay the same cost of the shoes.

● **ANUPAM MISHRA**

Ravana Recites Ramayana

There is an older religion than the Sanatana Dharma. It is the religion of the river. The saviours of Ganges will have to accept this religion first of all.

These are different issues. Think about the calendar of the nature and the calendar/decision of taking steps as per the time/Panchat hanging on the walls of our office and at home. These are entirely different issues. The pages of the calendar are turned over for 12 times in a year. But a page of the calendar of the nature is turned in thousands or millions of years. We are assembled here to discuss here about the river Ganges, so we should not forget the calendar of nature and the calendar of geography. Asking you to remember the calendar of millions of year never means that we should forget our present duty. That should always be kept in mind.

The Ganges has been polluted. There is a need to clean it. There were various plans to clean it in the past. Some thousand of million rupees have already been spent for it without yielding any result. Hence, one should not take up any work out of sheer emotions and spend a huge amount of money and finding no changes in it.

The children may be stubborn. There may be bad children. But, in our country, it is believed that mother cannot be a bad mother. Just think for a while that the children who have been trying to clean Ganges, why it does not get cleaned. Is our mother so stubborn? Despite the sincerest interest of the people from the groups of saints, social organizations, group of the scientists, Ganges undertaking and the capitalists of the World Bank, this mother is not ready to get it cleaned. Perhaps, we have to understand this riddle.

Whether it is good or bad, every age has got its own thought or flag. Its colour is so magic that it overshadows the colour of all flags. Whether it is the flag of tricolor or 2 colours; red or saffron—all are welcoming it and dance on its tune. Even the extrovert and introvert people also accept it. Some of them are supporting it after having properly understanding or some of them are just following it blindly. Hence, this age which is comprised of last 60 to 70 years has been treated as the age of development. Everybody has started to treat this country as backward and he is willing to show his commitment to develop it. The adjective like 'committed for development' is treated with high esteem.

Let us come back to Ganges. The old scriptures and the geographic facts reveal this fact the Ganges is not made by a man. There were variety of coincidences and the Ganges appeared on the land, it was not born. The geography and geology reveals this fact that its appearance is connected with the birth of Himalayas—a natural phenomenon which took place some 230 million years before. Along with this, let us recollect our calendars hanging on the walls. It is just 2013 years old.

Let us forget this big length of the period of time, and see only this much that to make it full

of water, the nature has not associated it with the rain. We have rainy season only for four months. It has given a blessing of connecting it with Hemant and connected the water with snow. So that it may remain intact. The name of today's meeting is given as Top level session of Ganges. I should also draw your attention to the fact that the nature has created the places like Gangotari and Gomukh   on such a height or in such a cold place as snow may not melt there and remain around the year. At the end of the rain, the melting snow will become the part of its non-stopped flow.

Our society treated Ganges as mother and created the literature in Sanskrit to Bhojpuri in the forms of Shlokas, songs and folksongs. The society has used its religion to protect it. It was also kept in mind that there is an older religion to the Sanatana Dharma. That is known as the religion of river. It is shown by its flow from its origin to the sea by following a way, a valley and a flow. We cannot recognize the religion of the river because our religion was associated with it.

But, nobody knows why a new banner of the religion of development has started unfurling on the top of all religions. This discussion may seem bad but one has to say that under this banner, people started making big dams. On the issue of bringing water from one valley to another valley, by breaking the religion of river was accepted unanimously despite different party positions, through big plans. The rivers like Bhagirathi, Gomati, Ganges which were flowing in various states, while coming under this banner, become the lifeline of a particular state instead of its role of mother. It became a point of tension due to the construction of dams and it put an end to any kind of serious and meaningful discussion. The issue of dam and the division of water becomes the bone of contention even if there is one political party in 2 states. All rich people and the leaders of the political parties associate themselves with the dam. Everybody start thinking it necessary to unite the rivers. It forgets the fact that the nature unites these rivers as per the demand of the hour. For this, it prays for thousands of years, only then we find the confluence of Ganges and Yamuna. Only then, the indebted society starts treating this place as a pilgrim. At end of its way, nature breaks this river into many waves. Without breaking, no river can unite itself with other river or with the sea.

If we start taking clean water from the river by way of making dams for providing the facilities of irrigation, generate electricity and run the industries in the name of development. Rest of the water is being stolen for the use of the speedily increasing cities by way of water supply. While doing this, we do not forget that these cities used to have big canals. These canals used to keep the water of the rainy season and control the flood there and raise the level of the water. This water was used to quench the thirst of the people for rest of 8 months. Now, the rate of the land in these places is high rocketing. A united effort is being made by the builders, leaders and high officials to do away with the existence of these canals. There was the worst famine in Maharashtra and there is flood in Pune and Mumbai due to the rainfall of a day. The other name or synonym of Indra is Purandra which means the expert in destroying small towns or cities and expert in breaking forts. If we do not fish to make Indra our friend to stop the water, it will certainly result in flood. If this water is flown away, we will have to face famine.

Let us come back to the Ganges. Remember the TV news about the flood in Uttarakhand or flood in Ganges. We constructed the temples and inns without carrying the religion of river. This flood has taken the statues in its flow.

We started taking out the water from the river in the name of the development, destroying the canals in the name of the value of the land, mixing the dirt of the cities and agriculture in the river and then start thinking of making a plan for cleaning the river. The river has been reduced to drainage and there is no way to clean the drainage. Go to Bharuch and see there. How Narmada has been destroyed by the chemicals in the name of development. The rivers cannot be cleaned in this way. Every time, we will get annoyed.

Do we have no hope? There is only one hope that we have to understand the religion of river in a proper way. We should examine our desire of development without any feeling of animosity. Nobody is killing quietly the Ganges or Himalaya by conspiring against it. These are our people. The issues of development, GDP, unite the rivers, big dams etc. are there— it is being done by either this group or that group. Under the banner of development, the difference between the ruling group and the opposition banishes away. There is a beautiful say in Marathi: 'Ravana tondi Ramayana' which means that Ravana himself is telling the story of Ramayana. Let us not become such Ravana.

● **ANUPAM MISHRA**

Water A Big Challenge

Once I asked some of the students of a school in Delhi, 'From where the water comes?' They replied 'From the taps', 'from where it comes in the taps?', they said further, 'From the tube wells.' Some of them said, 'From the hand pumps', some of the students started talking about the river. It was not the matter of the students. I asked the same question to some of the youngsters and common people, all of them answered in the same way, but the understanding of the illiterate and semi-literate women who are residing in the central Himalayan region and engaged in cutting grass for the animals have different understanding about the origin of the water. They look at this issue by relating it with the nature. With the chirping of the birds in the forests, their Garhwali song 'Banju Bandar' echoes—'Bujhel, barhiyo kun thandu pani ija chaila banj kee jagyo kun…. My dear friend, the taste of the chunks of Teth but the water of the roots of banj has more taste. In the similar way, 'lyon whando pani banj kee jaren ko, lyon thando pani jeth-baishakh.

Dhanshyam Shaila, The famous poet of the 'movement' had also written and sang—'Banj burash si kulaiki dali, na kata-na kata yon rakha jagvali, Patyon ma cha doodh ki jariyon ma Pani…. Yon banj burash kon yon thando pani…' It means that do not cut the forests of Banj-burash, save them and protect them. When its leaves are eaten by the animals, we get the milk, but more than this, its roots give the cold water. Though the water is available in the villages of the hills through the taps, but during the old time, the villages were developed in the places where there were the sources of water.

Banj is an ever green tree which grows naturally at the height of 4000 to 8000 feet in the middle of the hills. Banj does not grows singularly like pines, But banj has a powerful mixed society. Along with Banj, hundred types of creepers, bushes and grass grow. These include Burash, kafal, Kingor, Ayar, Khaksi, Roins etc. Wherever there is the forest of Banj, there will be the source of water below it. It is so tasty and digestive that one cannot forget it if one gets chance to drink it once.

The investigators have also identify the trees which grow along with Banj. It includes Vankarek, Uttis, Hinsar, Kafal, Kunja—forest rose, Biru etc. Source of water is simply is not just a source of water, but it is known with various names and in various forms which are emerging from the womb of the land. These are: Dhara, Naula, Salvani, Magra, reservoir, well, canal, Pokhar, falls and small and big rivers—all have got its unique identity.

- **VIJAY JARDHARI**

The Constitution, Water Policy and Recent Water Crisis

One can understand recent water crisis by the remark made by the Supreme Court on April 6, 2016 in which the court has told the Government of India that ten states of our country suffering from famine. The mercury is touching 45 degree. People do not have the drinking water. Help them. The situation reveals this fact that Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh are suffering the impact of famine. Almost 20,000 villages of Maharashtra are under the trouble of famine. The situation in Marathwara is so worst that they are forced to shift the jails and the hospitals. The water reservoirs of Saurashtra are heaving the capacity of water meeting the need of the water only for two months. People have started migrating from Bundelkhand. The water is being watched. It is being thought to arrange water through the trains for those areas which is having the scarcity of water. 700 people of the country are affected from the famine. There is only 25% water in the famous 91 water reservoirs. What will happen to the water and its reservoirs in the coming summer and the resultant impact on it?

● **KRISHNA GOPAL 'VYAS'**

Notes

Notes

Strategy to Use

Composite Heritage

⊙ **OBJECTIVE :**

Use of Compsite Heritage for Peace and Harmony.

PROCESS

- The facilitator should underline the objective or purpose of the exercise.
- Group Work
- Formation of groups should be done region area wise. Every geographical area has cultural identity and some kind of uniqueness, which may differ from other areas. Hence, it is advisable to formulate strategy according to regional identities.
- Group Discussion
- Presentation

POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- To formulate strategy in order to use Composite Heritage to restore peace and harmony among communities.
- Exploring ways and means to preserve, enrich and popularise our Composite Heritage in today's society.
- Sharing of experiences after developing strategies.

MATERIAL REQUIRED

Chart, Marker, Sketch Pen, Tape.

☺ TIME

2 .00 Hours

Facilitator's Note

From the present exercise, the beginning of strategy formulation and implementation of strategy at the grassroots level will start. Hence, it is important for the facilitator(s) to present a summary of all previous exercises in front of the larger group. The facilitator(s) should present step by step the content and the processes of all exercises. Once it is done, the participants would understand the need for formulating strategy to use Composite Heritage as a weapon to effectively intervene in conflict situations and bring about peace and harmony. The participants have to be reminded that the training workshop on Composite Heritage is not the be-all and end-all because the content covered till now can be accessed through books, journals and their own day-to-day life.

As has been mentioned in the beginning of the exercise, every region has its cultural identity and unique traditions. This identity and uniqueness should always be respected. Different groups from different regions may evolve a different strategy for their geographical area.

The facilitator(s) has to remind the participants that social tensions and conflicts are products of socio-political and economic situations. Their manifestations may differ but the core reason remains the same. Ethnic, communal, caste, gender, race or any other form of conflict has its roots in socio-political and economic situations. At this point, participants may ask the facilitator(s) that if these form the core issues, why not address these issues instead of taking up Composite Heritage as a tool to reduce the tension and bring about peace and harmony. They should be told that the final solution of rooting out all kinds of social conflicts lie in transformation of socio-economic and political situations of a given geographical area. It is a long running battle, which will go on until the dream of just and egalitarian society is realised. In this process, Composite Heritage can also be used as a tool.

The groups are expected to discuss the specific situation in their area first. Then they will move on to strategy depending upon the specific prevailing conditions. They should be encouraged to do so because the deeper they go into specific conditions of their area, the sharper will be the strategy.

Do not try to consolidate the presentation. Tell the groups that they have outlined the strategy themselves. It is now their responsibility to see that the strategy is implemented at the grass-roots level. But at the same time they should be aware that flexibility in the strategy is key to success. There will not be any necessity of input from the facilitator(s).
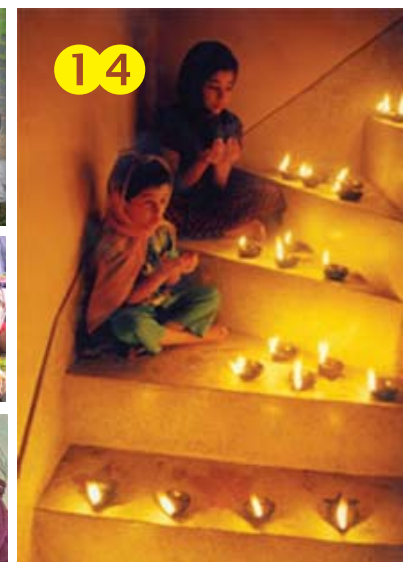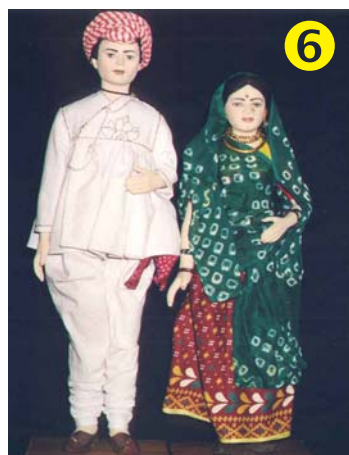
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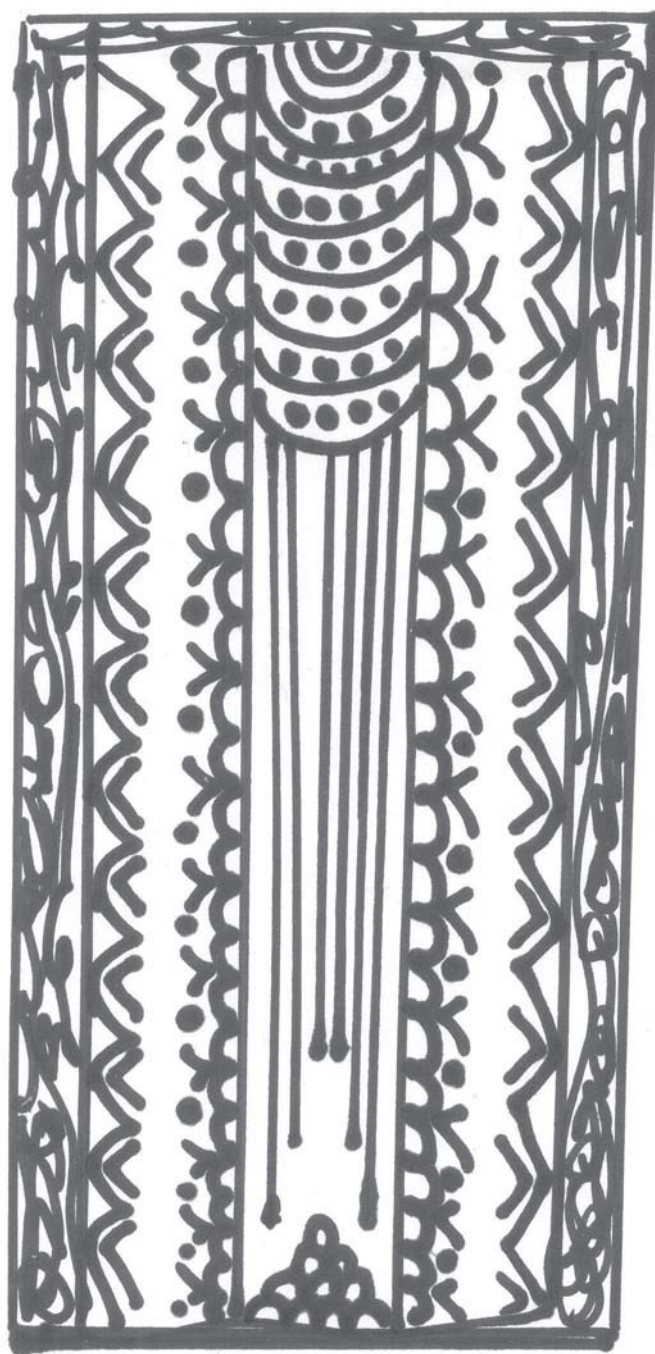
Appendix-2
Some Glimpses

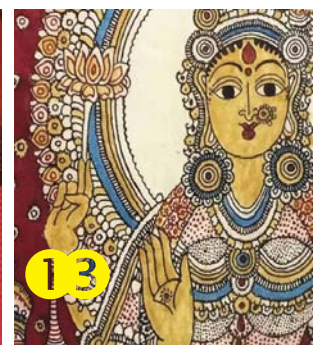1 : Festival, 2 : Dress, 3 : Textile, 4 : Folk Instrument, 5 : Handicrafts, 6 : Monument

Nuakhai Festival
नुआखाई त्यौहार
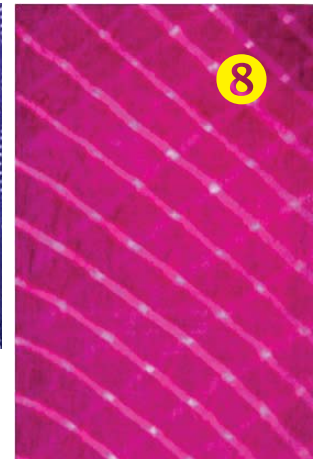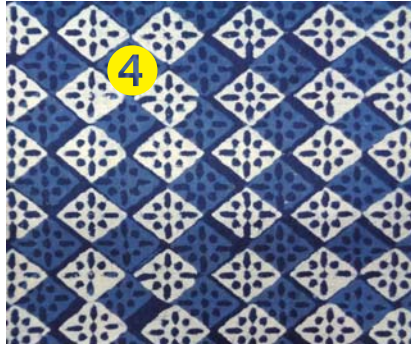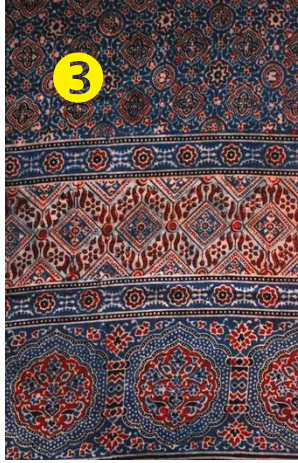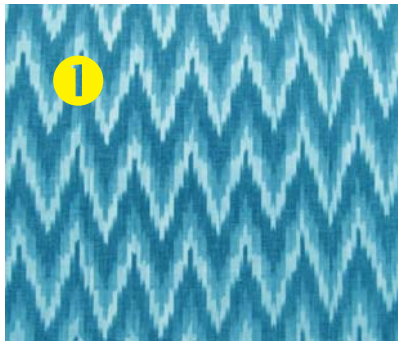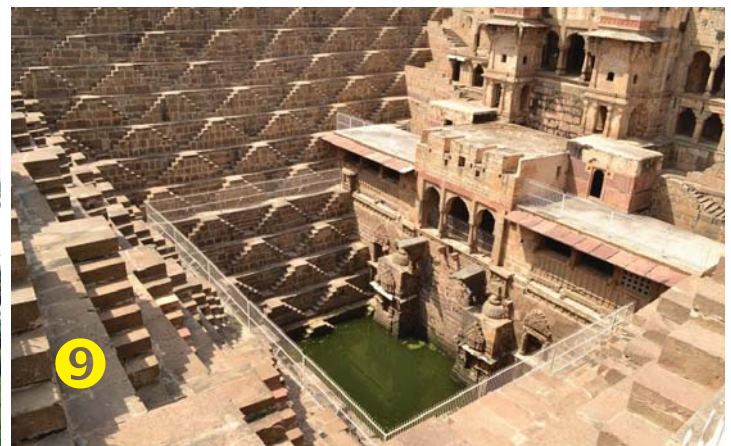
Glimpses-1, Festival (Page 111)	Glimpses-2, Dress (Page 112)	Glimpses-3, Textile (Page 113)
1. Puttari (Harvest Festival), Kerala	1. Coorgi Saree or Kodaya Style Saree, Karnataka	1. Ekat Textile,
2. Bihu (Harvest Festival), Assam	2. Abha or Kanjar, Kutch,Gujrat	2. Sambalpuri, Odisha
3. Tusu (Harvest Festival), Jharkhand	3. Traditional Dress of Muslim Women, Kerala	3. Ajrekh, Sindh, Pakistan
4. Bonalu, Telangana	4. Traditional Dress of , Tripura,	4. Bagru, Rajasthan
5. Chhath Pooja, Bihar and Jharkhand	5. Parasi Dress	5. Chanderi, Madhya Prades
6. Harela, Uttarakhand	6. Traditional Dress of Husband and Wife, Gujrat	6. Batik Textile
7. Nuakhai Festival, Orissa	7. Traditional Dress of Husband and Wife, Marwadi	7. Bandhani or Bandhe, Gujrat
8. Gangaur, Rajasthan	8. Mekhala, Asam	8. Leheria, Rajasthan
9. Navroz, Persian New Year	9. Pheran, Kashmir	9. Tant, Bengal
10. Onam, Kerala	10. Traditional Dress for Men and Women, Kerala	10. Phool Gamcha
11. Sarhul, Jharkhand	11. Kurti and Lehanga, Punjab	11. North East Textile
12. Phooldei, Uttarakhand	12. Manipuri Dress	12. Maheshwari Textile, Gujrat
13. Makar Sankranti	13. Various Dresses	13. Kalamkari, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana
14. Shab-E-Barat	14. Garara	
15. Gudi Padwa (Marathi New Year)		

Composite Heritage for Peace, Harmony and Democracy

Glimpses-4, Folk Instrument, (Page 114)

1. Kartal
2. Ek Tara
3. Shenai
4. Nagara
5. Algoza
6. Manzeera
7. Dhup
8. Pepa (Asam)
9. Khanjari
10. Damroo
11. Been
12. Ghatam
13. Madal
14. Tambura
15. Ravan Hattha

Glimpses-5, Handicrafts (Page 115)

1. Banarsi Sari
2. Katri
3. Kalamkari
4. Bamboo Craft
5. Tribal Craft
6. Patiyali Jutti and Kolhapuri Chappal
7. Kumhar
8. Handmade-Jute-Bags
9. Block Printing
10. Charkha Yarn
11. Dari Handloom
12. Bamboo Art
13. Khurja Pottery
14. Clay Work
15. Puppet
16. Aligarh Locks

Glimpses-6, Monuments (Page 116)

1. Ashoka Pillar, Patna, Bihar
2. Surya Temple, Konark , Orissa
3. Qutub Minar, Delhi
4. Taj Mahal, Aagra, Uttar Pradesh
5. Thousand Pillar Temple, Town of Hanamkonda, Telangana State
6. Nupi Lane, Manipur
7. Mahabat Maqbara in Junagadh, Gujrat
8. Rang Ghar, Siva Sagar, Assam
9. Chand Baori ,Bandikui, Dausa District, Rajasthan.
10. Bhagiratha's Penance, Mahabalipuram, Chennai

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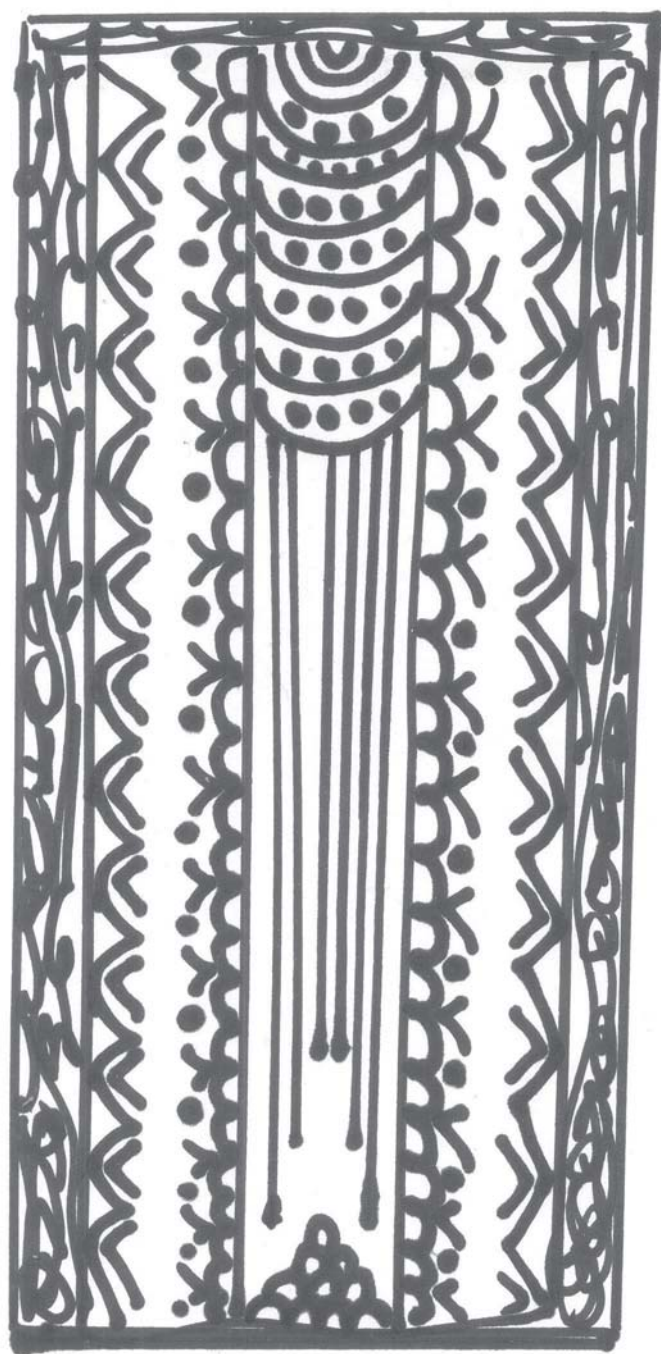
Appendix-3

Annexures

Dravidian Composite Heritage

Understanding the Terminology

According to the Oxford Advanced Learning Dictionary, Heritage means history, traditions and qualities that a Country or society has had for many years and that are considered an important part of its character; while Composite would mean made of different parts or materials.

The Dravidian People

(1.) Origin and History

There are several theories and viewpoints regarding the origin and history of the Dravidians.

According to Tamil Lore, Dravidians originally came from a submerged island Kumari Kandam in the South of India. Kumari Kandam has also been linked to Lemuria.

According to the World Book Encyclopedia, the Dravidians were among India's earliest known habitants. About 2500 B.C., they created an advanced civilisation in the Indus Valley.

Dravidian is the name given to a linguistic group of people in India. They are said to be the first original settlers of ancient India. The group is mainly composed of the lower class people in the Indian society.

(2.) Dravidian Civilisation

Dravidian Civilisation is considered to be synonymous with the Indus Valley Civilisation much of which lies within the present day Pakistan. This Civilisation, which continued for 1000 years and is known as the Harappan culture is said to be the culmination of thousands of years of settlement. Extensive excavations indicate that the Dravidian culture was well established by about B.C.2500. More recent studies reveal that it covered nearly all of the Lower Indus Valley.

Major cities such as Mohenjodaro and Harappa, which ware discovered in the 1920s in Pakistan, and Lothal near Ahmedabad in India were carefully laid out with precise street plans. Several sites had a separate acropolis pointing to a religious function. The great tank at Mohenjodaro could have been used for ritual bathing purposes.

The Indus Valley civilisation contained hundreds of cities, some of which had populations of 30,000 to 40,000 people. The cities were centers of high civilisation. Every household had a bathroom, and every city, a sewage system. The houses were made mostly of fired bricks; although sun baked bricks were used occasionally. Some houses were large mansions with many rooms. Others were small dwellings for poor people and craft workers. Buildings resembling citadels suggest that there was some kind of political organisation to govern the cities, which were large.

There was a harbour in Lothal that could handle up to 50 ocean going vessels, doing trade with countries as far away as Egypt.

(3.) Prominent Dravidian Groups

The Brahuis in Baluchistan in Pakistan who are exclusively Muslim, the Gonds who are Adivasi people in Central and North India, the Kannadigas, the Malayalis, Tamils in Sri Lanka and Tamilnadu, and Telugus constitute the prominent Dravidian Groups.

(4.) Dravidian Language

The Dravidian family of languages includes 26 languages, which are spoken by more than 200 million people mainly in the southern part of India making the Dravidians the fourth largest linguistic group in the world. They include Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu. Dravidian languages are spoken by about 24% of the population of India.

It is also opinioned that Dravidian languages are spoken in certain areas of Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Iran. Overseas Dravidians are also present in Malaysia, Singapore, Canada, USA, and UK who are said to speak Dravidian languages.

The Dravidians had a very complex writing system. Inscriptions mainly on clay seals reveal that the people knew and practiced the art of writing. The Dravidian Script still remains undeciphered since there are no code keys available. Therefore the full meaning and significance are still not understood. But some inscriptions indicate that the people knew how to count and measure. Dravidian languages have a recorded history of more than 2000 years.

(5.) Dravidian Literature

The Dravidian languages spoken in southern India have an ancient literature. The four principal languages are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam.

The early classical Tamil literature, Sangam was written by two groups of poets. One wrote romantic poetry. The other described the glory and the bravery of kings, and about good and evil. The Sangam Classics date mainly from the 300s B.C. Sangam literature was written by 473 writers, which included 30 women, the most famous of them, being Poetess Avvaiyar.

Two great Epics namely, Sillapadhikaram and Manimegalai were written in 200 A.D. In the 500s, Tiruvalluvar wrote the Thirukkural, which showed the way to noble living.

Devotional religious literature was composed in Tamil from about A.D. 600. A group of Tamil poets called the Nayanars were devotees of god Shiva, and another group called the Alwars were devotees of god Vishnu. The poetry of both groups had an intense personal quality and included female poets.

Literature in other Dravidian languages followed similar themes, being influenced by the Tamil and Sanskrit traditions. Tamil literature reflected mainly Hindu and Buddhist traditions, while Kannada literature was more influenced by Jainism. Literature in the southern Indian languages originated much earlier than the regional literatures of northern India.

(6.) Dravidian Religion

Clay figurines discovered at Harappa indicate that Dravidians predominantly worshipped

a Mother Goddess, which was later identified as Kali. The feminine dimension of worship was very much in vogue among Dravidians.

Terracotta sculptures include female figures who may be goddesses. Possibly they were fertility goddesses whose worshippers hoped to have healthy children and good crops.

Down South, Goddesses like Mariamma, Yellamma, Kaama, Morasamma, Matangi, Solamma, and Moosamma were and are still very popular feminine forms of worship.

The Dravidian Religion could discern the divine in natural objects and the presence of the supernatural in natural forces. The tree, the static stone, nature, were all part of the Dravidian worship. The elements of nature namely, earth, fire, air, water, and the cosmos were worshipped. Ancestral Worship was also an integral part of the Dravidian Religion. Totemism, meaning an animal or other natural object that is chosen and respected as a special symbol of a particular group or family was also practiced.

Animals were also worshipped, with the popular form being the humped bull. The clay seals contained animal figures such as elephants, crocodiles and other animals which reveal that respect for animals were very much part of Dravidian religion.

(7.) Dravidian Fairs and Festivals
All South Indians states (Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana Karnataka and Union territory called Puducherry) celebrates all the national festivals but when we talk about celebrating traditional festival it is different. Tamil Nadu and Puducherry celebrate Pongal for four days. It is a festival of gratitude celebrated in mid-January. People in these state show their gratitude toward agricultural fields and animals along with the desire of good crop. Kerela people celebrate Onam in the memory of their almighty king called Mahabali. They decorate their front yards with flowers, prepare special and delicious dishes and exchange gifts with each other. There are similarities in Makra Sankranti and Pongal of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Dussehra of Mysore in Karnataka is very popular and unique which is dedicated to diety called *Chamudeshwar*i. Besides these, there are other festivals as well such as Tamil New Year *Ugaadi,* Ramzan, Christmas, *Karaga, Aadi Perukku, Vishu* etc.

(8.) Dravidian Trade and Crafts
Archaeologists have found a large quantity of well-made pottery, replicas of bullock carts, statues showing the human face, bronze objects and glass beads. These prove that the Dravidians were skilled in crafts including ceramics, sculpture, metal work, and glass making. There is a strong similarity between the Indus Valley civilisation and the ancient civilisation of Mesopotamia in the Middle East. It is believed that sea trade may have existed between northwestern India and the Persian Gulf.

Trade supplied the Dravidian people with essential foods and with basic raw materials such as timber, raw cotton, dyes, metals and glass.

(9.) Dravidian Sports and Martial Art
Kabaddi, Kho-kho and Games related to pet animals are very common among Dravidian people. The Jalikattu game of Tamil Nadu has its long history. The sculptures and relics which has been discovered during the excavation of Mohenjodaro in the 1930s have also

shown the evidence of this game. It is also mentioned in the Sangam Literature written during 400-100BC. Other regional games are Nadan Pashu Bali(Cow Sacrifice) of Kerela, Kambala(Buffalo Race) of Karnataka and Gujjana Goollu (game played by children with wooden kitchen set)of Andhra Pradesh. The Martial art *Adithada*(Indian kickboxing) *Silambam* (game played with a bamboo stick) and *Kalaripayattu* (sword fight) are famous in the region of Tamil Nadu and Kerela. People practice this martial art to fight against evil and for maintaining a healthy life.

(10.) Dravidian Food

For a long time, Dravidian food habits have been changing and evolving with the mixture of Arabic, Aryan and Portugees food yet they have managed to preserve their own food and it has its own identity. Traditional food is mainly based on rice buts it also changes area to area. In coastal areas of South, India fish is eaten in large number. Tamil Nadu people prepare various dishes with the mixture of rice and cereals such as Dosa, Idli, Uttapam, Vada and other dishes like Sambhar, Coconut Chutney, Rasam, Poriyal is also cooked by them. Use of chilly and tamarind for the preparation of food is extensive in Andhra Pradesh and they cook dishes like Pesa Attu, Gongura, Pulihora, Kodi Iguru, Kodi Pulus with that. Kerela uses coconut in large amount for the preparation of their food and special dishes which they cook are Aviyal, Olan, Mach Poriyal, Nariyal Jhinga Jhol etc. In Karnataka, people cook various dishes with sugar, palm and Ragi(cereal). These methods of preparing and eating food are liked by the people who are fond of food all over the world.

(11.) Dravidian Social System

It is historically established that the Dravidian people followed matralinealism, which gave power and authority to women. Women controlled the affairs of society. Property rights were therefore obviously from mother to daughters.

Decline of the Ancient Dravidian Culture

Several Theories are being put forth as being the reason for the decline of the Dravidian culture:

(1.) The Aryan Angle

The most widely known approach to the decline of the Dravidian culture is the militarist one involving the Aryans. The history of the Aryans in India is known mainly from their religious texts, the four Vedas. These Vedas and other Sanskrit mythological literature reveal that the Aryans were organised into tribes. The horse played an important symbolic role in both Vedic religion and military power. This suggests that the Aryans came from the steppes of Europe and Asia, which were suited to raising horses. The Aryans settled mainly in the part of India, which they called Sapta – Sindhu, or the land of seven rivers (present day Punjab). In the plains of the Punjab, the Aryans combined animal breeding with a more settled agriculture. They cleared forests and planted wheat and barley. They practiced carpentry.

The Aryans disregarded the local cultures. They began conquering and taking control over regions in north India and at the same time pushed the local people southwards or towards the jungles and mountains in south India. According to this theory, the general division of Indian society was thus made. North Indians are Aryans and South Indians are Dravidians.

The fair skinned Aryans are also believed to have brought in the Caste System. Varna means colour. The Caste System is also known as the Varnasharama Dharma implying the victory of the fair skinned Aryans over the dark skinned Dravidians.

However there are many who completely doubt that there was ever any Aryan invasion at all in India. This skepticism is based on the dating of the Aryan invasion of India, around 1500 BC. But according to experts of Hinduism, some of the events in Hinduism occurred much earlier. For instance the Mahabharata war claimed to have taken place during the Aryan period is believed to have occurred 7000 years earlier!

(2.) Floods
Historians have also suggested several other alternatives; one theory being that the decline was caused by the flooding of the Indus Valley.

(3.) Failure of Agriculture
Another possibility is that climatic changes led to decreased rainfall and the subsequent failure of agriculture led to large scale migration to the southern parts of the country.

(4.) Inter Group Rivalry
Inter group rivalry and wars leading to victory for some groups and extinction of others are also attributed to the decline of the Dravidian Civilisation.

Emergence of New Trends

Ancient Dravidian culture was a glorious chapter in the history of ancient India - a civilised, peaceful, and matriarchal empire that declined due to various reasons.

However thanks to great luminaries like Periyar in Tamilnadu, Babasaheb Ambedkar in Maharashtra, Sri Narayana Guru and Ayyankali in Kerala, Poets Bhoi Bheemana and Ranga Swamy in Andhra Pradesh, and C.R.Reddy and the anti Brahmin Movement in Karnataka, the fire of Dravidian pride has been rekindled.

Periyar Ramasami coined the term **Adi Dravida** to denote the original natives or the indigenous people of Dravida land. Adi Karnataka and Adi Andhra are used in Karnataka and Andhra respectively to denote their official Dalit status. Adi Dravida denotes the Dalits, who are the **Panchammas**, or the fifth grouping considered not worth to be classified within the four-fold caste system according to the Varnashrama Dharma. On the other hand, Dalits believe that they are not so weak as to be confined within the caste system. They are beyond the bonds of caste…they have cast out caste….

Although each region has its own unique Composite Heritage but we also share it with our neighbours as well, in this case Dravidian Composite Heritage is not an exception. While maintaining their uniqueness Dravidian Composite Heritage has its unbreakable relationship with other parts of India and South Asia. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose in his book " Yuwaon Ka Sapna" Deams of Youth has shown his gratitude towards those TamilNadu People who joined his Indian National Army(INA) and participated in the freedom struggle. These are the pages of our shared history of freedom struggle which both Dravidian and Non-Dravidian of that area have written all together, which belongs to everyone. There are various examples like this.

Composite Traditions in Fractured Regions

How is one to understand the co-existence of multiple layers of identities (national, regional, religious, territorial, ethnic or any other) in a curious mix? Is it possible to decide before hand which of these plays a major role in the general process of identity formation? National identities are generally a modern phenomenon world over and do not go back in time prior to 19th century. Religious (or ethnic) identities, on the other hand, are much older, though the nature and character of these identities have undergone a profound transformation in modern times. In particular, the consolidation of religious solidarities across geographical territories and the social and political manipulation of these solidarities is undisputedly a modern phenomenon.

This problem becomes more acute in the case of regions that are fractured today but constituted organic cultural wholes in the past. The case of Punjab and Bengal readily comes to mind. Few would dispute that these two regions, situated on the northern and the eastern corners of the sub-continent, enjoyed a cultural compositeness that was rooted, among other things, in territorial integrity. Both the regions were multi-religious since medieval times. According to the census of 1931 in Bengal, Muslims and Hindus constituted 54 and 43 percent, respectively, of the total population. In Punjab, another religion, Sikhism, added to religious plurality of the region where Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs constituted 55, 31, and 11 percent of the total population, respectively. These figures may give the impression of culture in these areas being divided along religious lines, but this was far from being the case. For one, religions here for most of the period were far from being undifferentiated and monolithic entities. Hinduism in particular remained remarkably plural, allowing for multiple sects *within* its fold. It may be safely said that religious plurality of these regions did not hamper the growth of a territory based composite culture, till the 19th century. After the 19th century fissiparous tendencies began raising their heads.

The question of plurality of identities is not the same for all the regions. Some regions (or some groups and communities) are likely to be affected by it in a much more decisive manner than some others. This problem is particularly acute in the case of Bengal. Let us observe it more concretely. A Muslim living in western pocket of Bengal today faces a question about his primary identity: Is he a part of the *religious* Muslim community (*Ummah* or universal Muslim brotherhood); or a *regional* Bengali community; or a *national* Indian community? In other words his national, religious, and regional identities are not likely to converge together and are more likely to place him into different groups making different, sometimes conflicting, demands on his loyalty and allegiance. There may of course be other identities (based on gender, locality, profession, sect) available to him. But in the context of Bengal, the regional, religious and national identities have been historically crucial.

At this stage it may be important to point out that the question of multiple identities has generally accompanied the history of mankind without creating or constituting a problem,

till the arrival of modernity. Man (the term 'man' is used here as a generic specie term rather then a specific gender term) has lived in various groups and has been able to identify with each of those groups (based on clan, caste, religion or territory) without experiencing any pressures on his conscience or loyalty. The existence of multiple identities has been a general feature of the history of mankind; it has not been a *problem* or a dilemma. Much of it however changes with the arrival of modernity, which, for a variety of reasons, insists on a *hierarchy* of identities along with a *plurality* of identities. In other words, the modern man is confronted with a situation in which he is expected to pick one of his multiple identities as the most important or the central identity. He is expected to choose one identity as the basic, all-encompassing, overarching identity. Quite often it is the national identity that takes precedence over other, or it might be a national identity disguised as religious or vice-versa. Whatever be the case, the multiplicity of identities which is a feature of human condition, when carried into the modern conditions, has to put up with a hierarchisation of identities.

This insistence on the hierarchy of identities creates a problem in the context of Bengal (also Punjab to an extent). The area of Bengal enjoyed a geographical and cultural compactness for a long time but in the 20th century, underwent as many as three partitions. First partition (1905) was soon revoked (in 1912) but the second partition (in 1947) proved to be decisive. One part of Bengal was reconstituted as East Pakistan and part of the newly created nation-state of Pakistan with its headquarters in Punjab. The other part, called West Bengal remained with India as one of its states. This division of Bengal was based on religion, with eastern and western parts constituting Muslim and Hindu majorities, respectively. It was hoped in the newly created Pakistan that religion, or more specifically the ideology of Islam, would provide the necessary cement to hold together culturally and geographically diverse areas. But the geographical and cultural identity asserted itself in 1971 and this area was reconstituted as Bangla Desh, as a sovereign nation-state. Cultural and geographical factors have kept Bangla Desh separate from Pakistan. But what has kept the two Bengals separate from each other? The two areas enjoy cultural and linguistic similarities. The national anthem of Bangla Desh is written by Rabindra Nath Tagore who may have the unique distinction of having his poems as the national anthem in two separate nation-states. So what keeps the two Bengals apart? Is it religion? Or is it the logic of nation-state which, once formed, cannot be dissolved easily?

The interesting thing about Bengal is that in spite of being a Muslim majority area, it never had an exclusively Islamic flavour. This was because the Islam that triumphed and flourished in Bengal was not the high, doctrinal and classical form of Islam, but the low, Sufi, ritualistic and the unorthodox variety of Islam. This created openings for syncretic and composite culture that dominated Bengal's cultural landscape till the 19th century. Many people noted this aspect of Islam in Bengal and commented on it from their own perspectives. From the perspective of "high Islam" these cultural practices, that were neither exclusively Hindu nor exclusively Muslim, appeared as corrupt. For instance, as early as in the 16th century, Ihtiman Khan, a Mughal Admiral in Bengal, looked down upon the indigenous cultural practices of Bengal as he thought they were 'un-Islamic'. These supposed deviations from Islamic practices continued to be commented upon in the 17th and 18th centuries also. A late 19th century British resident in Bengal, Dr. James Wise, noted the "corrupt Hinduised rites" of Bengal Muslims. At the beginning of the 20th century, Syed Amir Ali, a distinguished Muslim intellectual, looked down upon the Bengali Muslims who were "chiefly converts from Hinduism" and still observed many "Hindu

customs and institutions." A little later, William Crooke, a British scholar of popular religions in India, regarded the Bengali Muslims as those who "assimilated Islam only in an *imperfect way*". Malik Feroz Khan Noon, the Governor of East Pakistan in 1952, regarded Bengali Muslims as only "half-Muslims."

Quite apart from contemporary commentators and politicians, many historians have also commented on this phenomenon. Mohammad Mujeeb called them only "partly converted" and Peter Hardy referred to them as "census Muslims" He wrote: "… the real challenge to purity of belief and practice in Islam in medieval India was to be found … in the convert's countryside – in the ignorance of new Muslims of the requirements of Islam and in the insidious infiltrations of 'creeping Hinduism' into the daily life of the convert." Another Bengali historian commented that the religious lives of Bengali Muslims were dominated by a kind of *folk Islam* "having hardly any connection with the dogmas of religion." Yet another Bengali historian with high Islamic leanings lamented this tendency and wrote: "Thus long years of association with non-Muslims who far outnumbered them, cut off from the original home of Islam, and living with half-converts from Hinduism, the Muslims had greatly deviated from the original faith and had become Indianised."

All these comments need to be understood in a proper perspective. The dominant form of Islam that was practised in Bengal through the medieval times and till the 19th century, contained strong syncretic elements. This syncretism was the result of very tentative and superficial penetration of values of high Islam from Arabia into Bengali Islam that was richly endowed with many Hindu/non Islamic practices. The literature of high Islam, written in Arabic and Persian, found it difficult to reach the common Muslims. So, if the Islamic traditions codified in the Arabic and Persian languages were not accessible to the lower classes of Bengali Muslims, but the many non-Islamic indigenous traditions were; it inevitably followed that the poor Muslims would be guided more by the local traditions than by classical Islam. One Syed Sultan wrote: "There is no dearth of *kitabs* in Arabic and Persian [which were] for the learned alone and not for the ignorant folk [who were] unable to grasp a single precept of their religion [and remained] immersed in stories and fictions of local origin. Hindus and Muslims in every home took themselves with avid interest to the Hindu epic, the *Mahabharta*, rendered into Bengali by Kavindra-Parameswara … and nobody thought about *Khoda* and *Rasul*." The other Hindu epic *Ramayana* were equally popular with the Muslims of Bengal. "The story of Rama was heard respectfully even by the yavanas [Muslims] and they were in tears to hear about the predicament of Rama at the loss of Sita", noted another commentator.

This linguistic divide fed into the already existing social and cultural divide between the *Ashraf* (noble or from pure lineage) and the *Ajlaf* (local converts from lower groups). One Sharif lamented this inaccessibility of high Islam to local Muslims: "The refusal or inability of the higher Mosalmans to adopt the Bengali has already affected the relation between them and the lower Mosalmans. We do not learn the Bengali – whilst our lower orders cannot learn the Persian ….There are thus no means of fellow-feeling or of acting together." Language did not just mean access to sacred texts. It was also a medium of cultural communication, idioms, symbols and imageries. When all of these were inaccessible to common Bengali Muslims, they held on to what was available for them – the traditional Bengali ballads and folklore and local mythological traditions of diverse kinds.

Towards A Sub-Continental History

Writing a common history of India and Pakistan (and now Bangladesh) has been a dream project for many historians and other scholars on both sides of the border. Quite clearly it is seen as a measure that is capable of bringing down the levels of hostility between the two countries. A fractured and conflict-ridden present needs the glue of a common past to bring the people and the governments of the two countries closer to each other.

On the face of it, the project appears easy enough and possible to attain. Out of a long written history of more than three millennium, all but the last 57 years have been spent in a state of separateness. In other words, if the history of the Indian sub-continent is to be seen as a continuous, unbroken chain of events and activities of the people and their rulers, then there is a case, not of a separateness, but of unity and continuity for a great part of the period, till 1947. The history of separateness has an extremely short span of a little more than five decades. So the writing of a common, composite, indeed the same, history of the people of India and Pakistan (and now Bangladesh) should constitute no difficulty for the historians.

Yet in spite of the apparent ease, this project has been rarely undertaken and almost never accomplished. Why has an intellectual endeavour, seemingly quite feasible and also socially desirable, proved to be so difficult to implement? Part of the answer to the question has to reckon with the fact that most histories, if not all, have generally been 'national histories'. This is not to imply that no histories have been written of 'units' other than nation-states. We have had historical accounts of villages, cultural groups and communities, continents and also of the world. (Leading scholar of demography Kingslay Davis has written a book on the population of India and Pakistan). This is just to argue that histories have generally been *conceived* in national terms. Even though the nations and nation-states have been recent entrants on the map of the world, these nationally conceived histories have been transported to a period when both the nations and the nation-states were absent (e.g., history of ancient England). This is partly due to the fact that history writing as a project (i.e., by conscious design rather than as a matter of habit or taste) has gained momentum under the spell of nation-states. History has been used as a legitimacy seeking device by the actual or aspiring nations. This is true not just during the life span of nations, but also for the vast stretches of time that preceded the birth of nations in the world. This is just to say that even when history was not being written *of* a nation, it was, in all likelihood, being written *for* a nation. In such a climate and under such impulses it would be difficult to write a common history of three *visibly different* nation-states-India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

However in the context of India and Pakistan, this project gets even more complicated. The creation of Pakistan was not a smooth, conflict-free event. Pakistan was not simply born one fine morning. As a nation-state it did not arrive as a smooth delivery. It was fought for and won from its opponents. From the other side it was seen as lost and

conceded in a state of helplessness. Victory for was defeat for the other. This became brutally evident at a seminar on the partition of the sub-continent, held in London in 1968 (later published as a book *Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935-47*, edited by C.H.Philips and Mary Doreen Wainwright, London, 1970) where historians from the three countries were invited. Some politicians who had been active during the 1930s and 1940s were also invited to reflect on the events leading to 1947. It was at this seminar that it dawned upon the historians of India and Pakistan how much they differed from each other even in their basic terms of reference. Whereas the historians from India (B.R.Nanda, S.R.Mehrotra among others) talked about the 'unfortunate partition', 'the tragedy of the partition' and on how it could have been averted, for the Pakistani historians and observers (I.H.Qureshi, Raja of Mahmudabad, M.A.H. Ispahani among others) it was a 'tryst with destiny' and an inevitable culmination of the forces of history. The ideologies of Indian nationalism and Pakistani nationalism (also referred to as Muslim nationalism and Muslim communalism by its adversaries) obviously did not and could not look in the same direction.

These irreconcilable differences have cast their shadow on various aspects of history writing in the two countries. Their heroes have been different. Their moments of triumph and tragedy have often exchanged places. This is much more so in the history textbooks written for school children. Indian textbooks on modern India highlight the role of Syed Ahmad Khan when he preached harmony and not when he began preaching Muslim separatism. Pakistani textbooks have credited him with consolidating the 'Muslim identity' in politics and have ignored his earlier efforts at trying to preach harmony. Likewise Iqbal too has been divided by the textbooks in the two countries. In the Indian textbooks he is hailed as the poet of the famous *taraana-e-Hind* (*Saare Jahaan Se Achchha Hindustan Hamaara*). Textbooks in Pakistan remain silent on this phase of the great poet's life and appropriate him for his second phase in which he tended to uphold the spirit of Islamic exclusivism. Many instances of this kind can be cited where the two textbooks of the two countries have highlighted different aspects of prominent individuals selectively and in accordance with their priorities.

Periodisation has created yet another problem. Where should the history of a society/people/country begin? There is no serious problem as far as India is concerned, given the civilisational continuity of the land, people and the rulers. Indian history can therefore be conveniently taught through the triple digits of ancient, medieval and ancient. But where should the history of Pakistan begin? Can its periods coincide with those of Indian history? Should the history of Pakistan begin with the Harappa and Mohenjodaro (given their geographical location in Pakistan), or with the advent of Islam in the seventh century (given the basic Islamic identity of both the movement for Pakistan and the nation-state of Pakistan), or in the 19th century when the idea of Pakistan began to be philosophically conceptualised? Or should it start at 1947 when the new nation-state was born? Should the history of nation-state coincide with its life? Given that the entity of Pakistan is not really traceable through the multiple layers of history, the question of a starting point can be really tricky.

All the difficulties notwithstanding, the project of writing a common history of the two countries (and also Bangladesh, another country that was born from the same land and people) is both challenging and fascinating. It can be attempted by :

- Transferring the focus from the nation-states to the people;
- Identifying the areas of conflict and underplaying them as far as possible;
- Trying to place people (Syed Ahmad Khan, Iqbal, Jinnah, Nehru, Patel) in their contexts and by highlighting the continuities of their lives along with changes;
- Writing more of social history and less of political history;
- Evolving a common terminology and by avoiding area-specific and contentious terms like partition, Muslim communalism etc., and
- Sensitizing the students towards the complexities involved in large political movements (e.g., Indian national movement and the movement for Pakistan) in such a manner that it does not prejudice them.
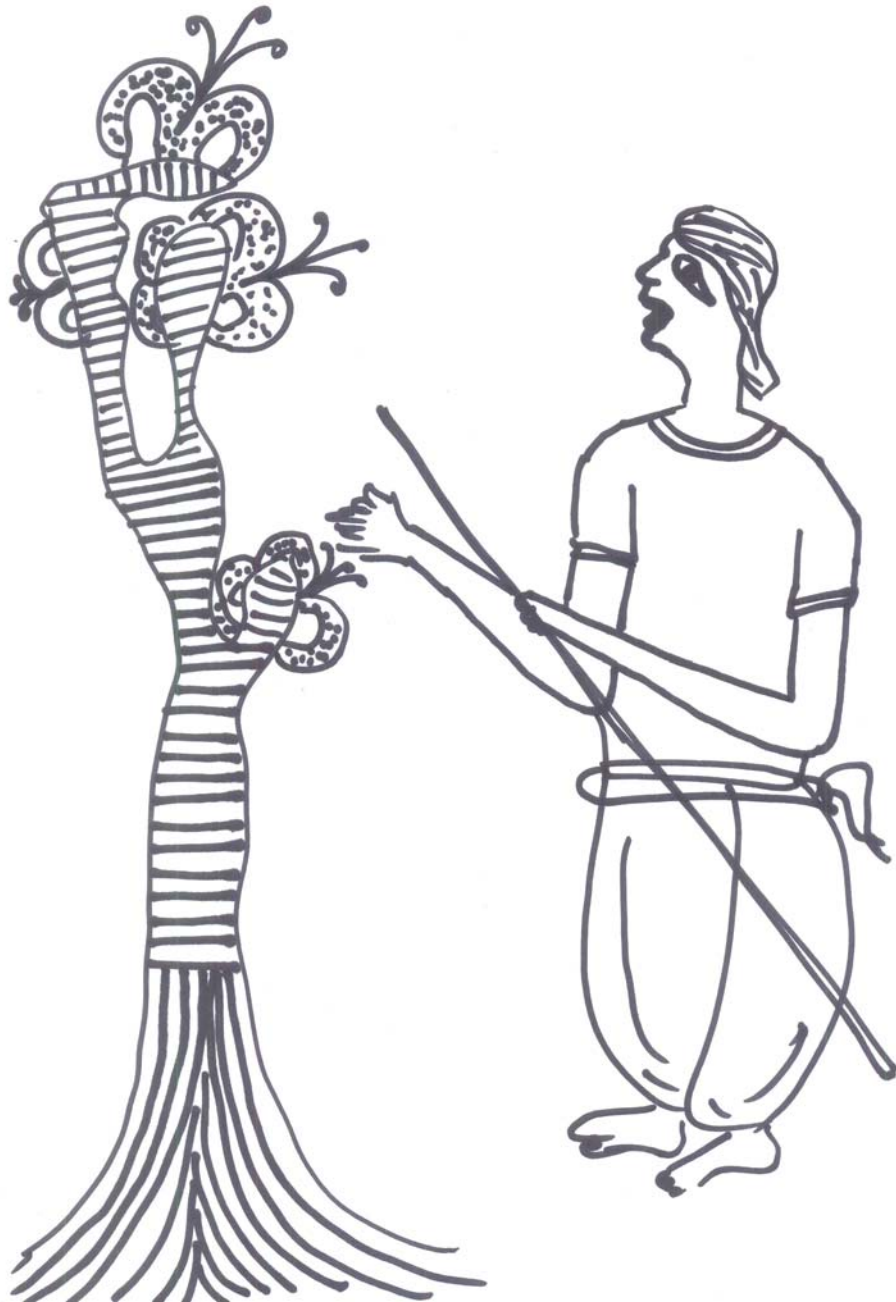
Notes

THE INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

The Institute for Social Democracy (ISD) was formed in Delhi in 2004. It strives for a secular and democratic society that is intolerant of any form of exploitation. ISD mainly intervenes in the Hindi speaking states in North India, but also has established contacts and undertaken programmes in other South Asian countries. The organisation educates and trains activists and staff of community-based and grassroots organisations on issues of communalism, caste and gender discrimination, globalisation, nuclear disarmament. Around these issues it develops and supports peace campaigns on international and national levels, but above all locally. Through its training programmes it has developed an informal network of grassroots activists who remain in touch with its office.

ISD understands secularism as an attitude that recognises the existence of different collective identities - religious, linguistic, ethnic, etc. - and respects their socio-political and cultural aspirations. It not only respects the space of communities of other backgrounds, but it asserts their right to this space.

ISD has developed the concept of "composite heritage", commonly shared values, symbols and cultural practices in the South Asian Subcontinent which go beyond the divides between the different religious and ethnic communities. It is comparable to the fact that each family member can be recognised as an individual person, but also as a member of his/her family, even if features shared among its members are not the same for each person. Composite heritage likewise does not belong to just one group in society, be it religious, ethnic, caste or gender-related. It belongs to the general people and contributes to the preservation of public spaces that are open, democratic and inclusive. Composite heritage is a dynamic, democratic concept that encourages the expression of cultural values in order to interpret socio-political relationships without endangering the tissue of society

ISD's Strategy is Threefold :

- Bringing together civil society groups and organisations committed to democracy and secularism in a series of meetings and workshops, to explore the dimensions of composite heritage and build commitment to preserve and enrich it.

- Carrying out training and research studies to explore and popularise cultural resources such as literature, folk tales, music and theatre, in order to uncover and defend cultural commonalities and make visible the secular and democratic values underlying shared traditions.

- Converting the findings and outcomes of the above workshops and studies into simple, easily accessible materials for popular education and public mobilisation, with a particular focus on rural communities.

ISD's programme therefore is not only projects; it also includes lifestyle and the deep concern of the organisation's leading personalities. Therefore, ISD encourages learning among its staff and including them in decision-making. All are empowered to get involved with the content-related work and to discuss and develop their own understanding and positions on the issues. Somebody who has worked with ISD will take along new learning about attitudes and democratic values.

Hagen Berndt
EED, Germany

Our syncretic and plural traditions got an impetus in the modern times by our anti-imperialist national movement. Sub-continent's movement, in a larger sense, emerged as more than a battle against British imperialism. At a time when India's plurality was threatened under the homogenising impulses of modernisation, the national movement stood up to preserve our social heritage. Out of this heritage was constructed the fabric of secularism and nationalism. Thus the traditional values inherent in our syncretism and plurality did not have to be sacrificed for the sake of modern impulses of secularism and national unity. Thus we were able to embark on the path of political modernity (and take on the alien rule) without abandoning our traditional reservoirs. Our society was thus able to enter the first phase of modernity without paying too much of a price in terms of its traditional resources. If we have preserved our syncretism and plurality thus far thanks to the freedom movement, used it to our advantage, we simply must not allow this wealth to be destroyed now.