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EXPLORE Rural India

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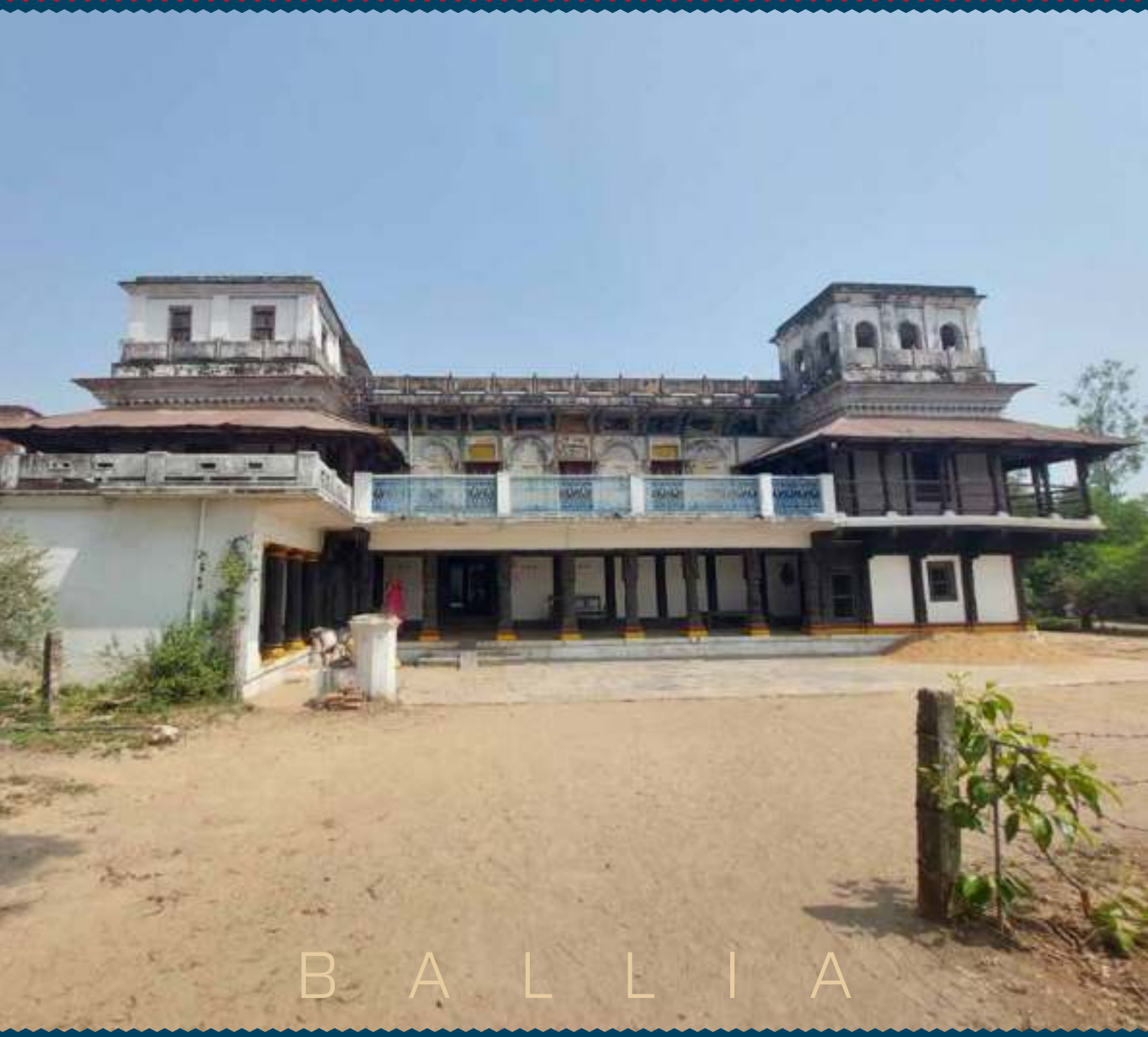

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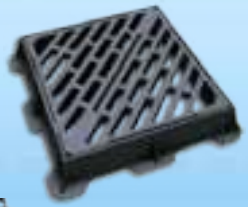

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"A Nation's Culture resides in the Hearts
and in the Soul of its People"

– Mahatma Gandhi

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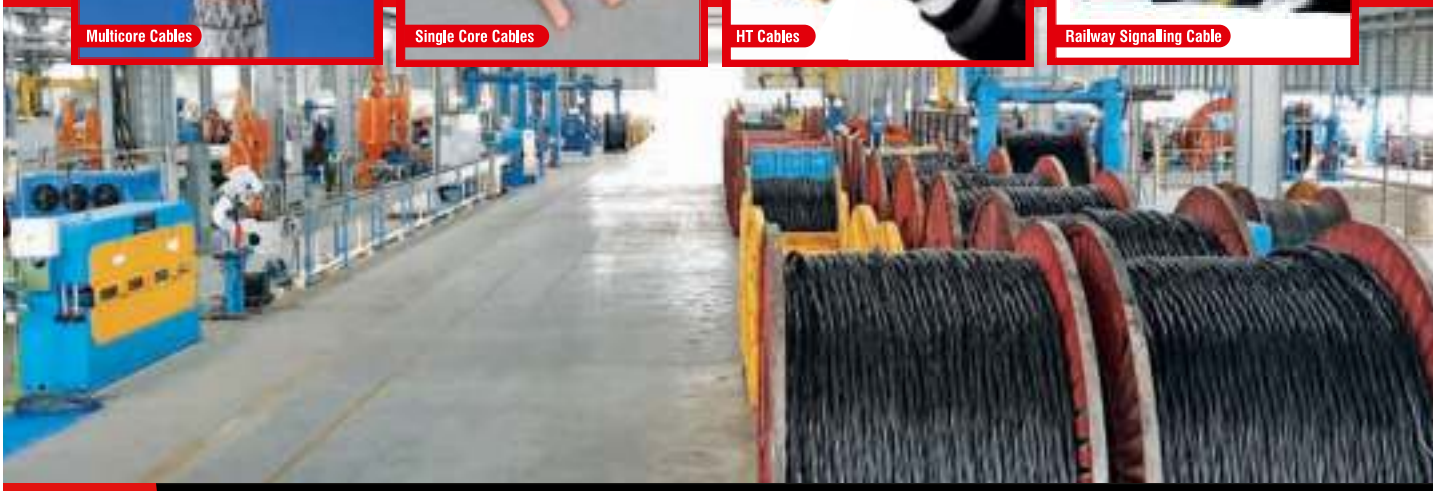

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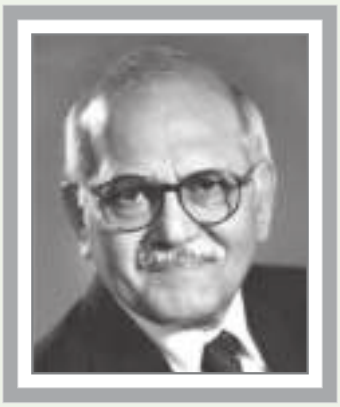


Chairman's Message

The Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development came into existence in 2011. After serving as Vice Chairman and then Chairman of INTACH for over 10 years, I felt the urge to devote my efforts to our rural heritage, and perhaps to link its sustainable preservation with rural development. With this idea in mind, I had extensive discussions with Maharaja Gaj Singhji of Jodhpur ('Bapji'), Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur ('Joey') and Raja Malvinder Singh of Patiala. The concept of ITRHD took shape, the Memorandum of Association was finalized, and the Society formally registered in June 2011.

In 2013 we decided to share our vision with a wider audience, and began bringing out an in-house magazine, Explore Rural India, with articles by Indian and international scholars and specialists. To date, 12 issues have been published. The positive response to this led to a decision in 2017 to begin creating special publications on specific themes of rural Indian life. To date, there have been five such volumes: Traditional Cuisines; Rural Games and Sports; Traditional Healing Systems; Tribal Culture; and Oral Traditions, Myths and Legends. All these publications have proved to be extremely popular and have acquired the status of collectors' items. The next special volume, soon to go to the press, focuses on Folk Tales Of India. All issues of the above publications can be seen and downloaded on our website.

We are grateful to Asha Rani Mathur for cheerfully accepting to continue editing the present edition despite her frail health.After completing most of the editing of this issue she fell seriously ill and could not continue.Fortunately Radhika Bhatia , a professional writer and editor (and family to me) agreed to give the final touches to proof reading etc and we are very grateful to her for the trouble she has taken.

In this present issue we have taken the liberty of reproducing a few articles from previous issues, in response to requests from our readers.

In our last issue I had referred to the severe financial crisis that we had been facing on account of Covid. Since then, I am glad to mention that we have partially recovered with CSR support from some companies and donations from individuals. We are also indebted to the Ministry of Culture for a grant of ₹ 5 crores as from the interest generated, we have been able to keep some of our projects afloat. Particulars regarding our projects are available on our detailed website.

However, certain ongoing activities need special mention.

EDUCATION

We have been running a primary school in the musicians' village of Hariharpur (in district Azamgarh in UP) for the last several years. It is free of cost to the children, who are mostly from the economically weaker sections of society, and with a special focus on including girls as students.

Initially started in a rented building, we then managed to add a few large rooms that were partitioned into 4 functioning classrooms. The hot mid-day meals were originally cooked in a local home. We have now been able to arrange funds for a multi-purpose dining hall and a proper modern, hygienic kitchen. With some additional donations we are in the process of adding to the number of classrooms. However, our dream of having a complete school building is yet to be realized. We are trying for CSR support.

For day to day running of the school we are on firm ground at the moment with contributions coming in from friends and members on a regular basis, in addition to some funds from a corporate supporter. However, in order to take care of the future, we are trying to set up a corpus for the school so that in future, in times of dire need, the interest would take care of the basic requirements. Our target is ₹ 5 crores and a modest beginning has been made with ₹ 36 lakhs.

LIVING TRADITIONS

In setting up ITRHD one of our objectives was to provide support to craft and music traditions which were struggling to survive. Azamgarh district in UP provided us with a 'Creative Cluster' of three unique villages: the silk handloom weavers of Mubarakpur, the potters of Nizamabad and the classical musicians of village Hariharpur. Each of these extraordinary villages had traditions that were several centuries old. The craftspersons, however, were being exploited by middlemen and were finding it difficult to survive, and the classical musicians were struggling for recognition and opportunity. At an early stage we decided to bring the talented inheritors of these traditions to Delhi where under the umbrella of The Azamgarh Festival the artisans were provided excellent venues where they could sell directly to customers, and the musicians performed before sophisticated audiences from whom they received the recognition that had been eluding them. All expenses, travel, board and lodging, fixing of venues, and publicity were organised through sponsors by ITRHD. These annual festivals have helped the craftspersons to gain some economic stability. The musicians acquired a distinct identity and came to be recognized as from the Hariharpur Gharana. A few years later artisans from the Barmer region of Rajasthan, known for their unique skills and products, were also included in the Festival as special invitees.

A more recent project, initiated in 2019, involves the revival and sustainable development of traditional crafts in the Barmer region of Rajasthan. Activities have included workshops for young residents in villages with unique and endangered traditions, exhibitions and sales in Delhi and in Jodhpur's Mehrangarh Fort, activities involving environmental education and conservation, and a number of other interventions. An especially innovative activity involved training young girls in villages famous for (the traditionally exclusively male) music traditions. We embarked upon this with some trepidation, not wishing to create a social uproar. To our pleasant surprise, not only the girls, but also the male musicians and the community leaders were tremendously supportive. Another activity involves the comprehensive development of a village in which a unique environment and an extremely committed group of local residents is forging impressive results in both the sustainable conservation of precious resources and the strong growth of awareness in both the younger and older generations. All these activities have been made possible because of the generous CSR support provided by the Bhiwani based Hindustan Gum and Chemicals Ltd.

As we have seen the positive benefits that accrue to the participants of our activities in Azamgarh and Barmer, our endeavor now is to identify and provide support to artisans and performing artists with historic traditions from other regions as well.

BUILT HERITAGE

Sustainable conservation of our built heritage is also one of our primary objectives. Initial support came to us from some state governments, particularly Jharkhand and Haryana.

The Jharkhand government on nomination basis, without asking for bids, entrusted to us two major conservation projects at a cost of ₹16 crores. These involved 62 terracotta temples in the unique living temple village of Maluti, and a historic jail in Ranchi in which Birsa Munda – a renowned tribal freedom fighter – had been held as prisoner. After restoration the jail was to be converted into a tribal museum. Both these projects had the blessings of the Prime Minister. The Ranchi Project was completed before schedule and the Maluti temples are in their second phase.

In Haryana's Nuh village, a 700-year-old Dargah of great architectural and historic value was on the verge of collapse. Its conservation was entrusted to ITRHD with funds provided by the Haryana Waqf Board, the Haryana Government, and ASI. This work also has been successfully completed.

We were extremely gratified that our capability to handle conservation projects was recognized by the XVth Finance Commission, which specifically recommended to the Government of India that 4 major conservation projects in Punjab and Haryana, totalling ₹38 crores, should be implemented by ITRHD.

DOCUMENTATION

It is our firm belief that in order to make an informed and sensitive impact, it is necessary to initially focus on detailed documentation of rural heritage all over the country. Such an exercise will enable us to determine which of the properties are in most need of conservation, and can thereafter be put to adaptive reuse, either for the benefit of the community or for purposes of rural tourism promotion.

Our belief in this is so strong that we began, with our own resources, to undertake as a pilot project a detailed documentation in villages in the Munnar region of Kerala. This led to the UP Government entrusting us with documentation of the rural heritage in the districts of Ballia and Varanasi. This was successfully completed, and the UP Government appreciated the efforts made by us and the quality of the publications produced. However, due to bureaucratic procedures, payment of ₹ 18 lacs has not yet been made despite our best efforts.

As a new Finance Commission has recently been constituted, we plan to make a presentation for support of further activity in this area.

OTHER PROJECTS

One of our first projects involved Rakhigarhi, a village in Haryana, that may soon enter the world heritage map. Had it been discovered earlier it would have been the first archeological site belonging to the Indus Valley civilization. Some archaeologists claim that the earliest settlements in Rakhigarhi in fact predate the Indus Valley civilization. Excavation has been done by the Baroda institute headed by Vasant Shinde. An article by him on the site is carried in this issue. ITRHD's role has been to create awareness among the residents, and to promote infra structural development. As a result of our efforts a museum building and accommodation facilities have been provided by the State Government. We also have plans to promote developmental activities, youth involvement and rural tourism.

A new project that currently is engaging our full attention is the setting up of an academy for management and conservation of rural heritage, with the initial focus being on rural Buddhist heritage. As there are quite a few institutes for general conservation of heritage, emphasis on Buddhist heritage will fill the need for such

a specialized facility and will also perhaps attract persons in this field from other countries with a Buddhist tradition. In order to carry the idea forward and to elicit views relating to the proposed academy, we are organising an international conference to discuss and debate various issues. For this, we have entered into partnership with various relevant organisations, including:

- School of Planning and Architecture Delhi
- International Buddhist Confederation
- Gautam Buddha University Noida
- Buddhist Monuments Development Council
- American Buddhist Association

We are also in discussion with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) for possible collaboration. Tentatively, the Conference is planned for the winter of 2025.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Apart from existing projects, plans are in process for initiating new projects in Madhya Pradesh (Gwalior), Punjab and Tamil Nadu.

We are committed to increasing the involvement of youth in our activities, and in increasing activities related to environmental conservation, such as sustained annual tree plantation drives.

Programmes relating to the empowerment of women and disadvantaged rural youth through skill development constitute one of our priority areas. Programmes we have already organized have included teachers' training, nursing training, tailoring, beauty treatment, computer training, as well as workshops and training in performance and craft skills. A particularly successful activity recently concluded in Jodhpur trained young participants as emergency medical technicians. We were extremely happy that almost all of the trainees received good job offers at the end of the course!

We are happy that we have so far been able to accomplish a good deal. This has been solely due to the tremendous support of our Trustees, our small but extremely dedicated staff, our members and friends, several of whom have made generous contributions of both time and money, and a few invaluable corporate sponsors who understand and share our vision. There is still, however, much to be done. It is a constant uphill battle, but we all share the strong belief that we cannot abandon the skilled and talented rural Indians who have placed their hopes and dreams in our hands. Please do join us in whatever way you can – we promise that it will be an immensely rewarding experience.

— S. K. Misra

Thoughts on Pottery and the Potter

— B. N. Goswamy

The blacksmith at work
At Chokhi Dhani, near Chandigarh

Potter's hands fashioning a vessel

The potter Nanak, and his son.
By Kehar Singh; 19th century; Chandigarh Museum

And while he (the potter) plied his magic art -
For it was magical to me -
I stood in silence and apart,
And wondered more and more to see
That shapeless lifeless mass of clay
Rise up to meet the master's hand,
And now contract and now expand,
And even his slightest touch obey.

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

For in the market-place, one dusk of day
I watch'd the potter thumping his wet clay:
And with it's all obliterated tongue it murmur'd
– 'Gently, brother, gently, pray!'"

— Omar Khayyam

Just the other day, Kalapini - gifted singer and daughter of the great Kumar Gandharva - was here on her way back to Dewas, and stopped by to be with us for some part of the day. Not surprisingly, conversation turned to Kumarji, whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year. And in the course of it came up his love for, in fact his being soaked in, the poetry of Kabir which he submitted to and sang of again and again, each time with a renewed, moving passion. Kabir, it is certain, was his soul-mate, his voice across centuries of time. That wonderful utterance of the great saint-poet - *ek hi maati, ek kumhaara/ ek sabhi ka sirjanhaara* - he used to recite to himself, she said, ever so often: There is one Clay, and there is just one Potter: from it He creates everyone, even-handedly, all of us.

Among all the crafts, I – personally speaking – love pottery perhaps the most. But to be able to read into that craft, distinguishing *meaning* from *information*, is given only to great minds. And I often wonder about that. From time to time, I look at images of potters at work and continue to be struck by that look of complete absorption on their faces as the wheel moves and those hands which 'now contract and now expand,' create things from simple clay. A favourite of mine is a drawing by Kehar Singh – that highly gifted 19th century Punjabi painter, so little seen and so little talked about – who drew faces and forms with consummate ease. Working as he was most likely for the British who were collecting data of class and caste and professions, he seems to have decided not to draw generalized images of professionals, but of specific individuals pursuing their professions: a tracker and his companion,

a wandering jogi, a carpenter, a nihang, a Shaiva pandit, and so on, each a brilliantly rendered sketch inscribed neatly with the name, sometimes the village, of the person portrayed. The person who I speak of here, and reproduce an image of, courtesy the Chandigarh Museum, is a potter, Nanak by name, recorded as being one hundred and thirty years old, seated on a rug, while an apprentice, or his son perhaps, sits close but below him, moving the wheel with his long staff. Around them lie some pots that have already come off the wheel. To look intently at the two portraits yields delight. And is in some ways moving.

Somewhat in that line, I had occasion to observe, recently, a gifted young potter at work in Chokhi Dhani, a cultural village, not far from Chandigarh, which showcases Rajasthani traditions. Spread all over its sprawling site are kiosks, some covered, many of them under the sun, where dancers dance, fortune tellers tell fortunes, marksmen offer challenging targets, and craftsmen ply their trades. I was intrigued by the fact that somewhere in the organizers' thoughts was the idea of bringing in all the 'original' craftsmen who are mentioned in one of the most ancient of our texts, the *Rigveda*, as the sons of Vishwakarma, literally the god who was the 'Maker of the world.' Vishwakarma had five sons it is stated - named Manu, Maya, Tvastra, Shilpi and Visvajna - each of them a craftsman: a potter, a blacksmith, a carpenter, a stonemason and a goldsmith: all essential to the functioning of a settled society. Here at this site, I saw at least a potter, a blacksmith, and a goldsmith: perhaps the other two were also there, somewhere.

I decided to spend time watching at least two of them who were demonstrating their methods and their skills: the blacksmith and the potter. Working with the most primitive looking of tools, the blacksmith forged for me in iron, at my asking, a perfectly shaped and proportioned letter M - the initial of the name of my grandson, Madhav - and I was given it to carry home. An even greater delight for me was to watch the potter at work. Slim and athletic looking, neatly turned out with a typical *lahariya* turban on his head and a *kurta* and *shalwar*, he was completely absorbed in his work, welcoming visitors, turning out simple pots on his wheel which he moved with great energy, complete calm on his face. I was drawn to him and engaged him in some conversation whenever he had a moment to spare and breathe. I asked him his name and he said, simply, 'Iddu' which was short for Eid Muhammad. When I mentioned the honoured place that potters had in ancient times and in our texts, he felt very interested in knowing more. I spoke of Kabir: he had of course heard the name but knew none of his dohas touching upon pottery and potters. He asked me to recite some, if I would: something I did with pleasure. I began with one of the best known of Kabir ji's compositions on mortality:

Maati kahe kumhar sey, tu kya raunde moye
Ik din aisa aaega main raundoon-gi toye

[Arrogantly you trample me under your feet, the Earth spoke to the Potter once:
When the day (of your burial) comes it will be I who will be trampling upon you.]

Again:

Guru kumhaar sis kumbh hai ghari ghari kaarhey khot
Andar haath sahaar dey, upar sey dey chot

[The guru is the potter and his pupil the vessel; repeatedly he keeps 'hammering' it into shape.
In fact, he is supporting it from the inside with his hand while slapping and beating it from the outside]

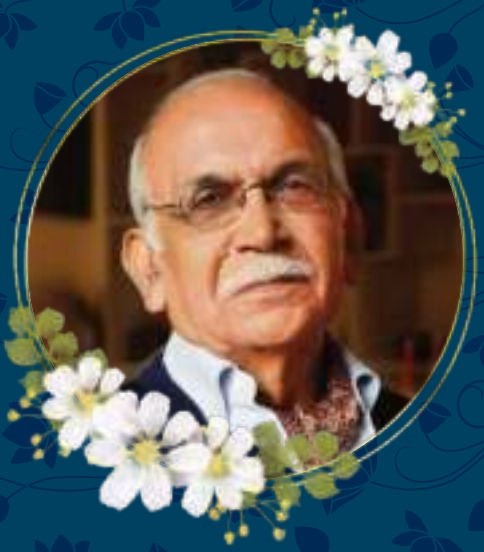
Iddu was thrilled hearing these. Just one more, he asked, as some reader of this piece might also do. I went on:

Kabira Hari ras yun piya, baaki rahi na chhaak
Paaka kalas kumhaar ka bahu-ri na charhibey chaak

[So much of the rasa of devotion to Hari have I imbibed, that I am completely satiated now.
Once a pot is baked, can it be placed on the wheel again?]

Who, other than Kabir, asks questions like these?

The potter 'Iddu' at work
At Chokhi Dhani, near Chandigarh



Dr. Brijinder Nath Goswamy

15 August 1933 – 17 November 2023

B.N. Goswamy was a truly extraordinary person. A member of the 1956 IAS batch (along with S.K. Misra), he soon decided that the world of art and art history was more suited to him, and left to forge new paths. And new paths there were. His brilliance ranged far and wide, discovering and exploring forgotten or previously unknown worlds within worlds of Indian art and culture. His ingenuity is legendary. Traipsing to remote pilgrimage sites and poring through centuries of pilgrim lists, painstakingly following the threads, and, lo and behold, finding the names of artists who until then had been lost to history, is only one example.

His 2022 book *Conversations* gives an insight into the extraordinary breadth of his knowledge and intellectual explorations. And his recent book on the Indian Cat shows how, even in his last few months, his amazing mind was exploring new vistas.

Every Sunday I would turn to the Chandigarh Tribune to read his latest column; as in the one reproduced here, they always informed, entertained, and often entranced.

I knew him and his lovely and sparkling wife Karuna from my days in New York in the 1970s. He always called me “dear Maureen” and SK “dear Shashi Kant” with his own special blend of affection and formality. We miss you Dear Brijen, and are grateful for the many ways in which you enriched our lives.

— **By Maureen Liebl**,
for all of us at ITRHD

Nikolas Roerich: Spiritual Bridge Between India and Russia

— Yuri Mazurov

Fig. 1. Svyatoslav Roerich. 'Portrait of the artist Nicholas Roerich'

Nicholas Roerich (1874 - 1947) is known as an outstanding Russian artist and scientist, a brave traveller and tireless researcher of the Asian cultures, an original poet and writer, and a great humanist. It is difficult even to enumerate all the incarnations of this personality, who left behind a huge legacy, the value of which increases with time. Creating true artistic masterpieces in his work and possessing the highest spirituality, Roerich convinced the world community of the absolute value of the cultural heritage of mankind and the need to protect it.

Now Roerich is known almost all over the world. However, this name is especially popular in his homeland Russia, and in India – his second, spiritual homeland. In Russia, it is considered the highest artistic, intellectual and spiritual authority that has discovered the cultural treasures of the East. In India, where Roerich spent a huge part of his life, he was called Maharishi (Great Saint) and Himavatputra (Son of the Himalayas). And he became, in a way, a spiritual bridge between India and Russia, which is successfully reflected in the famous painting by Roerich's son, Svyatoslav, also a famous artist (Fig. 1).

The many-sided activities of Roerich are perceived in Russia as true spiritual asceticism. Roerich is respected, appreciated and loved, he is trusted. And therefore, Russian people transfer their attitude towards Roerich to his beloved country, India. In many ways, it is from here that the trust and warmth towards India, so widespread in Russia, the feelings of sympathy and a kind of unlimited credit of trust in this country, originate. Russia remembers the invaluable merits of N. Roerich on this path and pays tribute to his memory, especially relevant on the eve of his 150th birthday.

GREAT ARTIST AND HUMANIST

It is generally accepted that Nicholas Roerich entered Russian art immediately as a mature master. In 1897 he graduated from the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. As a diploma work, he presented the painting 'Messenger. Rise against clan', taking a name for her from the Russian ancient annals. The picture, permeated with images of Ancient Rus (old name of historical Russia), was a resounding success. Since that time, the theme of the history of the Slavs for a long time becomes dominant in the artist's work. During this period, he created a cycle of paintings 'The Beginning of Rus. Slavs' (Fig. 2), based on the traditions of Russian realism and deep knowledge of history, folklore, arts and crafts, as well as personal participation in archaeological excavations.

The skill with which the artist created many paintings in this series is amazing. The artist takes his viewers back into the depths of the centuries and allows them not only to become eyewitnesses of the most important events of pagan Rus, but also to feel their involvement in them. He wrote that in order to understand the beauty and grandeur of that Rus, one must "comprehend the spirit of that era, love it, glorious, full of wild expanse and will."

Fig. 2. N. Roerich. 'Overseas Guests' (1901)

Fig. 3. N. Roerich. 'The heroes woke up' (1940)

Clear understanding the role of art in the life of the people, Roerich was an ardent supporter of the synthesis of arts. He was an active participant in that movement in the Russian artistic life of the twentieth century, which aimed to search for a great style by reviving the traditions of painting and turning to the origins of folk art. During this period, he also created a number of outstanding frescoes and mosaics, based on the traditions of ancient Russian monumental art. During this period, his influence on Russian theater and music was great.

Deep immersion in the history of his country and active indifference to its fate developed in Roerich a phenomenal historical intuition, noticed by his contemporaries. His paintings, full of anxieties and gloomy forebodings, created on the eve of the First World War, such as 'The Cry of the Serpent', 'Glow' and 'Doomed City' were perceived as prophetic forebodings of the impending horrors of the coming war against fascism. During the war, Roerich acted as a passionate patriot of his Motherland. In his paintings, as well as articles and speeches, he glorified the heroism of the Red Army, demonstrating his unshakable faith in victory over world evil. During these years, he creates a heroic series of paintings: 'Igor's Campaign', 'Alexander Nevsky', 'Victory', 'Partisans' and others (Fig. 3).

Roerich manifested himself as a humanist, a consistent fighter against militarism and a defender of cultural values, in other words, as a true patriot and an outstanding professional. And so, he remained for the rest of his life. In this regard, his son Svyatoslav Roerich spoke about his father: *He was a true patriot and loved his homeland. But he belonged to the whole world, the whole world was his field of activity. Every human race was for him a race of brothers, every country was of special interest and special significance to him.*

Since the 1920s, Roerich began active cooperation with the cultural centers of America and Europe. In 1937, the Nicholas Roerich Museum was opened in Riga, and the First Congress of the Baltic Roerich Societies was also held. In June 1938, the Russian Cultural and Historical Museum in Prague opened a separate Roerich Hall. The Nicholas Roerich Museum in Bruges is successfully operating under the auspices of the Roerich Foundation. Since 1932, under the patronage of the Yugoslav King Alexander I, 21 paintings by N. Roerich have been exhibited in the Belgrade Museum of Prince Paul. Since 1933, a permanent exhibition of paintings by N. Roerich has been held in Zagreb at the Museum of the Academy of Sciences.

In 1936, the books Gate to the Future and Indestructible were published in Riga, and in 1939 one of the largest monographs on Roerich's work with essays by Vsevolod Ivanov and Erich Hollerbach was published. In addition, at least eight major studies on Roerich's work are being published in Latvia, the USA and India. In 1936, the first doctoral dissertation on Roerich's pedagogical method was defended in New York.

Also in 1936, Roerich's students in the US organized the Arsuna Art Center (Santa Fe), and in 1937 they founded the Flamma Cultural Promotion Association

(Liberty, Indiana), which attracted a wide range of cultural figures and began publishing books and a magazine of the same name. The magazine was published in India and edited from India and the USA. In 1938, the N. Roerich Academy of Arts was opened in New York, continuing the traditions of the Institute of United Arts.

These and many other events in Roerich's life, together with his unusually productive activity in the field of creativity, which turned out to be surprisingly in tune with the challenges of that time, make him a leader in world culture. Nicholas Roerich really began to belong to the whole world, as evidenced by the many deeds and events of that time. And the most important of them was the adoption of the Roerich Pact.

ROERICH PACT

In 1928, N. Roerich, in collaboration with Dr. G. Shklyaver (University of Paris), prepared a draft Treaty for the Protection of Cultural Property, later called the Roerich Pact. Together with the Treaty, Roerich proposed a distinctive sign for identifying objects of protection – the Banner of Peace, which is a white cloth with a red circle and three red circles inscribed in it, symbolizing the unity of the past, present and future in the circle of eternity, according to another version – religion, art and science in the circle of culture. For international cultural activities and the initiative of the Pact in 1929, Roerich was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1929, the text of the draft Treaty with the accompanying address by N. Roerich to the governments and peoples of all countries was published in the press and sent to government, scientific, artistic and educational institutions around the world. International conferences were held. At the first international conference of the Roerich Pact in the Belgian city of Bruges (September 1931), N. Roerich proposed the creation of the World League of Culture. One of the main tasks of the League was to inculcate respect for nature.

The call for culture, the call for peace, the call for creativity and beauty will reach only an ear strengthened by true values. An understanding of life as self-improvement for the benefit of the people will take shape where there is a firm reverence for nature. Therefore, the League of Culture, among the main educational work, must do its best to interpret a reasonable attitude towards nature as a source of cheerful work, wise joy, unceasing knowledge and creativity – the artist wrote in the article *The Pain of the Planet* (1933). As a result, committees were formed in a number of countries in support of the Pact, and the World League of Culture was also established. The draft of the Pact was approved by the Museum Committee of the League of Nations, as well as by the Pan American Union.

Roerich hoped that the Pact would have educational value. He said: *The pact for the protection of cultural treasures is needed not only as an official body, but as an educational law that from the first school days will educate the younger generation with noble ideas about preserving the true values of all mankind.* The idea of the Pact was supported by many world-famous cultural figures: Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw, Rabindranath Tagore, Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Herbert Wells and others.

The signing of the Pact took place on April 15, 1935 at the White House in Washington D.C. with the personal participation of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The document was ratified by ten of the twenty-one countries of the American continent.

Fig. 4. Signing of the Roerich Pact

The signing of the Roerich Pact received a great response both in America and in Europe. The Roerich Pact was the first international act specifically dedicated to the protection of cultural property, the only agreement in this area adopted by a part of the international community before World War II. In 1949, at the 4th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, it was decided to start work on international legal regulation in the field of the protection of cultural property in the event of an armed conflict. In 1954, the Roerich Pact formed the basis of the Hague International Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

The ideas of the Pact were also reflected in the works of Nicholas Roerich. The emblem of the 'Banner of Peace' can be seen on many of his canvases of the thirties. The painting 'Madonna Oriflamma' (Fig. 5) is specially dedicated to the Pact.

Yes, indeed, Nicholas Roerich belongs to the whole world, but it so happened that it was India that became his second home.

Fig. 5. N. Roerich. 'Madonna Oriflamma'

ROERICH IN INDIA

From childhood, Nicholas Roerich was attracted to the paintings, archeology, history and the rich cultural heritage of the East. Studying at St. Petersburg University deepened his interest in oriental themes. In 1905, along with the ancient Russian theme, oriental motifs begin to appear in his work. He published several essays on Japan and India (*Devassari Abuntu, Borders of the Kingdom, Lakshmi the Conqueror, Indian Way, Gayatri Commandment*). Some of his most notable first paintings on Indian motifs were 'Devassari Abuntu', 'The Border of the Kingdom' and 'The Wisdom of Manu'. In addition to the collection of paintings of the 'Little Dutchmen' collected by Roerich, a collection of Oriental art appeared. In addition to Russian philosophy, he studied the philosophy of the East, the works of the outstanding thinkers of India – Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, the work of R. Tagore, theosophical literature. The ancient cultures of Russia and India, their common source, were of interest to Roerich as an artist and as a scientist.

As a scientist, Roerich realized the importance of personal acquaintance with the true, deep East and came to understand the need for a thorough research expedition to this vast and still little explored region. From 1913, he began to make plans for such an expedition, the preparation for which required enormous efforts and took ten years. In the autumn of 1923, Roerich's journey, unparalleled in the history of oriental studies, began along the route India - Himalayas - Tibet - Chinese Turkestan - Altai - Mongolia - China - Tibet - Trans-Himalayas - India.

The most difficult expedition in terms of its conditions lasted five years, and the length of the path traveled by its participants was 25,000 kilometers. During this time, the most valuable materials on geology and botany, archaeological artifacts, collections of various types of art, ancient manuscripts, etc. were collected. Upon his return from the expedition, to study the materials collected in it, Roerich founded an international research center - the Himalayan Institute Urusvati.

By the end of 1935, Roerich was living permanently in India (Northern Himalayas, Kulu Valley, Naggar). This period was one of the most fruitful in Roerich's work. Over 12 years, the artist created more than a thousand paintings, two new books and several

volumes of literary essays. Roerich's work came to be increasingly revered in the country. From 1932-1947, 18 major exhibitions of his works were held in different cities of India. Monographs about the work of N. Roerich were published. Indian museums and collectors acquired paintings by the artist. Since 1932, the Roerich Center for Art and Culture has been actively operating in Allahabad. There are separate halls of paintings by N. Roerich in the museums Bharat Bhala Bhavan (Varanasi), the Allahabad Municipal Museum, and in the gallery named after Sri Chitralayam (Trivandrum).

The paintings created by Roerich in India opened a new page in the history of world painting, which before him knew neither such plots or motifs of nature, nor such images and colors. Roerich not only deeply comprehended the history, ethnography, philosophy and art of the East, he literally lived the culture of its peoples. Among his numerous publications, the article *The Indian Perspective on Ethics and Aesthetics*, and articles on Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru stand out.

Jawaharlal Nehru, who highly appreciated Roerich, said about his paintings: *When you look at these canvases, many of which depict the Himalayas, it seems that you capture the spirit of these great mountains* (Fig. 6). *They have risen above the plains for centuries and have been our guardians. These pictures remind us of a lot of our history, our thinking, our cultural and spiritual heritage, a lot not only about the past of India, but also about something permanent and eternal.*

ROERICH DIED IN KULU ON DECEMBER 13, 1947. THE INSCRIPTION ON THE STONE READS: *ON DECEMBER 15, 1947, THE BODY OF NICHOLAS ROERICH, THE GREAT FRIEND OF INDIA, WAS SET ON FIRE HERE.*

Fig. 6. N. Roerich. 'Himalayas'

Fig. 7. N. Roerich. 'She Who Holds the World'

ROERICH'S HERITAGE

Nicholas Roerich lived a long and extremely eventful life, leaving behind a huge heritage. The whole world is amazed at the scope and richness of his activities and creative genius. A great artist, a great scientist and writer, an archaeologist and explorer, he touched and illuminated so many aspects of human endeavor. The sheer volume is amazing – thousands of paintings, and almost every one of them is a great work of art. Among them there is one fundamental painting for Roerich's heritage, 'She Who Holds the World', (Fig. 7), which he dedicated to his wife Elena, a like-minded person and faithful assistant who shared all the trials with him.

Explaining the meaning of this work, programmatic for his work, Roerich notes: *Under the many different covers, human wisdom composes the same single image of Beauty, Selflessness and Patience. And again, a woman must go to a new mountain, talking to her relatives about eternal ways*. This picture reflects the idea of synthesis of the artistic cultures of mankind, which the artist was striving for all his conscious life.

The idea of the synthesis of cultures pervades all the works of Nicholas Roerich, but in its most vivid form it was embodied in his desire to create a union between the cultures of India and Russia. The Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, who personally knew Roerich, said: *His paintings amaze with their richness and subtle sense of color and, above all, wonderfully convey the mysterious grandeur of the nature of the Himalayas. Yes, and he himself, with his appearance and nature, seemed to some extent imbued with the soul of the great mountains. He was not verbose, but restrained power emanated from him, which seemed to fill the entire surrounding space with itself. We deeply respect Nicholas Roerich for his wisdom and creative genius. We also appreciate him as a link between the Soviet Union and India…I think that the paintings of Nicholas Roerich, his stories about India, will give the Soviet people a part of the soul of their Indian friends. I also know that N. K. Roerich and his family contributed in many ways to a more complete picture of the Soviet country in India.*

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The Marvelous Mosaic of India

— AshaRani Mathur

Common be your store of water,
Common your share of food together;
I knit you together to a common bond —
United, gather round the sacrificial fire
Like spokes about the nave of a chariot wheel.

— From the Atharva Veda

The landmass of India is referred to as a sub-continent. But in terms of her people, India is so varied and heterogeneous that the scale is truly continental. Few continents, let alone countries, have such a large and diverse mixture of races. Travel a few hundred kilometres in any direction and you will find a different group whose language, food and costume vary from those encountered earlier.

THE PLACE, THE PEOPLE, THE PAST: DAZZLING DIVERSITY

India's population stands at over one billion, the second highest in the world; a population that speaks over 1600 languages and dialects of which 18 are officially recognised by the Indian government. Four great language strains can be heard in the country, the Indo-Aryan (such as Sanskrit and its descendents), the Dravidian, of which Tamil is the most ancient, the Indo-Tibetan along the Himalayan ridges from west to east, and the Austro-Asiatic of some tribal groups. Every major world religion is represented here, and India is the place of origin for quite a few. Christianity and Islam came here early in their histories: The Apostle Thomas is said to have brought the former, while the first wave of Islam came from Arabia with the traders of the coast. Hinduism was the gift of the Aryans, cosmic thinkers and singers of Nature. Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism were born here, reformist movements that have radiated outward through the world. Jews and Zoroastrians (known to us as Parsis) escaped the persecution of their homelands to find shelter here. For many historical reasons, most major racial groups of the world met and mingled here, turning India into, as one writer has put it, "One of the greatest ethnographical museums of the world".

But these bare facts give no idea of the colour and texture, the vibrancy and exuberance of the country's people, a country where complexions shade from the fairest to the darkest and eyes can be black, brown, green or blue. From this melting pot of races and beliefs has emerged the unparalleled richness and variety of Indian culture, based on assimilation and adaption, tolerance and the ability to co-exist and mingle in a complex and composite society.

It has been said that a country's history lies in its geography; for India, the Himalayas and the seas that wash the peninsula are at the heart of both. Neither high mountain passes nor daunting ocean voyages could keep out the invaders attracted to a land fabled for its spices and jewels, its gold and ivory, its textiles and wealth. Immigrants fled here to seek refuge; traders and merchants traversed long and perilous routes across deserts and peaks to exchange goods and ideas. Over thousands of years, successive waves of settlers and invaders including the Aryans, Parthians, Greeks and Central Asians came into the country and merged with the indigenous population. In the east, Indo-Tibetan and Indo-Burman peoples swept into India in waves from the Annamese peninsula or filtered down through the eastern Himalayan passes to settle in the sub-montane areas. All of them brought with them their customs, faiths and observances which were woven into the rich texture of Indian life. And all became heirs to a civilisation that began almost 5000 years ago, one that was capable of absorbing and transforming the peoples and cultures that settled here.

A complex demographic profile has resulted from the mingling of the major racial types — Australoid, Mongoloid, Europoid, Caucasian and Negroid. There is a theory that the Aryans entered India from the western mountain passes to settle across the

north: these pale-skinned people encountered the local populations of Dasyu, the dark-skinned ones of Rig Vedic description. While the Aryans established a predominant position in the northwest and the Gangetic plain, the people of Mongoloid descent remained in the highlands of the northeast. Their marked closeness to the east Asian world is reflected in the motifs used in their crafts. In the south, people in peninsular India might have had a link with Negroid racial elements, as inferred from dark skins and tightly curled hair. But the only true Negrito remain isolated as a tribe in the Andaman Islands.

We could speak here of the many dynasties and peoples that enriched the cultural fabric of India, from the ancient Greeks and Kushanas to the Islamic monarchs from Turkey and Central Asia, from the golden-skinned Ahoms of Assam to the mighty Cholas of the south. Powerful empires, such as those of the Mughals and of Vijayanagara, held sway over vast territories; their patronage of the arts and crafts stimulated excellence in every field. Each brought to the country ways of creating and perceiving that were absorbed and assimilated; the wealth of arts and crafts traditions, of sculpture and painting, of temple and mosque, of poetry and philosophy, of dance and music, bears testimony to this. The India of Aryan Vedic civilisation was a repository of knowledge, not just the profound spiritual thinking of the Vedas and Upanishads but also the precision of mathematics and of sciences such as astronomy and medicine. It is a little recognised fact that the concept of zero originated in India; Vedic altars, built to specific designs, called for highly sophisticated geometrical skills. Thus, the historical Indian mainstream was a generous platform of creative dialogue, where different ideas, cultures, faiths and people met and merged and became richer. From this symbiosis was born the essence of our Indian-ness.

Into this melting pot we now throw another element: the tribals, or Adivasis, the original inhabitants of the country. To this day, seven out of every hundred Indians are tribals. The great tribal belts cut a swathe across the states of Gujarat, Chhatisgarh, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. In the North East, the states of Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh are mainly tribal.

Subjected to the migratory tendencies of others, tribals were pushed back to fastnesses in hills, jungles or coasts. Sometimes, they were themselves migrants whose origins are lost in the mists of history, but who also form distinctive ethnic groups, as in the North East. Most often isolated in their own areas, there were occasional nomadic groups who moved across desert, plateau and river valleys in search of itinerant occupation. All of them had their distinct socio-cultural identity.

Earth, forest and sky held the secrets of Nature, who was worshipped and whose manifestations were invested with the personification of spirits and deities. The living kingdom of Nature provided the tribals with food, and also other means of life, such as medicine, clothing, resources for tools, and implements with which to build houses, fences, canoes, looms and weapons of war or objects of worship. Artistic expressions and ritual reflected the life around them: the beads used in jewellery or to ornament masks were as brightly coloured as the flowers they saw. Nothing was fragmented in this holistic perception of time, neither man, nor the calm unhurried rhythms of nature. The fabric of life wove work with festivity, worship with song and dance, myth with reality.

Whether tribal, rural or urban, there is one characteristic that unites the Indian people and this is the love of colour and ornamentation. In India, colour has been raised to the level of an art form. In areas where natural colour is absent, as in the dun landscapes of Rajasthan and parts of Gujarat, its use is lavish, as if to make up in everyday life that which has been denied by the gods. It is most evident in daily dress, where brilliant reds, vibrant saffron, ochres and greens meet bright pinks and deep blues; it is a technicolour presentation from top to toe. On the other hand, where Nature herself has been prodigal, there is a marked absence of colour in dress. In the southern coastal state of Kerala, an area drenched in colours from the vivid turquoise of the sea to the deep greens of tropical foliage and groves of palms, the women used to clothe themselves in cooling shades of white, such as ivory and cream, to ward off the brilliant rays of the sun. Far to the North East, in the foothills of the Himalayas, the Naga tribes weave cotton cloth on back-strap looms. Here, the basic colours are black, deep blue, and red: but these simple skirts, kirtles and shawls are meant to set off extravagant jewellery and ornaments made of materials such as beads, seeds, dyed animal hair, cane, ivory and cowrie shells and brass. These

are fashioned into necklaces, circlets, armlets and intricate head dresses, plumed with hornbill feathers and encrusted with the shiny wings of beetles.

Indeed, in days gone by, dress was a clear indicator of identity. What you wore revealed who you were in terms of community, location, caste, marital status, or special status within a community. In most parts of India, the basic clothing remains simple draped cloth, a tradition that has existed for thousands of years. The most famous of such garments is, of course, the sari worn by women, whose styles of draping vary between regions and communities. It is interesting to note that traditionally looms were built to the width of the sari as worn locally. Men have their draped garments, too, such as the dhoti and the lungi. It is said that the convention of stitched clothing was introduced with the coming of Islam, and amongst the garments most often worn are the salwar-kameez and pyjama-kurta of North India. In areas such as Rajasthan, long skirts and bodices are worn. Amongst the most colourful and uniquely Indian items of dress is the men's turban. Perhaps in no other country is there such a wide variety of turbans, tied in different ways, made of materials ranging from coarse cotton to the finest silk, many of the latter fashioned for special occasions like weddings and festivals.

FESTIVALS, FAIRS, MELAS AND PILGRIMAGES: THE SACRED AND THE CELEBRATORY

There are said to be more festivals in India than there are days of the year. Small, local village rituals of worship and propitiation are celebrated with as much fervour as are high holy days across the nation, occasions that can draw floods of people. Fairs and festivals are moments of remembrance and commemoration of the birthdays and great deeds of gods, goddesses, heroes, heroines, gurus, prophets and saints. They are times when people gather together, linked by ties of shared social and religious beliefs. Each of India's many religious groups – Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and others – has its own such days. The spirit and colour of these religious or seasonal festivals draw together seemingly diverse groups across faiths; for Indians believe in sharing happiness, and a festival or celebration is never limited to one family or one religion. The whole neighborhood participates in such occasions, marked by sharing sweets and visiting family and friends. Thus, all communities join together for the joyous lights of Diwali; and the words "Id Mubarak!" (literally, Blessed Festival, meaning "May your religious holiday be blessed") are exchanged between Muslims and non-Muslims over a bowl of sweetened vermicelli.

In India, the celebrations of fairs and festivals mark the rites of passage between birth, death and renewal. These moments are determined not by a calendar but by the sun as it enters new seasons, and in cycles spun out by the waxing and waning of the moon. Each full moon has its own meaning and is placed in the context of its own rituals, sacred or social: May, to commemorate the birth of Gautama the Buddha; July, to honour the guru or teacher; November, in remembrance of the birth of Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikh faith. The sighting of the new moon at the end of Ramzan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, is eagerly awaited; it signals the end of a month of fasting and the advent of Id-ul-Fitr, celebrated with prayers, feasts and family get-togethers.

Along with the concept of consecrated time, there is also the concept of sacred space, one that goes beyond the immediate environs of temple, gurudwara, or mosque. The banks of a river, the meeting place of waters, a holy tank, forests, mountains, the seashore, the tomb of a beloved pir or saint... all are areas of celebration and communion, where ritual prayers and blessings are followed by feasting, song and dance.

Festivals are symbolic of a link between the home, the village, and a larger outside world. Within the home, celebrations are expressed by the love and care given to its decoration by the women of the house; freshly-washed courtyards are embellished with designs made in flower petals, coloured powder or rice flour; walls are painted with scenes from the epics or made brilliant with embedded bits of mirrored glass; doorways are hung with auspicious mango leaves or marigold flowers. Each festival in each religion has its own particular foods and sweets, appropriate to the season and the crops, and days are spent in their careful preparation.

Outside the home, there is the brotherhood of community worship, moments when the barriers of caste and even creed are forgotten. There is the joy of the congregational darshan or view of the deity; the sharing of amrit, or nectar and prasad, or specially blessed food; the immersion of idols led in long, winding processions; the chanting of holy verses and partaking of the barkat or blessedness of an exemplary pir or saint. Festivals reinforce the presence of god in the life of the individual and the family, and bind them to the community. They are also moments for young people to absorb and be part of age-old, yet still vibrant and living traditions.

But festivals are also about fun and enjoyment, more so when they coincide with agricultural events such as harvests, a time to let go of the cares of daily life. The riotous exuberance and earthiness of Holi, the spring festival of colours, its almost Bacchanalian character, has the light-hearted atmosphere of a true Indian carnival.

Celebrations of festivals have their own special characteristics in different parts of India. If Mathura in northern India is famous for its uninhibited Holi and devout Janamashtami (the birth of Lord Krishna), then Calcutta is the city to see the Durga Puja, the ten-day worship of the great goddess who defeated the demon. Ganesh Chaturthi, dedicated to Ganesh, remover of obstacles, whose very presence is auspicious, is best experienced in the state of Maharashtra. And nowhere outside of Kerala can you match the sheer spectacle of the caparisoned elephants of Trichur Puram or the snakeboat races of Onam. Differences of observance lend local colour to certain festivals – Dussehra, for example, famous equally in the south Indian city of Mysore, the Himalayan valley of Kulu and the holy city of Varanasi, whose celebrations in each place follow distinctly regional cultures.

The mela or fair can also be, and quite often is, connected to a religious festival or observance. The mela brings together a large variety of social groups: priests and mendicants; artisans and craftspeople; bards, jesters, dancers, musicians, and other itinerant performers; hawkers of fiery snack foods and iced drinks made of fruits and milk; vendors of toys, clothes and household merchandise; sellers of camels, horses or cattle, and families who throng from far and near.

The largest melas take place over a number of days, as in Pushkar in Rajasthan. Here, the mela looks like a gigantic encampment, a multitude of small tents stretched out as far as the eye can see. As dusk falls, the lights of lanterns and cook fires sparkle in the gathering darkness, creating an air of romance and magic. And at some fairs, the ambience of romance is very real, for this is where the young gather to arrange their betrothals. At the Tarnetar mela in Gujarat, and the springtime Bhagoria of Jhabua district in Madhya Pradesh, young men and women wear their finest to the fair; and as they sing and dance together, shy glances and smiles often lead to marriage.

The yatra or pilgrimage is altogether more serious of purpose, and its intention is, as the name suggests, religious. In its most literal sense, a yatra can be undertaken at any time, for essentially it is the individual's journey to an especially holy place to meditate, pray for salvation, or as thanksgiving for a granted boon. But on major occasions at the great pilgrimage sites, hundreds of thousands of people gather, drawn by the irresistible magnet of faith. The site of the yatra is sanctified by centuries-old tradition, and so many are centred around water – a holy river or its source, a sacred tank or lake, the confluence of waters. To immerse oneself in these pure waters is essential, for then one is cleansed of sin and renewed. The consecrated time is governed by the phases of the moon and sometimes, as in the Kumbh or Gomateshwara pilgrimages, can be as far apart as twelve years. Even annual pilgrimages draw vast crowds, as in the Rath Yatra of Orissa, where thousands of the devout join hands to pull on thick ropes, thus physically transporting the giant temple chariots on their journey across the town of Puri.

Here, as everywhere in the world, solemn pilgrimages can also be fairs, and fairs can also be festivals. What is important is the meeting and mingling of people, and the common language of shared human experience; the perception of the larger world as the larger family. And all festivals encourage this outward vision, a generosity of heart and mind. For in the end, all celebration is an exaltation and reaffirmation of life itself.

The Naqqāls

— Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry

Naqqāls (from the Persian word, 'to imitate'), also known as Bhands (clowns), are rural itinerant actors from Punjab. Those with whom I have worked come from the Bazigar caste and are now based around the Chandigarh area, Ropar and Ludhiana.

In the past these artists were patronized by local landlords, to whom they ritually apologized before starting their performances. Their troupe was headed by an ustād, who was actor, director, and musician all rolled into one. Members of a Naqqāl group were trained in music, singing, and dance, according to the traditional 'guru-shishya parampara'. Their performance style, called naqqāl, is a form without any firm or continuous tradition, and as such the Naqqāls became master adapters, changing the script, movement, songs, and jokes as they went along. They included in their repertoire urban issues, along with stories of gods and goddesses, legendary heroes, tales of bhakti and miracles. These were enacted with an idiomatic speech, in a patois that had its provenance in colloquial discourse. Their performance was rendered with a rhetorical flourish, interspersed with comic gesticulations that always stopped short of the crass.

Most of the traditional actors belong to one extended family. Members of the group with whom I have worked are all related: brothers, uncles, cousins, brothers-in-law, and so on (only men perform while the women look after the wigs, the jewellery and other accompanying bibelots required for performance making). In the beginning, most of them married within the clan, but that slowly changed as many of them chose to opt out of this profession, due to economic nonviability and aspirations based on spurious notions of respectability.

This is due to an inconsistent audience, the uncertainty of the profession and the social stigma of being a performer, especially a female impersonator, in the present day context, value system and perception. A few decades ago, most of the Naqqāls had no permanent address or home and moved from village to village with their cattle and sheep in search of pasture and work. Like all nomads, they were a trifle aloof and suspicious. Their background is mysterious, as all claim separate genealogies even though they belong to the same family.

Prem Chand, the self-styled ustad, said his family came from Rajasthan to Patiala on the invitation of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh. By contrast, another member of the group, Mundri, the Toombi player, claimed no such grand history for himself. (Both were super stars in the folk performance galaxy during their youth; both are unfortunately dead now.)

As performers, the Naqqāls would sing and dance at village melas and weddings. The female impersonators in their group would have no problem posing as hermaphrodites, dancing and singing with gusto at the birth of the village headman's son or at traffic crossings. It was all a question of survival and no role was big or small, good or bad in their dictionary. Naqqāls were also hired occasionally by the 'Song and Drama' division to sell products, pass on social messages, and damage the reputation of a rival political opponent when required. It is sometimes weird to see issues of dowry, birth control, and female infanticide being rendered with a dash of the mythological and such declamatory flamboyance.

The main source of income for these individuals was their role of shaman for buffalos and cows, during the monsoon season when animals were more prone to diseases. During this period, they would sit in a cowshed chanting incantations to dispel evil spirits. Before the start of this ritual the ustad would purify all the musical instruments by lighting incense sticks and sprinkling rice over them.

In recent times the Naqqāls' considerable popularity has been challenged by cinema and television and they have had to survive by 'disco' dancing at weddings and other community festivities. Furthermore, the Naqqāls of late have lost the impulses that created this art form and the values that supported it due to changing taste patterns and the choices posed by a new globalized economy. The younger generation does not view their traditional legacy as offering them a viable profession and has sought alternatives, from selling helmets and fruit or anything that brings a semblance of a livelihood, rather than sing, dance, or play the drums. Most of them have dreamed about getting an office job as a peon or a clerk – if they were lucky or educated. The naqqāl performances are unfortunately now a relic of a fading art.

THE NAQQĀL PERFORMANCE

The naqqāl performance follows a structure that begins with two actors who, through a series of jokes and improvisations, make satirical comments on politics and society. This aspect of the performance is constantly interrupted by four to five female impersonators who first enter dancing with their backs towards the audience and who show their faces only after straining the viewers' curiosity and suspense to the utmost limit as their swagger and hip gyrations have hooked the mostly male audience into a state of frenzy.

This is then followed by a humorous and dramatic encounter between the two male actors and the female impersonators, with most of the dialogues hinging on double meanings that border on being seriously risqué. This constant repartee is usually followed by a great amount of ribaldry and raucous humour that at times can descend into obscenity. Next comes an erotic dance with many a thrust and a wriggle, to the accompaniment of musical instruments that include the Dhol, harmonium (reed organ), Chimta Toombi Gubgubi (a small drum, open from one side, with a string that is strummed), and matka (a metal pot idiophone). The style of dance resembles the pirouette movements from the classical kathak. After this comes an erotic song sung usually in rāg Malkauns or Darbari. This is then followed by the enactment of the story, usually taken from popular Punjabi folk tales, e.g. Hir-Ranjha, Sohni-Mahiwal, or Puran Bhagat. The dancing and the narrative are interspersed with comic interludes handled by a comic actor who represents the common man. In this way the performers function as both social critics and popular psychiatrists through their verbal gymnastics on varying subjects such as dowry, corruption, and the aspirations of the people. The anxieties of the audience are assuaged and made visible through the performances, bringing it to a point of recognition.

The text of the narrative that evolves during a performance has a freewheeling mix of tragedy and comedy that swings from the esoteric to the banal. The Naqqāls would spin any narrative on its head by breaking all the rules of realism. For example, when the protagonist in the play Keema-Malki pats his horse while singing a dirge to his beloved, the charger starts singing along with the lover. This contrast helps in breaking the maudlin mood and shifting it to another emotional plane, by breaking the continuity of a single emotion. In another example, in an episode from the famous love legend Sohni-Mahiwal, the earthen pot upon which Sohni is crossing the river Chenab suddenly animates itself and starts to narrate the story to the audience. This is a theatrical device that does not fit with any known grammar of performance, but is nonetheless completely acceptable to the audience.

Indeed, the energy of the naqqāl form comes from the fact that, although it upholds traditional values, it has the capacity to question and subvert these values. The various conventions of chorus, music, and unrelated comic interludes, as well as the mixing of the human and mythological characters, allow for alternative viewpoints to be presented simultaneously.

The Naqqāls are musicians and traveling bards who sing songs, dance, and improvise while telling a story. In their performances, they lampoon a situation in an effort to subvert existing attitudes, and stereotypical responses. Along with their tool box of singing and dancing they also have a repertoire of storytelling techniques and raucous humour, but the mainstay of their tradition is dancing, which is performed by female impersonators.

The theatrical aspect that fascinated me the most was the role of the female impersonator: how gender is constructed performatively for the stage.

It raised within me questions about the relationship that sexuality and imitation of sexuality have with performance making. The Naqqāls challenge the myth that it is necessary to be homosexual in orientation in order for a man to dress up as a woman or to perform his sexuality. My observations are based over 35 years of working in collaboration with the Naqqāls whilst directing my Chandigarh-based theatre group, The Company.

When I started working in Chandigarh with the Naqqāls, I was not interested in situating traditional actors/musicians as 'material' to be cited and imitated or as an exotic leitmotif. I was interested to see if actors coming from different worlds could make a performance together. Although the Naqqāl did not have a well-developed theatrical tradition in terms of aesthetics, technique and style, this form (like other local forms) has been commercialised, globalized, culturally uprooted and simplified, wrenched from the specific demands of its histories and practices. In my creative journey into Punjab, my challenge became the formalizing of a process of training, and creating performances through translation and collaboration between cultures and regions and even across genders. The Naqqāl tradition of rural Punjab became the base from which this exploration began.

I started working with the Naqqāls and urban actors, exploring a theatre where unusual encounters could happen, and where the distinction between conflicting histories did not matter. Over more than three decades, a way of working has emerged which combines, through fusion and differences, a new way of looking at performance history, space, image, and text. This synthesis both connects, and throws up differences. It became the theatrical metaphor for the work we created. By putting such a company together, I have created a somewhat precarious, somewhat unstable, meeting of folk, tradition, and the modern, along with a dynamic equation between the female impersonators and the other actors, both male/female.

I found, during the course of my work, a willingness in both the urban and rural actors to shed the skin of separateness and enter the cultural and emotional terrain of each other's lives. The inherited set of values they brought with them went through a shredding machine, and working with female impersonators made the actors not only realign their concepts of femininity on stage, but also shifted the way masculinity was perceived and constructed for the stage.

Let me start from the beginning. The first time I met the Naqqāls they were performing in a village square – singing, dancing, ad-libbing, and telling stories. A mixture of pop art and natural fun was their chosen vocabulary. The stories they enacted were pan-Indian myths conjoined with local myths, transformed and renewed for local meaning. The gods they evoked rode bicycles, aspired to a sarkari naukri (government job), and cursed like hoodlums on a rampage. Their way of working did not fit with any recognisable grammar of performance for me, but was completely acceptable to the audience. In one moment all my tidy and safe definitions of what was possible on the stage went for a toss.

Watching them perform I understood the true meaning of 'spontaneity' and 'openness'. For most of us, going to the theatre in the '80s involved sitting in neat rows in the dark, hardly acknowledging the presence of strangers with whom we sat shoulder to shoulder, and certainly never expecting the actors to invade our space, or to stake a claim to theirs. To see a large number of people sitting under a starlit night, and observe how the audience pumped energy and excitement into the performance, was to recognize that something real and precious was being exchanged. Something clicked within me, and my way of working was now determined by this unusual encounter.

Yerma, a play written by Frederico Garcia Lorca, which I directed in the year 1992, had the urban actors working and performing side by side with the female impersonators. The presence of the female impersonators, who play the role of Yerma's sisters-in-law, disorients the naturalness of gender definition and raises questions about how gender is socially constructed. Being a woman is not the same as 'playing' a woman. The presence of female impersonators in a play about 'barrenness' accentuated the dimension of sterility. To emphasise Lorca's interest in stylised theatre I reached towards the female impersonators to present a set of grimly doomed sisters-in-law and androgynous laundresses, in Lorca's famous washerwomen scene.

While working on the dramatization of plays like *Yerma* (by Lorca), *Naga Mandala* (by Girish Karnad),

Mad Woman of Chaillot (by Jean Giraudoux) and *Kitchen Katha* (an improvised play dramatised by Surjit Patar), to mention a few, what struck me about the female impersonators were the similarities between them and the male actors. The framework of their bodies was alike. If the female impersonator does not attempt to be diminutive, then the hero doesn't appear hyper-masculine either.

In *Naga Mandala*, Girish Karnad had used a conceptual device of a chorus of flames. An abstract idea based on philosophical concept of absence and presence were explored with the female impersonator. We played with some ideas: What happens when we blow out the light from our lanterns at night? What happens to the light? Where does it disappear? These are metaphysical questions posed by Karnad in his play. This is theatrically represented by creating a chorus of flames, who have escaped from the homes that they illuminate, to gossip and indulge in ribaldry in an abandoned temple. Like the chorus in a Greek play, they observe, comment, make asides and link up the narrative through their 'seeing' and 'non- seeing'.

In my production, this chorus of flames was played by the female impersonators, dressed in tinselly black costumes with sequins festooning their faces and costumes. The ambiguity of their genders gave them a somewhat divine – or should I say, otherworldly – status, beyond gender configurations. Their surreal make-up and razzmatazz costumes, disinvested of a clear sexual orientation, presented them as oppositions to both male and female ideals. This decontextualized image that the female impersonators present, despite an exaggerated performance of the feminine, has the potential to disrupt and destabilise ways of seeing.

In *Kitchen Katha*, which was directed in 2001, all the male actors dressed in what are stereotypically designated as female clothing and the women actors wore male attire. I realised that my actors, during the process of improvisation, not only chose the characters but also the gender they were portraying. These were not always conscious choices, as working with female impersonators made them view the maleness or femaleness of the characters with a certain degree of fluidity. The distinctions between men and women disappeared as they entered a space where this distinction did not matter.

It's imperative to mention B. V. Karanth's role in working with my group. For Karanth, theatre music is neither folk nor classical, but belongs to the genre of theatre. Karanth interpreted a play musically, and his use of music was never decorative nor was it an aspect of the narrative; it connected with the dialogue, which became an extension of the speech. He called his musical score a 'sound plan'. It became a leitmotif for the performative content; an adjunct to the spoken word. The actors were made to sing their dialogues and speak the songs in the grand tradition of the strolling minstrel. The traditional music that the Naqqāls play has a restrictive range. He showed them the possibilities of using traditional instruments in a non-traditional manner.

For my production of *Kitchen Katha*, directed in 2000, B. V. Karanth composed the music for the play using the sound patterns of cutting, chopping, hissing, pounding, with the narrative strung together with recipes that were sung to a musical orchestration being provided by the mortar and pestle, the chopping board, or the scraping of a wok with a ladle. All the implements from the kitchen were used as musical instruments.

The Naqqāl tradition provided a fund of stage conventions, concepts and techniques. The beating of a metal kettle with a spoon to suggest war, the smearing of flour on the face to suggest fear; simple techniques, but powerful in their suggestiveness. These were incorporated into the theatre vocabulary of my productions.

When I look back at the years gone by, I observe, as from a distance, the figure of the Naqqāl in my theatre. Already a disorienting figure: a man pretending to be a woman, but not a homosexual; a jester who speaks truth; a rural relic who transforms into a bearer of the uncanny. I do not say that this is what I started off with, but eventually that is what they became. Urban performers, global travellers, highly 'post' modern creatures, bearers of complex modern narratives. They were integral to transforming the training of urban actors. They also transformed the notion of the 'marginalized' in my work. The marginalized character on stage is not the chorus or the gender bender. The 'marginal', the shadow, the figure in between genders and cultures, is instead the driver, the medium of transformation.

Essential Strategies for Heritage Organisations Responding to Climate Change

— Simon Molesworth

This article is based on a presentation to the 17th International Conference of National Trusts in September 2017 in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.

Climate influences all that we do and all that we have done in the course of human existence. Our lives in any particular place have been dependent upon our understanding, or rather expectation, of the climate of that place. We have organized our whole existence in ways that respond to and respect the climate. We have learnt to understand meteorological conditions as being, largely, beyond our control. Human history shows an acceptance that climate was beyond our influence – often our beliefs and philosophies would explain climatic change in terms of religion and/or the supernatural. However, as our scientific understanding of the natural world improved, we came to understand that humankind was not so disconnected from climate. Our management and mismanagement of our world could cause change. In more recent decades we have come to understand that the modern world has exploited natural resources to excess and the resultant anthropogenic climate change is the legacy with which we've cursed our present and future generations.

Over the centuries, our responses to climate have molded our societies, influenced our cultural development and, in part, influenced us so much so that our societal identities reflect the climates within which we have evolved. Our way of life, be it how we produce and grow food, modify the natural environment and express ourselves culturally, all reflect the climate of our place. Our cultural creations and expressions: our traditions, our buildings, our art, song and dance all reflect the all-pervading influence of climate. Even the languages we used have evolved over the centuries, embedding into them terms and descriptions which reflect the climatic conditions we know and have expected to remain.

The anthropomorphic evolution that I have described has occurred throughout time at a pace that reflected a manageable timeframe, often brought about by conscious human decisions, the desire to survive or find a sustainable way of living being the strongest influences. So, our communities have migrated to new territories, some have followed seasonal cycles, some have moved where sustenance was more assured. We've responded to extreme conditions, such as drought and flood, as required. We've learnt when such extremes are recurrent or predicable, strategically modifying our existence to accommodate the changes so as to lessen impacts when such conditions are repeated. Over time wars have been fought and the territories of others conquered, leading to influxes of new or replacement communities. All these territorial changes have required us to adapt, to evolve our ways of living, resulting in the evolution of cultural responses to the places where we settle.

Now overlay that social evolutionary process with anthropogenic climate change, where change is inexorably occurring at a such a scale and at such a rate that the vast majority, if not all, of the world's societies will concurrently face change: change that is not freely chosen but rather uncomfortably faced as inevitable, reflecting the global human community's mismanagement of the planet. Perhaps this global anthropogenic climate change began in an excusable, yet unfortunate, manner: out of sheer

ignorance when human kind didn't understand the signs of global change. Perhaps we were tardy, or 'conveniently blind', pandering to short-term expediency, but whatever the origins, the science is now understood. Now that we understand these changes, there is no room for excuses: to simply witness such changes without making the effort to counterbalance them would be inexcusable. We are now duty-bound to respond appropriately – and we must do so for that most primal of instincts, to survive. But more than that, the intellectual 'property' in our collective cultural development is deserving of effort: effort that might see our respective cultures, the physical and intangible manifestations of our culture, survive so that future generations have a chance to appreciate, understand and celebrate that which went before.

Climate change will increasingly present a plethora of complicated, and sometimes polycentric, challenges for heritage organisations, including the world's National Trusts – organizations such as ITRHD - entrusted with conserving built and intangible cultural heritage. These challenges should not be ignored or awaited passively until the difficulty and cost of effectively responding proves crippling. Rather, in adopting a precautionary approach to heritage conservation, an integrated and comprehensive 'toolkit' of climate change strategies should be developed and implemented.

World Heritage harbour city of Valletta, the capital of Malta, vulnerable to rising sea level

This climate change 'toolkit' must include both strategies capable of achieving the clever and sympathetic adaptation of heritage properties to a changing climate and strategies that enable National Trusts and heritage organisations to effectively reduce their carbon footprint. Moreover, National Trusts and heritage organisations should recognise and fully carry out their duties with respect to climate change – namely: leading by example by becoming exemplars; advocating for responsible and necessary sustainability action; and protecting against, and responding to, the loss of intangible cultural heritage.

This article advocates for the adoption of thirteen such strategies, which are considered to be essential for National Trusts and like heritage organisations to properly respond to anthropogenic climate change.

ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

1. ADDRESSING DETERIORATION IN BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

World Heritage megalithic temple site of Hagar Qim in Malta, shielded from climatic conditions by canopy erected over entire site

A changing climate will undoubtedly impact upon the physical condition of heritage buildings and structures. For example, if climate change leads to increasingly moist or dry conditions at the locale in which a heritage building is situated, these changed conditions will likely have significant and potentially seriously detrimental impacts, on the physical condition of that building. Indeed, in 2010, Smith et al concluded: *Environmental controls on stone decay processes appear to be changing rapidly as a consequence of changing climate.*[1]

1 B J Smith et al, "A commentary on climate change, stone decay dynamics and the 'greening' of natural stone buildings: new

World Heritage megalithic temple site of Hagar Qim in Malta, protected from climatic extremes

Thus, it will become increasingly imperative that National Trusts and heritage organisations develop comprehensive strategies to analyse the possible and probable physical changes resulting from climate change. Moreover, it will be essential that recurrent condition reports, prepared by professionals, are carried out to identify and monitor the deterioration of heritage buildings and structures. Yet, the capacity to effectively monitor the condition of heritage should be expanded by encouraging "*community involvement in recording and monitoring the historic environment through projects such as CITiZAN*",[2] which has *"established ... [a] network of volunteers ... to record, monitor and promote the significant, fragile and threatened archaeological sites around England's coast"*.[3]

Training volunteers to support professional heritage conservation practitioners. Here CITiZAN volunteers are recording shipwreck remains on a vulnerable English coastline at Seven Sisters, East Sussex.

perspectives on 'deep wetting'" (2011) 63 *Environmental Earth Sciences* 1691-1700, 1701.

2 H Fluck, *Climate Change Adaptation Report* (Historic England, Report No 28/2016, 2016) 44.

3 CITiZAN, 'About Us' <www.citizan.org.uk/about-us/> accessed 10 July 2017.

2. ADDRESSING DETERIORATION IN HERITAGE COLLECTIONS AND MATERIALS

Climate change will have consequences for the management of collections of heritage significance by National Trusts and like heritage organisations. Amongst other impacts, materials within heritage collections may be vulnerable to greater solar exposure, more extreme hot or cold temperatures and wetter or dryer weather conditions.[4]

Moreover, *"global temperature increases [may] lead to the spread of insects and other potentially damaging organisms into previously inhospitable areas, putting organic materials at risk"*.[5] Hence, recurrent and systematic analysis of such impacts and endangering processes will be essential to ensure the proper precautionary management of heritage collections.[6] For example, conservators ought to prepare thorough materials management plans that identify and consider the probable and possible impacts of climate change and delineate the necessary strategies to effectively monitor and respond to such impacts.

Insect infestation can be a consequence of changing climatic conditions. This "Encyclopedie" written by Denis Diderot in 1780 book has been riddled by bookworm requiring conservation treatment.

4 See, eg, M Roberts, J Lloyd and J Hopkinson, *Forecast Changeable* (National Trust UK, 2015) 8.

5 J Adams, "Global Climate Change: Every Cultural Site at Risk?" in M Petzet and J Ziesemer (eds), *Heritage at Risk: ICOMOS World Report 2006/2007 on Monuments and Sites in Danger* (ICOMOS, 2008) 195.

6 See, eg, P Brimblecombe and P Lankester, "Long-term changes in climate and insect damage in historic houses" (2012) *Studies in Conservation* 1.

As the physical manifestations of climate change will vary from place to place, so it will be that the impacts will vary. Hence it will never be possible for one management plan within an organization to cover all circumstances and conditions. A heritage organization will need to carefully attune their management plans on a case by case basis, modifying the requirements and strategies according to the particular circumstances of the climatic conditions of the particular district, the characteristics of each place and the heritage collections within that place.

3. INITIATING AND MAINTAINING SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMMES

National Trusts and like heritage organisations will be unable to effectively and efficiently respond to the challenges posed by climate change unless the skilled people upon whom they rely are adequately equipped with the necessary skills to determine and implement practical climate change strategies. Therefore, training programmes should be devised to appropriately re-train (or train), inter alia, architects, builders, material conservators, restoration tradespeople and horticulturalists. These programmes ought to equip these professionals with the requisite competency and knowledge to address climate change related challenges.[7]

As most National Trusts and like heritage organisations rely to a large extent on the support and skills of a volunteer supplementary workforce, providing essential support to the professional staff teams, the same skills training programmes should be made available to volunteers.

To this end, National Trusts and heritage organisations ought to offer, or sponsor, essential training programmes and actively collaborate with relevant tertiary institutions and professional organisations. Furthermore, the diverse range of properties held by National Trusts and heritage organisations make such properties ideally suited to host well-designed and appropriate training programmes. Learning 'on the ground', with practical demonstrations and examples, will surpass mere theory any day.

4. ADOPTING SUSTAINABLE GARDEN AND ESTATE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Climate change will pose considerable and complex physical challenges for the maintenance of estates and gardens of heritage significance. One important challenge will be that created by significant changes to rainfall patterns. Indeed, it has been observed that *"water shortage is likely to be the most serious single impact of climate change on gardens"*.[8] In some parts of the world, the opposite extreme will be an outcome of climate change, with excess water challenging many places around the globe: with melting mountain glacial fields, snow fields and polar caps, increased sea levels all being predicted occurrences.

National Trust of Australia (Victoria)'s National Heritage listed garden estate of Rippon Lea, with management plan in accord with sustainability principles.

If the objective of a particular heritage estate, managed by a National Trust or like heritage organization, is to maintain the property as an example of a past lifestyle – a cultural timepiece – by retaining its style, design, composition and characteristics, it will be critical to properly understand how that desired static state can be preserved despite potentially significant changes to rainfall patterns. Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to establish the infrastructure

7 See, eg, The (UK) Historic and Botanic Garden Trainee Programmes <http://hbgtp.org.uk/about-the-programmes/> accessed 10 July 2017; National Trust (UK) Volunteer Management Traineeship Programme <www.nationaltrust.org.uk/projects/volunteer-management-traineeship> accessed 10 July 2017.

8 R Bisgrove and P Hadley, *Gardening in the Global Greenhouse: The Impacts of Climate Change on Gardens in the UK* (Technical Report, UK Climate Impacts Programme, 2002) 83.

to collect, store and harvest water or to protect a property from excessive water by shielding particular features and re-directing water flow.[9]

Wicken Fen, a National Trust property near Cambridge, England, where vulnerable and disappearing fen environment is carefully managed.

Another opportunity for National Trusts is to offer their properties as places where bio-diversity offsets might be established. Given that heritage organisations collectively own tens of thousands of properties across the globe, tree planting and more intense revegetation opportunities should be available in many places. In circumstances where developments might have been allowed in places which have resulted in the removal of vegetation, such as trees which act as 'green lungs', many regulatory systems require those responsible for such developments to off-set the calculated environmental harm (and so consequential long-term impact on climate change) by replanting or revegetating in other places. In exchange for payment, thereby raising much needed revenue for related heritage conservation projects, National Trusts can most probably make available many places where carbon off-setting can occur. A win-win for all participants, the Trusts can have the plantations or wood lots on their properties augmented with the cost being met by others, such as developers in the circumstances just described, whilst concurrently creating further green lungs to absorb carbon dioxide.

5. MONITORING AND DOCUMENTING CHANGE IN HERITAGE GARDEN & ESTATES

In many circumstances, responding to climate change may require National Trusts and heritage organisations to adopt a pragmatic strategy of managing and adapting particular heritage estates and gardens to the changing climate. Rather than resist the inevitable change in a futile fashion, expending significance resources in the effort, it may be decided to adopt an approach to transition the place, monitoring the process of change. If such a strategy is adopted, it will be incumbent upon the responsible entity, say a National Trust owner, to properly understand the desired transition from, for instance, the past and existing plant communities to the likely future plant communities which will more likely survive in the changed conditions.

Eucalyptus gillii trees in a private conservation reserve established by the author and his wife Lindy. Research underway to understand why these 200+ year old trees are no longer regenerating. Climate change impact suspected.

In order for such an evolution to be successful, and to be accepted by the public, this evolution must be properly explained. The carefully determined communication strategy is essential. Moreover, the evolution of such places should be recorded and interpreted for both educational purposes and to protect the historical legacy of what was and will no longer be.[10] Being able to understand the new 'present' in the context of the lost past, can be instructive as a means to understand the process of change as well as being respectful of that which

9 See ibid, 83-84.

10 See, eg, M Morrison and L Clausen, *Cruden Farm Garden Diaries* (Penguin, 2017).

was before. Good heritage practice facilitates such a process of understanding, enabling a greater understanding of comparative values.

6. MONITORING AND MANAGING CHANGING PEST & DISEASE CONDITIONS

Heritage estates and gardens will undergo considerable biophysical changes as a result of climate change. These changes must be identified and understood to allow appropriate strategies to be developed to respond to the associated challenges.

Two important challenges that conservators of historic estates and gardens will have to grapple with are the spread of problematic pest species and the increasing level of risk posed by plant diseases such as moulds, funguses and viruses. Consequently, strategies (sometimes controversial) must be developed to both prevent and address these challenges.

For example, the Royal Botanic Gardens of Melbourne and Sydney have had to devise and implement a strategy to address the damage caused by roosting flying fox colonies to the biodiversity of those gardens.[11] The flying foxes were an animal that in past decades only lived in the northern reaches of Australia, in hot humid tropical conditions. In the last twenty or so years these animals progressively moved further south into environments that never before had experienced the impact of such creatures. With the increasing warmth further south in Australia from the northern climes, the flying foxes' natural habitat, the impacts were unacceptable from a heritage garden perspective. Natural resilience in the plant species had not evolved, so the heritage gardens became vulnerable to extremes of predation. Further, being heritage gardens, conflicts between human enjoyment of these places and the now vast numbers of these non-endemic animals in a new home required the adoption of emergency strategies.

11 See, eg, "Flying fox relocation" (Off Track, ABC Radio National, 1 July 2012) <www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/offtrack/flying-fox-relocation/4100340> accessed 10 July 2017.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

1. REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT WITH SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INITIATIVES

National Trusts and like heritage organisations have a moral obligation to reduce their carbon footprints and, in so doing, mitigating climate change. In particular, strategies to reduce energy usage – by, for example, relying on renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuel energy sources – will be necessary.

Having committed to reducing its carbon emissions from energy use by 45 per cent by 2020, the National Trust (UK) is an exemplar organisation in this respect.[12] Heritage organisations may be able to secure corporate and government support to facilitate this transition to a sustainable energy future.[13]

2. REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT WITH GREEN TRANSPORT & EQUIPMENT

Similarly, National Trusts and heritage organisations should endeavor to embrace cutting edge technologies capable of reducing their carbon footprints. For example, green transport and green equipment should increasingly supplant existing stock: visitors should be encouraged to walk, cycle[14] or use electric vehicles on heritage properties[15] and equipment and machinery should increasingly be powered by renewable energy.

12 See, National Trust (UK), "Our energy targets"<www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/our-energy-targets> accessed 10 July 2017.

13 See, eg, National Trust (Vic). "Federal Funding announced for Rippon Lea Carbon Reduction Project" (13 July 2012) <www.nationaltrust.org.au/news/federal-funding-announced-for-rippon-lea-carbon-reduction-project/> accessed 10 July 2017.

14 See, eg, National Trust (UK), "Cycling" <www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cycling> accessed 10 July 2017; J Pascoe, "Cycling is at the hub of National Trust's new initiative" *Guardian* (online) 15 March 2011 <www.theguardian.com/environment/bike-blog/2011/mar/15/cycling-hub-national-trust-new-initiative> accessed 10 July 2017.

15 See, eg, Y Zhang and Q Zhou, "Research on Developing Strategy of the Ancient City Pingyao Based on Low-Carbon Tourism" (2012) 573-574 *Advanced Materials Research* 762.

Only electric vehicles inside 14th Century Chinese World Heritage city of Ping Yao

Even the police vehicles are electric in World Heritage Ping Yao

With respect to organisational management, rapid advances in information technology should obviate the need for human movement to the extent currently required. Additionally, the formation of partnerships between heritage organisations and tertiary research institutions, to identify new sustainable property management approaches, will be fruitful. Innovation, in response to the challenges of climate change, is likely to be the outcome of scientific research that is occurring globally. The National Trusts and like heritage organisations, being largely in the public eye due to their custodianship of thousands of heritage properties worldwide, have the opportunity to be true exemplars, allowing their properties to demonstrate sites and exemplars of responsible and sustainable property management.

3. SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

National Trusts and heritage organisations should implement strategies to avoid excessive water use and associated energy use. Water is too valuable a resource to be allowed to be wasted. The objective of such strategies should be to simultaneously discourage the excessive use of water, whilst developing the capacity to harvest, store and reuse water through grey water and water purification approaches.[16] A program which has achieved impressive results in this respect is the National Trust (Wales) 'fit for the future' program.[17]

The lake in Rippon Lea, the National Heritage listed property in Melbourne of the National Trust of Australia. Sustainably harvested water from surrounding urban streets reused on the heritage gardens.

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria)'s National Heritage List property Rippon Lea is a very early example of sustainable property management. The system was designed in the 19th Century to capture and reuse water from the surrounding neighbourhood, using a large ornamental lake as a storage basin. Still functional, the captured water is pumped throughout the heritage gardens. Recurrently, the lake sludge is dredged and then reused as fertilizer on the gardens. This system of water recycling was originally pumped by water pump windmill, using the renewable power of the wind. In short, the property demonstrates a multi-faceted

16 See, eg, M Roberts, J Lloyd and J Hopkinson, *Forecast Changeable* (National Trust UK, 2015) 8.

17 See, eg, P Mandeville and D Rajasingham, "Sustainability in the Museum sector" (Museums and Heritage Advisor < http://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/features/sustainability-in-the-museum-sector/> accessed 10 July 2017.

approach of sustainable property management in a climate change context.

4. WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Finally, National Trusts and heritage organisations should formulate strategies to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. To provide only a few examples, heritage properties can commence (or intensify) composting programmes, produce sustainable heating bricks from farm waste and utilise sustainably harvested timber. Such strategies will reduce operating costs and allow for the realisation of sustainability objectives. More ambitiously than recycling, reusing and reducing waste, the National Trust for Historic Preservation (USA) has established a Preservation Green Lab to carry out research on how waste can be reduced by encouraging the reuse of existing (but not necessarily heritage) buildings, rather than such buildings being prematurely demolished and replaced.[18]

DUTIES

THE DUTY TO ADVOCATE

All National Trusts and heritage organisations, as custodians of significant cultural heritage, have a duty to aspire to be a proactive advocate for responsible climate change action. These organisations, from their volunteers through to their leaders, should talk about sustainability, write about sustainability and adopt effective communication strategies to promote sustainability objectives and strategies.[19]

Inherent in this duty is the obligation to encourage the public to reduce their carbon footprint. For instance, the National Trust (UK) has created a webpage, in partnership with the renewable energy provider Goodenergy, which provides the public with information on 'ten ways to be greener'.[20]

"Ten Ways to be Greener" – National Trust for England, Wales & Northern Ireland – leading by example with website initiative in partnership with renewable energy provider Goodenergy.

Another proactive strategy, especially for membership-based organisations and influential organisations with a respected reputation, such as is often the case with many National Trusts, is to create an awards scheme. Heritage organisations, such as National Trusts, can incentivise people to focus on sustainability by incorporating sustainability focused awards in their annual reporting programme. If they have existing heritage awards covering traditional areas of activity they ought to be expanded to embrace achievements or successes within the range of proactive adaptive and mitigation strategies recommended earlier in this paper. This would ensure that the successful work of exemplary people and organisations are recognized and highlighted in public forums and in the media.

THE DUTY TO SHAPE THE LAW

National Trusts and heritage organisations should also become proactive advocates for responsible climate change action at a macro level. The lobbying of legislators and governments to introduce or strengthen laws, regulations and policies concerning climate change should be seen as central to their guiding objectives. For example, the Australian Council of National Trusts collaborated with the Australian Wind Energy Association to carry out the Wind Energy and Landscape Values Project. This project assisted Australian Governments in establishing appropriate regulatory regimes to facilitate renewable energy whilst protecting against the unacceptable impacts of such development, such as on precious landscapes.[21] Identifying and thereafter advocating for the protection of cultural and natural landscapes has been a traditional role for

18 See Preservation Leadership Forum, "Preservation Green Lab" <http://forum.savingplaces.org/act/pgl?_ga=2.155521339.1672742180.1499661254-307833118.1499661254> accessed 10 July 2017.

19 See, eg, National Trust (UK), "Green energy building design guides" <www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/green-energy-building-design-guides> accessed 10 July 2017.

20 See, eg, National Trust (UK), "Ten ways to be greener" <www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/ten-ways-to-be-greener> accessed 10 July 2017.

21 See Australian Council of National Trusts, *Wind Farms and Landscape Values* (Pirion Printers, March 2005).

Birthplace of Democracy, Runnymede, appropriately a National Trust property in England. Advocacy for responsible environmental policies worldwide is our duty.

many National Trusts, whereas supporting wind farm installations has been difficult. So, the identification of a collaborative approach whereby renewable energy installations were concurrently supported – in acceptable locations – whilst landscapes to be protected were identified, was seen as groundbreaking for the National Trust movement, given the past controversies.

Urgenda Climate Change litigation court room in the Netherlands – setting the precedent for global advocacy

Perhaps more importantly, National Trusts and heritage organisations should similarly participate in, and contribute to, the international deliberations which could lead to, in a trickle-down fashion, the eventual enactment of consequential national laws. Achieving reforms globally through effective and persuasive influence is in the interests of the global heritage movement. The importance of INTO itself performing this role, on behalf of the heritage fraternity, is indisputable.

THE DUTY TO PROTECT INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Intergenerational equity – our duty to future generations: children in Chinese World Heritage city of Ping Yao

Finally, in the context of my opening observations in the preface to this paper, it is critical to emphasise that National Trusts and heritage organisations have a paramount duty to protect and conserve intangible cultural heritage associated with places. As such, it must be recognised that a critical and all too often over-looked consequence of climate change is the loss of cultural knowledge, cultural connectivity and the 'sense of place' derived from the intergenerational affinity of a people to their locality. Climate change is likely to cause people to move: put simply, how and where people have traditionally lived will be in jeopardy in many parts of the world. Cultural traditions of art, craft, music, folklore and language are all fragile and susceptible as people are relocated and dispossessed by climate change.

To properly carry out this duty, National Trusts and heritage organisations must marshal their

resources – including, for example, their educational programmes – to safeguard and interpret cultural heritage legacies.[22] So, if a people are relocated from the coast to the mountains or from an island to a mainland, it is the heritage fraternity of National Trusts and heritage organisations that will be uniquely placed to foster, celebrate and understand their cultures. This fraternity will ensure that dynamic and 'living' repositories are established which, overtime, may become an essential cultural resource for successive generations.

22 See, eg, V Herrmann, "America's Eroding Edges" (National Trust for Historic Preservation (USA)) <https://savingplaces.org/americas-eroding-edges?_ga=2.217980566.1672742180.1499661254-307833118.1499661254> accessed 10 July 2017.

Conclusion

This paper has briefly outlined thirteen essential strategies that National Trusts and heritage organisations ought to adopt in order to effectively respond to the challenges posed by climate change. This is by no means a comprehensive list of all the necessary or useful climate change strategies that could be adopted to protect and conserve cultural and natural heritage. It should also be stressed that there is no one-size-fits-all method or approach to devising and implementing the above-mentioned strategies. In fact, it is critical that each National Trust and heritage organisation carefully devises and implements its own unique particular model of each of the above strategies to effectively respond to climate change. Yet, it should also be stressed that National Trusts and heritage organisations must collaborate with, and learn from, one another to ensure that the heritage fraternity successfully upholds its paramount obligation to conserve the heritage of the world. As this paper has shown, this is especially so given the increasing complexities and challenges posed by a changing climate to the proper conservation of heritage.

The Hon. Simon R. Molesworth AO KC

INTO Honorary President and Chair, 2007-2015

"African Identity" and "Color":

THE DYNASTY OF SACHIN AND THE MOVIE STAR ZUBEIDA

— Kenneth Robbins

1. a. (opposite) Nawab Sidi Mohammad Haidar Khan of Sachin (1909-1970; reigned 1930-1948). Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins.

   b. (above) Exhibition banner at the Schomburg Center for Black Culture of the New York Public Library.

THE FAMILY OF THE NAWABS OF SACHIN

Sachin was a small princely state ruled by Muslim nawabs. This family continue to have a strong sense of identity as Sidis or Habshis (East Africans), as can be seen by the retention of the word

"Sidi" in their titles. As Nawab Dr. Mohammad Sidi Nasrullah Khan put it in 2006, "The most important fact about Sachin is that while almost all the Muslim States of India were ruled by families of Pathan and Afghan descent, we Sidis of Sachin and Janjira are of African ancestry"[1] His widow Shams un-Nisa Begum (whose family were noble Pathans from Nipani, Karnatak) was delighted that the family was "able to revisit the history of their ancestors when the exhibit *Africans in India* came to Surat. "It is indeed sad that my husband is no more, or else he would have given them an abundance of information and anecdotes on shikar, music, culinary arts (being a connoisseur himself), the intricacies in the royal palaces, their history and philanthropy of the princes. Late Nawab saheb was an encyclopaedia of knowledge."[2]

There was nothing in Sachin's state symbols that reveal any "African" themes. There were almost no other persons of African descent within Sachin's borders and the nawabs freely married with other elite Muslims of non-African ancestry, so many family members appear more Indian than African.

African soldiers had formed dynasties elsewhere where there had been no Africans. There was a Habshi dynasty for a few years in fourteenth century Bengal. Another in Janjira lasted almost three centuries, though there were never more than a few hundred Sidis ruling the mostly Hindu population. Janjira's Sardars married almost exclusively within this small group until the late 1800s.

Sachin came into being in 1791 during a succession battle in Janjira. Balu Miyam, unsuccessful in his attempt to succeed his father as nawab, traded his rights to Janjira's traditional enemy (the Peshwa) in return for twenty-seven villages including the *jagirdari* of Bhimpore-Puna¬Kumbharia. The new state was very near the great port of Surat, where the Sidis had been quite powerful until 1751. Balu Miyan did not follow the Sidi naval tradition or bring in a Sidi military force. Nor did his successors choose to employ Sidis from Western India.

In the past, the Nawabs of Sachin did not attempt to lead or even interact with other Afrindians as part of any pan-African diasporic community. The family was not involved with the shrines of the `African Sufi saint" Baba Ghor, though there are several elsewhere

1. Robbins and McLeod, page 7.
2. Khurana

2. a. (left) The present Nawab of Sachin, Sidi Mohammed Reza Khan, and his brother with their non-Sidi mother and wives. The Nawab's wife came from the Hyderabadi noble family of Walia estate and his sister-in-law's family are Pathans from Bhopal.

   b. (right) The present Nawab in 2015 on the economic struggles and heritage of Sidis.

3. (opposite, top) Sidi Ibrahim Khan II (?-1873; reigned 1868-1873). He is depicted with all the accoutrements of a mid-nineteenth-century Indian prince, from his jeweled sword to the attendants bearing the objects that symbolize royalty in India. Though fly whisks are also seen in African royal regalia, these are typical of ones used by royalty throughout India. Collection of the Nawab of Sachin.

4. (opposite, bottom) Installation of Nawab Sidi Mohammad Haidar Khan (1930). Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins.

Nawab of Sachin seeks job opportunities for Sidis

At GNLU, Sidi Mohammed Rezakhan says the only way to ensure social and economic development of Sidis is to ensure education and employment opportunities for them

in Gujarat. They were alienated from the Sidis of Janjira and there was no real coming together until late in the nineteenth century between the Nawabs of these two Habshi states.

The Sidi elites of the great Deccani Sultanates of Bijapur and Ahmednagar had somehow totally integrated into the greater Muslim community losing their 'African" or Habshi identity. Therefore, descendants of great figures like Malik Ambar of Ahmednagar or Ikhlas Khan of Bjiapur were not available to marry with the families of the Nawabs of Janjira and Bijapur.

In Kutch and other Western Indian princely states, people with African ancestors were employed in courts and military forces. Kutch was heavily involved in international trade to Africa and Arabia for centuries and Africans came as sailors and slaves, mostly, during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Sidis usually sided with the Rao of Kutch in power struggles with the Rao's own Jadeja Rajput clan (the *Bhayat* or brotherhood). Driven out during the reign

5. (left, top to botton) The coats¬of-arms of Janjira and Sachin feature Janjira's famous island fort, naval tradition, and African warriors. Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins.

   a. Janjira.
   b. Sachin.

6. (right) Sachin fielded the Nusrat Risala (a cavalry unit) and the Yakut Infantry. Neither Janjira nor Sachin had any naval forces during the twentieth century. Collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins.

of Godji II (1760-1778), they came back as prime supporters of his successor Rao Raydhanji (1778¬1786 and 1801-1813). This Rajput Rao became a Muslim and tried to spread Islam, leading to communal problems as well as continuing problems with rich merchants and the *Bhayat*[3]. But the coming of the British led to less overt rebellions and conflicts and the role of the Sidis diminished throughout these princely courts. No evidence has emerged about any attempt of the Nawabs of Sachin to interact with these other Sidis, who were losing their traditional power roles from Surat to Kutch just when the state of Sachin came into existence.

The Nawab of Sachin's family easily intermarried with other elite Muslims from the el-Edrus and Bhutto famiies as well as members of noble and princely families from many places across India including Baroda, Bantwa, Bhopal, Cambay, Hyderabad, Loharu, Radhanpur, Savanur, and Walla.'[4] Most of these were Pathans. The el-Edrus family were prominent Sufi scholars in India, Yemen and Southeast Asia.

Sometimes the family history of their wives was complex as in the case of Nawab Abd ul-Qadir Khan's Muslim mother-in-law from Baroda. Her father, an officer in the Baroda State Army, was the son of General Thomas D. Ballantine and a Mughal woman.

Mustafa Khan, the grandson of Nawab Sidi Mohammad Abd ul-Qadir Khan who abdicated in 1887, opted for Pakistan and became an army Brigadier there. He married the daughter of Sir Shahnawaz Bhutto. His brother-in-law and niece became prime ministers of Pakistan. His son, Muzaffar, better known as "Poncho," married Europeans and is a London businessman. He is known for owning the Penthouse Club, the Club Royale, and the Yacht Club there. He has had no contact with the present Nawabs of Sachin or Janjira but his father told him "we were Princes, we fought Shivaji and we had skinny legs like racehorses." He has plans to open a luxury yacht hotel and "fly the Sachin and Janjira flags from its mast. Once

3. See Goswamy.

4. See McLeod 2006 and McLeod 2008 for details of the family marital history

a pirate always a pirate." (The Sidis of Janjira once had powerful naval forces and served as Mughal admirals among their other activities.) Muzaffar thinks of making a movie called *The Warrior Princes of Janjira:* "It is quite a story, certainly better than the pirates of the Caribbean ... The aim of the exercise is to prove to the world that Africans were not all slaves but that in fact they achieved a lot in other parts of the world."[5]

5. Personal communication March 13, 2017.

7. Nawab Ibrahim III (1886-1930). Postcard from collection of Kenneth and Joyce Robbins.

Bali International Field School for Subak, an Experience to Explore the Harmony of Nature and Culture

— Catrini Pratihari Kubontubuh[1]

The challenge of climate change is being seen at the global, national, and local levels. Eastern countries believe that sustainable social and cultural practices are urgently needed to tackle the extreme weather conditions. There is a need to revitalise our traditional practices in order to strengthen our resilience to environmental changes, while preserving rich cultural heritage. The Indonesian Heritage Trust in cooperation with Kyoto University, and together with its local partner, Bali Kuna Santi Foundation, brought up the Balinese traditional farming methods as a focus of Bali International Field School for Subak (BIFSS) to explore and deepen understanding of local ecosystems and sustainable practices that respect and preserve biodiversity.

The Balinese ancestors showed how they live in harmony with their natural environment, and how their traditional wisdom can mitigate the natural disaster risk and its further degradation, now known as climate change. Today, the concept of harmony in Balinese Hinduism is not merely a relic of the past, but a part of people's daily activities that will be passed on to the next generation. Taking human interactions with nature and the spiritual world as an example of the relationship between cultural heritage and climate change, this paper discusses Tri Hita Karana as a Balinese philosophy. Tri Hita Karana promotes harmony among human beings through communal cooperation and friendship; harmony towards God, manifested in numerous rituals and offerings to the creator; and harmony with nature, which strives to conserve the environment and promote sustainability and balance. It guides many aspects of Balinese life, from daily rituals to economic activities. Currently, efforts are needed to harness this philosophy in this challenging urban development. As such, this paper will share the experience on how Balinese people embrace their spiritual traditions towards their prosperity while combating climate change.

Traditional wisdom created significant values attached to their place of living and daily life. Tradition is not merely about the past, but also about passing on current activities of people to the next generation in the future. People have their own dynamics which contribute to changes in tradition. We risk losing the rich and unique traditions when they are carelessly passed from one generation to the next. A tradition is no longer regarded as an obligation, but can be understood as a wisdom which reflects daily custom. This meaning is related to its community's custom, and attached to their beliefs of Hinduism. The history behind each tradition provides stronger attachment to community, even for migrants new to the area.

The experience of Balinese Hinduism is connected to a long history from its past to the present condition. Bali is an island province of Indonesia with a Hindu majority. Presently, 86.9% of the population adhering to Balinese Hinduism. The Bali Kingdom is composed of 10 traditional royal Balinese kingdoms, each of them ruling a specific geographic area. The royal kingdoms are not recognised by the government of Indonesia currently; however, they originated before the 8th century. The centre of this kingdom is in Pejeng or Bedulu, Gianyar, led by Sri

1 Chairperson of SEACHA (Southeast Asian Culture Heritage Alliance), President of The Indonesian Heritage Trust/BPPI (Bumi Pelestarian Pusaka Indonesia), and Patron of Bali Kuna Santi Foundation.

Kesari Warmadewa. These kingdoms ruled native elements of spirit and ancestral reverence combined with Balinese culture, and are also intertwined with neighbouring Java. The Balinese migration to Java island started in the Mataram Hinduism period in the 9th century, during the reign of King Erlangga, who originated from Bali. During the age of the Majapahit Empire in 13th to 15th century, Bali was conquered by Majapahit warriors led by Gajah Mada. After the empire fell, a number of Balinese Hindu Majapahit courtiers, nobles, priests and artisans found their way back to the island of Bali (Kubontubuh, 2021). As a result, Balinese Hinduism is described as the last stronghold of Balinese-Javanese culture and civilisation (Rukmi, 2015). In subsequent centuries, the Balinese Kingdoms expanded their influence to neighbouring islands. The Balinese Kingdom of Gelgel, for example, extended their influences to Blambangan and other regions in East Java, while the Balinese Kingdom of Karangasem conquered its neighbouring island of Lombok in a later period.

In the mid-19th century, the colonial state of Dutch East Indies began its involvements in Bali, until the early 20th century. The Dutch colonial administration, as well the British and Japanese colonialization in Bali, ended the native Balinese independent kingdoms, and later a provincial government of Bali was formed following Indonesia's independence and its proclamation as the Republic of Indonesia. Nevertheless, the influences of the Hindu traditions, since its period as a kingdom until now, has been shaped by Balinese who still practice it in their daily life. This paper is taking the view of its cultural wisdom in safeguarding the environment based on aspects of harmony and balance of life and addresses the problems and consequences of how Tri Hita Karana as a pillar of Balinese cultural wisdom contributes to safeguarding environment against degradation. What are the respective roles of communities in protecting environment? How to promote cultural heritage as the key to save our environment?

TRI HITA KARANA AS CONCEPT OF HARMONY

Balinese clearly state that Tri Hita Karana is the manifestation of their basic tradition that consists of the balanced connection between man and his environment, between man and man, and between man and the creator. Balinese believe that environment is all forms are God's special creation. These all manifest as the richness of a gift that supports people's lives. All these connections have to be maintained to achieve prosperity in harmony.

Figure 1. Tri Hita Karana philosophy (BPPI, 2015)

The philosophy of Tri Hita Karana has existed as a life philosophy for the Balinese before the 8th century. The concept can be applied to the balance of harmonious relationships in all sectors of life. Literally, Tri Hita Karana can be interpreted as 'the three causes of happiness' by achieving the harmony of the three relationships as mentioned above. Its principles guide many aspects of Balinese life, from daily rituals, to communal mutual cooperation practices, to spatial planning in Balinese architecture.

The three connections are named Parhyangan, Pawongan, and Palemahan. The Parhyangan is the basis for all the wonderful rituals in the relationship between man and God. People express their appreciation to the generosity of Gods through various rituals in Balinese daily life. Balinese Hinduism philosophy described people as God's creation (Brahman), while the Atman in humans is the spark of the holy light of God's greatness that causes humans to live. Therefore, humans actually owe their lives to God. Hence, every human being is obliged to be grateful, devoted and always prostrate to God. In other words, they worship and carry out religious teachings and make rallies to holy places.

The Pawongan expressed a harmonious relationship between neighbors. This relationship is essential for

serenity of life. The spirit of Pawongan is manifested in togetherness such as helping each other, finding solutions through discussion, and formulating policies based on village consensus. Relationships are based on the concepts of mutual compassion and nurturing, which means mutual respect and mutual love. This harmonious relationship will create security and inner and outer peace of society in a higher order.

Last but not least is Palemahan, or the people and nature connection. Balinese believe in a give-and-take circle with nature. As nature provides for them, they must preserve nature in return. This has become the basis for sustainable development in our environment. The actions influenced by this relation might be the simplest one such as watering plants or managing garbage, or larger actions like farming in Subak socio-cultural organization, and forest restoration to preserve nature. People get the necessities of life from their environment so they are very dependent on the environment. For this reason, they must always take care of their environmental conditions and keep them from being damaged. The environment shouldn't be soiled. Forests should not be cut down arbitrarily and animals should not be over-hunted because it can disturb the balance of nature. If everything is properly maintained, it will create beauty and bring a sense of calm and serenity in humans.

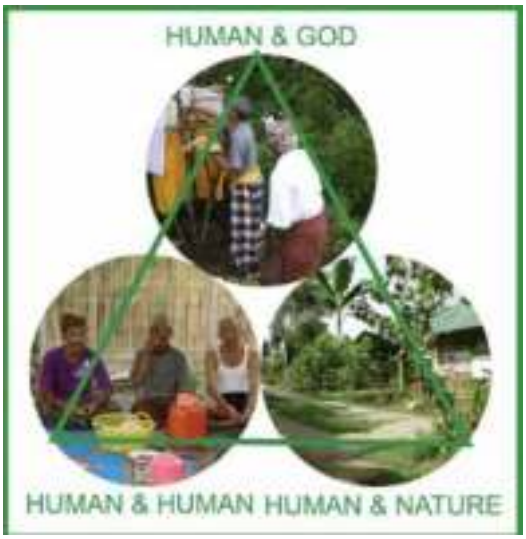

Figure 2. Tri Hita Karana connections (BPPI, 2015)

Lastly, this philosophy clearly states that the good relationship between the three components of man, nature, and the creator is necessary to maintain balance and harmony.

TRI HITA KARANA AND CLIMATE ACTION

In this context, we are not going to talk about the Hinduism itself, but rather about the wisdom that we can learn together to contribute in preserving our nature in the future. We are not talking about what belongs to whom and who is most entitled or who should benefit, because we see it as a unity. The degradation of environment causes long-term shifts in temperature and weather patterns, named as climate change. People are experiencing climate change in diverse ways. Some of us are already more vulnerable to climate impacts which can affect our health, ability to grow food, housing, safety and work (United Nations, 2020). These conditions have advanced to the point where whole communities have had to begin efforts to tackle the impact of climate change. Our own cultural heritage and our traditions can be a positive factor in designing climate action policies.

The movement in reinventing our local tradition has been supported by the formation of Indonesian Network for Heritage Conservation in 2003 and the Indonesian Heritage Trust (Bumi Pelestarian Pusaka Indonesia/BPPI) in 2004. BPPI, together with all conservation organizations and individuals from various regions in Indonesia, is actively carrying out activities to promote local traditions as part of intangible heritage understanding and awareness, preserving and utilizing heritage, as well as safeguarding Indonesian heritage nationwide. BPPI in cooperation with Kyoto University and its local partner Bali Kuna Santi Foundation initiated the Bali International Field School for Subak (BIFSS) started in 2015, held annually and still ongoing today.

The annual BIFSS provides opportunities for first-hand learning about Balinese traditional farming and village activities, and especially the relation between Balinese traditional practices and its harmony with nature. Bringing together volunteers, local and international students, community members and other stakeholders to learn about the Subak system of Balinese traditional farming, BIFSS not only provides important experience, but also builds optimism and hope for the future. The 9th BIFSS was held in Karangasem, Bali on 23-28 July 2023.

Figure 3. Participants of 9th BIFSS 2023 (BPPI, 2023)

Indonesia, as well as other eastern countries in Asia, believe it is not difficult to integrate local traditional philosophy as part of the current dynamic framework of modernization climate action policies. Locally-based climate action requires commitment and broad participation to understand the philosophy and background behind the tradition (Smith and Akagawa, 2009). Tri Hita Karana is a case study that shows how the involvement of local wisdom is approached in this concept of harmony. The efforts to promote conservation are part of our tradition practices. In this understanding, various social issues must be taken into consideration when implementing conservation efforts so that all of them can support each other both directly and indirectly.

The local people have a strong attachment to their ancestors' legacy, that creates a passion for nurturing the local traditions (Lowenthal, 2009). The threats to nature have resulted in valued lessons learnt for the people about their role in the dynamics of modern life. They currently are making efforts to maintain their environment and their surroundings, starting with small and simple steps and leading to bigger ones. These efforts are inviting broad participation as explained above. But still, limitations in capabilities sometimes hinder these people from fully being able to implement the climate action in their daily life.

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Who are the Harappans at Rakhigarhi

— *Vasant Shinde*

Fig.1. Arial View of the site

Rakhigarhi is an archaeological site located in the district of Hissar in Haryana. The site belongs to the Harappan Civilization, also known as the Indus Valley or Indus-Saraswati Civilization. The Harappan Civilization flourished in the Indus and Saraswati (Ghaggar) basins in the northwest and in Gujarat up to the Maharashtra border in western parts of the Indian subcontinent. Harappan sites are found in Sindh, Baluchistan and Panjab in Pakistan and Jammu, Punjab, Haryana, Western Rajasthan and Gujarat in India. The Harappan Culture flourished from 6000 BCE to 1500 BCE; the early phase up to 2600 BCE is a formative stage termed as Early Harappan. The fully-developed phase of the culture from 2600 BCE to 1900 BCE is termed as the Mature Harappan or Harappan Civilization phase. Due to climatic fluctuations and various other factors, the Harappan Civilization started declining around 1900 BCE, but continued to survive until 1300 BCE in a decadent form. Till date more than 2000 Harappan sites of different categories have been discovered, of which nearly 1500 are located on the Indian side of the border. There were five mega cities namely Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa and Ganweriwala in Pakistan and Rakhigarhi and Dholavira in India. Before intensive and extensive investigations at the site of Rakhigarhi in 2011-12, it was thought that the site of Mohenjo-Daro was the biggest Harappan city in terms of size and magnitude. But the recent scientific investigations by the team from Deccan College and the State Department of Archaeology, Haryana Government, have revealed that Rakhigarhi was almost double the size of Mohenjo-Daro.

The Saraswati Basin, which covers parts of Indian states of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, has a thick cover of fertile alluvial soils, conducive to agriculture. The agricultural richness of the region made it attractive to settlers in the 6th millennium BCE. The Ghaggar was undoubtedly the breadbasket for the Harappans, who extensively occupied it in the coming centuries.

HISTORY OF THE SITE

Sir Aurel Stein is known for his systematic research primarily focused on finding archaeological sites. He noticed the correlation between the contemporary river network of Ghaggar-Hakra and the Rigvedic river Sarasvati. His groundbreaking research (Stein 1942) provides important insights into the distribution and geographic positioning of the archaeological sites in the state of Rajasthan.

In the 1950s, A. Ghosh was the first archeologist to explore the Drishdwati valley, a major tributary of Saraswati. The work carried out by Rafique Mughal, A. Ghosh, Suraj Bhan, K.T. Frenchman, B.B. Lal, L.S. Rao, and Deccan College, Pune under the direction of Vasant Shinde has brought to light some of the earliest phases of the Harappan culture.

The discovery of cultures like Hakra in the Hakra basin and Sothi in the Saraswati Basin, which flourished in the middle of the 4th millennium BCE, were initially thought to be pre-Harappan in nature, but careful observation and subsequent analysis reveal that

they made important contributions to the formative period of the Harappan culture. These cultures are now treated as the Early Harappan.

Recent excavations at sites like Bhirrana, Girawad, Farmana, and Rakhigarhi have pushed the Harappan Civilization's date back to 5500 BCE (Shinde, 2016).

At Rakhigarhi (Fig. 1), excavations were conducted to find out where it all began and how the civilization evolved. The site was excavated by ASI's Amarendra Nath in the year from 1997-2000 and later followed by Deccan College of Pune under the direction of Prof. Vasant Shinde and his team. Deccan College started the work of scientific clearance and in 2011-12 exploration was carried out, followed by excavation in the following year of 2013-16. However, in 2022 the excavation was again undertaken by ASI and it is still in progress.

From 2012-16, excavations of the site have showed that the planned city had both mud-brick and burnt-brick houses, as well as a good drainage system. This was the Mature Harappan phase.

IMPORTANT FINDINGS FROM RAKHIGARHI

The excavation (Fig. 2) was aimed at understanding the gradual transformation from the beginning at around 6000 BCE to the emergence of the Mature Harappan or Harappan Civilization phase around 2600 BCE. It is now evident that at Rakhigarhi, the Early Harappans gradually developed into Mature Harappan. This transition is found in their structures, pottery shapes, surface treatment, raw material, decorative themes, and overall technology.

The early cultures in the Saraswati basin began with a modest lifestyle in circular or oblong pi-dwellings or huts. Gradually, over a long period of time, they began to transition into rectangular mud or mudbrick structures overground, ultimately culminating in the building of a well-planned grid settlement in the Mature Harappan Period.

The excavations at Rakhigarhi have thrown light on the town planning and the burial customs of the mature Harappans. The town's orientation of northwest to southeast direction closely resembles that of the settlement at Kalibangan, whereas the overall plan of the site is similar to the Harappa site in Pakistan. As only foundations have survived, it is not possible to visualize the walls and superstructure of the buildings. The walls were supposedly made of burnt bricks which have been reported but most of them might have been robbed by the present-day villagers.

The Mature Harappan ceramic assemblage found in this region differs from the sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Most of the pottery shapes are typical Harappan, but the ceramic is not profusely painted as is found in the Sindh region. The presence of a large number of artefacts at Rakhigarhi suggests that the site was a flourishing centre for the manufacture of pottery and bricks. The site of Rakhigarhi may have acted as a mighty Regional centre for pottery and bricks production due to the availability of the fine clay from the alluvium belt of the Saraswati basin. The settlers of Rakhigarhi might have acquired semi-precious stone and copper for craft items from the Khetri region of Rajasthan. The site seems to have flourished because of major agricultural and industrial activities. One of the decorated etched carnelian beads from Rakhigarhi is identical with

Fig.2. Structural remains during excavation

the bead found at Ur in Mesopotamia, an exciting discovery that suggests it had a vital role in the great trade relations with Mesopotamia. Apart from beads, evidence of seals and sealings helps us understand the strong trade networks of Harappans. The craft industry at Rakhigarhi also helps us understand the domesticated animals – among the finest examples are collared dog and fragments of terracotta bird cage (Fig. 3).

Fig.3. Material remains found from the site

Fig.4. Excavation of burial and sampling

DNA ANALYSIS —

Rakhigarhi and Farmana are among the few Harappan sites in the subcontinent that have Mature Harappan cemetery located in their vicinity. These burial sites were of three types – Primary, Secondary and Symbolic interments. They are oriented either in north to south or northwest to southeast direction. Such variation in burial custom suggests the presence of different strata of people co-existing at the same time. Based on the findings of burial goods, it is possible to surmise the social and economic status of the individuals.

To understand the population of Harappans, we needed to study DNA samples of the Harappans. Initially, we could not get any DNA remains, but after changing the methodology with international scholars, particularly with the Korean scientists from Seoul National University (Fig. 4), we succeeded in the extraction of DNA from the Harappan remains at Rakhigarhi. The DNA extraction was done by Indian scientists at CCMB where we are now developing the national facility.

The analysis of the Rakhigarhi sample revealed the absence of any genetic markers associated with Iranian-related ancestry among the Harappans. This discovery is quite intriguing as it suggests that the indigenous population in South Asia introduced agriculture, a settled way of life, and developed Indian Knowledge system and urbanization. It refutes the prior notion that farming was introduced by Neolithic Iranians. Furthermore, it is apparent that the Harappans showed considerable migration towards Central Asia. We are presenting the 'Out of India Theory' for the first time, supported by evidence of Harappan-like genetic heritage in the populations of Turkmenistan and Iran during the same period as the Mature Harappan Civilization. This discovery has the potential to support the 'Out of India' theory. The DNA findings suggest that Vedic knowledge originated locally and was not introduced by the Aryans coming from outside as previously believed.

Researchers frequently employ an interdisciplinary approach, integrating genetic investigations with facial reconstruction and other archaeological information to achieve greater understanding of the ancient population. Facial reconstruction is the process of creating a model of an individual's appearance over their lifetime from bone remains.

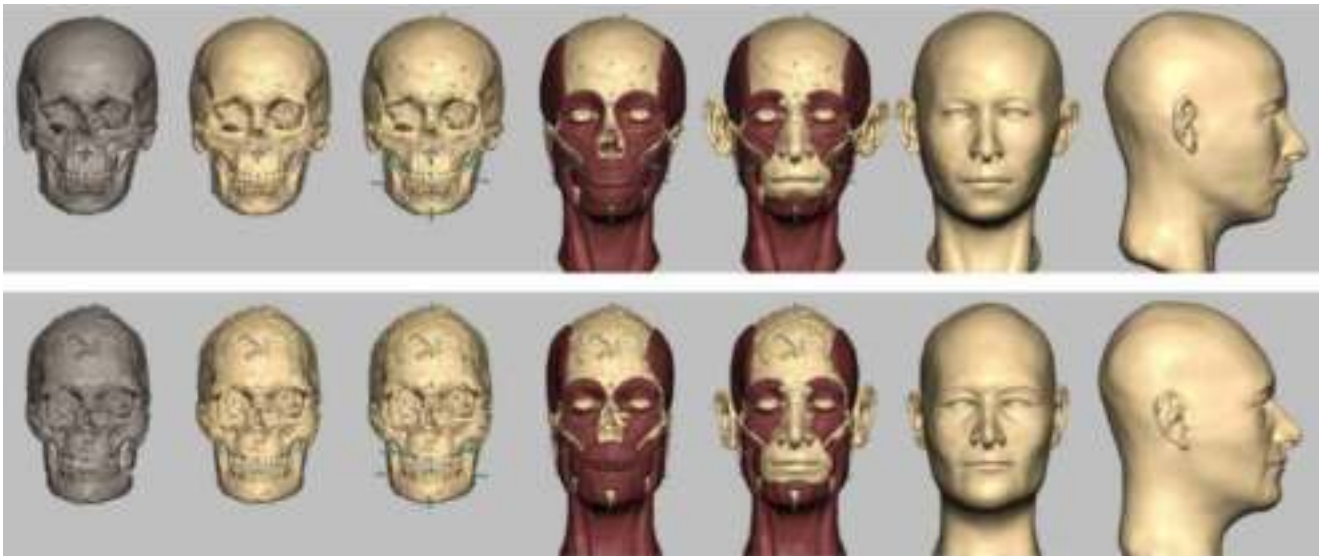

Fig.5. Step by step Craniofacial Reconstruction of a male (18 yrs of age) above and female (45 yrs of age) below

Facial reconstructions at Rakhigarhi could provide a more personal link to the ancient Harappans (Fig. 5). However, it is important to emphasis that facial reconstructions are interpretations and may contain some level of uncertainty.

Rakhigarhi's value stems from its size and well-preserved urban characteristics, making it an important site to study the Harappan Civilization. The data acquired at Rakhigarhi adds to our understanding of ancient cities, trade networks, and social systems in the Indian subcontinent during the Bronze Age.

In recent years, ongoing study and excavations at Rakhigarhi have provided crucial insights into the complexity and organization of the Harappan Civilization, adding to our broader understanding of ancient South Asian history.

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HERITAGE CLUB

— Rashmi Malik

India, renowned for its rich and diverse heritage, is a fascinating mosaic of cultures, traditions, and customs. Notably, during the challenging era of the COVID-19 pandemic, our country introduced International Yoga Day to the world as a symbol of resilience and pride. This momentous event not only resonated on a national scale but also projected our country's ancient traditions onto the global stage, underscoring the nation's unwavering commitment to preserving its distinctive cultural heritage.

With a population surpassing a billion, India's heritage boasts countless layers and dimensions yet to be fully explored and comprehended. As conscientious citizens and integral members of our school community, we share the collective responsibility of safeguarding this invaluable legacy for the benefit of future generations. Our heritage is not confined to the past; it is a vibrant testament to our roots and our identity, forging a connection with the present.

The importance of heritage management and preservation extends not only to the national level but also holds international and local significance. Since achieving independence, our nation has made resolute efforts to conserve, protect, and present its rich heritage in a compelling light. This commitment to heritage preservation reflects India's deep respect for its history and its determination to transmit its cultural wealth to future generations.

Our country takes pride in its wealth of iconic sites and breath-taking monuments, each embodying the history and architectural brilliance passed down through dynasties and cultural influences. This multifaceted cultural diversity mirrors our intricate, ancient history. Local heritage preservation not only unifies communities but also propels economic development. The nation's cultural and historical heritage serves as a source of national pride and a valuable economic asset, drawing tourists and fostering regional growth.

In the spirit of heritage preservation, Salwan Education Trust in its Schools of Delhi/NCR has launched **उपनिधि–The Youth Heritage Club** in collaboration with the ITRHD. As both Trusts firmly believe that going forward to attain the goal of protecting and safeguarding the cultural and natural heritage is to involve the next generation and sensitize them about the importance of preserving their heritage and affording an opportunity to engage the young minds and harness their energy and ideas at an early stage.

The clubs in Salwan Group of schools are receiving the guidance and support from the Heritage Ambassadors for Rural Tradition (HARTs) working religiously for the mission through ITRHD. This initiative seeks to instil in students an appreciation for India's rich heritage and the importance of diversity. The Youth Heritage Club is our way of nurturing a new generation of heritage enthusiasts and custodians who will continue the legacy of our nation.

HERITAGE CLUB FINDS ITS MEANING IN उपनिधि

UPNIDHI, which in Hindi literally means **'अपनी धरोहर को संजो के रखना'** perfectly describes the vision of

our club to CONSERVE, PRESERVE AND CARE for our heritage. उपनिधि represents our material and spiritual assets which are essential for individual and societal prosperity.

MISSION

The mission of the Heritage Club is to make youth aware of the tangible and intangible heritage of India, to inculcate the spirit of preservation of our rich heritage, to make use of natural sciences and social sciences effectively in conserving our heritage and to develop creativity and imaginative skills in them.

The Heritage Club shall make the young members aware and proud of the richness of the natural and cultural heritage in their own locality, state, and country. The Youth Heritage Club is driven by the noble purpose of promoting awareness and active participation in heritage-related initiatives among its student members.

Each young member of the Heritage Club will receive an inspiration to engage in heritage preservation and expand their knowledge of their local heritage. The club's programmes are meticulously crafted to immerse students in a diverse range of activities, all geared towards fostering a deep understanding and appreciation of heritage.

The club will have **four pillars approach: Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental** with various well-defined attributes.

ACTIVITIES UNDER CLUB

The Club will work like a laboratory to explore the linkages between different subjects and to create a platform for an interdisciplinary approach to education. Heritage Education is not merely recreation for the young learners but is also an important part of their learning process. NEP 2020 states a similar vision: *All curriculum and pedagogy, from the foundational stage onwards, will be redesigned to be strongly rooted in the Indian and local context and ethos in terms of culture, traditions, heritage, customs, language, philosophy, geography, ancient and contemporary knowledge, societal and scientific needs, indigenous and traditional ways of learning in order to ensure that education is maximally relatable, relevant, interesting, and effective for our students. Stories, arts, games, sports, examples, problems, etc. will be chosen as much as possible to be rooted in the Indian and local geographic context. Ideas, abstractions, and creativity will indeed best flourish when learning is thus rooted.*

Such pedagogies will eventually help the youth to understand history and society and will teach values of respect for diversity and tolerance. While it is important to highlight aspects of national heritage, it is also important to bring local heritage into the purview of heritage education programmes.

Keeping these ideologies and guidance from NEP in mind, there are a few activities that will be included in the Heritage Club to foster the student's creativity and artistic skills:

- **CULTURAL PRESERVATION:**
  The Club aims to preserve and promote the cultural traditions, customs, and practices of a specific or a different group or region. This will include activities like traditional dance performances, language classes, and cultural festivals.

- **HISTORICAL AWARENESS:**
  The Heritage Club will also explore the history of the community, country, or region, including significant historical events, figures, and landmarks. The students will engage in research, field trips, and presentations to learn and share this history.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP:**
  The Heritage Club will focus on preserving the natural heritage of their area. This can involve activities like tree planting, wildlife conservation, and educational initiatives to raise awareness about local ecosystems.

- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**
  The club will engage in community service projects and outreach programs to raise awareness about their cultural or historical heritage. This will include volunteering at local museums, organizing heritage-themed events, or collaborating with other community organizations.

- **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS:**
  The Heritage Club will serve as a platform for students to learn about their heritage and share their knowledge with others. They will host workshops, lectures, and exhibitions to educate their peers and the wider community.

  An interdisciplinary approach in education as per NEP 2020 will be used in designing the club activities which will help students to learn the various interrelated concepts in an experiential way.

- **CELEBRATORY EVENTS:**
  The club will organize cultural celebrations, festivals, or heritage months to showcase and celebrate their heritage through music, dance, art, food and more.

- **FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS:**
  To enhance the understanding of heritage, the members of the Heritage Club will go on field trips to museums, historical sites, nature reserves, and other relevant locations.

- **SKILL DEVELOPMENT:**
  By participating in the above activities, the students will ensure their inherent skills like research, leadership, photography, video making and editing, language, social interactions, storytelling, etc. get identified and honed through the presentations.

All the activities of the clubs will also be aligned with the SDGs (3,4,6,10,11 and 13) to ensure our student's contribution to achieving the same.

PAVING THE WAY THROUGH THE FUTURE

As the stepping stone, the Salwan Group of Schools under the aegis of Salwan Education Trust has been hosting World Heritage Day and Hunar Mela since 2019, where the purpose was to support and highlight the abilities of regional artists while giving them a forum to interact with the public.

As part of pre-Independence Day celebrations, all schools under Salwan Education Trust in collaboration with ITRHD (Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development) organized a craft demonstration and exhibition of renowned craftspeople – The Weavers and Potters from Azamgarh, Nizamabad and Mubarakpur from 02 - 06 August 2023 in the school premises.

This initiative was a dedicated effort and a heartfelt gesture aimed at supporting and empowering indigenous craftsmen, weavers, and rural artisans, thus contributing to the preservation of India's rich cultural heritage.

PICTURES OF HUNAR MELA IN SALWAN SCHOOLS

The exhibition featured a plethora of handcrafted products, ranging from terracotta lamps, pitchers, flower vases, pots, clay toys, and various other








PICTURES OF HUNAR MELA IN SALWAN SCHOOLS


captivating accessories to handwoven Banarasi saris, silk garments, and fabric materials from Mubarakpur. Also on display were beautiful black pottery pieces adorned with silver work, hailing from the Nizamabad region of Azamgarh district.

The event provided parents and students with a profound insight into the intricate techniques used in weaving, the cultural significance of diverse patterns and designs, and the overall importance of these textile traditions. It was a truly exceptional exhibition that not only showcased the richness of our heritage but also facilitated a deeper understanding of the traditional warp and weft that underpin it.

The formal installation ceremony of the Youth Heritage clubs was conducted with the commitment to heritage and culture preservation to the next level.

The distinguished presence of Mr. S.K. Misra, Chairman of ITRHD and Sh. Sushil Dutt Salwan, Chairperson of Salwan Education Trust, who have been guiding us for the mission to conserve and nurture rural heritage, brought delight and enthusiasm amongst the young

members while receiving their badges stating their roles within the Club bestowed by Mr S.K Misra. This event served as a profound reminder of our duty to cherish, preserve, and pass on the invaluable treasures of our culture to future generations.

This pioneering initiative serves as a pilot project that will initially run in Salwan Schools in Delhi and NCR, with the aim of establishing a framework for other schools and universities across the country to develop similar establishments in their Campus. Every year, a showcase of the Heritage Club's work will be held on World Heritage Day.

Conclusion

Looking ahead, the journey of heritage preservation is not solely the responsibility of the उपनिधि club members or the Salwan Group of Schools; it is a call to action for every individual, every citizen, and the global community. India's heritage is not just its own; it is a world heritage, a shared legacy, and all must play a part in its preservation. Let us collectively celebrate our heritage, protect our roots, and ensure that the story of India's cultural diversity and historical richness continues to be written for generations to come.

In this endeavour, the उपनिधि- Salwan Youth Heritage Club stands as a shining example, a testament to the power of youth, education, and community in preserving the legacy that is India's heritage. In doing so, they inspire us to join hands and continue the journey towards safeguarding the wealth of our past and the promise of our future.

Rashmi Malik

NEWLY INSTALLED CLUB MEMBERS WITH TEACHER INCHARGES


Salwan Public School Mayur Vihar


Salwan Public School, TDSC, Ghaziabad


Salwan Public School Gurugram


Salwan Public School Rajendra Nagar

Garhwal Heritage Club

— M.M. Semwal

Motivated by our Chancellor, Dr. Yogendra Narain, in 2022 we started a membership drive for students of Garhwal University who would be interested in heritage protection and preservation. Sri Uniyal of the Tourism Department was already conducting heritage tours for the university students, and our first target was to gather a hundred members.

We met with little success in the first year. The enrolment process required the students to fill the membership form and send it along with a photograph and ₹100 to the ITRHD headquarters. The students found it difficult to prepare and submit the bank drafts. Sri Uniyal and I collected the fees ourselves and sent a collective draft to the ITRHD headquarters, along with the names of the students who had submitted the fees.

Thus, with some perseverance we were able to enrol about 40 student members from various districts of Uttarakhand. The initial brief to enrol only students from rural areas proved impractical as it was difficult to distinguish between which of the university students were from rural or non-rural areas. We consulted Dr. Yogendra Narain and ITRHD gave us permission to enrol all interested students regardless of their background.

To ensure maximum attendance at our first meeting, we decided to hold a zoom meeting. The members were individually informed of the date and timing of the meeting in the preceding week. We advised all our members to download the Zoom App on their computers/laptops/mobiles. We thus got them 'Meeting Ready'.

Our first meeting was held on 21 November 2023 with 45 participants, including the members and some professors of the university who had shown interest, as well as others.

The aim of the Garhwal Heritage club is to become a catalysing force in preserving Uttarakhand's cultural heritage. Towards this end, in the first meeting itself it was decided to open membership to all the students of various districts and utilise their resources and participation to develop a district-specific consortium of tangible and intangible heritage of the state. The members were motivated to document their experiences in the form of records, photographs and narratives, to ensure the preservation of heritage for future generations.

It was also decided that the members will engage the local community through awareness camps, outreach activities and educational programs to popularise the importance of Uttarakhand's heritage.

The state of Uttarakhand has a rich cultural heritage ranging from traditional food and cuisine to folk art forms and music. The state's craftsmanship, engravings and architectural heritage in wooden houses are a hallmark of sustainability and resilience, given the fragility of the region. Folk traditions and rituals that are practiced in various parts of Uttarakhand include traditional forms of worship such as Jagar, the local art form of Kumaon, Aipan, along with a diverse range of linguistic treasures of Garhwali and Kumaoni languages.

It was resolved that the Garhwal Heritage Club will dedicate itself to preservation of historical buildings, cultural traditions, songs, folk arts, handicrafts and more in the Garhwal region and will showcase these treasures through documentaries. Some members suggested tapping of CSR funds for this purpose. Dr. Sarvesh Uniyal, the HART (Heritage Ambassador for Rural Tradition) of ITRHD, also volunteered to organise heritage walks for the members.

In the next meeting the student members will be encouraged to speak about the steps they have taken and the heritage walks they have participated in.

Prof. M. M. Semwal
Convenor, Garhwal Heritage Club

Following the Footsteps of Buddha:

Exploring lesser known Buddhist Sites in Bihar

— Debashish Nayak

Cyclopean wall, Rajgir • Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Bihar, the birthplace of Buddhism, holds immense tangible and intangible Buddhist heritage that needs preservation and protection. Many communities in Bihar continue to worship centuries-old sculptures without fully understanding their significance, resulting in the loss of artifacts. Dr. R. Panth, Former Director of Nava Nalanda Mahavihara and Mr. Deepak Anand have been playing a significant role in reviving and creating awareness about Buddhist heritage in Bihar. Their efforts have led many villages to protect and preserve these precious relics.

Bihar holds immense significance in the history of Buddhism. It was in this region that Gautama Buddha embarked on his spiritual journey and ultimately achieved enlightenment. Bihar derives its name from 'Viharas', referring to Buddhist monasteries – places dedicated to purifying the mind and acquiring knowledge. Buddha travelled extensively through the villages and towns of Bihar, spreading his teachings and blessing the land. Even in later years, the importance of Bihar in the Buddhist world remained prominent.

Bihar was home to at least four major Buddhist universities: Nalanda, Vikramsila, Odantapuri, Tiladaka, and others. These centers of learning became renowned for Buddhist education and played a vital role in the propagation of Buddhism. These universities have attracted scholars from all over the world, contributing to the rich intellectual and cultural heritage of Bihar.

Emperor Ashoka, a follower of Buddha, closely followed the footsteps of the enlightened one. He constructed numerous stupas, viharas and chaityas, resurrecting the Buddhist religion and its sacred sites. King Bimbisara of the Magadha Kingdom also supported Buddha, leading to the rise of many viharas in the region. Rajgir, the ancient capital of Magadha, is well-documented as a place often visited by the Budhha and his monsoon retreat.

Rajgir played a vital role in the early development of Buddhism and was the site of the first Buddhist Council, held six months after the Mahaparinirvana of Buddha. The second Buddhist Council was held in Vaishali, another city associated with Buddha's teachings, while the third Buddhist Council took place in Pataliputra during the reign of Emperor Ashoka.

King Bimbisara has welcomed the Buddha in the Jethian Valley and offered the area of Veluvana (Bamboo Grove) for the Sangha's rain retreats. The tradition of vassā, a rainy season retreat lasting three months, was instituted by the Buddha at Veluvana. During this period, monks would stay in one location and refrain from travelling.

It's also mentioned that the Buddha frequently visited Gridhakuta (Vulture's Peak) in search of solitude, despite attempts by the mythical figure Mara to frighten him. King Bimbisara, being fond of the Buddha's company, would also visit Gridhakuta to receive teachings from the Buddha and discuss matters related to governance. The most important event associated with Gridhakuta Hill is when after his Enlightenment the Buddha set forth the Second Turning of the Wheel of Dharma. The Prajñāpāramitā hdaya Sūtra (The Heart of the Perfection of Understanding) and the Saddharma-Puarīka Sūtra (Lotus Sūtra) are considered second turning teachings delivered here. Hiuen Tsang offered prayer at a stūpa in Gridhakuta that marked the place where the Buddha delivered the Heart Sūtra for the first time. The construction of the concrete pathway known as the Bimbisara Path, leading from the bottom of the hill to the summit, is attributed to King Bimbisara. Two stupas were built along this path, one to mark the spot where King Bimbisara dismounted from his horse and another where he used to order his ministers and bodyguards to stay back as he continued alone to the peak of the hill. There are also the Saptparni caves near Gridhakuta where the First Buddhist Council was held.

Asura Cave - *Asura* Cave where the Buddha once dwelled and preached *Dhamma* for three months. (The cave mentioned by Hiuen Tsang).
Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Rajgir's historical importance is further highlighted by the presence of the ancient Cyclopean wall, a pre-Buddhist structure that encircled the city to protect it from external enemies. The wall is mentioned in Buddhist texts and is considered one of the oldest examples of cyclopean masonry in the world.

The Rajgir-Jethian Valley, located in the heart of ancient Magadha, is believed to be one of the routes taken by the Buddha during his 45 years of wandering and preaching in India. Jethian Valley houses several important Buddhist structures and statues. The Chandu Hill, Asura Cave, Buddha Temple, Buddhavana (Ayer – Pathari) and Tapovana are other significant sites within the valley, each holding unique stories and connections to the Buddha's life.

There are numerous Buddhist structures as well as Buddha statues in and around Jethian. As you move towards this village, you will come across a large mound with a tank. The mound is believed to be the remains of the stupa built over the Supatittha Cetiya, the place where Lord Buddha stayed when he was in Jethian.

Though the place was correctly identified back in 1901 by Sir Auriel Stien, not much happened after that. The real revitalization of the place started only in 1999, when venerable monk Satori Hanaoka along with Gencyu Hayase and Kenryu Ito of the Japanese All Kochi Young Buddhist Association created a temple to house the sacred images of the Buddha that were lying neglected for centuries, with the help of Bhagwan Buddha Gram Vikas Samiti, Jethian.

Beside the mound, there is a huge and impressive statue of Lord Buddha. Then, there are the statues of Padmapani and Buddha, situated very close to the mound. Not to be missed is the Chandu Hill, located at a distance of approximately three km from Jethian. This hill is quite popular as it houses the large cave of Rajpinda - Asura Cave (the cave mentioned by Hiuen Tsang).

Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese traveler and scholar, stayed in this valley for two years, where he studied as a disciple of Jayasena, further deepening his knowledge and understanding of Buddhism. The significant aspect of his journey was documenting his discoveries and contributing to the preservation of the ancient Buddhist trail.

Born in China around 602 AD in what is now the Henan province, Hiuen Tsang's early fascination with religion led him to read numerous religious books, including Chinese classics and writings from ancient sages. Hiuen Tsang was inspired by the journey of the earlier Chinese monk, Fa-hien, who had traveled to India back in 399-412 AD. Hiuen Tsang aspired to undertake a similar pilgrimage to India to study Buddhism at its source and bring back sacred texts.

In the 7th century, Hiuen Tsang embarked on his epic sixteen-year pilgrimage to India (629–645 CE). During his extensive travels, he visited many sacred Buddhist sites and recorded his discoveries. His meticulous documentation of the places he visited and the information he gathered played a crucial role in preserving the knowledge of the ancient Buddhist Trail. Upon returning to China, Hiuen Tsang brought back numerous Buddhist scriptures and relics, which greatly enriched the understanding of Buddhism in China.

More than 250 villages in Bihar (ancient Magadha) contain ancient remains and sculptures related to Buddhism. Nava Nalanda Mahavihara has taken the initiative to document these sites as a 'Living Museum' of Magadha and aims to raise awareness among the people of the need to respect, protect and restore this heritage. Presently, many sculptures are found worshipped in temples and at 'Goraiyansthan' (probably a corruption of the word 'Guru – Sthan', meaning teachers' place) of most villages. The following are a few villages and dedicated individuals who are helping to preserve the glorious past of Bihar. Their efforts are now being recognized and honored.

SILAO
(NALANDA DISTRICT)

The very important 'Exchange of Robes' between the Buddha and Venerable Mahakassapa happened somewhere between Rajagirha and Nalanda. Venerable Mahakassapa was the third prominent disciple of the Buddha who became the head of the Sangha after the Mahaparinirvana of the Buddha and played a vital role in preserving the teachings of the Buddha by convening the first Buddhist Council at Rajagirha. In 1934, a broken sculpture of Venerable Mahakassapa from the Pala Period (8-12th CE)

Village Keori, Jahanabad District • Image Credit : Deepak Anand

Jamuawan , Gaya District • Image Credit : Deepak Anand

Neglected statue of Buddha in Jethian
Image Credit : Deepak Anand

was discovered at Silao. The sculpture had a long inscription in Brahmi script mentioning the historic 'Exchange of Robes' between the Buddha and Mahakassapa. The sculpture was relocated in 2010.

DHARAUT
(JEHANABAD DISTRICT)

It's fascinating to hear about Dharaut and its historical significance as the site of the Buddhist monastery Gunamati and the fine twelve-armed statue of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva by the side of a large tank. Records indicate the presence of a big Buddhist shrine here during Hiuen Tsang's time, adding even more historical weight to the village. Shri Deepak Kumar Dangi from this village has keen interest in these remains. He has collected and safeguarded many antiquities from this area. Using a variety of literary sources, he has gathered historical information and corroborated some of his finds. Through various mediums, he has generated awareness regarding the significance of this village.

SONSA
(NAWADHA DISTRICT)

Sonsa Village of Nawadha District has one of the richest antiquities from ancient times. Shri Vikas Kumar and his late father Shri Bhagirath Singh, have dedicated their lives to collecting these antiquities which are spread throughout the village. Late Shri Bhagirath Singh donated his collection to the District Museum, Nawadha. Vikas Kumar has continued the work of protection and preservation of these antiquities after his father's demise. In one incident, a big mound was found in the village and the villagers were damaging it in hopes of finding some treasure in it. Vikas Kumar, with the help of local media, drew the attention of concerned officials who stopped the vandalism. Through the efforts of Vikas Kumar and Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Government of Bihar has declared the mound over Sonsa Hill a protected site.

JIYAR
(NALANDA DISTRICT)

As a responsible villager, Shri Kumar Pankaj and Shri Karyanand Sharma and his family from Jiyar Village

of Nalanda district have contributed towards the development of a beautiful shed where ancient sculptures have been plastered along the wall. This act of turning it into a temple of sorts has facilitated worship and safeguarded the antiquities from theft.

DHURGAON
(NALANDA DISTRICT)

Shri Anil Kumar from the village Dhurgaon of Nalanda District is very active in the development activities of the village. He has collected many ancient sculptures from all over the village and kept it in a safe room until further provisions are made towards their proper safeguarding.

BESWAK
(NALANDA DISTRICT)

The presence of numerous Buddhist and Hindu sculptures in the Beswak Village, along with the mound and antiquities found throughout the village, indicate that it was once a significant center for Buddhism. Shri Dinanath Pandey and his fellow villagers took the initiative to protect the mound in Beswak Village. Preserving cultural heritage sites like this is crucial for maintaining historical and archaeological significance. By involving the government officials and successfully advocating for the protection of the mound, they have ensured its safety from land grabbers. Constructing a boundary wall around the mound adds an additional layer of security and safeguards it from encroachments and unauthorized activities. The efforts of Shri Dinanath Pandey and the villagers demonstrate their commitment to safeguarding their heritage and ensuring that future generations can appreciate and learn from it.

TELHADA
(NALANDA DISTRICT)

According to research and based on study of Hiuen Tsang and I-Tsing's descriptions, present day Telhada in Nalanda District is actually settled over the remains of the ancient Tiladaka Monastery. Tiladaka Monastery was a very prominent center of Mahayana studies. Hiuen Tsang studied here for two

Buddha Mandap, Jethian • Image Credit : Deepak Anand

Buddha Mandap, Jethian (in picture : Satori Hanoka and his colleagues)
Image Credit : @ Deepak Anand

'Exchange of robes' place revived in 2012 @ Silao
Image Credit : Deepak Anand

Map of Nalanda District

Temple where Buddha borrowed a Rob, Silao Town (Nalanda)
Image Credit : Douglas Mason

An Inscription at the base of the partial sculpture
Image Credit : Douglas Maso

months and gave a beautiful eyewitness account of its grandeur. Tiladaka monastery was founded by a descendant of King Bimbisara and attracted students of Buddhism from many places. Almost the entire village is settled over a big mound of nearly 30 acres. There is a 30ft high stupa type mound in the west corner of the village now being excavated by the state archaeology department. The people of the village are extremely enthusiastic about preserving their heritage and showcasing it in a way that can be shared with connoisseurs of history and culture.

CHECHAR
(VAISHALI DISTRICT)

Chechar is situated on the north coast of the Ganges. With the changing course of the Ganges the mound of Chechar has been eroded to expose many antiquities along the river bank. As per the travelogues of Chinese monk Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang, a stupa was erected in the vicinity of Chechar to commemorate the parinirvana of the fourth prominent disciple of the Buddha, Venerable Ananda. Studies also suggest that Chechar is the place where the Buddha and the Sangha crossed the river Ganges as they travelled between Magadha and Vaishali. Shri Rampukar Singh's contribution to the heritage of Chechar village is well known. Since 1970, he has advocated for the preservation of the heritage of Chechar. In 2011, The revival of the Ancient Buddhist Pilgrimage in Bihar Project Committee honored Shri Ram Pukar Singh Ji for his lifetime contribution towards the protection and preservation of the heritage of Chechar.

PARWATI HILL
(NAWADHA DISTRICT)

Parwati Hill holds great historical and religious significance, as it is believed to be a place where the Buddha frequently delivered important teachings. However, over the years, the hill faced various challenges and threats to its ancient structures and artifacts. In the early 19th century, British explorers reported the presence of 13 large and small stupas on Parwati Hill. Unfortunately, during that time, many of these stupas were robbed of their bricks to construct a nearby road, causing damage to the archaeological remains. Further destruction occurred in the mid-19th century when miners brought down the eastern peak of the hill, as described by Hiuen Tsang. Despite the devastation, some important elements survived, such as the cave where the Buddha meditated and the Hasa stupa mentioned by Hiuen Tsang. In 1988, Shri Narendra Prasad became the headmaster of Parwati High School. He recognized the ancient antiquities of Parwati Hill even before its association with the Buddha was widely known. He understood the significance of the site and actively involved the village community in its preservation. In the early 2000s, new research suggested that Parwati Hill was indeed the Indasalaguha and the Vediya

Parwat mentioned in Pali literature, establishing a direct connection to the Buddha. Shri Prasad, realizing the importance of this discovery, took on the responsibility of protecting the heritage and raising awareness among stakeholders. However, in 2004-05, illegal mining activities and the installation of a crusher machine posed a threat to the hill. Fortunately, with the support of the villagers and the efforts of Shri Narendra Prasad, a strong protest took place, leading to the preservation of the sacred hill in its present form. Shri Prasad's dedication to protecting the heritage of Parwati Hill and generating awareness among the community played a crucial role in safeguarding this important historical and religious site.

JEHIAN-RĀJGIR HERITAGE WALK

Organization of the annual walk by Nava Nalanda Mahavihara and the Light of Buddha Dharma Foundation International (LBDFI) (https://lbdfi.org/) demonstrate a commitment to preserving and promoting the rich Buddhist heritage of the region. This heritage walk takes place each year on 13 December, and provides an opportunity for devout Buddhists and locals to engage in a spiritual journey along the Buddha trail. This pilgrimage allows followers of the Buddha's teachings to immerse themselves in the historical and spiritual context of his life. Such initiatives are essential for generating awareness about the historical and cultural significance of the Buddha trail and they also contribute to the local economy by promoting tourism in the region. It's wonderful to see organizations collaborating to preserve and celebrate the legacy of Buddhism and offer a meaningful experience to those who wish to deepen their connection with the teachings of the Buddha.

*This article is based on blogs and articles of Mr. Deepak Anand, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara (http://nalanda-onthemove.blogspot.com/) and other available articles on Buddha online & offline.**

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This boy has found this artifact in a Cave in Ayer where Buddha meditated.
Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Buddhavana : Cave where Buddha Meditated.
Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Dhamma Walk, Jethian to Rajgir
Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Dhamma Walk, Jethian to Rajgir • Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Dhamma Walk, Jethian to Rajgir • Image Credit : Douglas Mason

Village Dharaut, Jehanabad District

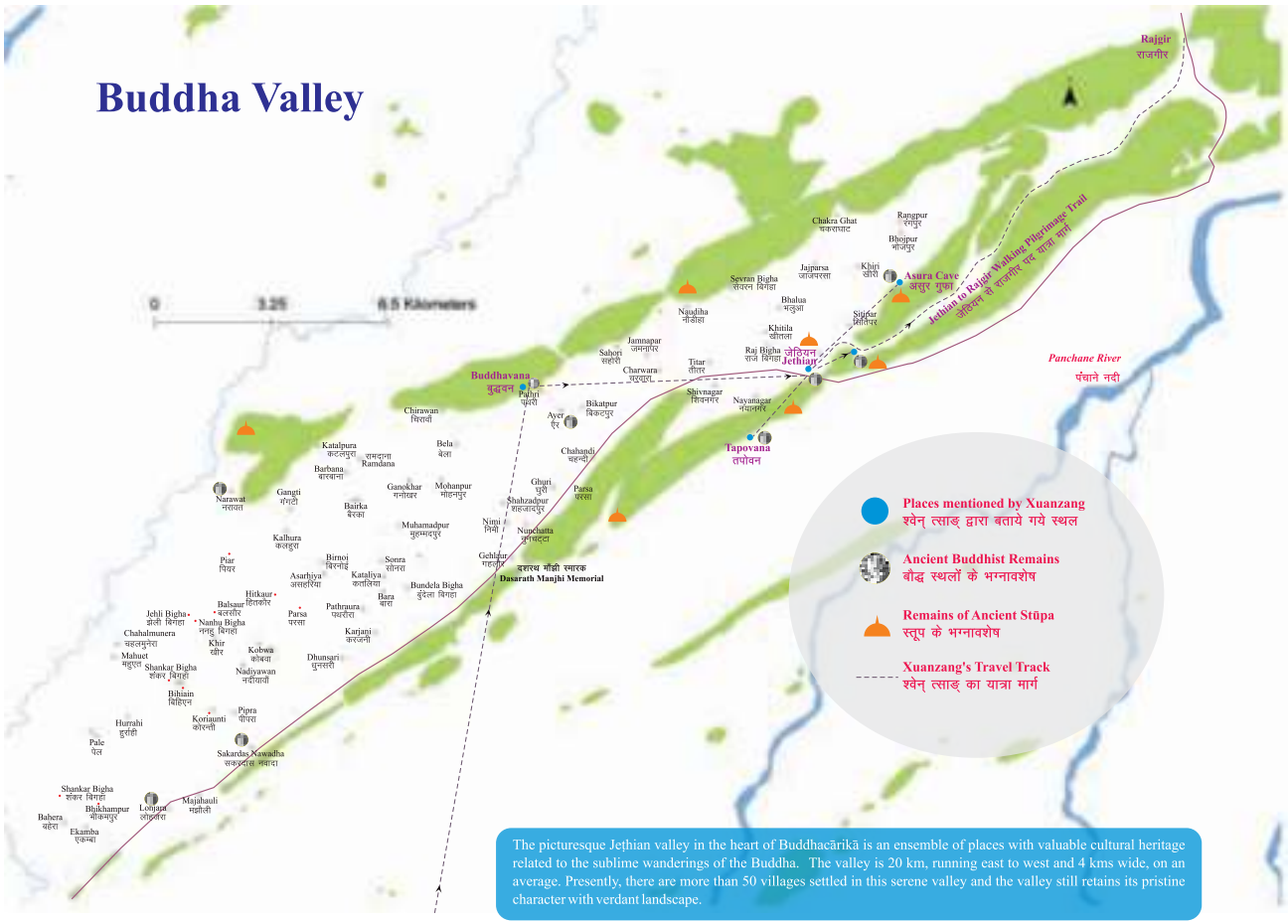
Twelve-armed statue of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva

Image Source : https://www.facebook.com/wonderfulbihar/photos/dharaut-a-village-in-jehanabad-district-is-considered-to-be-the-site-of-the-budd/1319685498165671/

Shri Ram Pukar Singh Ji with the Citation trophy (Mahakassapa Plaque)

Dr. R. Panth and other dignitaries honoring Shri Ram Pukar Singh with the Mahakassapa Plaque

Images source : http://nalanda-onthemove.blogspot.com/search?q=ram+pukar+singh



The Buddha Valley Map

Image Source : http://nalanda-onthemove.blogspot.com/search/label/Jethian

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Conserving and developing unprotected Buddhist heritage and sites

— A G Krishna Menon

As the birthplace of Lord Buddha, India has many iconic sites associated with his life and revered by Buddhists across the world. But, it also has many other sites associated with Buddhism that are considered less significant, lying in ruins or yet undiscovered in rural areas. Many are venerated locally and have the latent potential to contribute to the economic welfare of the contemporary societies where they exist.

In this process of economic development also lies an opportunity to recover, and perhaps reconstruct, a more authentic understanding of ancient architectural knowledge and building traditions. As matters stand, while Buddhist theology has attracted substantial attention, and even the buildings themselves have been documented and their elements and features widely memorialized, little work has actually been undertaken to understand the building culture that produced these much-admired artefacts. A fuller knowledge of the ancient building culture would not only assist conservation efforts but also add immensely to the public understanding of the significance of this heritage. It is with this background that ITRHD proposed an international conference of domain experts to deliberate on the issues of conserving and developing unprotected Buddhist Heritage and Sites.

ITRHD was set up to primarily leverage the conservation of cultural heritage for the benefit of contemporary society, particularly rural society. It is enshrined in the Memorandum of Association, which states: *Identify those areas of tradition and heritage in rural and tribal India whose value in historical, cultural or economic terms is intrinsic to the identity of those areas and whose preservation and conservation can play a substantial role in enhancing the quality of life.* Thus development, in its multi-faceted manifestations, is its primary agenda.

To achieve its objectives, ITRHD undertook five initiatives:

1. Rural heritage is loosely categorised as vernacular architecture. With a view to define and explicate its meaning and significance more effectively, ITRHD partnered with the School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal, and the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sanghralaya, Bhopal, (The Museum of Man), to conduct the South Asian Vernacular Architecture Conference in Bhopal, from December 11-13, 2015. The participants drafted and adopted a Charter for Promoting Vernacular Architecture in South Asia.

2. A proposal was submitted to the Government of UP to undertake a district-wise listing of heritage buildings, and two were carried out. A model survey was also undertaken in one cluster of five villages in Kerala, for listing heritage buildings that could be converted for homestays to promote tourism.

3. Several restoration projects were undertaken, including the Sheik Musa Dargah in Nuh, Haryana; 42 Terracotta Temples in Maluti

village, Jharkhand, including upgradation of infrastructure and facilities to attract tourists; The historic Birsa Munda Jail in Ranchi for accommodating a Tribal Museum; and a detailed survey of the Royal Gardens of Rajnagar in the Bundelkhand Region of Madhya Pradesh, restoring heritage buildings and developing infrastructure to promote agri-tourism and organic farming in conformity with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, undertaken by The Belgian Chapter of ITRHD.

4. It organised public lectures by experts on World Heritage Day and World Tourism Day, and conducted several conferences on Rural Tourism and Agri-Tourism.

5. It lobbied with the 15th Finance Commission to promote the conservation of rural heritage. In its report three conservation projects have been identified in Punjab and Haryana which have been allocated to ITRHD for implementation.

The focus on Buddhist heritage and sites emanates from this experience. It pursues ITRHD's core purpose to link heritage and development as a preferred strategy to alleviate rural poverty and underdevelopment. It also hopes to simultaneously draw the attention of policymakers to the social and economic potential of the extant Buddhist heritage that lies neglected in the country of its origin.

The decision to make this an international conference is based on two imperatives. Firstly, substantial Buddhist heritage exists in South and Southeast Asia and therefore there would be considerable mutual benefit to engage in a constructive international dialogue on the subject with all legatees of Buddhist heritage. There are well-regarded experts in Europe and the USA, as well, who could also contribute to this dialogue. Secondly, it aligns with the Indian government's policy to encourage collaboration and partnership with neighbouring countries with which India shares deep-rooted cultural affinities.

ITRHD's long-term objective in organizing the conference is to establish a **Rural Heritage Training Institute**. It will train conservation professionals and scholars to engage with the protection of cultural heritage. It will differ from existing academic programmes conducted by universities and the ASI's Institute of Archaeology in one key aspect. ITRHD's vision is to thoughtfully move away from the focus on preserving the authenticity of the cultural legacy by expanding focus to the lesser known categories of cultural heritage, particularly in rural areas, as a viable avenue for promoting economic development. This pedagogic departure from quotidian practices emerges from an understanding of the socio-economic realities of our society and the search for more locally-rooted development strategies to mitigate the adverse consequences of economic and cultural globalization. It will take a more relative and pragmatic approach to conserving cultural legacy by redefining the other attributes of authenticity and foregrounding its role in contemporary society. Such an ideology of conservation is not being taught here and the ITRHD Rural Heritage Training Institute is predicated on developing it. In the rural Indian context, authentic repair and reconstruction protocols could provide valuable skills to crafts people. It will also enrich the knowledge of the past and should not be ruled out *a priori* by scholars who have absorbed the doctrinaire principles of conservation developed by Eurocentric societies and regulatory agencies to conserve the unprotected cultural heritage of our society.

The ITRHD Training Institute proposes to focus on the welfare needs (tangible and intangible) of local societies to achieve non-generic, case-specific and site-specific outcomes. Broadly, its immediate objective is to prepare professionals in different disciplines to deal with the vast numbers of unprotected, often undocumented Buddhist heritage that are present in the rural hinterlands of the country, because they offer fertile opportunities to implement such new development and conservation paradigms.

Following several exploratory meetings with scholars, conservation professionals. archaeologists and administrators engaged in development, the following are the themes for the Conference:

a) Developing architectural knowledge of Buddhist architectural culture, including materials, decorative arts, etc.;

b) Buddhist heritage in other countries and the problems being faced in conservation and management;

c) Tourism and its linkages particularly with Buddhist heritage, heritage routes already identified and new ones that could be developed;

d) Buddhist sites in India, particularly in rural areas, and both national and international professionals and scholars associated with them, the problems they face, etc.;

e) Buddhist decorative art experts who could contribute to the Conference and later for skills development training at the ITRHD Institute;

f) Training programmes required for both academic and practical purposes.

The ITRHD is collaborating with the following institutions to conduct the conference:

1. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and its Institute of Archaeology are key interlocutors to take these ideas forward. The ASI is the premier agency safeguarding important Indian architectural heritage and sites and it has a wide network of heritage sites under its care and an equally extensive cohort of professional expertise. It has considerable experience in both national and international sites.

2. The School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi (SPA) is a premier institution imparting professional education in architecture and urban planning and the allied disciplines. It is a designated Centre of Excellence by the Government of India and has a strong commitment to promote Conservation Studies by developing new directions and interdisciplinary networks. They propose to undertake empirical field studies at Buddhist sites to contribute to the objectives of the conference.

3. The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is a Buddhist umbrella body with its base in New Delhi that serves as a common platform for Buddhists worldwide. IBC currently has a membership comprising more than 320 organisations, both monastic and lay, in 39 countries. Its mission is to make Buddhist values part of global engagement while working to preserve and promote Buddhist heritage, traditions and practices.

4. The Gautam Buddha University in Greater NOIDA, has been designated as a Centre of Excellence for Buddhist Studies. It has a diverse student body including several international students, and a faculty actively associated with both national and international institutions and individuals. GBU has held many international conferences in the past and has a strong infrastructure at its campus to hold the proposed international conference.

5. ITRHD is also exploring collaborating with The American Buddhist Association to organise the international conference and consider the setting up of the ITRHD Rural Heritage Training Institute.

ITRHD has conducted structured dialogue with national and international experts, the officials at the embassies of Myanmar, Bhutan and Japan in New Delhi, and found a wide consensus to support the objectives of the conference.

This article is a report of a work in progress. It has been provisionally decided to conduct the conference at the GBU campus towards the end of 2025 followed by a tour of the iconic Buddhist sites for the participants.

Embracing Traditional Rural Architecture for a Sustainable Future

— Preeti Harit

As a country with a profound understanding of both the physical and spiritual aspects of human existence, India boasts a cultural heritage rich in wisdom. Ancient scriptures provide insights into every aspect of life, offering guidance on living, eating, medicine, and even the construction of buildings. *Vastushastra*, a text dedicated to the principles of constructing structures for various purposes, is rooted in the movement of the sun and wind. These principles became the base for all traditional, rural, vernacular architecture in India, until western influences and religious connotations began to alter traditional practices.

These practices have further seen a huge downfall over the past few decades, bringing about a significant disconnect from cultural roots. While the intentions behind these changes were to benefit society, they have at the same time taken a toll on physical and mental well-being. The shift in construction practices has not only affected the environment but has also given rise to health issues.

The adoption of new materials, disregarding the environment, coupled with poor planning, has led to buildings that struggle to provide proper ventilation and natural light, leading to a rise in respiratory problems, skin issues, depression, and anxiety. India has witnessed a surge in these diseases due to inadequate living conditions and other factors, introducing the concept of a 'sick building syndrome' into the country.

These construction materials have also had a severely detrimental impact on the environment because of the way they are manufactured; there is high wastage of energy in their production. Both the materials and the architecture used have considerable impact on the electricity demand. To make buildings healthier and more comfortable extra layers of services are necessitated – including extra lighting for daytime, air conditioning, heating, air purifying and water softeners. Adding these features to buildings as standard in turn leads to huge environmental impact.

The traditional, rural architecture in India is based on sustainable, environment-friendly principles that help the society to live in sync with nature. It is characterized by inclusive planning that caters to the day-to-day activities and specific cultural nuances of a region. It places a strong emphasis on the symbiotic relationship between culture and function in the planning of structure. Rural architecture incorporates cultural symbols and elements, adding a layer of identity and aesthetics to the buildings. This decorative nature not only enhances the visual appeal but also strengthens the cultural connection. By incorporating cultural symbols and elements, rural architecture helps in preserving and promoting cultural continuity, fostering a sense of identity and belonging among communities. These architectural practices are inclusive, addressing the diverse needs of society.

Motif used for decorations in Benaras

Opening in Baghdadi houses of Ballia

Typical Finial in Ballia and Benaras houses

Typical decoration on walls during festivals

Typical courtyard in a traditional rural mud house

Unlike modern constructions that may cater to specific demographics, traditional rural architecture considers the requirements of all members of the community. Traditional rural architecture is inherently sustainable, allowing individuals to coexist harmoniously with nature. Traditional rural architecture promotes a lifestyle in harmony with nature, recognizing the importance of coexistence. It allows for a balanced and sustainable way of living.

Mud is dug out in a low line area of the village to build houses and then the area is used for collecting rain water and recharging ground water

The construction methods prioritize non-destructive practices, minimizing the long-term impact on the environment. The materials used in traditional rural architecture have a significantly lower environmental impact compared to modern building materials. This is crucial in the context of increasing concerns about climate change and environmental degradation. These buildings do not require excessive electricity consumption to maintain comfort for occupants. The construction materials and techniques

Vernacular rural house in mud with front yard

contribute to energy efficiency, aligning with the need for sustainable living. The emphasis on proper planning, ventilation, and natural light in traditional rural architecture contributes to better air quality and living conditions.

Traditional rural architecture serves as a repository of indigenous wisdom, preserving time-tested practices that are increasingly relevant in the face of contemporary challenges. To start with, it has become extremely important to safeguard, document and preserve the rural heritage of India to be accessible to the coming generation. This knowledge system combined with modern technology can make a significant contribution in solving the present environmental issues and energy crisis.

In 2015, ITRHD made a notable contribution in this field. With the objective of enhancing rural economy, livelihood, and the preservation of precious heritage, it convened a national seminar on conserving South Asian Vernacular Architecture in Bhopal, in collaboration with the School of Planning and Architecture, Bhopal, and the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sanghralaya. This resulted in the formation of a charter on vernacular architecture that started the process of building a healthier future.

One of the projects initiated by ITRHD was listing of Rural Heritage of Ballia and Varanasi District, as a first step towards the conservation and development of the rural heritage in these two districts. Physical surveys of the built heritage showed how India is sustainable by nature. The villages came into existence around pokhras (waterbodies), which were used for water harvesting. The mud from these pokhras was used for the construction of houses and other structures, providing good insulation and keeping structures cool in summer and warm in winter. This was well experienced while doing the survey in the month of June, with 50° temperatures and a red alert declared in the district. The structures are planned around courtyards, that provide natural ventilation to the rooms that all open into it. Deep verandahs are placed all around the rooms, serving

as sitting and activity areas. These outdoor spaces are interesting and inviting spaces that help in creating a more socially active and balanced society.

Another project initiated by ITRHD was the formation of a rural heritage tourism development plan for the Anjunad region in Kerala. Anjunad region has five villages located in the northern-most part of Kerala. It has a hot summer and cool winter, for which they developed mud houses that are most comfortable throughout the year. The houses have sloping roofs made of bamboo and wild grass, which is in abundance there; it was later replaced with wood and terracotta tiles. These structures generally have very small or no windows, which also helps in keeping the insides cool. The construction of the house is in mud and bamboo, where the bamboo structure is made with mud infills. It is then finished with mud and cow dung by burnishing with river stones. The ingenious construction techniques that have evolved here result in houses strong enough to withstand elephant attacks, which is of high probability in this region.

These instances, drawn from rural heritage development projects initiated by ITRHD, illustrate how sustainable buildings with a focus on the cultural, environmental, and social factors of specific regions were built in India. In a world of swiftly advancing technological modernity, the revival of these principles from traditional rural architecture presents a promising path to sustainable living.

This journey towards embracing traditional rural architecture as a forward-thinking approach necessitates a collective effort. Organisations involved in the field of rural development, governments, architects, and individuals should join hands to promote sustainable construction practices, revive traditional knowledge systems, and safeguard the cultural identity embedded in architecture. Through this conscious and collaborative effort, we can pave the way for a future where our built environment becomes a testament to the wisdom of the past, a boon for the present, and a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Kinetics of Cultural Synthesis in Performing Arts

— Shovana Narayan

From time immemorial, India's contacts with other cultures combined with natural environmental changes has led to a constant process of cultural synthesis. Migration leads to a movement of people who settle down in other areas, carrying with them the flavour of their own cultures, which takes root in the psyche of the people of the new region. The converse scenario is equally true. Aspects of the integrated cultures fuse, to produce a new practice with its own individual identity. Such a process is continuous.

From pre-historic times to the Indus Valley Civilization, followed by the Vedic and successive periods, this sub-continent has witnessed inclusion in favour of exclusion. Elements of dance, theatre, group formations, musical instruments and rituals of pre-historic India found resonance in the Indus Valley-Harappan periods. Large scale migratory patterns whereby populations moved from western coastal regions to the interior heartlands of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, have been borne out by their folk songs. These refer to the song of the salt, flight on camels and rituals accompanied by phonetic sounds, with symbols reminiscent of the Harappan period and the occurrence of ancient Hebrew, Greek and Egyptian words. These are also indicators to forces of natural disasters and socio-political power changes.

With the drying up of rivers, there was an inevitable migration of populations towards the Gangetic belt. The Vedic civilization, mainly associated with the Indus valley, added another dimension with the emergence of Itihas and the Puranas. In the spread of Aryan precepts, various sages such as Sage Agastya carried out the Aryan expansion in the Deccan. In time, almost the whole of India came under the spell of Aryanism. Hinduism incorporated all forms of belief and worship without obliterating or eliminating other beliefs or rituals. No part of India remained oblivious or untouched by inter-regional and inter-cultural influences. Sanskrit, identified with the Brahmanical religion of the Vedas, was adopted in all parts of India. One of the important fall-outs of this was adoption of the caste stratification of society, which also had an impact on artistes.

Political instability and foreign invasion from the northern and western borders led to migration of many scholars to safer areas, carrying with them masses of literature and their literary and artistic knowledge of art forms and traditions from their own cultures. These were compiled painstakingly in various treatises. The authors of treatises such as the *Natyashastra* and the *Sangeet Ratnakar*, respectively Bharata and Sharangdeva, originally hailed from Kashmir.

The 10th century was a water-shed in the area of performing arts as it marked the regional development of various art forms. The usual outward turn of knees or the straight stance prevalent till then gave way to regional identifying features. Language, music and costume were similarly influenced under various rulers, be they from across or beyond Indian borders.

DEVOTION AS THE UNDERLYING FACTOR OF CLASSICAL PERFORMING ARTS

Rituals enjoyed a prominent position in both pre and post-Aryan periods. The evolution of faith saw a dynamic process of inclusion of myths, rituals and iconographies. The seal discovered at Mohenjo-daro that shows a seated figure in a crossed-legged posture of meditation surrounded by animals, is identified with Shiva as Pashupati. Post the period of Buddha, there was an upsurge of devotion to Lord Shiva, the Auspicious One. Elements of Vedic deities such as Agni, the vehicle Nandi of Shiva, Rudra the deity with 'golden red hue of flame' and Surya, found fruition in the early Mauryan period.

This also led to the birth of the philosophy and myth of Nataraja. Tantra and Shakta traditions find a unique merger and expression as Nataraja, dwelling on monistic idealism where consciousness is the one reality. With its roots on the banks of River Sindhu in Kashmir Shaivism and Tantrism, the concept of Nataraja and its iconography slowly spread its wings to various parts of the sub-continent. The migration of the Shaivite scholar Sage Moolanath from Kashmir to Chidambaram in the 6th century AD, laid the foundations of Shaivism at Chidambaram with associated legends taking root. In time, Sage Moolanath came to be known as Thirumuller (Thiru for Shri) in the Tamil style.

The iconography of the Dancing Shiva grew slowly. The Ganges came to adorn his locks around the 5th century. The crescent moon and serpent were added in following centuries. The aureole of flames came about in 8-9 century AD and is attributed to Buddhist iconographies. Nataraja was known by names such as Narteshwar, Natakeswar and Nriteshwar and was always portrayed in a frontal position till the 10th-11th century AD. But after this period, he came to be known as Nataraja and gained the position as is popular today. These have been borne out by epigraphic representations gleaned from the 2nd century BC Sunga period in north and north-west India, spreading to various parts of India and culminating in the 11th century Chola era's popular figure of Nataraj.

Krishna is the other popular figure in performing arts. Even though Krishna finds mention in various references continuously since the 4th century BC, it is from the 10th century onwards that he has filled our consciousness and along with Radha, has become the central motif for all art forms. Jayadeva, the court poet of King Lakshmanasena (AD 1179-1205) of Bengal raised the level of Radha and brought in the element of divine romance. His Sanskrit classic, *Gita Govinda* (Songs of Govinda) became a powerful evocative landmark in this process. It raised the imagery of Radha (which was minimal till the 10th century AD) to unprecedented heights of imagination.

Jayadeva's seemingly intentional elevation of Radha from a somewhat obscure person to a central deity of worship may perhaps be best explained by an analysis of the socio-political situation existing at that time in Indian history. In the 10th century, the influence of Shaivism was waning

and Vaishnavism was on the rise. Simultaneously, there were new emerging challenges because of the changed socio-political scene that came with the advent of Muslim rule. With men out on battlefields, the natural emotional urges found resonance in the stories of Radha and Krishna. Thus, Krishna came to symbolise the philosophical and pragmatic acceptance of the relevance of desire. The yearning of the individual soul for the Almighty, symbolised by Radha yearning for Krishna in Vaishnavism and between the lover and the beloved (the Almighty) in Sufism, became subjects of enactment in performing arts. Sufi thought became visible in Vaishnav philosophy and vice versa. The two parallel streams with their verses being part of all our performing art traditions, lent beautiful and meaningful cultural synthesis.

It was this yearning, with the Kathaks being the link between the two focal points, which resulted in its characteristic pose where one arm is raised above the head and the other arm stretched out at chest level. This particular pose finds a certain similarity to the Sufi whirling dervish's hand position where his right arm is directed to the sky, ready to receive God's beneficence and his left hand, upon which his eyes are fastened, is turned toward the earth.

Kathak dance form has had an unbroken continuity since the 4th century BC. Weaving through contours of socio-political history and inter-cultural dynamics, Kathak exudes the fragrance of 2500 years of Indian history, especially the last 1000 years of heritage, capturing the natural beauty, innate solutions to historical conflicts and the cultural diversity of this distinctive cross-cultural fertilization. Unlike Hinduism, the Islamic code of the Shariat did not bestow recognition on dance, music and other performing arts and forbade its use. The Brahmin Kathaks therefore remained confined to their temples. Yet it showed great resilience and strength because of its innate belief in plurality. With the increasing spread of Muslim rule in large parts of the sub-continent, ripples were felt in the field of performing arts. Regionalisation of art forms and development of various streams of languages became pronounced.

The element of pirouettes associated with dervish dances in Sufism, found its way into Kathak's rhythmic virtuous rendering. Even though a sculpture from Pataliputra pertaining to the Maurya period (3rd century BC) indicates use of pirouettes and the Natyashastra too refers to the 'chakra bhramari', the pirouettes were not treated as a special or spectacular aspect of a Kathak rendering, until under the influence of Sufism it assumed a virtuous garb. The Brahmin Kathaks found a unique explanation to marry the sensibilities of Vaishnavism and Sufism. As Indian philosophy expounded the cyclical nature of life, there could be no better visual translation of this philosophy of 'kaal chakra' and jeevan chakra' than with the rendering of the 'chakra bhramari' (the pirouettes). In Sufism, the impulse for pirouetting also stemmed from a similar philosophy whereby abandoning the ego, the believer aims at oneness with the almighty, encompassing in this 'dhikr', the three elements of 'tawhid' (realization of Allah's oneness and role as sole creator), resurrection and prophethood. In the words of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi: *All loves are a bridge to Divine love. Yet, those who have not had a taste of it do not know!*

PERFORMERS

The new societal norms led to another significant development. Male Brahmin Kathaks now remained confined to their temples. For court entertainment, a new group of women performers, the courtesan dancers, emerged to replace the devadasis, in a practice prevalent in all parts of India including Delhi and surrounding areas. Dubbed as 'nautch' by the British (a corrupted version of 'naach'), there were several categories of such courtesans.

There are a few instances where depending on the personal interest of the Muslim rulers, male Brahmin Kathak dancers performed in the haloed precincts of the court. The 13th century treatise *Sangeet*

Ratnakara indicates how some of the artistes adapted themselves to changed socio-political circumstances. Thus, the Kathaks were performed not only within the sacred temple precincts, but in courts of both Hindu and Muslim rulers. Court etiquette demanded that they could not place an idol of their Hindu Gods. The Kathaks found a unique solution by placing the 'tulsi mala' (rosary symbolising Krishna) or the 'rudraksha mala' (rosary symbolising Shiva) in lieu of an idol, which did not offend the sensibilities of the Muslim rulers. This has been recorded and archived by the British in the 17th century.

MUSIC

The meeting of Vaishnavism and Sufism had other fall-outs too as it saw new genres of music compositions such as the 'khayal' and the 'tarana', off-shoots of the traditional 'dhrupad gayaki' of ancient India. The new genre of music compositions became part of the Kathak repertoire.

It is widely believed that impetus for development of the new musical system of qawwali (a form of Sufi devotional music) came from Amir Khusro, inspired by the Central Asian 'Sema'. As orthodox interpretation of Shariat code permitted only devotional music and calligraphy, it has been recorded that because of such restrictions, a serious argument took place between Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia (1243-1325 A.D.) and Qazi Mohiuddin Kashani during the reign of Ghayasuddin Tughlaq, on the practice of the newly developed qawwali and the mehfil-e-sama where the participants entered into a state of ecstasy, reminiscent of dervishes.

The tarana, derived from the Persian term 'tarannum' (melody), emerged as an adaptation of the 'non-tom alap' rendering of 'dhrupad gayaki'. In the emergence of the new philosophy in the wake of Muslim rule in India, the tarana saw the meeting point of Vaishnavism and Sufism, where at the height of ecstasy in devotion resulting in a trance-like state, the commonly used meaningless syllables 'deem-ta-na-na', 'na-dir-dir-dani', 'de-ra-na' etc. symbolised the union of spirit of the self with the higher Almighty. Unlike its parent 'dhrupad ang' where the 'nom-tom alaap' was sung at slow speed ('vilambit laya'), the newly evolvedtarana' was set at medium speed ('madhya laya') sometimes even reaching a faster pace ('drut laya').

The success of this new melodic composition tarana is evident from its adaptation in various parts of India, whether as 'thillana' or 'pallavi' and such others, facilitated by exchange of artistes as gifts by the Mughal Governors from the Delhi court to the provinces.

VACIKA

The area of 'vacika abhinaya' saw far reaching influences of developments that impacted performing arts across the length and breadth of the country. The advent of Muslim rule with its capital at Delhi, saw a cross fertilization of several languages in the region: Prakrit of the common man, Sanskrit of the learned, Persian, Arabic and Turkish. From this interaction, the new language of the masses that developed was Hindavi. This new language was utilised by Amir Khusro and became an important vehicle for 'abhinaya' in Kathak. Urdu emerged as the cross-fertilization of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words adorning the sentence structure of Prakrit and Hindavi. This became the language for the outpourings of the romantic poets of late 18th and 19th centuries. The new lingua franca was utilised for evocative verses of 'thumris' that centred on the eternal theme of yearning of union of the individual soul with the Almighty and which was symbolised by the yearning for union by Radha and the gopis with Krishna, the Almighty. These poignant verses reflected love in both its hues, namely pain of separation and ecstasy of union. When performed by the courtesans, Mohan became synonymous with 'sajan' or 'piya'. Interestingly, the content and themes danced by the traditional Brahmin Kathaks continued to be strongly based on Hindu deities.

It was the fermenting 16th century onwards that also saw Maithili verses of Vidyapati being adopted and performed by the monks of Assam in the sattras (monasteries). Jayadeva's *Gita Govind* was adopted by performers in southern India while Telugu verses (a language that borrowed heavily from Sanskrit) became central pieces of performance repertoire in the southern region. Thyagaraja 'kritis' became a dominant feature. During the 17th century, several Persian and Arabic words were also added in the Telugu language, and its influence went on till the 19th century.

REPERTOIRE IN SOUTHERN INDIA:

Muslim rule in southern India were exemplified by Tipu Sultan and the Nizam of Hyderabad. Tipu Sultan, Tiger of Mysore, ruled over a large kingdom in the 18th century bordered by the Krishna River in the north, the Eastern Ghats in the east and the Arabian Sea in the west. The first Nizams of Hyderabad were of Turkic origin from Uzbekistan. They found service under the Mughals and became rulers in the 18th century. Their kingdom included the regions of Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra. Both the rulers were known to have patronised the performing arts. The repertoire of the devadasis performing in their courts included several items that had Islamic influence, one such being the 'salaamatoru'. It was during this period that the counterpart of the tarana locally known as 'thillana' found its way into the repertoire of the devadasis.

DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH EAST:

The medieval period saw the spread of Vaishnav influence in the north-eastern state of Manipur which led to a healthy amalgamation of traditional local tribal culture with Vaishnav thoughts and practices. This led to the 'sankeertan' music and the development of the Raas dances based on Vaishnav Padavalis. Various virile and vigorous cholam dances now formed part of temple rituals of Manipur. In Assam, the Vaishnav influence saw the development of temple rituals that included dance by the temple priests of the sattras – similar to the Kathaks of the Gangetic belt, who performed largely to verses of Shankardeva and Padavali of Vidyapati from Mithila.

INTRODUCTION OF TEMPLE RITUALS & DEVADASI TRADITION

After the decline of the Mauryan Empire in the 3rd century BC, the Sungas (who were Brahminical by faith) came to power. Under them, the concept of the Dancing Shiva (later Nataraj) and the importance of female energy, Shakti, embodied as woman Goddess, began to come into prominence.

Temples were built to Hindu deities where ladies known as devadasis (servants of the Lord), were employed to perform services like cleaning and cooking in the temples. With the growth of temple rituals, a few were also given the task of entertaining the Gods through music and dance. Their dance came to be known as 'dasi attam' (dance of the dasis). There were several avenues for recruitment to the devadasi profession. Fulfilment of a wish, dire economic compulsions and poverty forced families to donate their daughter as devadasis. Families without sons volunteered a daughter to become a devadasi to ensured that their property stayed within the family, as she was given this privilege of a male heir. Women folk of the defeated or killed were also sent to temples to become devadasis.

A flourishing devadasi system was seen in all parts of the sub-continent. Much has been written on them. Kalidasa makes a reference to the 'devadasi pratha' in the Mahakala temple of Ujjain at the time of 'sandhya pooja' (evening worship) in his *Meghdoot*. Jain chronicles refer to both the 'deva kumars' and the 'deva kumaris' as temple dancers. Hiuen Tsang makes a reference to the number of dancing girls he saw attached to the Sun temple at Multan while the Rajatarangini of Kalhana also indicates the prevalence of this custom in Kashmir from about the 7th century onwards. This system was also not unknown at the Vishwanath temple at Benaras, as is evident from the reference in *Kuttinimatam*. Historical records of the Mughal period refer to the

existence of devadasis in the temples of the Indo-Gangetic belt. A 'parwana' dated 25 January, 1644 AD (15 zulqada 1053 AH) written by one Azam Khan mentions the presence of 'nrit-kanyan' (women dancers) in the Govind Dev temple at Vrindaban. Other writers of the time who commented upon the system included Domingo Paes (Portuguese diplomat), Fernao Nunz, Abbe Dubois (19th AD), and the English traveller, Mundy.

Economic reasons provided impetus to the system as temples were important sources of revenue. The presence of devadasis increased the attraction of temples. Al Beruni (11th c Arab historian) has recorded that the institution of devadasi was maintained by the kings for the benefit of their revenues.

The devadasis were kept outside the caste system. This in effect meant that they belonged to the lowest caste. However, with their assigned service as temple and court performers, the devadasi system reflected how a non-hierarchical principle of auspiciousness qualified lower castes and out-castes for certain ritual status. Sacred prostitution was linked to cultural hegemony and caste-oriented feudal economy.

UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE BRAHMIN PRIESTS AND THE RULERS OVER DEVADASIS

The devadasis were 'servants of the Lord'. Herein, there was a struggle as to who constituted the 'Lord'. Brahmin priests claimed that as the 'bhudevas' (representatives of gods on the earth), anything offered to God belonged to them; hence the girls offered to God must belong to them. The kings believed that as they appointed devadasis, giving them money, land and food, theirs was the greater claim.

The conflict was resolved by an understanding and devadasis were branded on their chest with emblems of the 'garuda' (eagle) and 'chakra' (discus) for kings, and 'shankha' (conch) for brahmins.

COLONIAL PERIOD: IMPACT ON PERFORMING ARTS & THE ABOLITION OF DEVADASI SYSTEM

With the Crown making India its colony after the 1857 War of Independence, equations changed. Indians were no longer treated as equals. What were once seen as interesting cultural traditions were now considered impure and debauched. The notion of white supremacy gained ground. Within some Indians, there was a spirit of new prudery, while in others, there was an identity crisis. With interest of the colonial powers in antiquity and tradition, there was also a rush among the newly-awakened Indians to trace their respective roots as far back as possible and lay claim to being the 'oldest' in terms of antiquity, especially in the field of performing arts. Associated social reformation induced a search for identity and a need to legitimise, theorize and justify existence in terms of antiquity by the conscious process of tracing roots with the help of temple sculptures, incorporating elements that had not existed or had not been practiced earlier. This led to the reconstruction of dance of that region in the mid-twentieth century from a virtual skeleton framework.

The colonial masters viewed the devadasi system as temple prostitution, subservient to the degraded and vested interests of the priests and rulers. It was argued that it was a custom created by the upper castes and classes to exploit lower castes under the protective shield of religion.

The consolidation of colonial authority and newly emerging bureaucracy and administration changed the power structure and emboldened the colonial masters to strike against the devadasi system. The rise of non-Brahmin consciousnesses resulted in social upheaval, ripples of which would be felt in the performing arts. There was widespread fear that continuation of the devadasi system was

essential for Brahminical authority and for furthering class and caste inequalities. Less opportunities in securing influential government jobs added to the list of woes of the non-Brahmins. The Brahmins, being the educated intelligentsia, were preferred in employment, placing them in influential positions that were denied to the lower castes.

With the rising momentum of the Anti-Brahmin movement, the colonial authority gathered strength to introduce the Anti-Devadasi Bill which had the support of lower castes and and a large section within the devadasi community itself. A section of upper-caste Hindu social reformers, lawyers, writers, artistes also supported the Bill. A third group that was against the system of the devadasis was the Isai Vellalar and the Sengundar communities, who vigorously supported the Bill.

At the same time, a small group of educated elite Brahmins led a counter movement in the early 1930s. Initial efforts were directed towards sanitization, reconstruction as well as rechristening of 'dasi attam' (the dance of the devadasis). Consciously taking terms from Bharata's *Natyashastra*, the dance form was given a new name, Bharatanatyam, by scholar and critic V. Raghavan. He popularized Bharatanatyam to represent Bharat (India) and natya (theatrical dance). He also gave it its creative acronym – 'bha' for bhava, 'ra' for rasa and 'ta' for tala.

With the entry of the first Brahmin lady, Rukmini Devi Arundale, into the hitherto prohibited field, the counter movement received great fillip. Her association with the Theosophical Society and her easy entry and acceptance in the corridors of colonial power structure, became catalysts. Rukmini's entry changed the tenor of the dance; it now became a Brahmin stronghold. There was a studied construction of the antiquity of the dance, not only through the ingenious change of name but also in the sanitization and restructuring efforts. Elements of eroticism were removed and the art form was imbued with devotion. Traditional erotic references to the Lord (priest or noblemen) were now taken as addressing the Almighty.

The sanitization process also saw removal of all elements from the repertoire that had Islamic influence. In this process, the death knell was sounded on traditional items like the 'salamatoru'. Led by the upper echelons of society namely V. Raghvan, E Krishna Iyer and Rukmini Devi Arundale, all belonging to the Brahmin caste, the 'margi' system of presentation that had been initiated by the Tanjore Quartet in the late 19th century received greater attention. Under these Brahmin stalwarts, people soon came to presume that it was an 'ancient dance'.

'A dance was created in the past in order to be restored for the present and future' said Schechner and Khokhar.

ORISSA

The eastern Indian state of Orissa that had the system of 'maharis' (the temple girls) equivalent to the devadasis of southern India went through a similar phase. The British Victorian sensibilities dubbed maharis as prostitutes and their dances were considered sacrilege. The mid 1950s saw re-structuring of the dance of the maharis. Elements of 'gotipua' dances and the dance of the maharis were fused to create Odissi. The Jayantika group drew the 'margi' presentation format of the newly-structured Odissi form.

NORTH-EASTERN INDIA

Restructuring and renaming of the dance form was not an issue in Manipur as the temple dancers – men and women – had always been treated at par and there was no discrimination between the two. In Assam, Sattriya, performed by Brahmin priests (like the traditional dance form Kathak of Indo-Gangetic belt) did not need rechristening.

NORTH AND CENTRAL INDIA

As traditional Kathaks had always been men belonging to the Brahmin fold, the need for rechristening was not felt. Unfortunately, the courtesans were mistaken to be Kathaks, a notion that was fanned and allowed to grow, whether by design or not, remains to be deduced. This created tensions within a society that was already engulfed in a growing divide between the two dominant communities. In this process the content of Kathak repertoire and the terminologies used in Kathak that speaks of its roots in pre-Christian era, was lost sight

of. Costume and the virtuous rhythmic elements practiced in Kathak, reinforced the 'divide and rule' sentiments. The twentieth century also saw further changes in the 'margi' system of presentation in Kathak that first became visible in the early to mid-nineteenth century in the courts of Awadh, especially under the patronage of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah.

COSTUME

All writings of the colonial period have emphasized that the art of stitching was unknown to pre-Muslim India. In this context, attention is drawn to a few facts:

In the 4th century BC, with the marriage of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya to the daughter of the Greek general of Alexander, mutual influences could not be ruled out. Sculptures of dancers of that period indicate adoption of tight fitting pants and a flared frock like upper garment (akin to today's churidar-angarkha), along with the lehenga (long ankle length skirts) style of dressing for dancers of the Gangetic belt that can be seen in the sculptures of that era. In the absence of sculptures from earlier periods, it cannot be conclusively stated that stitched clothing of this kind existed prior to the 4th century BC, However, the Riga Veda mentions that stitching was known to India as borne out by the following verses:

seevyatvapah soochya
achhidyamanaya (Rigaveda)

the needle i.e. 'soochya' is used for joining together two pieces

yatha soochya vasah sandagheeyat,
evamevaitabhiryagyasyachhidram sandaghet

Aitareya Brahmana (II.32.4)

two pieces of cloth are joined together by a needle

Styles of stitched clothing such as tight fitting trousers and a long shirt, lehenga and dhoti are evident in the sculptures of the Gupta period (4th-5th c AD), a thousand years before the advent of Mughals here. In the 10th c AD, Al Beruni has recorded in detail the

practice of wearing stitched clothes such as the ghaghra or lehenga-choli-chadr and the kurta-pyjama. He says:

Their 'şidār' (a piece of dress covering the head and the upper part of breast and neck) *is similar to the trousers, being also fastened at the back by buttons.*

The lappets of the 'ķurţaķas' (short shirts from the shoulders to the middle of the body with sleeves, a female dress) have slashes both on the right and left sides.

Sculptures from the Sunga period also indicate that stitched clothes were worn by some section of the population.

Co-existence of non-stitched and stitched clothes in India since early Mauryan period (4th c BC) seemed to have been part of the performing art tradition in northern and central India, as borne out by sculptures and writings of Al-Beruni.

The costumes of women performers of medieval India conformed to the practices in the Muslim courts. Paintings of this period indicate great usage of churidar-angarkha with the veil covering the head. This continues till date. In case of lehenga, an equally long fan was draped in front. But uncovered head seemed to be taboo in this period as is evident from miniature paintings so characteristic of this era.

SOUTHERN INDIA

Even within traditional India and unstitched clothing, influences of neighbouring states or adoption of custom of the new ruler in style of dressing is visible.

The rule of the Marathas over southern India (1676-1832) also left its impact. The Maratha custom of the

nine-yard sari being worn by upper class (especially Brahmin) women, soon caught on in southern states of Thanjavur and surrounding areas courtesy establishment of Maratha rule in the 17th century. This translated itself into the costume of 'dasiattam'. Its modern contemporary stitched version was designed by an Italian designer friend of Rukmini Devi Arundale in the late 1930s.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The Natyashastra mentions and classifies musical instruments into four major categories. Sculptures of ancient India show the existence of various forms of percussion drums, stringed instruments (with and without frets), wind and solid instruments.

The Muslim invasions and rule saw some changes. It is commonly believed that the two-piece drum such as the tabla was unknown to India prior to the period of Amir Khusro. However, dance panel sculptures from central India from the Gupta period (4th-5th centuries AD) reveal the presence of a pair of vertical drums, thus negating the widely held hypothesis. Modifications carried out by Amir Khusro cannot be ruled out wherein the 'bayan' of the drum was modified to a more rounded form modelling itself on the 'naqqara' (or nagada) drum. It was this era that adopted the Arabic name of 'tabla' (based on the drum 'tabl'). Thus, the hitherto 'oordhvaka' drum stood rechristened.

Corroborating the fact that the horizontal drum, the mridanga, still continued to be the most popular percussion drum during the Mughal period, are the paintings of musicians and dancers from the 15th-19th centuries. It therefore follows that the replacement of mridanga by the tabla was extremely slow and came about only after the late 19th century. In fact, even Kathak, Hindi, and vernacular dialect literature of the Indo-Gangetic belt refers to the horizontal drum as mridanga and not by the now common name of pakhawaj, a term that seems to have come into vogue in the last few decades. With the tabla slowly gaining ascendancy in late 19th century, many special patterns emerged that gave rise to the 'Dilli baaz' of tabla, many of which were translated into dance.

Of the four categories of musical instruments categorised in the Natyashastra, the stringed category, with and without frets, goes by the generic name 'veena'.

The lute-like musical instrument, sarod, has led to several wide-ranging discussions. The fretless instrument is also found in the 5th and 6th century's sculptures of Ajanta and other regions. Some opine it was a modification of the central Asian, Persian or Afghan 'rubab'. These discussions still continue with as many views and as many opinions as there are scholars.

The stringed instrument sitar (derived from the term 'seh tar' that indicated presence of resonant strings along with main strings) came into prominence in the late medieval period. It is widely believed that Amir Khusro inspired innovations in the form and number of strings of the 'veena' that finally resulted in the 'sitar'. Mughal miniature paintings do show two kinds of stringed instruments, one with a long slender neck and few strings (similar to the 'tanpura') and the second, again with a slender neck but a little broader, with several strings and frets. There is also a variety of long-necked stringed instrument sporting two rounded resonant barrels, reminiscent of the present day sitar or the 'surbahar'. The stringed instrument with over 100 resonant strings, sarangi, became a standard accompanying instrument for Kathak.

The Maratha kings who ruled over southern Thanjavur, the erstwhile Cholamandalam, since the rule of Ekoji I in late 17th century, made an important contribution to the history and culture of the area. Rajah Serfoji II , born in the family of Chhatrapati Shivaji, and adopted by the Thanjavur family, was greatly influenced by Rev. Christian Freidrich Schwartz, a Danish missionary, under whose care he grew up. Thus Western sensibilities in approach to music, musical notations, presentation and even adoption of the violin and the clarinet in Carnatic music system came as no surprise.

In direct contrast, despite the long-standing rule of Muslim rulers such as Tipu Sultan and the Nizam of Hyderabad, who patronised and nurtured traditional southern Indian performing arts and in whose courts traditional pieces like the 'salami' and verses in praise of the Muslim ruler were sung and danced, such pieces and associations with the Muslim court disappeared in the wake of the cultural renaissance 80 years ago. Conscious efforts were made to distance the performing arts from Muslim influences.

CASTE AND GENDER OF PERFORMERS

Often a question is raised as to the caste of the performer. In its discussion, the social tensions and mindset of the local populace becomes evident.

Art forms that owed their origins to the male gender, the upper caste and to Indian-born faith were acceptable in society. Male origin art forms such as Kathak, Kathakali and Kuchipudi did not have to undergo rechristening or sanitization. Women origin dance forms such as Bharatanatyam had to be rechristened from 'dasi attam' and 'sadir attam' to Bharatanatyam while the dance of the Maharis was restructured to include features of the dance of the gotipuas and came to be known as Odissi. Mohini attam stands out as an exception. Manipuri dance forms did not have to undergo sanitization process for there was already a beautiful harmonious blend of pre-Vaishnav and Vaishnav cultures and equal respect accorded to both men and women performers.

Traditional Kathak performers of Lucknow gharana are Brahmins (Kanyakubj or Gaur Brahmins) as borne out by various colonial era censuses of the Kathaks of eastern and central UP. However those farmers or families from the not-so-high caste hierarchy, especially from Rajasthan, who took to the practice of Kathak, were categorised separately. This took a different tone when women entered the Kathak scene. Because of the prevailing 'purdah' system, women who came to be associated with public performance of dance and music were either relegated to the lower-caste hierarchy within the Hindu fold or became converts to Islam but in either case, like their southern devadasi counterparts, they were kept on the fringes of society.

It was only the entry of the first Brahmin woman Rukmini Devi Arundel in the 1930s that changed Bharatanatyam into a Brahmin stronghold, as also a way of life in every Brahmin family – a tradition that was unthinkable only 70 years ago.

The tradition of women not being allowed to display their art in public space also led to the genre of men doing women's roles (stree vesham) in Kuchipudi and in Kathakali.

In the newly emerged film industry of the early to mid of the last century, matters were no different. Either men performed the role of women or women were imported from abroad to play various roles in films.

FALL OUT OF COLONIAL PERIOD AND POST-INDEPENDENT INDIA

The colonial period saw the emphasis on roots and the tracing of the antiquity of traditions to bestow pride on a civilization. The ones that were first past the post in reconstructing their antiquity came to be known as the most ancient art forms. Thus, the study of temple sculptures and their incorporation into dance started in most parts of the country and led to a process of antiquity being established, largely by inventing theories tracing direct linkages to *Natyashastra*. In this effort, the devadasi system was bestowed a haloed past. There was a conscious distancing of connection with Muslim courts and sensualism.

In independent India, there was an upsurge of the need for regional identity. In order to be recognised as a major dance tradition or before it could be called 'classical', the first task of a dance form was to bolster and create a body of items and formalize the repertoire in a recognised 'margam' format. Thus, upon Independence in 1947 there were only four recognised 'Classical' dance styles – Kathak, Kathakali, Manipuri and Bharatanatyam. Post-Independent India saw the inclusion of four more dance forms within the fold of 'classical'. These included Kuchipudi and Odissi (in the fifties) and Mohiniyattam a decade later. Finally, in the year 2000, Sattriya was declared 'a major dance form'. Sattriya was an art form traditionally practiced by male priests in the temple cloisters or sattras of Assam, which had, post-Independence, modelled itself into the accepted 'margam' format and opened its doors to women performers.

Independent India has seen exchanges of experiences and ideas and the welcoming of a new breed of educated performers. In the true spirit of multiculturalism that is the hallmark of this country, it has provided the fermenting ground for expanding boundaries in themes, thoughts, ideas, costumes,

language, text and execution, meeting the challenges posed by technological advancements and the demands of an unprecedented pace of globalization, while keeping intact the form, spirit and substance of its own art forms.

Boundaries of language have been extended to dance enactments in several different languages besides intelligently marrying the traditional idiom to eclectic music of various cultures, both indigenous and Western classical, without diluting its inherent form and substance. The practice of musicians following the dancers with their instruments tied around the waist for support that was prevalent during the medieval period was changed to the formal seated position of the musicians, ennobling both the dancer and the musicians. Technological advancement in terms of light and sound also found their imprint in stage presentations.

The twentieth century was witness to the rise of nationalism in the air of freedom movement, and significant developments in the preservation and nurturing of this art form became visible. National and private institutions sprung up everywhere, where legendary Gurus brought with them the 'margi' system of presentation that had been mapped in late 19th century. While promoting emergence of solo performers, there has been furtherance of the genre of dance dramas.

GENDER, DIGNITY AND STATUS

Similarly, the margins and space of acceptance of artistes, especially dancers, have also undergone transformation. Today, performing arts as a vocation is not discarded as an option in increasing number of families. Status and dignity for the arts and artistes has witnessed a steep rise. Even the traditional male bastions like that of Kathak, Kathakali and Kuchipudi have been punctured with the tide of women performers and educated women performers at that, taking over the mantle – which in its own way has impacted dance presentations. Male gurus are giving way to women gurus.

PATRONAGE AT HOME AND ABROAD:

For Indian performing arts, the move out of community-controlled venues like temples, community centres and local halls brought implications in its wake. Economics and need mean that dancers have to look outside the body of their own cultural support team; they have to look both to public funding and mainstream audiences. And around both of them, a whole world has been changed by technology and travel. It is now shrunken and contemporaneous in very tangible ways. It has been altered by new responses to the concept of 'home' and changing meanings of identity, nationality and community. Patronage by Rajas and Maharajas has given way to the sponsorship of societies, government bodies and public and private sector bodies. Globalization and changing tastes of patrons have also impacted presentations – some good and some questionable.

Abroad, in the early years, the role of the Indian artiste was comparatively simple. Accompanying her husband on his posting abroad, she (musician or dancer) would replicate her classical training by passing it on to a number of selected pupils. There were very few outlets for performance, and the audiences were rather small. Consequently the importance of the private concert grew, set up by a 'rasika' at their home, for a few knowledgeable invited guests.

Such performances by artistes from India served to open the eyes of Western connoisseurs to the body of performing arts, especially dance, existing in India. But they were regarded as exotic visitors. However in the 70s, following the large-scale arrival of Indian families, growing prosperity of the community and changing demographics, there was a visible upsurge in the call for cultural activities. Community-specific, culture-focused institutions were formed to meet this call. These small 'sabhas' also hosted a number of top-level artistes touring abroad who were willing to perform for small groups of audiences. The trend continues.

Today, with many Indians migrating abroad, what kind of margins, pushes and pulls in performing arts exist there? From 'replication' of art by wives of men posted abroad, 'projection' of art has now given way to 'engagement'. The Indian Diaspora is now more confident with their increasing affluence, stature and acceptance in the host country abroad. Those engaged with performing arts are not hesitant in trying to reflect the ethos, angst and emotions that they underwent in their adopted country. Criticisms of such efforts in their home country have slowly given way to awareness and acceptance of this new expression. Relationship of artistes abroad with artistes in India is now one of professional exchange; of equality rather than of patronage.

Thus, the margins of space and aesthetics impact presentations at several levels – horizontally as well as vertically – in terms of repertoire, themes, movements, presentations, dignity, status and gender considerations. Ultimately, change is the only 'constant' and performing arts and artistes have responded to the changing times and ethos with subtlety and finesse that have only added value addition to society. There is a blurring of water-tight boundaries as dance forms of one part of the country are increasingly gaining acceptance in other parts of the country or globe.

Vasudhaiva kutumbakam is actually being seen and practiced!

Preserving Roots, Building Futures: Rural Tourism in Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh

— Shaista Perveen

Figure 1 The Tamsa river in Azamgarh during monsoon

"THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED"

Azamgarh is a small district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, settled in the Doab plains of the Ghagra and Ganga rivers. It is located on the tributary Tons (Tamsa) with an area of 4,054 square kilometers (1,565 sq mi). Azamgarh is mostly plain with few parallel ridges, with lakes and ponds, and the undulating river and its tributaries. It is easily accessible from Varanasi, Lucknow and even Delhi. It takes around 4 hours (268 km) from Lucknow via Purvanchal Expressway and 2.30 hours (112 km) from Varanasi to reach Azamgarh and the journey is quite pleasant due to better road conditions. The road journey from the hustle and bustle of urban life to Azamgarh's serene rural environment is charming for off-road travellers. Along the journey are authentic dhabas (local food joints) known for their snacks, kulhad chai and wood-fire cooked full course meals. Local travellers take this route for the rare culinary experience. It a its own railway station with direct trains from multiple cities, and now a newly-developed airport will be soon be operational. With the efforts of tourism in the nearby regions of Ayodhya, Varanasi and Lucknow, Azamgarh has huge tourism potential. Though there are a few religious sites in Azamgarh where one experiences domestic tourist footfall in specific seasons, the entire district remains to be explored.

Azamgarh is a small hamlet of crafts, cuisine and heritage spread across multiple villages, each village known for its specialty. It is heavenly for travellers who love to explore cultures through art, craft and music. The small village of Mubarakpur is known for silk sarees and its intricate floral motifs, while Nizamabad is famous for its Black Pottery with silver engravings. Among these is a small village with young and old musicians practicing their art with the sound of bird cuckoos and the morning sun. Another small village Khairabad known for its textiles is a hot spot for foodies, serving lip smacking kebabs and tikkas with local flavors. Hundreds of locals can be seen gathered at the local household

Figure 2 Local Dhabas serving traditional cuisine in Azamgarh

stalls of kebabs with chutneys served in pattal (leaf plates) and old newspapers wrapped with threads. Muhammadabad is known for its desi ghee imartis, a traditional sweet said to have originated in the Jaunpur Sultanate, even before the Mughals.

Chirrayyakot, a historic settlement, is marked by a small tomb build within the rice fields. Mehnagar village has multiple heritage tombs and fort remains, settled within green ponds and lakes. Large talliyas (ponds and lakes) such as Baba Badhia Taal and Salona Taal remain largely unexplored. The village thrives on cattle and small orchards with mangoes, guava and shehtoot berries. The seasonal fruits and vegetable are pickled on household terraces. Weaving bamboo baskets, sikki baskets, chatai and jute ropes are sources of livelihood. Papier mâché toys for kids and bread baskets are distributed during weddings. Each village has a different way of sewing hand fans and pillow covers for friends and relatives. There are multiple sites with antiquities such as Ashokan Pillar, Neel Ki Kothi, stoneware, metal utensils, swords, antique books, coins, etc. Azmatgarh, another small village, has a large historic temple build in carved red sand and a stepped Rani ki Kund. The village has multiple historic buildings along with large houses and beautiful agricultural fields.

Each village within itself offers an entire compendium of unique experiences, as the morphology of each village and the craft products they offer are different. The villages have a diversity of people who practice different crafts and belong to different religions and sects; their individual customs and culture define their lifestyles. The cultural celebrations and local cuisine in Mubarakpur for instance, are very different from Hariharpur. Each festival that is celebrated resonates through place, craft, cuisine, and personalities.

Silk brocade, a key element of handloom weaving in Mubarakpur, is known for its intricate floral motifs and has been produced here since the establishment of karkhanas from the Tughlaqs to Mughals (15th -18th CE). The silk sarees crafted in Mubarakpur were transported to the royal courts of Delhi, Jaunpur, Allahabad, and Varanasi and even the far east subahs of Bengal[1]; they are exported to different parts of India and abroad even today. Mubarakpur has one of the largest Islamic universities, Jamiatul Ashrafia, and is visited by international scholars during the Urs Hazrat Hafiz-E-Millat, a huge celebration in the village with demonstrations of local cuisine, music and Kawwali and Mushaeras. Muharram in Mubarakpur is a cultural event celebrated with a procession, where tazia (models of shrines of Karbala, Iraq), khichda (a local delicacy made with mix of lentils, wheat, rice, and tender meat), songs and milads are collectively prepared and shared within the community. The rich street food culture with keema pakodi, keema pudi, and thekua along with Ghati, Launglatta, and Chai is on display. The village is beautifully decorated. These annual celebrations that continue for the 10 auspicious days of Moharram are well-worth experiencing.

The regional delicacy, Safed Gajjar Halwa, is made of white carrots grown only in Mubarakpur, and can only be found in the bazaars of Mubarakpur. Mubarakpur has many heritage sites such as Imambara, mosques, and temples which are scattered at various nodes in the village. The life of Mubarakpuri people revolves around handloom weaving, its preparation and finishing the final product. Their days start with dyeing, rolling and pinning the silk threads along with a breakfast of keeme ki pudi and chai, and ends

1 D.L. Drake Brockmann, DGUPAO, Vol. xxxiii, p. 261; Athar Mubarakpuri, Tazkira, p. 14;

Figure 3 Antiquities and crafts in Azamgarh a.Wooven Basket, b. Stone Mortar, c. Iron Bucket in Hariharpur, d. Ashokan Pillar at Palhna near Mehnagar , e. Papier Mache basket made in Mubarakpur, f. Sugarcane grinder in Olmapur

Figure 4 Tikri roti being prepared on firewood and picnic at Nau Ghazi Peer, Mubarakpur

with meeting friends again in the evening for tea. The streets are bursting at each corner with stalls where people can be seen enjoying the local snacks. People from the main district travel to Mubarakpur to enjoy the evening snacks and kebabs. During the winter, when the weather is nice, families visit nearby shrines and tombs for picnics and recreation.

Nizamabad is famous for Black Pottery, a unique type of clay pottery known for its dark shiny body with engraved silver patterns. Though it has a huge resource of Black Pottery, the people of Nizamabad also practice other kinds of pottery and idol making. It is also interesting to note that Nizamabad is one of the major sites where Guru Nanak Dev himself

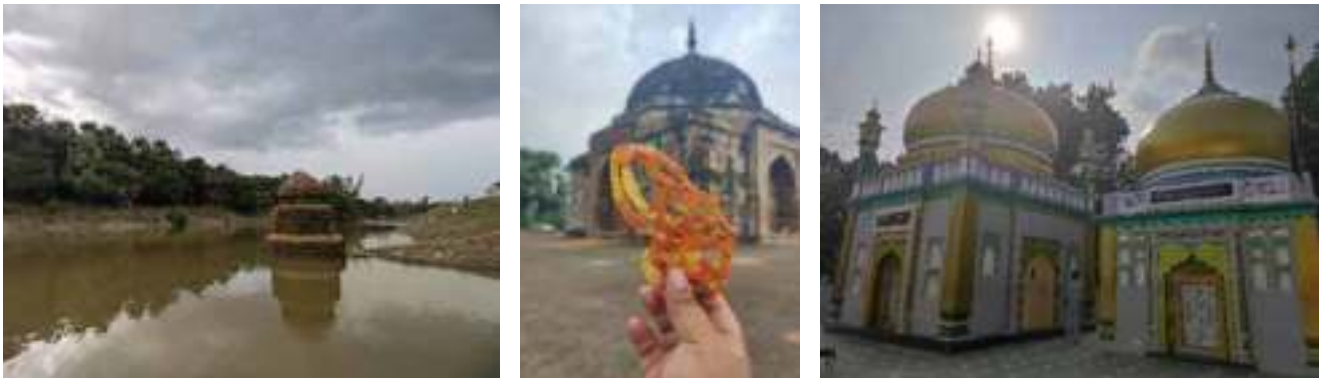

Figure 5 Series of built heritage in Azamgarh District, a. Brick Stambh at Hariharpur, b. Daulat Ibrahim Tomb at Mehnagar c. Rauza Imam Hussain at Mubarakpur

Figure 6 a. Traditional Rural setting where eminent musicians have performed in Hariharpur b. Young musicians and vocalists of Hariharpur practicing in their courtyard

visited and stayed. The Gurudwara Charan Paduka has a huge collection of antiquities including swords, dresses and handwritten granths of the medieval period. In 1566, Akbar celebrated Majlis I Warn (Akbar's Birthday) in pargana Nizamabad, and huge donations were distributed to the people of Nizamabad [2]. It is also interesting to note that the Shahi Jama Masjid in Nizamabad is dedicated to Aurangzeb and has ostrich eggs hung as a lamp for the last 300 years. The settlement of Nizamabad developed around the Ghat of Tons River, where the Guru Nanak sthan is still preserved in the form of a small gurudwara. The village is settled on the banks of the Tons River, with temples, shrines and mosque, a picturesque setting with the backdrop of a forest on the other side of the river. Group of potters live in clusters and with their clay soaking pits and kilns, and women and children who polish the black pottery.

Hariharpur is a small village with approximately 30 Brahmin families who practice traditional music. They are taught from an early age, by their fathers, uncles, or grandfathers, learning to play tabla and sarangi and to sing classical as well as folk genres. These families have musical lineage related to some of the legendary artists Pt. Chhanulal Mishra (Padma Bhushan), the late Pt. Samta Prasad, Pt. Sarda Maharaj, and relatives of Pt. Birju Maharaj (Padma Vibhushan). It is a humble but picturesque rural setting with a temple and historic well as a point of origin and a large lotus pond. Within the agricultural fields lie a mix of traditional and pacca houses in multiple units of a small and large courtyard with guava and mango trees. The village boasts of local mithhau aam (sweet mango) which is considered a delicacy. Walking through the streets one can see large paddy fields with *Nilgai* and flocks of birds flying in swampy grounds. The village is rustic and raw and thrives on slow living, an apt opportunity for experiential rural tourism.

2 D.L. Drake Brockmann, DGUPAO. Vol. xxxiii

Apart from the three major craft villages, there are other villages rich in local crafts of embroidery, bamboo weaving, papier mâché and cot weaving. These are daily household activities and are used for domestic purposes. Multiple small mosques and temples are scattered around the district in large green fields. The travellers would be enlightened to see such rural richness in the vicinity of Varanasi's urban sprawl. Day trips from Varanasi to visit these places and enjoy local music and food would be easy to arrange. Interested tourists may stay back in rural houses for a longer period to live and learn the ways of village life and culture. The experience of trying local crafts and visiting local markets along with homestays and modest meals would be attractive to visitors looking for authentic experiences.

Figure 7 Nizamabad's Black Pottery, Mubarakpur Silk Weaving and Hariharpur Music Gharana

Azamgarh's cultural richness is cocooned within its villages. Rural tourism could be one of the approaches where the rural lifestyle is showcased without the need for hotels and other such typical infrastructures. The majority of Azamgarh's population resides in villages and the rural life creates a sustainable sphere for its people. The villages of Azamgarh have not experienced tourism, therefore it is important to host consistent orientation, workshops, and training of craftspeople, local leaders, women, and other stakeholders before the actual tourism begins. These efforts would create an unforgettable experience for the tourist and could positively influence the livelihoods of the community.

Through rural tourism, the rural assets will be protected, restored, and developed. Rural tourism will increase consumer awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of the products and experiences available in Azamgarh Triangle rural areas. It will give an identity and value to the craftsperson and the communities by taking ownership of the development, management, protection, and conservation of rural assets and locations. A sustainable rural tourism plan is required, that will support the local community and tourists holistically without adversely affecting the lives and environment of the local populace.

Azamgarh Rural Tourism would showcase the rural lifestyles of these villages and provide a rooted experience to international as well as domestic tourists. Therefore, Rural tourism in the Azamgarh will bring substantial benefits to local economies, craft and communities and contribute to their sustainable growth in the coming future. Rural Tourism will diversify and modernize the region's products to generate business opportunities suited to local environments and communities. The impact of rural tourism would be minimal, the main intention would be to share the Azamgarh's rural landscape and provide extra support to its people.

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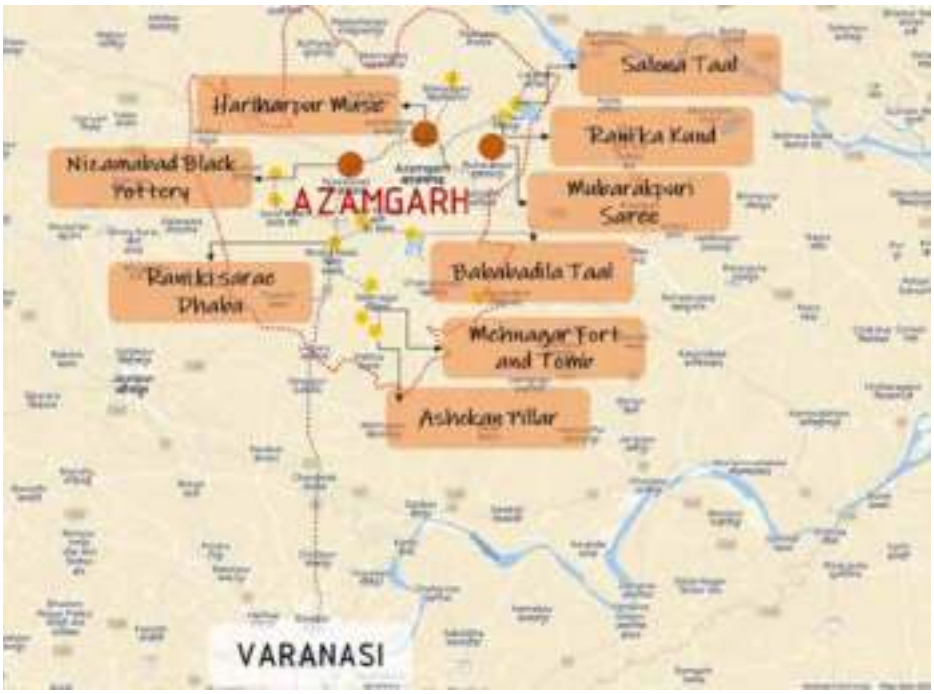

Figure 8 Key Rural Tourism destinations in Azamgarh District

Figure 9 Baba Badila taal during monsoon

About the Authors

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Brijinder Nath Goswamy was an Indian art critic and historian, and a vice chairman of the Sarabhai Foundation of Ahmedabad, which runs the Calico Museum of Textiles. Goswamy was best known for his scholarship on Pahari painting and Indian miniature painting.

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Neelam Man Singh Chowdhry has a Master's degree in the History of Arts as well as a diploma from the National School of Drama. In 1979, she moved to Bhopal and was attached to The Rang Mandal, a theatre repertory attached to the Multi-arts Complex, Bharat Bhavan. In 1984, she moved to Chandigarh where she set up her own theatre company called 'The Company.' Alongside the Company, she has also been teaching in the Department of Indian Theatre, Panjab University and was also the Chairperson. Dr. Chowdhry is the recipient of several awards including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 2003, and the Padma Shri (2011) . She is presently Professor Emeritus at the Panjab University.

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A G Krishna Menon is an architect, urban planner and conservation consultant practicing in Delhi for over 40 years. He is actively engaged in research and his contributions have been extensively published in professional journals and several academic books. He has also been actively involved in urban conservation and in 2004 drafted the INTACH Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage and Sites in India.

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About 70 per cent of India's population still lives in rural and tribal communities. Sadly, poverty remains a chronic condition for almost 30 per cent of this population. Yet even the most poverty-stricken areas, lacking access to basic facilities, often hold wealth accumulated over centuries. These are their heritage assets, not just historic sites and structures, but also a vast array of traditional skills. Conserving and nurturing rural heritage can be powerful tool for sustainable economic growth in India's villages, ensuring livelihood to rural residents in their traditional homelands enhancing the pride and self-confidence of the entire community.

Recognizing this, a number of professionals and specialists in relevant fields came together to establish and manage the India Trust for Rural Heritage and Development (ITRHD), a registered body. The Trust's two-fold aim is very specific: firstly, the preservation of our vast rural heritage – some of it fast disappearing – for its intrinsic meaning and value; secondly, linking this preservation with improvement in the quality of rural life in areas such as income generation, education and literacy; health and hygiene; waste and water management and issue of women and the girl child.

ITRHD is actively involved in projects relating to conservation of rural heritage and rural developmental programmes in eight States viz. Jharkhand, UP, Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Nagaland, Kerala and Telengana. Rakhi Garhi in Haryana, which is a site of Indus Valley Civilization, is a major project in which ITRHD is focusing on developmental programmes. A Primary School in Hariharpur in Azamgarh District in UP is in its fourth year and a number of friends and members have agreed to contribute at least Rs. 3000/- each every year for the education of one child. We appeal to our Members, who have not so far responded to our appeal, to come forward for a good cause. The potters and weavers of Nizamabad and mubarakpur villages in Azamgarh District have also received our attention. We have helped them in opening up new markets for their products. In each of the projects undertaken by ITRHD local bodies are fully involved in planning and implementation processes; the Trust's frontline workers, the Heritage Ambassadors for Rural Traditions or HARTS, serve as local project coordinators and resources persons, working in development areas to benefit their respective locations and communities.

JOIN HANDS WITH US : There are many rural areas in our country that await your support and action. That is why we invite to join hands with us becoming a member of the Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development.

There are compelling reasons for becoming a member. The long-term future of our country lies in the revitalization and appropriate utilization of assets inherited by our rural tribal populations. The benefits are many, not just economic development and poverty all alleviation. Equally, they are markers of identity, reinforcing a sense of ownership amongst communities, encouraging grass-roots leadership and innovation, and instilling dignity and pride. An improved quality of life is an incentive for rural populations to remain in their own surroundings rather than migrate to the misery of choked urban conglomerates.

In this sense, your membership is actually an investment in the future. Certainly no investment can be fulfilling as that which restores and nourishes the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people and highlights their assets as national treasures. That is way we invite you to join us in this endeavor to recognize and respect our rural and tribal heritage in a manner that will keep it alive for the benefits of all.

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Indian Trust for Rural Heritage
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APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBER
(VOTING CATEGORY)

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"Just as the univers is contained in the self, so is India contained in the villages." Mahatma Gandhi

1. Name of the Applicant .....
2. Address of the Applicant .....
   .....
   .....
3. Education Qualifications .....
   .....
4. Profession/Present Employment .....
   .....
   .....
5. Date of Birth .....
6. PAN Number .....
7. Email .....
8. Mobile No. .....
9. Landline No. .....
10. Area of Specialisation .....

Turn Overleaf

Category of Membership	Membership Fee	
	Indian Resident (Indian Rupees)	Others (US Dollars)
Life Member Individual	5,000	500
Life Member Corporate	10,00,000	25,000
Life Member Institutional	25,000	1,250
International Annual Membership		50
Associates Members, Individual (5-year term, renewable after 5 years at same fee)	2,000	
Associates Member, Corporate	1,00,000	
Rural Member	100	
Associates Member, Student	100	

Note:

1. Unless otherwise specified all fees are one-time payment only.
2. Any academic or cultural body, including a University, Department or Registered Society engaged in cultural, academic or social work is elegible to apply for Life Member Institutional.
3. Associate Members will not have any voting rights.
4. Any person residing in a rural area, who is interested in rural heritage and development, can be become a member on paying a token fee of Rs. 100 only.
5. The Membership Fee once paid, is Non-Refundable.
6. The Fee shall form part of the Coropus of the Society.

I am enclosing cash / cheque / demand draft for Rs. / USD ..... as admission fee for (catagory of membership) ..... and I agree to donate the fee to Corpus Fund.

Signature of the Applicant

I recommend the application of ..... of membership.

Signature of Trustee / Life Member

Name of Trustee/Life Member

(The Membership Committee appointed by the Trustees reserves the right to reject any application for membership of the Trust.)

Please note : A cheque / demand draft is to be made in the name of the **Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development** payable at Delhi.

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