

# SACH

SOUTH ASIAN COMPOSITE HERITAGE

MAY 08—JULY 08 ■ VOLUME—1 ■ ISSUE—12

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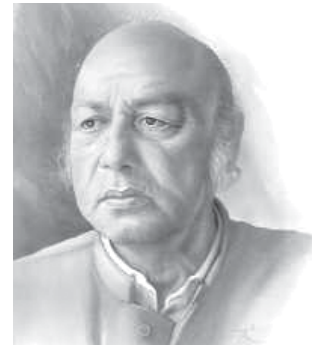
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In the previous issue we presented poems from Faiz Ahmed Faiz who knew no national boundaries and has always been admired all over South Asia. In the present issue we are publishing few poems from yet another revolutionary poet from Pakistan, Habib Jalib. The fearless fighter Habib Jalib always fought against dictatorship, tyranny, religious sectarianism and capitalism. His concerns were not Pakistan centric. He was concerned about the whole region. He says :

*Hindustan bhi mera hai aur Pakistan bhi mera hai  
Lekin in donon mulkon mein Amrika Ka dera hai*

*(Hindustan belongs to me and Pakistan belongs to me  
Both of these, however, are under American hegemony)*

Similarly one can find several instances in his poetry where he expresses similar concerns. Here are a few poems which reflect such sentiments.



*Habib Jalib*

## [I] What Does Pakistan Mean?

*Bread, clothes and medicine  
A little house to live in  
Free education, as my right be seen  
A Muslim, I, too, have always been  
What does Pakistan mean  
There is no God, but God, The Rab-al-  
alameen*

## [I] Pakistan Ka Matlab Kya

*Roti, kapda aur dawa  
Ghar rehne ko chhota sa  
Muft mujhe talim dila  
Mein bhi Musalmaan hoon wallah  
Pakistan ka matlab kya  
La Ilaha Illallah...*

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*For American alms do not bray  
Do not, the people, laugh away  
With the democratic struggle do not play  
Hold on to freedom, do not cave in  
What does Pakistan mean  
There is no God...*

*Confiscate the fields from the landowners  
Take away the mills from the robbers  
Redeem the country from its dark hours  
Off with the lordly vermin  
What does Pakistan mean  
There is no God...*

*Sind, Baluchistan and Frontier  
These three are to Panjab most dear  
And Bengal lends them splendour  
Anguished should not be their mien  
What does Pakistan mean  
There is no God...*

*This, then, is the basic thing  
For the people, let freedom's bell ring  
From the rope, let the plunderer swing  
Truly they speak, who the truth have seen  
What does Pakistan mean  
There is no God, but Allah...*

## [II] Islam Is Not In Danger

*Endangered are the idle rich, bursting with cash  
Crumbling walls about to crash  
All the centuries' mish-mash  
Islam is not in danger  
Why do a few clans all the land rights enjoy  
And those, who revere the Prophet, are bereft of joy*

*Endangered are the beasts of prey  
Multicoloured cars which in the streets sashay  
And for whom the American hearts sway  
Islam is not in danger  
Due to our slogans the palaces shake and tremble  
The towering ornate shops cannot our hopes quell*

*Endangered are the robbers of the highway  
Western traders who make hay  
Thieves and tricksters who waylay  
Islam is not in danger  
Holding aloft the banner of peace, loving all humans, we are  
on the go  
Loving all the world, O Jalib, is our proud credo*

*Amrika se mang na bhik  
Mat kar logon ki tazhik  
Rok na janhoori tehrik  
Chhod na azadi ki rah  
Pakistan ka matlab hai kya  
La Ilaha Illallah...*

*Khet waderon se le lo  
Milen luteron se le lo  
Mulk andheron se le lo  
Rahe na koi Alijah  
Pakistan ka matlab kya  
La Ilaha Illallah...*

*Sarhad, Sindh, Baluchistan  
Teenon hain Panjab ki jaan  
Aur Bangal hai sab ki aan  
Aai na un ke lab par aah  
Pakistan ka matlab kya  
La Ilaha Illallah...*

*Baat yehi hai bunyadi  
Ghasib ki ho barbadi  
Haq kehte hain haq agah  
Pakistan ka matlab kya  
La Ilaha Illallah...*

## [II] Khatre Mein Islam Nahin

*Khatra hai zar daron ko  
Girti hui diwaron ko  
Sadiyon ke bimaroon ko  
Khatre mein Islam nahin  
Sari zamin ko ghere hue hain aakhir chand gharane kyon  
Naam nabi ka lene wale ulfat se begane kyon*

*Khatra hai khun khwaron ko  
Rang birangi karon ko  
Amrika ke pyaron ko  
Khatre mein Islam nahin  
Aaj hamare naaron se larza hai bapa aiwanon mein*

*Bik na sakenge hasrat-o arman unchi saji dukanon mein  
Khatra hai bat maron ko  
Maghrib ke bazaron ko  
Choron ko makkaron ko  
Khatre mein Islam nahin  
Amn ka parcham le kar utho har insane se piyar karo  
Aprna to manshoor hai Jalib, sare jahan se pyar karo*

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*Endangered are the palatial predators  
The kings and their abettors  
Nawabs and other such traitors  
Islam is not in danger.*

### [III]

## Maulana

*Too long I have heard you preach and prate, Maulana  
But so far there has been no change in my fate, Maulana  
Keep to yourself your preachings of gratefulness  
My heart, like an arrow, they penetrate, Maulana  
The truth, only you know or God knows  
They say that Jimmy Carter is your pir\* incarnate,  
Maulana  
The land to the landlords, the machine to the despoilers  
This, according to you, is God's dictate, Maulana  
Why don't millions fight for Palestine  
Prayers alone cannot from chains liberate, Maulana  
\* Sufi saint*

### [IV]

## Ghazal

*Hindustan belongs to me and Pakistan belongs to me  
Both of these, however, are under American hegemony*

*American aid gave us wheat, as also their deceit  
Do not ask me how long we've suffered their conceit*

*And yet the bayonets are all around this flowering valley  
Hindustan belongs to me and Pakistan belongs to me*

*Khan Bahadur, do not follow the English, from them better  
keep away  
Once again they are holding you by the collar, you are still  
their prey*

*Macmillan was never thine, Kennedy can never be  
Hindustan belongs to me and Pakistan belongs to me*

*This land in fact, my dear, belongs to peasants and workers  
Here will not run the writ of a few clannish marauders*

*The dawn of freedom is heralding the end of tyranny  
Hindustan belongs to me and Pakistan belongs to me.*

*Khatra hai darbaron ko  
Shahon ke ghamkhwaron ko  
Nawabon, ghaddaron ko  
Khatre mein Islam nahin*

### [III]

## Maulana

*Bahut mein ne suni hai aap ki taqdeer Maulana  
Magar badli nahin ab tak meri taqdeer Maulana  
Khudara Shukr ki talqeen apne pass hi rakhen  
Yeh lagti hai mere seene pe ban kar teer Maulana  
Nahin mein bol sakta jhut is darja dhitai se  
Yehi hai jurm mera aur yehi taqdeer Maulana  
Haqeeqat ka kya hai, yeh to aap jaanen ya Khuda jane  
Suna hai Jimmi Carter hai aap ka peer Maulana  
Zameenen hon waderon ki, mashinen hon luteron ki  
Khuda ne likh ke di hai yeh tumhen terhrir Maulana  
Karodon kyon nahin mil kar Falastin ke liye ladte  
Dua hi se faqat kat-ti nahin zanjir Maulana*

### [IV]

## Ghazal

*Hindustan bhi mera hai aur Pakistan bhi mera hai  
Lekin in donon mulkon mein Amrika ka dera hai*

*Aid ki gandam kha kar ham ne kitney dhokey khai hain  
Poochh na hamne Amrika ke kitne naaz uthai hain*

*Phir bhi ab tak wadi-e gul ko sangeenon ne ghera hai  
Hindustan bhi mera hai aur Pakistan bhi mera hai*

*Khan Bahadur chhodna hoga ab to saath Angrezon ka  
Ta bah gareban aa pahuncha hai phir se hath Angrezon ka*

*Macmillan tera na hua to Kenedy kab tera hai  
Hindustan bhi mera hai aur Pakistan bhi mera hai*

*Yeh dharti hai asal mein, pyare, mazdooron dahqanon ki  
Is dharti par chal na sakegi marzi chand gharanon ki*

*Zulm ki rat rahegi kab tak ab nazdik savera hai  
Hindustan bhi mera hai aur Pakistan bhi mera hai*

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# The Problem of Changing Name in INDIA, PAKISTAN and BANGLADESH

*Sharifa Siddiqui and Pallavi Gupta*

Asmita Resource Centre for Women

## INDIA

With increasing frequency one finds names of places being changed in the sub-continent. One finds that the changing name of cities in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India is often about asserting ones identity either on linguistic or religious grounds.

Recently there has been a spate of name changes of Indian cities. Some examples are: Bombay to Mumbai,

Baroda to Vadodara

Madras to Chennai,

Calcutta to Kolkata,

Cochin to Kochi,

Calicut to Kozhikode,

Poona to Pune,

Quilon to Kollam,

Trivandrum to Thiruvananthapuram

If one considers Calcutta, Cochin, Bombay, Poona, Quilon, Delhi, – all cosmopolitan cities, their names holding a certain cosmopolitan character which several generations connected with. The changed names - Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Kochi, Kollam, Thiruvanthapuram, all equally beautiful names but carrying with them a certain divisive persona excluding those not connected to it linguistically. Genuine aspirations and expressions of ethnic identity must be divorced from separatist, chauvinism. Delving into the background of the demand of name change for particular places, one comes across many instances where this assertion of identity on linguistic grounds is largely backed by the divisive forces which have an eye on the vote bank. They

destroy the compositeness of the heritage of names of places.

In India, the first significant name change was Mumbai, in 1995. This name change was proposed in 1982 by the municipal government, but it was only with the efforts of the hardliners like Shiv Sena that this was possible in 1995. The native *kolis* had named the island Mumbai after the goddess Mumbadevi.<sup>1</sup> But Bombay consisted not just of native *kolis* but people from all over the country especially large number of Gujuratis, Goans, Parsis and Muslims.

Some important public places names have also changed like Victoria Terminus in Bombay became Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus and Sahar International Airport got renamed to Chatrapati Shivaji Airport.

In 1996 Madras was renamed Chennai. The English named the city Madras, while the Tamilians named it Chennai. Some believe that the Portuguese had set up a settlement named '*Madre di Dios*' after the church St Mary and the British eventually shortened it to Madras.

However some argue that many who participated in the name debate were unaware that for the Tamil-reading, Tamil-speaking multitudes the city had always been Chennai. In the late 19th century, Vallalar sang of '*Dharumamigu Chennai*'. What the State government did in 1996 was merely to jettison the anglicised name<sup>2</sup>.

Pushpa Arabindoo goes deeper into the issue and writes about renaming and the politics of identity. She records that much of the deeper and larger meanings that explain this act of name change will be lost to analysis if one were to

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assume that the renaming was merely “a means of decolonisation through vernacularisation”. She also points out the ‘southern bias’ in the development of Chennai and how North Madras is neglected.<sup>3</sup>

In Chennai certain imperial names have been changed to local names. Some examples: Edward Elliot Road to Dr Radhakrishnan Salai, Elliot’s Beach Road to Sardar Patel Road, and Mowbray’s Road to T T K Road.

As Shashi Tharoor Indian author and diplomat asks “Are we Indians so insecure in our independence that we still need to prove to ourselves that we are free?” he was referring to the change of name of Bangalore city to the more colloquial Bengaluru.

The name change was approved by the

Karnataka state government in 2005. The original name of the city was Bengaluru, modified from the Kannada name, Benga-val-Uru, which meant “City of Guards”. Folklore also has it that it was a place where a king got lost long ago without his retinue and wandered into a hut where an old lady fed the starving king with a local dish whose name sounded like “benga” and that the king later recognized that place as “bengaluru”. Whatever the source of the name is, the purpose of the name change is to revert to the vernacular usage and eliminate the anglicisation of the name.<sup>4</sup>

With the President APJ Abdul Kalam giving assent to The Pondicherry (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2006, which was passed by both the Houses of Parliament, Pondicherry has been re-christened Puducherry. This name change is also seen as a

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## IDEOLOGY

The following news item appeared in the Indian Express daily newspaper. It is an example of the Hindutva ideology that wants to erase all traces of a syncretic history. The same fundamentalist ideology operates in Pakistan and Bangladesh. What gives us hope for peace and harmony is the justice system. The High Court ruling has reinforced that the state must uphold secular principles in spite of pressure of extreme ideology.

### **BJP backtracks on Ahmedabad renaming row** **EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE Thursday, October 15, 1998**

AHMEDABAD, Oct 14: In a major setback to the saffron brigade and its obsession with changing city names to suit its own brand of history, the Centre has told the Gujarat High Court that, for the present, it has decided not to change the name of Ahmedabad to Karnavati.

This was submitted in the High Court in connection with a petition challenging this May 11 resolution of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) changing the name of the city. This Centre decision has made the petition infructuous.

On October 12, Additional Advocate General S N Shelat and Assistant Government Pleader K T Dave placed on record a September 11 communication from Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, informing of its decision.

The petitioners, Prof Nisar Ahmad & others had submitted that if the Centre government is empowered to change the city name, it cannot do so without consulting the people. Besides, consultation not only with the people of Ahmedabad or Gujarat, but with those of the country, it was submitted. Besides, such a decision was must be based upon honest purposes, it was submitted.

It was also pointed out that the AMC resolution was not consistent with the Central government guidelines on changing the names of towns or cities. The main principles laid down in the circular say that unless for a special reason, it is not desirable to change a name which the people have got used to. Besides, the names of villages or cities having historical connection should not be changed as far as possible, the circular states.

The petitioner also contended that the real motive behind changing Ahmedabad’s name was the dislike for the minority community. Statutory powers of neither the civic body nor the State government can be used out of prejudice for any community, it was alleged. Besides, no legislation empowers the civic body to change a city name, making the AMC resolution illegal, it was submitted.

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reassertion of identity and shift to the local names.

Tamil scholars and lovers of the language have been clamouring for a change. The Tamil Development Action Committee (Tamizh Valarchi Nadavadikkai Kuzhu), headed by Thirumurugan, has been fighting for the cause since 1977. "The territorial Assembly passed two resolutions, one in 1980 and the other in 1996, but there was no follow-up with the Centre. When Prof. M. Ramadass became MP, he took efforts to get the name changed, which seems to have paid off," said Thirumurugan.

While to a large extent name changes have been an anti-colonial reaction it is increasingly taking a religious slant. We will see how the Hindutva ideology backs the name changing agenda from Islamic or secular name to Hindu names in India. Also how in other countries in the sub continent like Bangladesh and Pakistan, the names have changed due to Muslim fundamentalist forces and many secular names are being changed to Islamic names.

If India seems plagued by bug to change names of places from anglicised and Islamized names of places, then neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh seem to carry the same virulent germ of renaming. Minorities in the country note with alarm and helplessness as names have been officially changing. Some of them in Bangladesh are as follows:

Joydevpur to Gazipur  
Bikrompur to Munshigunj  
Swarupkathi to Nesarabad  
Alekyodon to Ali Kadam

These names have been changed by the local religious Islamic leaders/ political parties which were approved by the Bangladesh government.

In Pakistan too names of past British officials are fading.

Lyalpur: Lyallpur named after Sir James Lyall its founder was changed in 1979 to Faislabad apparently to win the goodwill of the Saudi Royal

family.

Sahiwal: After the end of Sikh rule, the British formally annexed Punjab in 1849. The District Headquarter of District Sahiwal was initially established at Pakpattan Sharif. Then it was shifted to Gogera in 1852, which is located on the left bank of river Ravi on the old Grand Trunk road constructed by Sher Shah Soori. In 1864 it was shifted to Sahiwal, a village situated on main Lahore - Karachi Railway track that had been recently laid. In 1865, it was renamed as Montgomery District after the name of the then Lt. Governor of Punjab, Sir Robert Montgomery. The district was again renamed as Sahiwal in 1966.

Other local landmarks too have changed names, perhaps due to change in ownership but sometimes for not such innocent reasons. A famous cinema Bharat Talkies in Lahore became Pakistan Talkies.

But in all three countries the dangerous trend has been of ever increasing proposals to change names of place. In India the demand has been revert back to ancient names thus obliterating not only the British colonial past but also the Muslim past, while in Pakistan and Bangladesh, the trend has been an increasing change towards Islamized names.

Separatist demands, linguistic, religious, ethnic may be pervasive across historical time and geographical space, but it is worrying that in all three countries, the demand for change seem to be increasingly encouraged often initiated by the state. And minorities in all three states, if they had earlier been unsure of their position, it becomes even more precarious now.

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## 1857 In Our History

P. C. Joshi

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*...Continued from previous issue*

THE British text books on Indian history contained only the story of the "atrocities of the mutineers,"-dishonouring of women, killing of children and so on. The reality, however, was the opposite. Again, the early generation of educated Indians like Savarkar and others began exposing from British sources themselves the story of unprecedented British atrocities against the Indian people. During the non-cooperation movement of the twenties, the British terror during 1857 was related to Jallianwallabagh to rouse the people to struggle more valiantly and unitedly than our ancestors had done during 1857. Thereafter came Edward Thompson's *'The Other Side of the Medal'* which tried to put across the thesis that there were atrocities on both sides which are best forgotten.

The question of questions is: can the two sides be put on the same plane? Can the crimes committed by the enslavers of the people be equated with some mistakes and excesses committed by the fighters for freedom? The two cases are different...

If tales of Indian "terror" are largely mythical, British brutality got even Lord Canning worried. On December 24, 1857, the following Minute appears in the proceedings of the Governor-General-in-Council:

*...the indiscriminate hanging, not only of persons of all shades of guilt, but of those whose guilt was at the least very doubtful, and the general burning and plunder of villages, whereby the innocent as well as the guilty, without regard to age or sex, were indiscriminately punished, and in some cases, sacrificed, had deeply exasperated large communities not otherwise hostile to the*

*government; that the cessation of agriculture and consequent famine were impending; ...And lastly, that the proceedings of the officers of the Government had given colour to the rumour...that the Government meditated a general bloody persecution of Mohammedans and Hindus.*

In the History of the Siege of Delhi, written by an officer who served on active service, it is graphically described what the British officers did on the way from Ambala to Delhi.

Hundreds of Indians were condemned to be hanged before a court-martial in a short time, and they were most brutally and inhumanly tortured, while scaffolds were being erected for them. The hair on their heads were pulled by bunches, their bodies were pierced by bayonets and then they were made to do that to avoid which they would think nothing of death or torture-cows' flesh was forced by spears and bayonets into the mouth of the poor and harmless Hindu villagers.

How the sepoy and the civilian, the guilty and the innocent alike were butchered by the British victors after the capture of Lucknow is described below by one of them:

*at the time of the capture of Lucknow-a season of indiscriminate massacre-such distinction was not made and the unfortunate who fell into the hands of our troops was made short work of-sepoy or Qudh villager it mattered not-no questions were asked; his skin was black, and did not that suffice? A piece of rope and the branch of a tree or a rifle bullet through his brain soon terminated the poor devil's existence.*

What happened in the countryside, between Banaras, Allahabad and Kanpur during General Neill's march through the area is described by Kaye and Malleon in the following words:

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*Volunteer hanging parties went out into the districts and amateur executioners were not wanting to the occasion. One gentleman boasted of the numbers he had finished off quite 'in an artistic manner', with mango trees for gibbets and elephants as drops, the victims of this wild justice being strung up, as though for past-time in 'the form of a figure of 8'.*

Pandit Nehru has rightly stated the problem of race mania as it faced our insurgent ancestors and faced us subsequently in the whole course of our struggle for freedom.

*We in India have known racialism in all its forms ever since the commencement of British rule. The whole ideology of this rule was that of the Herrenvolk and the master race, and the structure of Government was based upon it; indeed the idea of a master race is inherent in imperialism. There was no subterfuge about it; it was proclaimed in unambiguous language by those in authority. More powerful than words was the practice that accompanied them, and generation after generation and year after year, India as a nation and Indians as individuals were subjected to insult, humiliation, and contemptuous treatment.*

Our forefathers suffered and bled during 1857. Subsequent generations kept up the struggle and went on making the needed sacrifice. If after independence we forget our past experience and began to consider British imperialism as our new friend instead of our traditional foe, we will not be able to safeguard Indian independence nor discharge India's duty towards the struggling colonial peoples in Asia and Africa...

IN the broad historical perspective of India's struggle against British domination what needs being stressed is not the limitation and narrowness of the 1857 uprising but its sweep, breadth and depth. The 1857 uprising stands sharply demarcated from all the earlier anti-British wars of resistance fought on Indian soil.

The first is the sheer vastness of the area

covered by the 1857 uprising and the still wider sympathy and solidarity it commanded. It is admitted by all historians and chronicles, British and Indian alike, that the 1857 national insurrection was the biggest ever anti-British combine that had so far been massed in armed struggle against British authority in India.

The second is the qualitative difference between this and all other anti-British wars. In the earlier wars people of a single kingdom, which very often coincided with a specific nationality, fought single-handed. For example, the Bengalis alone fought at Plassey. The same in the Karnatak and the Mysore and the Maratha, the Sikh and the Sind wars. Earlier attempts at broader combinations had failed. But during 1857 people of various castes, tribes, nationalities, religions, who had lived under different kingdoms rose together to end the British rule. It was an unprecedented unity of the Indian people. Marx, the most far-sighted thinker of the age, duly noted this new phenomenon.

Before this there had been mutinies in the Indian army but the present revolt is distinguished by characteristic and fatal features. It is the first time that the sepoy regiments have murdered their European officers; that Musalmans and Hindus, renouncing their mutual antipathies, have combined against the common masters; that 'disturbances, beginning with the Hindus, have actually ended in placing on the throne of Delhi a Mohammedan Emperor'; that the mutiny has not been confined to a few localities.

As it is important to stress the above positive aspect of the 1857 national uprising, it is equally important to state its negative aspect and state which decisive areas and sections of the Indian people did not join the national uprising and how some were even led to supporting the British side. There were several factors involved but let us examine the main, the



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national factor. The Gurkhas and the Sikhs played a decisive role on the side of the British. The Nepal war had been fought by the British with the help of the Hindustani Army. Rana Jung Bahadur, who was centralising Nepal under Ranashahi, was promised by the British a permanent subsidy and large tracts in Terai and he brought his Gurkha soldiers down, in the name of revenge, for subduing Oudh.

The Sikhs had their own historic memories against the Moghuls and after initial hesitation the British were able to recruit the unemployed soldiers of the Khalsa Army and the retainers of the Sikh princes and sardars.

From the Marathas the heir of the Peshwas had risen in revolt but the Maratha princes had their own rivalries and historic feuds both with the Nizam in the South and the Moghuls in the North.

The Rajputana princes had their own historic memories of earlier Moghul and later Maratha domination, besides their being under British grip now.

These historic memories from the past of our feudal disunity kept the people of large parts of the country paralysed and moved by their feudal self-interest the Indian princes helped the British usurpers. Nehru has put the whole position in very succinct words:

*The revolt strained British rule to the utmost and it was ultimately suppressed with Indian help.*

As it is true that the 1857 revolution was the biggest national uprising against British rule, so it is equally true that the British were able to suppress it by using Indians against Indians. Divide and rule was the traditional British policy and they used it with devastating effect during 1857....

The peasant was anti-British but his outlook was confined within his village, his political knowledge did not go beyond the affairs of the kingdom in which he lived under his traditional Raja.

The political-ideological leadership of the

country was yet in the hands of the feudal ruling classes. They shared the general anti-British sentiment but they feared their feudal rivals more. They were a decaying class and their historic memories were only of the feudal past of disunity and civil wars and the vision of a united independent India could not dawn upon them.

Love of the country in those days meant love of one's own homeland ruled by one's traditional ruler. The conception of India as our common country had not yet emerged. Not only did the feudal historic memories come in the way but the material foundations for it, the railways, telegraph, a uniform system of modern education, etc., had not yet been laid but had only begun.

The conception of India as common motherland grew later and the great experience of 1857 rising helped it to grow. The London Times duly noted the rise of this new phenomenon.

One of the great results that have flowed from the rebellion of 1857-58 has been to make inhabitants of every part of India acquainted with each other. We have seen the tide of war rolling from Nepal to the borders of Gujarat, from the deserts of Rajputana to the frontiers of the Nizam's territories, the same men over-running the whole land of India and giving to their resistance, as it were, a national character. The paltry interests of isolated States, the ignorance which men of one petty principality have laboured under in considering the habits and customs of the other principality—all this has disappeared to make way for a more uniform appreciation of public events throughout India. We may assume that in the rebellion of 1857, no national spirit was roused, but we cannot deny that our efforts to put it down have sown the seeds of a new plant and thus laid the foundation for more energetic attempts on the part of the people in the course of future years.

*To be continued...*

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# Folk Painting Traditions of India

*Sarita Chauhan*

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...Continued from previous issue

## FOLK PAINTING TRADITIONS IN RAJASTHAN

In Rajasthan each art form is unique. Folk painting has a rich tradition in Rajasthan. In bare and arid Rajasthan folk artist found contrast in bright and exciting colour schemes. Women paint on walls and floors and the motifs are quite often symbolic and associated with their rituals. Like the *Sanjhya* painting of Mewar and Malwa region where only the newly wed girls paint the walls for 14-15 days during the *pitrapaksha*, the period when the ancestors are remembered and offered ritual oblations by Hindus. Pichwais or temple hangings are known for their artistry on cloth.

The murals on the walls of houses prepared by local potters follow the fresco tradition and can be seen in an advanced form in the palaces of Rajasthan especially of Udaipur, Bikaner, Bundi and Kotah. Also it is interesting to know that in Rajasthan the various courts developed the miniature school of painting in Rajasthan by bringing together the folk artists of their area which was later developed by Mughal courts and influential people.

The art of Rajasthan grew out of princely, warlike and chivalrous tradition. An interesting folk technique that provides visual record of this tradition is large-scale horizontal paintings on long scrolls known as Phads.

### PHAD TRADITION OF RAJASTHAN

In Rajasthan folk artists created epic grandeur through their bright colours and strong brush strokes and made alive the life history of heroes or legendary figures worshipped by the people in the large cloth scroll called Phad.

The centers of Phad creation have been Shahpura, Bhilwara and Raipur in the Bhilwara district and some part of Chittorgarh region of Rajasthan.

These paintings represent a complex and full-blown folk epic narrative, which it achieves through a very specific style of representation. Filled with figures and pictorial incidents, these paintings form a backdrop to epic story telling performances.

These paintings depict different episodes and are unrolled only after sunset when it is dark as it is an all-night performance. 'Par' means folds in a Rajasthani dialect and they are opened in folds. Before the narration begins both the performer and the attendee render ritual offerings to the images of the hero-Gods that are drawn at the center of the paintings.

The performer or the *Bhopa* is like a priest who travel from one village to another with the scroll, narrating the life history of the hero in song and dance while their wives hold lamps to illuminate the relevant part of the phad painting out the scenes painted at the phad. The performance is not just entertainment. Here the performer is like a priest and the painting is to be worshipped.

The principal subject for the paintings is the life of their legendary Rajasthani heroes- Pabuji and Devnarayanji or more popularly called Devji. Pabuji is supposed to have powers to cure ailing camels and protect cattle. Castes associated with these animals, such as the Mehr, Jhats and Bhats revered Pabuji. Story tells virtues of Pabuji and his life's journey from divine birth to death at the hands of rival clan and the eventual avenging of his death by his nephew. Similarly there is another story related to Devji.

A black snake identifies the Devnarayan phad because the hero is believed to be an incarnation of this form whereas the phad depicting Pabuji commonly has a black mare, which it is believed Pabuji used to ride.

The illustrated paintings are prepared by *Joshis* and generally *bhopsas* commission *Joshis* to paint and on completion of the painting, the artist

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ceremoniously imprints his signature as a pupil of the hero-God on the central portion which bears the largest figure of the hero being depicted. The artist also writes the name and address of the *Bhopa* who has commissioned the work and the date on which he has completed and signed his work.

Each hero-God has a different *bhopa* or a performer priest. The *Bhopa* is a term for the non-Brahmin priests who devote their life to the service of their deity. It is expected that a *bhopa* must be able to perform for at least 12 hours, dance and sing and have a thorough knowledge of each picture.

The phads also depict the lives of *Rama* and *Krishna* and are known as *Ramdalas* and *Krishnadalas* respectively. All phads, no matter which hero-God they represent, have certain similarities. Every available inch of the canvas is crowded with figures. The minor characters never overlap the main characters. The position of each group of character is unique. The hero-God with his court is drawn at the center, family and friends on the either sides.

Another interesting feature is that the figures in the painting do not face the audience; rather they face each other. The only frontal views are of Gods and Goddesses. In the Pabuji Phads there are few exceptions to this, when some negative character face the viewer.

The paintings are very wide to accommodate the numerous episodes of the complex stories. The story of Pabuji need canvas i.e. 15-18 feet wide and 4-5 feet tall, whereas for Devji 25-30 feet long canvas.

The process of making the cloth ready for painting is an important aspect. The cotton cloth is initially starched at home, coated with a paste of boiled barley flour and gum and then rubbed with a polished stone to make it smooth and ready for the Joshi to paint. With the help of a book the painter sketches and prepare an outline. Then the different colours are filled in. First, the yellow colour is painted in, after that the green, then the vermilion and lastly the blue. The outlines are then worked out in black. The colours used are pigments acquired from powdered stones and

indigo.

As the deity is believed to reside in the phad, there are special rites performed in order to dispose of torn and old paintings, they are taken by the *bhopas* to the holy lake at Pushkar for immersion.

Nowadays, there can be found new variants of phads that can be sold more easily: these are small in size on paper with decorated figures of Gods and Goddesses. For the contemporary connoisseurs today the modifications in content and style can be seen which is affecting the originality of this art form.

### **NAKASHIS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH**

Like phads of Rajasthan the scroll painting tradition from Andhra Pradesh is known as Cherial Scroll Painting. It illustrates the origin of a particular community and tells stories of their deities, demons and heroes. The common themes are from *Krishna Leela*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Shiva Puranam*, *Markandeya Puranam* and stories of communities like Gauda, Madiga and so on. The length of the scroll depended on the length of the story: an epic like Mahabharata would go up to 20 meters.

The Nakashis are the painters who paint these scrolls and they were at one time in great demand among storytellers of seven of the Andhra communities- Madiga, Goud, Mudiraju, Malas, Padmashali, Chakala and Mangali. The performers or narrators would give them script and ideas of what pictures were needed and then the Nakashis would paint the scroll.

The storyteller would then wander from village to village in a team. Say in a team of five people, two usually narrate the story while the others give simple musical accompaniment with harmonium, tabala and talas. The stage is simple, erected on four poles with a horizontal bar on which they display the scrolls.

For Dakkalis, subcaste of Madiga Nakashis paint *Adipurana* tales as this community narrates the *Adipurana* tales dealing with the origins of the Madiga community and use the palm leaf scrolls on which the story is written.

The Nakashis use the canvas; harden it with layers of chalk powder and tamarind nut powder.

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The base colour is bright red and other colours are yellow, blue, green and white.

Today the long stories have been cut short, as there are no patrons for long scrolls. The artists have been forced to break the tradition. Nowadays their works are being used to adorn the walls in homes and there is not much of wall space to hand big scrolls so they now paint smaller canvas depicting may be just a scene from a particular story. Also they no longer prepare their colours in a traditional way. Earlier they used natural white extracted from sea shells, black from lamp soot and yellow from turmeric but nowadays synthetic colours are used as they involve less labour and are much more economical.

Nakashis have shifted to other professions, as their art has no takers. R. Vaikuntam has been painting for more than three decades. Born into a family where his art has passed on hereditarily, Nakashi Venkataramaiah's family is perhaps the only family to pursue this art form.

#### **THE PATUAS OF WEST BENGAL**

Bengal folk culture has risen amidst tension of acceptance and rejection. On one hand people accepted the main structure by temple or court and on the other hand rejected it because it had increased social division in the society. In folk painting tradition we see all these factors have a very close bearing on its characteristics.

Pata Painting (*Patachitra*) a traditional art form 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. The Pata, which came from Kalighat in Kolkata is a narrative art form in which the long scrolls are painted by Patuas. The stories are narrated through songs as the pats are displayed to the audience.

These scrolls illustrated episodes from the popular epics or mythological stories. They were an important form of entertainment. Storytelling became a part of the society as to even the uneducated the message could be conveyed and most importantly, as the performance used to be amidst the community it also drew people together.

There are three schools in which Pata style

can be distinguished according to the area wherein families living and practicing pata style in one particular area had certain common features from the style practiced by a set of families in other area. These schools were-

- 1) Midnapore
- 2) Birbhum
- 3) Murshidabad

In schools of thought we find the usage of the theme in their own distinguishable style. Mythological themes are most commonly used where interesting scenes are selected from a long mythological legend and illustrated in a self-contained pictorial drama called *Pala*.

It would mainly deal with different *Palas* from *Ramayana*, *Manasa-Mangola* (stories from the loves of *Siva*, *Durga*, *Krishna* etc.) Also themes include scenes from everyday life, description of nature and social and contemporary concerns.

#### **THE PATS OF MIDNAPORE**

The Patuas of Midnapore are the people whose religion and customs lies between Hinduism and Islam. The stories of the origin of their community are not clear. Patuas are Muslims and follow Muslim customs but they have Hindu names and they depict stories of the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, *Puranas* and *Mangal Kavyas* on cloth, canvas or paper. They observe a number of Hindu rituals and the common surname '*Chitrakar*' signifies their profession.

The scrolls from Midnapore are relatively narrow- usually less than 2 feet across, suited for easy handling by a single performer. The scroll begins with a prominent character like in *Ramayana* scroll begins with the image of *Dashrath* in court, which is followed by many narrow registers. A few landscape or architectural elements can be seen at times but they most of the time have no connection with the theme of the painting. The background colour is red or sometimes white also. The colours used predominantly are yellow, orange, blue and green.

The Pats have figures like face, frontal shoulders and body with puffy chest in side view. The figures have thin black outline filled in with a thin black outline filled in with a flat colour.

The Patuas also deal with contemporary

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themes like terrorist attack, educating girl child etc. Nowadays, in order to survive they have started painting on sarees and salwar-kameez also and are finding it hard to sell their art.

### **THE PATS FROM BIRBHUM**

The scrolls of Birbhum hardly explore contemporary subjects and prefer to retain the traditional, puranic and epic themes. It seems from their style that they have been influenced by the European style of painting probably they were exposed to woodcuts, oleographs, newspaper cuttings and other sources that were available during British rule.

Because of western influence one finds the forms more expressive and have more depth. The old face or young face can be differentiated. The treatment of space in the scrolls is not as flat as in Midnapore scrolls. The scrolls show here much fewer events in greater detail and are larger in size- almost 3 feet across and the patuas use a small stand during performance.

### **THE PATS OF MURSHIDABAD**

Murshidabad is a place where Islamic culture is very strong. It is a source of some of the finest scrolls with liveliness in their cultural expression. The pat tradition was badly effected during partition and today we find their pats in very small number in some of the collections.

The artists of this school seem to belong to a system of making that is more elaborate and refined than any of the other pat styles. Their figures are set against red background but are much superior with powerful colours and the artists were able to make images of great visual interest. The details rendered on clothes, jewellery, architectural settings were amazing. The scrolls were made of large number of very narrow registers and their format reminds one of palm-leaf manuscripts.

All the three styles are very different from each other in terms of handling of theme, colours, figures, gestures, postures and expression; all seem to differ from region to region.

Today people following these traditions are in low esteem because there are no buyers, because for survival they have to move to other professions

and sometimes they move to big cities to look for work. There has to be a revival of interest in their art forms so that they can pursue their art and it will not only serve to preserve our rich and diverse culture but also these traditions help the rural and tribal people like in case of drought in Mithila region the women could contribute and it helped in boosting up their self-esteem, the income from their art provides a substitute to agricultural income and the farmers have something else to back on instead of falling in the trap of heavy debts.

As these painting traditions are ritual traditions and are done with festivity or are performances amidst the community, they are the means to bring people together so that they can resolve their tensions and enjoy, share and celebrate with each other. They are the moments when they sing and dance and believe every form in their painting is animated. Such moments, such celebrations should never come to an end. They should live on....

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## Middle Classes

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Class is a familiar idea, made familiar by decades on political conflict in the industrial countries, by revolutionary movements in many parts of the world, by the diffusion of Marxist thought, and by the development of sociological investigations. But it is not a simple idea. Anyone who enters into the details of the matter will quickly discover that even the descriptions of class structure vary; and still more, that the interpretations of its importance in modern societies and of its transformation are conflicting. It is noteworthy to mention that I am not attempting a meticulous definition. I am trying to point finger on the historical role.

The division of society into classes or strata which are ranged in a hierarchy of wealth, prestige and power is a prominent and almost universal feature of social structure which has always attracted the attention of social theorists and philosophers. During the greater part of human history this inequality among people has been generally accepted as an unalterable fact. Ancient and medieval writers, when they touch upon the subject of the social hierarchy, always tend to provide a rationalization and justification of the established order, very often in terms of a religious doctrine concerning the origin of social ranks. This is most apparent, perhaps, in the Hindu religious myths about the formation

of the caste system. On the other side, the sporadic rebellions of the poor and oppressed were usually revolts against particularly irksome conditions rather than against the whole system of ranks and they did not give rise to any clear conceptions of an alternative forms of society. The revolutions of the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, directed against the legal and political privileges which survived from the system of feudal states, brought about an extension of civil and political rights and with a greater degree of equality of opportunity. But at the same time they created a new social hierarchy, based directly upon the possession of wealth, and this in turn came to be attacked during the nineteenth century by socialist thinkers who believed that the idea of equality ultimately implied a 'classless society'. The English society of the mid-nineteenth century described by Marx was extremely convincing. The course of industrial development seemed to confirm the thesis that society was becoming more clearly divided into two principle classes. However, the principle classes, the bourgeoisie and the working class may be fairly easily identifiable in most societies but there are many intermediate strata, conveniently referred to as the 'middle classes', the boundaries of which are difficult to state exactly and membership in which cannot be determined in any simple fashion.

The term middle class is much used and since most of us without the aid of a specialist, understand what we mean when we

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use it in our everyday conversation. Capitalism made the middle classes an integral part of a unitary social order. The old trading middle class was called 'middle' because it was situated in between the baronage and the peasant or artisan class. But something more than this was implied by the new middle-class social order; it was not simply that they stood between the capitalist and the worker. There were two other important factors. First, they formed a composite intermediate layer consisting of a wide range of occupational interests but bound together by a common style of living and behavior pattern. Secondly, they stood for certain liberal, democratic values which they expressed in their social and political conduct. They showed respect for the individual and gave less weight to a religious sanction of authority. Ideologically the new order stood for intellectual freedom and social mobility, liberal individualism and political democracy. A middle class society thus became identified with a stratified social order representing a new standard of values which its members or groups impressed upon the entire societies in which they lived.

Institutions conducive to capitalist growth were not lacking in India before British rule. Indian artisan industry and occupational specialization were very highly developed. But radical changes accompanied the advent of the British in India. In the absence of an adequate political and economic system, they transplanted into India their own form and principles of government and economic organization which they modified only to suit local conditions. The character of the middle classes in the period after 1905 became more and more complex, for besides the religious approach, an economic approach to social

divisions and political struggle emerged from the growth of modern capitalism. For example, the industrial population of Calcutta, Bombay, Cawnpore and Jamshedpur seemed obviously divided into capitalists and labourers rather than Hindus and Muhammadans. The religious and economic concepts of social division began to operate side by side. But since religion had the backing of tradition and general acceptance, it dominated the economic concept which was after all new and still embryonic.

The growth of revivalist nationalism was by far the most effective counter force. It did not diminish in face of the rise of proletarian and peasant movements; it was stimulated by the rising influence of the Muslim League and rigidity of British policy towards the Hindu middle classes. While economic thinking was blurred as a consequence of communal riots, constitutional methods were discredited as a result of delay in the recognition of the demand for responsible government. Nationalism became the core of the Indian struggle against the British, but while the radicals combined with it an overdose of socialist doctrine, the conservatives imbued it with a revivalist fervour. Both were carried away by emotions and swayed by doctrinal considerations. Most of the political negotiations with the British in that period, describes how rigid adherence to political dogmas intensified communal rift and led to the division of India in 1947. Both freedom and division were the work of the middle classes.

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# A Thread of Faith

*Sarita Chouhan*

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*...Continued from previous issue*

## UNITY

All the religions may seem different but essentially they are one. The means or paths are different, but the destination is one and the same and that is, spiritual experience. Whether we say our God is Rama, Krishna, Allah, Jesus or Wahe Guru- but important is we want to have communion with God.

“As much is the Music in our minds, that much is Thy Sound, O Lord.  
As much is the form (of the universe), that much is Thy Body.  
Thou art the tongue that tastes, Thou the nose that smells:  
O mother, I can think not of another.(1)  
My Master is One, yea, the One alone: The One Absolute; the One-in-One.  
Nanak, the meek says: it is God who of Himself Assumes all forms.” (Guru Granth Saheb, p.350)

“To Him belongs all  
That is in the heavens  
And on earth: and He  
Is Most High, Most Great.” (Quran, 42:4)

A wise man sees the same one God in all as his own true Eternal Identity. He has experienced God in himself and he can see God in others. But an ignorant man lives in darkness and cannot see the same One God in all.

“No one is superior, No one is inferior- all are equal. Our father is ‘Rudra’ and mother is ‘nature’.  
Like Gods we should work together for the welfare of mankind. (Rig Veda 5.60.5)

It is important that all the religions should emphasize on the spiritual experience and truth for the Oneness of man on the earth. All the scriptures give the message of not differences or hatred but love and unity.

“How precious is your steadfast Love, O God!  
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.” (Bible, Psalm 36:7)

“He who, established in unity, worshippeth Me, abiding in all beings, that Yogi liveth in Me, whatever his mode of living.” (The Bhagavad Gita, 6:31)

Quran tells the entire mankind to follow the nature of reverence.

“ O mankind! Reverence  
Your Guardian –Lord,  
Who created you  
From a single Soul,  
Created, of like nature,  
His mate, and from them twain  
Scattered (like seeds)



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Countless men and women-  
Fear Allah, through Whom  
Ye demand your mutual (rights),  
And (reverence) the wombs  
(That bore you): for Allah  
ever watches over you. (Quran, 4:1)

“A blessing is the arising of Buddhas, a blessing is the true preaching. Blessed is the unity of the Sangha, blessed is the devotion of those who dwell in unity.” (Dhammapada, 194)

“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and if, anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (Bible, Colossians 3:12-14)

### **EQUALITY**

The equality of all- rich and poor, of any race, caste or class, is proclaimed in the scriptures of all faiths. This is true despite the conventions of many cultures that discriminate between people on the basis of caste, or class, or race, or sex.

The essential equality of all people is supported by the belief in One God above all. That anyone can be enlightened or realization of Goodness is available to all universally.

“The self, harmonized by yoga, seeth the SELF abiding in all beings, all beings in the SELF; everywhere he seeth the same.” (The Bhagavad Gita, 6:29)

“You love one another as I have loved you” (Bible, John 15:12)

“I do not call you servants but I have called you friends because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.” (Bible, John 15: 15,16)

“The caste of God is castelessness; He is unborn, self-illuminated, without desire and doubt” (Sri Guru Granth Saheb p.597)

God has no caste; similarly, our soul or self is also casteless. Names, castes, colour, religion, birth etc. are temporary like this body. But the self or soul is free from any such limitation. The self can be enlightened to know the truth and it doesn’t matter from what class or caste you belong to.

“Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart.” (Bible, Peter 1:22)

Good and virtuous deeds are always placed higher and a noble person following a path of truth and righteousness are considered above all and it doesn’t matter – what is the colour of the skin, the gender, birth or the riches one possess- all are immaterial. What matters and what is considered of real value is the soul within and whether it leads you.

“If any do deeds  
Of righteousness-  
Be they male or female-  
And have faith,  
They will enter Heaven,

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And not the least injustice  
Will be done to them." (Quran, 4:124)

"Not by matted locks, nor by lineage nor by caste is one a Brahmin; he is the Brahmin in whom are the truth and righteousness and purity." (Dhammapada, 393)

"But if God is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness." (Bible, Romans, 8:10)

"Make to thyself a refuge; come, strive and be prudent: when thy impurities are purged, thou shalt come into the heavenly abode of the Noble." (Dhammapada, 236)

"The pure fragrance of earth and the brilliance of fire am I; the life in all beings am I, and the austerity in ascetics." (The Bhagavad Gita, 7:9)

### **GOOD CONDUCT**

How do we behave in a given situation or how is our conduct depends on our nature, past memories or outlook. Good or virtuous conduct comes when one is balanced and composed in any kind of situation and circumstance, when one doesn't lose the stability of mind and doesn't over-react in any situation. A person with good conduct is truthful, kind, compassionate, giving and loving. It is possible only in a mind that is free from any false-ego.

"Mind it is which gives to things their quality, their foundation and their being: whose speaks or acts with purified mind, his happiness accompanies as his faithful shadow." (Dhammapada, 2)

It is the false-ego and I-ness, when it arises it bewilders the mind. The mind becomes conditioned and gets trapped in Maya. Maya or material consciousness acts through three Gunas- Taamas or Misconception, Raajas or Passion and Saatv or goodness. In a human life these three Gunas play a vital role. A person who moves towards self-improvement keeps a regular check on them and do not let the mind to be over-powered by them. If one has the desire to improve oneself with determination and devotion one can do it.

"By strenuous effort, by self-control, by temperance, let the wise man make for himself an island which the flood cannot overwhelm." (Dhammapada, 25)

"You have Good conduct and True contemplation if you dwell in the Lord's Name: this indeed, is the true self-discipline, Meditation and Austere Living." (Sri Guru Granth Saheb, p. 1113)

"Little by little let him gain tranquility by means of Reason controlled by steadiness; having made the mind abide in the SELF, let him not think of anything." (Bhagavad Gita, 6:25)

"As the elephant surrenders its will to the goad and the anvil to the smith.

So one should surrender one's body and mind (to the Guru), and be ever alert in the service of God.

So should one still one's Ego, and thus have sway over the whole world." (Sri Guru Granth Saheb, p.648)

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Through introspection, self-discipline and doing good deeds one can conquer the unsteady and wavering mind. And God is with such people who realize the false-ego in them and work towards their self-improvement. As it is known saying, “ God helps those, who helps themselves.”

“Verily never  
Will Allah change the condition  
Of a people until they  
Change it themselves  
(With their own souls) (Quran, 13:11)

Helping oneself doesn't mean satisfying material needs. Yearning for physical pleasures of the world and craving for wealth, power and desires, is Maya and in Maya one thinks very narrowly for the self-interest only. A mind, which doesn't think of others, is selfish and evil passions (lust, greed, anger, emotional attachment and pride) takes over the consciousness. These evil passions are very destructive not only to the society but also to the person's own life. They are the origin of all suffering.

“Because of their sins  
They were drowned  
(In the flood),  
And were made to enter  
The fire (of Punishment) (Quran, 71:25)

“As to those who believe  
And work righteous deeds,  
They have, for their Entertainment,  
The Garden of Paradise” (Quran, 18:107)

“There they shall be in great terror, for god is with the company of the righteous” (Bible, Psalm 14:5)

A righteous or virtuous conduct is free from selfishness, greed, jealousy, corruption and any other evil-doings. In scriptures the virtuous conduct means patience, reverence, truthfulness, tolerance, compassion towards all, love for all, forgiveness, giving nature, kindness, moderate appetite and sleep, purity (of mind, body and speech) and control of mind. The real wealth is the wealth of righteous conduct. A person who realizes this knows his own true self. Such a person is dear to God.

“Beware of bodily anger, and  
control thy body!  
Leave the sins of the body,  
And with thy body practise virtue!” (Dhammapada, 231)

“Beware of the anger of the tongue,  
And control thy tongue! Leave  
The sins of the tongue, and  
Practise virtue with thy tongue!” (Dhammapada, 232)

“Beware of the anger of the mind,  
and control thy mind! Leave the

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sins of the mind, and practise  
virtue with thy mind!" (Dhammapada, 233)

"The wise who control their body,  
who control their tongue, the  
wise who control their mind,  
are indeed well controlled." (Dhammapada, 234)

Quran says,  
"Truly the Righteous will be in Bliss" (Quran, 83:22)

Krishna says in Gita that Soul or Self is Eternal and the body is just temporary. Realization of Self or Nirvana is only possible to a man of good virtues by knowledge or action. But as knowledge should be without pride, arrogance and hypocrisy, the action should be done with devotion to the Divine renouncing all kind of attachment to it. The act of doing is important and not success or failure.

It is true; a human being cannot stay without doing some action or the other. And action will produce reaction. Then, how to escape the wheel of Karma? By leaving the results to the God and having a total detachment to results and this is what is called Karma Yoga or Yoga of renunciations of fruits of actions.

"Thy business is with action only, never with its fruits; so let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor be thou to inaction attached." (Bhagavad Gita, 2:47)

By doing selfless work one gets satisfaction and happiness and that is the real wealth. Love, compassion, service bring joy and peace to the soul. It is mentioned in all the religious texts that efforts of good work do not go waste.

"Burn ye therein:  
The same is it to you  
Whether ye bear it  
With patience or not:  
Ye but receive the recompense  
Of your (own) deeds."  
As to the Righteous,  
They will be in Gardens,  
And in Happiness. (Quran, 52:16,17)

"From food creatures become; from rain is the production of food; rain proceedeth from sacrifice; sacrifice ariseth out of action." (Bhagavad Gita, 3:14)

For the survival of life on earth –Sun is selflessly giving light and heat, rivers are providing water, plants giving fresh air and food, air we are breathing in to live- all are selflessly doing the duty manifested to them. So all our action should be harmless to the harmony and order created in nature.

"He who on earth doth not follow the wheel thus revolving, sinful of life and rejoicing in the senses, he, O son of Pritha, Liveth in vain." (Bhagavad Gita, 3: 16)

*To be continued...*

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## “Music, A Power of Ages”

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Music an essence, a spirit, voice of hearts, a value, a culture and a magic of bringing souls together for centuries although has changed its shapes, but has remained the power to change. Life without music is like a hollow and futile pot. According to an observation of a musician who says “I can categorise people when they are enjoying music with the head phones in the ears. Nodding of their heads, sparking light in their eye and body gestures exhibit their feelings which the music creates in them. The energy they get from music is beyond explanation. He also quotes a research that says about energy by music while at work. 30-35% people while listening to the music can perform their work and creativity energetically and with high concentration”.

History reveals that music has been a major part of the people’s life which gathered them, harmonised their feelings, relations and interests which we can see still in our modern music. All ancient cultures have their traditional music in different forms but the devotional music has its own significance and importance in the lives of people around the globe. South Asian Heritage strongly owns Bhajans and Qawwali’s which is not only associated with Sufism but has strongly been a source of spirituality in general. The music that re-enforces and re-strengthens spiritual powers has been used a lot in Sub-continent. Qawwali is a traditional form of spiritual and mystic musical expression and is an integral part of the great Sufi tradition. Sufism – a mystical philosophy striving to attain truth and divine love through personal communication with the divine is a unique tradition which emphasis that it is

possible to reach God in our temporal existence through sheer devotion. It has strong affinities with various streams of Bhakti movement which stress the same principles 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, Sufi’s believe that human beings can come into touch with god in this life.

Great Qawwal Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (late) has given a new trends to modern forms of Qawwali promoting Sufism, by breaking ethnic & religious boundaries and bringing people together. He proved to be major source of Communal Harmony breaking the religious fundamentalism and promoting peace and brotherhood, as almost all of his qawwalies focused on believe in one God, and depth of spirituality mainstreaming *tasawwuf* and *Ishq* (the divine love). The below true story is based on his great work as an artist is also a common heritage. The life of artists is for everyone, everywhere and for all ages.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan sang first ever Qawwali for Christian faith in 1988 at PCRM Studio Faisalabad. He witnessed that after he sang this qawwali, he became famous in the world because lyrics of this qawwali were taken from the Holy Bible, the Book of Exodus, Chapter 15. This song is also called Song of Deliverance or the Song of Prophet Moses which follows as;

“I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;

The horse and his riders, he has thrown into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my song,  
And he has become my salvation;  
This is my God, and I will praise Him,  
My father’s God and I will exalt Him.

The Lord is the man of War;  
 The Lord is His name.  
 Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into  
 the sea;  
 And his picked officers are sunk in the Red  
 Sea.  
 The floods cover them;  
 They went down into the depths like stone.  
 Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power,  
 Thy right hand, O Lord shatters the enemy.  
 In the greatness of Thy majesty thou over  
 throwest Thy adversaries;  
 Thou sendest froth they fury, it consumes  
 them like stubble.  
 At the blast of Thy nostrils the waters piled  
 up,  
 The floods stood up in the heap;  
 The deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.  
 The enemy said, I will pursue, I will  
 overtake,  
 I will divide the spoil; my desire shall have  
 its fill of them.  
 I will draw my sword, my hand shall  
 destroy them.  
 Who is like Thee, O Lord, among the gods?  
 Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness, in  
 glorious deeds, doing wonders?  
 .....  
 .....  
 Sing to the Lord for He has triumphed  
 gloriously; ...

\*\*\*\*\*

This song right after its recording came in  
 the market, was sold in hands, reproduced by the  
 studio and was nationally and internationally got  
 fame. Nustrat Fateh Ali khan personally sang this  
 qawwali on various occasions like mela's, urses,  
 radio and TV shows etc. A couple of years back,  
 this cassette was heard on a shrine near to a  
 Christian colony in Lahore. The Christians were  
 amazed to hear the words, there was itinerant  
 about this song, many Christian came to the same

Shrine. They got involved emotionally, spiritually  
 and physically, many were blessed and many felt  
 strange feelings in them. A couple of Christians  
 were interviewed about this change and their  
 frequent visitation of this Shrine of a Muslim Sufi  
 who replied, "God speaks to us, we are healed  
 and we are blessed. We pray to God only, He is  
 our redeemer and savior, this Shrine is a place  
 where we all assemble. This Shrine is a source of  
 bringing people together, we had never thought  
 of coming hear for pray and never even thought  
 to be healed and blessed but God has done it for  
 us". When they were asked, what brings you hear?  
 They replied, "This Qawwali of Nusrat Fateh Ali  
 Khan, when we listened to it, we feel that he is  
 speaking to us and is inviting us to sing with him  
 the Song of Prophet Moses".

In a particular question related to faith and  
 religion, Usman replied, "Religious places are  
 meant to separate people but are origin to bring  
 people together towards goodness, brotherhood  
 and unity – oneness in God. This and other shrines  
 of Sufi's are places to share a heritage of purity in  
 God".

Such believers inspired by music,  
 harmonized in oneness and living with values are  
 true human beings. This true story of a sufi shrine  
 and qawwali originated from the Holy Book have  
 become life giving source for many. We can  
 generate thousands of such example across South  
 Asia where people are healed with Music, inspired  
 to live in Peace, gathered for unity and oneness  
 culturally, socially and spiritually.

Qawwali with modern trends has given  
 people a new spirit and gloriously has inspired to  
 share a Composite Heritage of talents sharing too.  
 We see today, singers, and other artists across the  
 borders are playing vital role in giving spiritual  
 food, and messages. We believe that Composite  
 Heritage of the South Asia will revive and be  
 strengthened provided we instigate togetherness  
 irrespective of caste, creed and religion across the  
 borders.

## Composite Heritage Workshop—Orissa 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2008

Institute for Social Democracy organised a five day orientation workshop on Composite Heritage with activists and Ngo workers of Orissa and Jharkhand regions. ISD has been working on the concept of Composite Heritage from more than five years. Our experiences tell us that Composite Heritage is a strong peace building tool in conflict ridden societies. South Asian region has a great cultural diversity, a fact known to all. It is this

rich culture of India in particular and South Asia in general that has been a uniting factor for centuries.

This workshop was organised with the objective of introducing the concept to field activists working on various issues and dealing with a variety of conflicts on a day to day basis. There were 27 participants representing Jharkhand and Orissa.



*Published by : INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, New Delhi*  
*for*  
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