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Volume 7, 2020

**SAARC Cultural Centre  
Sri Lanka**

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*SAARC Culture* is an annual research journal of the SAARC Cultural Centre, Colombo. It seeks to provide a platform to the academics, practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders of various dimensions of culture of the South Asian region (including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) to present their research findings and to debate on issues of mutual and common interests.

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## Preface

SAARC Cultural Center is devoted to restore, enrich and promote the culture and its aspects, particularly in South Asia with its every single effort. Being the exclusive care taker of South Asia's Culture, under the canopy of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), it is our mission that the SCC elaborates and illustrates the diverse affinities of South Asia's culture. To achieve the wisdom, SCC organizes a variety of programs through which we aim at awakening and amalgamating the Asia's rich and nutritious arts and crafts. Our mission is to dig the deep soils and surface the hidden marvels of our culture and restore it for the future generations by documenting, and presenting them to appeal the global community.

Research in culture, in this perspective, is not a simple task. Because, any study on culture needs to have a multiple approach: society, economy, polity, religion, norms and customs etc., It intermingles the values and other benefits which we call as facts. Further, such research cannot be lodged in so called laboratories: the researcher has to live in it and extract the potential values, figures and other sources to develop his hypothesis and the conclusions as well. Therefore, the scholar who contributes to the research on culture does have the life-long patent to demand ownership about the theories and assumptions of his study.

SAARC Cultural Center continues to conduct research under such a holistic view that South Asian nations will have their own research data bases that have to be dug out and exposed to a wider community to showcase the very essence of South Asia's culture and encourage the generations ahead to enrich such precious cultural aspects and to enumerate the common characteristics and relationships that South Asian nations have had throughout the prolonged history and evolution. In fact, this lively and friendly relationships are to be elevated, evaluated and appreciated to date more than any other day because we are now under the diasporic threat and at the point of culmination due to misconceptions, misunderstandings and unnecessary isolations. Research on culture, therefore, should pave the path towards the achievement of harmony through polity and economy and to appreciate the identities of each nation for which *culture* is the most appealing and demanding medium of expression. .

Thus, with its inception grown since 2011 SCC has conducted research in a variety of manner to encourage our community. SAARC Research Grant Program, workshops and seminars, Conferences and several other publications based on the data collected from the eminent scholars and from the field have been published and circulated among member states to educate our community and make them well aware of the divine aspects of culture. Of the series of publications, *SAARC Research Journal* has become the most highlighted and important publication, because it carries abundant of information on culture of SAARC nations and amaze the reader with its novel patterns.

In the year 2020, amidst the global pandemic, we invited the scholars to submit the research papers of the new knowledge they gained to share with the peers, interest

groups and other valued readers, and groups of Asian Studies and the students as well. We are happy to reiterate that we received seven full paper articles and one review on a theatrical production for this Volume 07 of the *SAARC Research Journal* to be published in 2020. All the articles were reviewed by a selected panel of reviewers and the compilations was previewed by three Academic consultants belonging to various fields of Cultural studies.

I take this opportunity to thank the contributors of the articles, consultants and the reviewers for their valuable guidance towards the success of this volume. The Administrative staff and the respective assistants have laboriously attended the matter to make this volume a success and their contribution is so appreciated and accredited. The IT Division taking the responsibility of designing and formatting made the task easier and smarter and showcased their enthusiasm towards the success of the Volume. Finance division gets the due credit for its constant reminders to comply with the time line and payments for printing. Finally, the big thank goes to the his Excellency the Secretary General Esala Weeraman, Mrs. Varuni Muthukumarana, Director, Education and Culture, SAARC Secretariat and the GB members, and the staff for providing their fullest support for the programs, research and other activities conducted by the SAARC Cultural Center.

With Compliments!

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# The Art of Islamic Calligraphy

Abd hul Moquim Afghan

## Abstract

*This research examines the evolution of the Art of Islamic calligraphy in Afghanistan. The ancient Aryana (Afghanistan) was blessed with variety of handwriting styles since long ago. In 7<sup>th</sup> century the Afghan artistic and calligraphy became more versatile by adopting new characteristics and specifications of Arabic alphabets and art of Islamic calligraphy. Afghan artists and calligraphers, with their extraordinary talents, love and passion for this fine art evolved and flourished in more artistic manner. Particularly Herat renaissance in Timurid era (1370-1507 CE) reached its greatest glory in the evolution of Islamic calligraphy in the region.*

*A thorough review of the historical development of calligraphy of Afghanistan specifically highlights the embedded challenges i.e. introduction of computer typing and designing as a replacement for handwriting, poor school curriculum that held back the process of improving the art of calligraphy, and the different dimensions of the modern calligraphic art in Afghanistan as a whole. The study further recommends an overall review of the curriculum pertaining to calligraphy, recruitment of skilled trainers in public institutions, organize national exhibition and promotion events. It is hoped that the prescribed suggestions contribute to preserve and the improvement of Islamic calligraphy.*

## Abstract in Native Language

کتنه کي. که څه هم پخپله و آيځان ول ډي رو لرغونو زلمه وراه يي دلي کلو او رسام پيش کلي و په زرمپوړيو پي کار کلي، خو کله چې په اوومه ميلادي پي کي دې له قرونو بڼه کي خاوي ته نوي عربيل فني او د اسلامي خطاطي هنر راورل شو، نو د بڼه او زوړا کي لکي ليکنو او فنون بڼه بيخي ورسره وبل ته. افغاني هنرمندانو او خطاطو په خپلو مکمله کو گوت وزيات ميني اوفوق لعا دروتی او د اسلامي خطاطي هنر ته نوي بڼه وکړه په ځنگري ډول په تيموري دووکي د هرات رسالو سرخو د خطاطي هنر د لوري او وروستۍ پوځي کلي او همدا وخت وو چې د خطاطي و مقالياتي بڼه د هنر په مکمل حالت ته ورسيدل له دې سره چې د خطاطي هنر پافاڅين کي د عروج وروستۍ پي ته رسيدلې دي، څه په وروستۍ کي د خطاطي پر ځا کي مېتري کي کي کي کي او په بڼه کي د خطاطي هنر ته د کمي توجه او د نظم درس بنسټون له امله د بڼه کي هنر د لمن څه تلو او وړي ډول کي واپس سره مخ دي

پافاڅين کي د اسلامي خطاطي بڼه کي هنر د بڼه او پراختيا په هڅه په کار ده چې پمټوله کي د لويي او خصوصي بڼه او روزنوي بنسټونو د خطاطي بنسټ او ارزول شي په لويي بڼه کي د خطاطي تکړه او ژمي بڼه کي وومارل شي و پملي کچه د خطاطونو د څښتن و تچيود شي کي وپاره د نوي ډولونو سره اوني وري



## **Introduction**

Calligraphy is a visual art of writing beautifully and it is much more than just 'beautiful writing'. Calligraphy is a creative and pleasant fine art, about lettering in a different manner. It applies using different colors, structurally slant and angle, and typical size and with new and different elements while writing, it calms you down like a personal retreat, it is a fun and a hobby, and a meaningful passion that reflects the cultural authenticity of Afghanistan. It also recalls the amazing and artistic way that the humans have expressed themselves to appeal the mind and soul and to sooth them by the rhythmic patterns of language. The significance of all these characteristics is that people designed, developed and propagated the idea of language and its picturesque elements minimal tools and facilities they had in hand. It is evident that the origin of calligraphy with the fine brush strokes dates back to 3000 years BC in ancient China. And those of western scripts originated about 1200 -800 years back by Greeks (Harris, 1995).

According to Ali and Hassan (2017) earliest writings were pictorial, later these symbolic pictures were converted to alphabets in the form of Greek and Aramaic language. Arabic writing came from Aramaic while Western writing originated from Greek alphabets.

## **Antiquity of Islamic Calligraphy**

It is important to note that the basis for Islamic calligraphy is Arabic scripts which comprises of 24 letters - written from right to left. However, it is also very typical that the formation of the Arabic letter changes depending on its location: using at the beginning, middle or at the end of the word etc., Therefore, the particular calligraphic style is considered a natural cursive language which serves as Islamic wall art and designs popularly known as Salam Arts in Arabic and Islamic tradition of Art. Arabic writing derived from Aramaic alphabets and was not known that much prior to the advent of Islam. After revelation of the Holy Quran in Arabic language, its verses were used to be written on leaves, leather skins, stones and rocks etc., With the spread of Islamic civilization across the world and development of paper, Holy Quran was written in too many copies and circulated to the non-Arabic world as well. As figurative and pictorial presentations are prohibited in Islam, the calligraphy was the key art used by Islamic artists and calligraphers, and it is very intricate that the Islamic rulers in Arabian gulf tended to communicate and circulate their messages in the most artistic and attractive manner (Mostapha and Krishnamurti, 2001).

## Historical Background of Calligraphy in Afghanistan

Aryana (Land of Aryans) or today's Afghanistan as a crossroad of civilizations has rich history and cultural heritages. Veda and Avesta are great examples of corroborating vital part played by Aryans in the world's civilizations (Panjsheri, 2019). Inscriptions (Kateeba) discovered in Alishang of Laghman and Hazar Sum of Samangan provinces demonstrate that Aryans used handwritings and sketches on stones 5000 years ago (Dupree, 1967). According to the archaeological excavations and discovered inscriptions, various alphabets and scripts such as Aramaic, Brahmi, Greek, Kharoshti, Nagari-Sanskrit have been used throughout the history in Afghanistan.

During 8<sup>th</sup> Century CE, with the spread of Islamic civilization in and around Afghanistan, previous alphabets were replaced by Arabic. Arabs were impressed by rich culture of the region and art of decorating temples and monuments with pictorial sketches and paintings, this impression encouraged Abbasid rulers (750-1258 CE), and artists to promote and modify Islamic calligraphy instead of drawing living things, because it was prohibited for Muslims. Simple Naskh style was modified into different Kufic styles and decorating mosques and monuments with calligraphy and miniaturization started as a consequence. Contribution of Barmakid family from Balkh of Afghanistan is worth mentioning in promoting Islamic calligraphy, Yahya Barmaki (767-803) served as vizier to the Abbasid Caliph Harun Al Rashid, his contribution was immense to introduce Central Asian Arts and Science into Baghdad and had a vital contribution in promoting Islamic calligraphy. Because of Barmakid influence Islamic calligraphy improved as a well-defined art in Abbasid era.

From 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century, Islamic calligraphy has gone through different stages of its evolution. Ancient art of sketches and drawing pictorial symbols were substituted with Islamic calligraphy. The Islamic calligraphy was not only used for writing Holy Quran and other religious books but decorating monuments, mosques and palaces with calligraphy was an iconic function and a medium of message as a tool for designers to create identity and spiritual built environment. Two minarets (Jam-e-Ghori in Afghanistan and Qutb Minar in India) are finest examples of using calligraphy on the surface of monuments. Throughout Seljuks, Ghaznavids, Ghurid and Khwarazmian empires, Afghan artists and calligraphers contributed a lot to flourish, enrich and spread art of Islamic calligraphy in the region (Ferozkoh, 2013).

## Herat Renaissance & Raise of Islamic Calligraphy in Afghanistan

Timurid empire, established in late 14<sup>th</sup> century is considered as a renaissance

and a golden era of raising and flourishing Islamic calligraphy and art of miniaturization and compilation of books. At the beginning of 15<sup>th</sup> Century Shahrokh (Timurid Emperor) with the support and encouragement of his wise wife (Gawharshad Begum) assembled artists, calligraphers, architects, and scholars from all across the empire to the capital Herat. In Herat's renaissance led by Sharokh and Gawharshad, thousands of artists were involved in training young students and numerous memorable and valuable artworks and masterpieces of calligraphy and miniature were produced in Timorid era. Copy of Firdawsi's Shahnama written by Jafar in 1429 CE is considered one of the world's masterpiece and most valuable handwritten book from the calligraphy, miniature, paper and compilation point of view. Calligraphy was not the monopoly of calligraphers anymore, kings and princes also were keenly pursuing this art; for instance, sons of Shahrokh and Gowharshad: 'Ibrahim Sultan' and 'Baysonqor' were amongst the best calligraphers of their times (Habibi, 1971).

## Types of Islamic Calligraphy in Afghanistan

From the early days of the evolution of the Islamic civilization till 14<sup>th</sup> Century CE, only two main styles of the Arabic calligraphy were common; *Naskh* and *Kufic*, along with their almost fifty other sub-forms whereas the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Ce shows its milestone by evolving six main styles i.e. *Manashir*, *Muhaqiq*, *Naskh*, *Ryhan*, *Riqa* and *Suls*. However, during the Herat renaissance, *Naskh* and *Kufic* styles reached their climax. What is important in the evolution of these two forms is while *Naskh* was used for copying and writing books and *Kufic* and its sub-forms were used for ornamentation while. Extraordinary talent and dedication of artists and calligraphers in using both *Naskh* and *Kufic* together and beautifying it furthermore resulted in the emergence of many innovative styles. According to Habibi (1971) following were the most common and frequently used Islamic calligraphic types of Timorid era:

1. Kufic and its different sub forms  
Due to its flexibility and attractiveness widely used for decorating surface of the monuments.
2. Modified Suls  
Mixture of Naskh and Kufic and has sub forms such as: Muhaqiq, Ryhan and Riqa.

3. Taliq-

Wholesome contribution of Khorasan's calligrapher to the Islamic calligraphy. It is also called 'Tarasul' because of its common usage in writing messages and letters.

4. Nastaaliq

Typical style of Islamic calligraphy, emerged as a defined art in the mid of 15<sup>th</sup> century. Nastaaliq is the mixture of Naskh and Taliq, and the calligraphy of most Timurid era's artworks is Nastaaliq style.

5. Shakista

A combination of both Taliq and Nastaaliq together in a new way, and mainly used in official communication. Unlike the other styles which were used as ornaments and decorations, Shakista became the official graphic with its own beauty.

To date, Manashir, Muhaqiq, Naskh, Ryhan, Riqa, Suls, kufic, Nastaaliq, Taliq and Shakista are the prominent Islamic calligraphic styles usually have been used in Afghanistan, since the introduction of Islamic calligraphy to date.

## Conclusion

The archaeological evidences and the discovered descriptions (kateeba) indicate that the origin of handwriting and sketches by Aryans in ancient Aryana dates back to 3000 BC. Various alphabets and scripts such as Aramaic, Brahmi, Greek, Kharoshti, Nagari-Sanskrit have been used throughout the history in Afghanistan. Arabic alphabets and Islamic calligraphy introduced in 700 CE along with the spread of Islamic civilization into Central Asia. Afghan artists and rulers contributed a lot in flourishing, enriching and spreading the art of Islamic calligraphy in the region during Seljuks, Ghaznavids, Ghurid and Khwarazmian eras.

Islamic teachings prevented using pictorial drawings and painting of living beings as decorative elements, thus Islamic calligraphy was a fine substitute to decorate monuments, mosques and palaces applying simple *Kufic* and *Naskh* styles which were further evolved into fifty sub styles.

The art of Islamic calligraphy reached its highest peak in Timurid era (1500 CE) also known as Herat renaissance. Intensive focus on art was promoted and thousands of artists engaged in training of calligraphy and illustration to the young learners. Numerous memorable artworks and masterpieces of calligraphy and miniature were formed during Herat renaissance led by Timurid emperor Sharokh and his empress Gawharshad.

However, the inception of computerization and information technology weakened the traditional craftsmanship of calligraphy. However, to date, teaching and learning of traditional calligraphy is part of the school curriculum in public primary level schools and there are many private learning centers across the country where interested young students are learning Islamic calligraphy and it is considered as an interesting and mind soothing art. At present, along with well-known Haft Qalam (Suls, Ryhan, Muhaqiq, Naskh, Tawqi, Riqua and Taliq) Naskh and Nastaliq are most predominant and commonly used styles of Islamic calligraphy in Afghanistan.

It is very unfortunate that due to inadequate attention from governmental and non-governmental institutions, and the lack of unique and effective means of training calligraphy in public schools, lack of exhibitions, and competitions which creates an experience-sharing platform for the young generation are some of the major challenges of restoring the beautiful tradition of calligraphy, uniquely identified as the Islamic art in Afghanistan. Despite the computers and the digital technology and its subordinate devices have given abundant of advantages to improve the quality of human life and the education systems all around the world, it has never been able to serve its best to maintain and sustain the values and significant elements of Islamic calligraphy.

## **Recommendations**

The study proposes following recommendations which could contribute in promoting and preserving the art of Islamic calligraphy in Afghanistan:

1. Ministry of Education review, reform and improve the present curriculum and method of training calligraphy at public schools and provide compulsory tools, will contribute too much to promote and preserve art of Islamic calligraphy.
2. All public-owned fine arts institutions, make sure to recruit highly skilled and committed trainers.
3. Relevant public and private organizations may launch experience-sharing and encouraging programs among calligraphers such as: competitions, exhibitions etc.
4. Small grants to be provided for highly talented and interested calligraphers to enable them to equip their training centers which will in turn, increase their income level l.✕

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# Country Boats: A Tangible Pride of Bangladesh

Rubina Rafat Chaity

## Abstract

*For any society, cultural heritage is the legacy of tangible and intangible elements of a community that are inherited from past compeers, upheld in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Bangladesh is filled with extraordinary cultural elements of which the so called country boats is one significant way of transportation through waterways and during heavy floods. It is evident that the rich cultural element which is now at the point of extinction due to various reasons: modern transportation, lack of materials and the necessary craftsman skill etc., Country Boats are the product of many generations; created and carried through shared experiences. What is worth mention is the values that ensure the continuity of the traditional way of life and socio-cultural practices rooted in place. Country boats, in a great variety of shapes and sizes, are known to play a vital role in the transport of goods and people in a country adorned by the country's greatest rivers i.e. Padma, Meghna, and Jamuna since long before. Thus, it is important that Bangladesh being a state in the South Asian region with rich cultural heritage needs to pay special attention for formulating a comprehensive master plan for identifying, developing, preserving and protecting its' cultural traditions and cultural properties of which country boats are just one of it. The aim of this paper is therefore, to preserve and explore important architectural and design factors of beautifully crafted specialized vessels that reflects the gifted ancient tradition of transportation in Bangladesh as a point of attraction with an emphasizes on socio economic importance of preserving the legacy.*

**Key Words:** Country Boat, Cultural Heritage, Tangible Elements, Craftsmanship, Sea Heritage, Boatman Lives, Bangladesh.

## Abstract in Native Language

দশে নৌকা: বাংলাদেশে একটি বাস্তব গণের

যে কোনও সমাজের জন্য, সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্য হল একটি সম্প্রদায়ের স্পষ্ট ও অদম্য উপাদানগুলির উত্তরাধিকার যা অতীতের প্রত্যাশীদেবের কাছ থেকে উত্তরাধিকার সূত্রে প্রাপ্ত, বর্তমানের সামনে রয়েছে এবং ভবিষ্যতের প্রজন্মের কল্যাণে বরাদ্দ। বাংলাদেশে অসাধারণ সাংস্কৃতিক উপাদানগুলিতে পরিপূর্ণ যা মর্যাদাপূর্ণ হয়ে উঠছে, তবু তারা অদূর ভবিষ্যতে অদম্যতা নিয়ে আগরহী। বাংলাদেশের দেশের নৌকাগুলি নৌপথ ও ন্যায়মতি বন্যার দেশে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ পরিবহন নেটওয়ার্ক সরবরাহ করে। নৌকা নির্মাণের ঐতিহ্যটিও একটি সমৃদ্ধ সাংস্কৃতিক উপাদান যা বর্তমানে বলিষ্ঠতার পথে। দেশে নৌকা বহু প্রজন্মের পণ্য; ভাগ এবং অভিজ্ঞতার মাধ্যমে বাহিত। তারা তাদের মূল্যবোধগুলি প্রতীক, তহিষগতভাবে তাদের ঐতিহ্যবাহী জীবনযাত্রার ধারাবাহিকতা এবং সামাজিক-সাংস্কৃতিক অনুশীলনগুলিকে নিশ্চিত করে। দেশীয় নৌকাগুলি, যার মধ্যে বিভিন্ন আকার এবং আকারের কয়েকশ হাজার রয়েছে যা দেশের পদ্মা, মেঘনা এবং যমুনার মতো কয়েকটি দেশের নদী দ্বারা আকৃতির একটি দেশে পণ্য ও লোকের পরিবহণে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করে বলে জানা যায়। এই সংস্কৃতিটি গত ৩০০০ বছর থেকে মৌখিকভাবে অতিক্রান্ত হওয়ার সাথে সাথে, আধুনিক এবং প্রযুক্তিগত বিবর্তনের কারণে এই সংস্কৃতিটি দ্রুত অদৃশ্য হয়ে যাচ্ছে। তাই অবাক করা বিষয় যে একটি দরদার দরদার দেশে তারা যে ভূমিকা পালন করে এবং সামাজিক ও অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নের প্রক্রিয়াগুলিতে তারা যে অবদান রাখে তা পরীক্ষা করার জন্য এখনও অবধি কয়েকটি প্রচেষ্টা করা হয়েছে। সমৃদ্ধ সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্যের দেশে হিসাবে বাংলাদেশকে দেওয়া দরকার এর 'সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্য এবং সাংস্কৃতিক বৈশিষ্ট্য যা ঐতিহাসিক এবং উপকারী মূল্যবোধ রয়েছে সনাক্তকরণ, বিকাশ, সংরক্ষণ ও সুরক্ষার জন্য একটি বিস্তৃত মাস্টার প্ল্যান প্রণয়নের জন্য বিশেষ মনোযোগ। এই কাগজটিতে দেশের নৌকাগুলির সংস্কৃতির বিবর্তন দেখানো হয়েছে এবং বাংলাদেশের কয়েকটি উল্লেখযোগ্য বোটের পরিচয় দেওয়া হয়েছে। এটি উত্তরাধিকার সংরক্ষণের আর্থ-সামাজিক গুরুত্বের উপরও জোর দেয়।

## Introduction

Bangladesh is a land bestowed by three main water causes: Padma, Jamuna and Meghna, which Banglas call them the *three mighty rivers*. These rivers play a vital role in Bangladeshi transportation, culture and livelihoods. The three rivers also connect the nations of Nepal, Bhutan and East Pakistan and also some states of India. During the past 60-70 years, these rivers were the sole means of transport for riverine communities to traverse from one town to another (Islam 2017). The 'boat' as maritime transportation has its own history since prehistoric times. And for Bangladesh, boats are a main source of vehicle, as evident in recent manuscripts, ancient drawings, terracotta plaques and ancient literature (Bin-Doza 2015). Traditionally the country boats were a comparatively prosperous sector of the agricultural economy (Palmer 1992).



The country boasts of the largest fleet of wooden riverine boats and the art of making the boats as an ancient craft, passed on from one generation to the next through oral tradition. While the sea boats in the Bay of Bengal reflected foreign influences in design, the boats navigating through the inland river waters remained with its unique architectural characteristics. The deltaic plane has many versatile floating vessels; around fifty totally different floating components were accessible everywhere the dry land of geographic region. The various types of boats were made for a selected purpose and formed to serve the community. It should be mentioned that boats have undergone some changes thanks to the impact of business development and its connected phenomena. In any case, the normal manner of boat crafting is near to disappear and with it the forms of boat producing processes in numerous coastal regions and contexts, even supposing the contextually embedded ‘form of art’ of crafting the water vessel was still widely known for its unique usage and design values (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **The River System of Bangladesh**

The Combination of three great rivers, the Brahmaputra-Jamuna, Ganga and Meghna dominates Bangladesh to feed sediment into one of the World’s largest deltas in the Bay of Bengal (*Fig.1*) (Best et al. 2008). Any study of inland water transport and of country boats in Bangladesh is by definition a study of country’s rivers and waterways and their uses. It is significant that the natural sources like rivers are not subject to change unless they divert themselves in order to find way towards, and thus have for centuries been opened for navigation will remain open in perpetuity. The people of Bangladesh have adapted their lifestyle for centuries to live with river – frequently moving their temporary bankside homes, planting on newly emergent river bars, and sometimes raising their homesteads above water level in flood periods (Best et al. 2008). Bangladesh has about 15,000 miles (24,000 km) of rivers, streams and canals that together cover nearly 7% of the country’s surface. In Bangladesh there are 257 large and medium rivers that have been recognized and they flow through the country and discharge into the Bay of Bengal (Sarker et al. 2003). These rivers give Bangladesh one of the world’s most complex river systems.

Further, it is remarkable that the waterways are integrated into the entire economy with multiple uses. Native manufactures like paddy, jute and fish are some key products that heavily rely on the complicated watercourse networks of Bangladesh as a water driven country.

## Country Boats of Bangladesh

Since ancient times, boats have been attached to the life of the Bengali people (Bin-Doza 2015). In Bangladesh the expression ‘country boats’ denotes any wooden non-mechanized craft used on inland waters, along the coast or in the Bay of Bengal. The expression is more or less synonymous with the Bengali word ‘*Nouka*’ (Ray 2006). ‘Commercially operated, cargo-carrying boats plying inland, on-shore and off-shore routes, constructed in wood in traditional designs, and which are, with few exceptions, non-mechanically propelled’ (Bin-Doza 2015). Such a definition excludes many small rowing boats, canoes, dug-outs, and dinghies etc. which are mainly used in rural areas for transporting people, private belongings and crops, especially in the monsoon season. Also exclude are boats used for carrying passengers and for ferrying people across rivers, even though this is a commercial operation, all kinds of fishing craft and motorized vessel whose design is not derived from traditional boats (Palmer 1992). Despite this narrowing of the definition, an impressive array of boats which exhibit great variations in terms of capacity, design and type of construction, type of cargo carried, route patterns, and, last but not least, such socio-economic indicators as ownership patterns, payment system and income generating capacities (Palmer 1992).

### The Types of Country Boats

Country boats vary in form and shape, depending on the context of their usage, the customs of people from different localities and, more importantly, the nature of the river, which ultimately shapes the crafting of the fishing boats. It should be mentioned here that the heritage and the memory of the boat of Bengal is closely linked to the river network and its way to the mouth of the sea, which justifies the order in which the different morphology of the boats will be explained (Bin-Doza 2015). Many criteria can be used to structure the complex and diversified universe of country boats. An obvious distinction is between sea-going vessels and those whose operation is restricted to inland waters. That is they are of two distinguished types.

#### a. Sea-going Country Boats

The boats are found mainly in Chittagong area. They are designed for rough weather for waves and strong winds and are rigged in such a way that they can sail to windward. These boats ply along the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal, some even venturing as far as Burma, crossing the bay to major western ports such as Barisal, Khulna and Potuakhli. The most

important routes however are between Chittagong in the south and Dhaka, Narayanganj and Chadpur in the north (Bin-Doza 2015).

## **b. Country Boats of Inland Waters**

Five main types of commercially-operated cargo-carrying boats can be distinguished Sampan, Balam, Jali etc. All the boats mentioned above are well-known for the role they play in transporting crude salt from the salt fields to the mills. They also carry a variety of other goods, i.e. timber, cement, boulders and consumer goods, particularly from Chittagong to inland ports, as well as paddy and other agricultural products from inland ports to the coast. More recently, they have become involved in the transport of fresh fish from harbours in the outer delta or direct from the fishing grounds to Dhaka, Narayanganj and Chittagong (*Fig. 02*).

However, in terms of basic structure, most of the boats which ply the rivers of Bangladesh can be classified as round-hulled smooth skinned boats. Such are Binekata, Malar, Patam etc.

## **The Physical Characteristics of Country Boats**

A great variety of distinctive types have developed on basic pattern, reflecting local boat-building traditions as well as adaptations to different navigational needs and user demands. One survey of Lakhya River recorded 54 different types of boats, mostly of Binekata type, on the basis of the local names used by the boatmen. One type of boat may, however, have different names in different localities. Different names can also be given to the same boat to give expression to the purpose for which it is used.

A simple typology of boats based on such differences is given below-

- Boats with ‘goloi’ fore and aft and a spoon-shaped hull
- Boats without ‘goloi’ but with a spoon-shaped hull
- Boats with neither ‘goloi’ nor a spoon-shaped hull that are of flat bottomed.

## **Well-known Country Boats**

### **Sampan**

The ‘Sampan’ is well distinguishable with its high flat stern with two horns rising higher than it that bend slightly inward (*Fig. 03*). On a giant boat these horns type the framework of the bamboo roof that protects the seaman. ‘Sampans’ square measure short, high sided vessels with a flat bottom and no

keel. The skiff was the initial boat type within the southeastern coastal region. Underneath constant name it's called a most typical kind of boat in Chinese waters, however has been made in People's Republic of Bangladesh during a kind of styles. Some boats have sharp bows, and nearly all have giant sterns, with the once portion of the strake and deck nearly perpetually raised. Sampans square measure sometimes lateen for sailing, typically with two masts; otherwise they're rowed with giant sweep-type oars (*Fig. 04*). They're sometimes open or part bedecked, with a shelter or cabin aft. In Japan, Hawaii, and Taiwan, a hopped-up boat has been developed out of the standard Japanese sampan, with a flat-bottomed region (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Malar**

Most of the largest boats of the Pabna district are called Malar. Their design is similar to 'Jong' and the 'Palowari', but they are stronger and more elegant (*Fig. 05 & 06*). The boat has a deep draught, and for this reason operates mainly on arterial waterways. A typical trip for Malar is to carry jute from Bera or Nakalia to Narayanganj, and to go empty from there to Chandpur where it collects salt for the return trip. The Malar is also called the Nakalia boat, named after the boatman from Nakalia on the Hurasagor River who are renowned in Bangladesh for their Boatmanship and their strong internal solidarity (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Panshi/Panchi**

Boats are fairly large cargo boats and are common in Dhaka and Mymensingh districts. Most were constructed at the important boat-building centers at Savar (on the Dhaleswari) and Bajitpur (on the Meghna) (*Fig. 07 & 08*). Most Panshis were found to come from places along the Old Brahmaputra, although boats from as far away as Barisal, Rangpur, and Kushtia. The panshis from Savar widely used for carrying sand and bricks. On the Lakhya, however, jute was the most common commodity carried. Widespread use of the name 'Panshi' inevitably means that the term is used to describe a range of boats with slight differences. In Pabna for example Panshi refers to a long narrow boat generally used in local boat races (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Ghashi**

On the Lakhya River, the Ghashi was by far the most predominant, according for no less than 38% of all boats observed. This boat is from small to middle-sized, in the range of 75 to 700 maunds. The ghashi is found mainly in the Dhaka district, but is also common in neighbouring districts. The front goloi is low, running as a straight prolongation of the water board, and is almost submerged

when heavily loaded (*Fig. 09 & 10*). The boat has no rudder. It is equipped with a simple square sail and can be rowed from the foredeck. This type of boat is regarded as one of the faster and is often seen carrying consumer goods and perishables such as fruit and vegetables (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Patham**

Patham is used in Dhaka and Mymensingh districts. Smaller patham are built without an inner framing. The boat is fairly cheap to construct for its capacity, and it also has a shallow draught. For these reasons it seems to have grown in popularity in Dhaka area (Sarker et al. 2003).

There are two types of patham which have important differences. The first is the elegant large boat from Bajitpur. It is called ‘Bajitpuri’ or ‘Sylheti’ because of the role it plays in the transport of sand and stone from Sylhet to Dhaka (*Fig. 11 & 12*). It has a long rounded roof, similar to that of the ‘Ghashi’, and is often decorated with dark patterns woven into the bamboo matting. These pathams normally have a capacity of between 800 to 1000 maunds (Bin-Doza 2015).

The other type of the Patham is much smaller, with a capacity of 100 to 300 maunds. It is common in the Dhaka district in Western Mymensingh and is referred to by some boatman as ‘Pati’. A similar, but somewhat larger, boat seen on the Lakheya is known locally as ‘Dhairol’ (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Kusha**

This is small and medium-sized boat, not of the ‘binekata’ type. The hull is flat-bottomed, long and narrow, and does not have the characteristic spoon shape of the ‘ghashis’. The boat is common in Dhaka, Comilla, and Rangpur districts, and was the third most common type found on the Lakheya River. The kosha carries a very wide range of commodities, although its small size and special shape makes it well-suited for the transport of such bulk commodities as stone, bricks, and sand (*Fig. 13 & 14*). It is particularly well-suited for small timber hauls (Sarker et al. 2003).

### **Palowari (*Fig. 15 & 16*)**

Palowaris are big boats much used in the collection and transport of sand, and are very common around Dhaka. While Manikganj is their main center, they are also found in Faridpur, Comilla and Noakhali. The Palowari looks rather like the ‘Malar’ from Pabna but its hull is wider. On some boats, the hull is almost round, and the boat resembles a floating bowl. It is also known as the ‘Gopalpuri’, named after a place in Manikganj (Sarker et al. 2003).

**Dingi (Fig. 17 & 18)**

Dingi is from Northeastern riverine route of Bangladesh (Pabna, Sirajgonj). They are used especially for fishing and sometimes for carrying people and goods Rivers Padma, Meghna and Yamuna (Sarker et al. 2003).

**Sharonga (Fig. 19 & 20)**

This is a sea-going boat that comes from Barisal and Khulna. Basically, it is a dug out made from single long and extended by planking. Sharongas are both small and medium-sized, used in fishing as well as transport. It is also called 'Haranga' (Sarker et al. 2003).

**Balam**

Kutubdia, that is located at the acute finish of southeastern People's Republic of Bangladesh, is one in all the most important costal islands within the Bay of Bengal. This ocean floating vessel will navigate in a very big selection of junctions at the mouth of the Bay of Bengal. This boat is used largely for carrying merchandise and to trade on navigation routes. Its deep and big deck helped to store merchandise for import and export within the riverine landscape of the southern region. Specially designed for the ocean. Boat building was taken care of by experienced craftsmen whose totally different schooling trusted the region wherever this sort of boat was engineered. Supported scientific calculations, the well-designed, proportionate curvature is embellished with glorious trade (Bin-Doza 2015).

**Suluk**

The extreme southern coastal region (Chittagong) was the territory wherever this big vessel was in use. This can be the heaviest among all of the boats that are mentioned here. This vessel accustomed navigate the ocean and stream routes. The central rib is intended with significant frame of Gorjon wood and created in keeping with similar patterns of alternative heavy boats with a deep hull. It had been used largely for Carrying passengers and merchandise, mercantilism within the bone belt (Bin-Doza 2015).

**Tedi balam**

This elegant vessel used to cruise on the eastern part of Bangladesh (Sylhet) and to float on the river Surma and its adjacent branches. The unusual form of this giant vessel was built with traditional local craftsmanship. The shape and width of the boat was rather different from others, with its heavy wooden joists, reinforced with solid wooden beams in some special cases. The deep hull had a

detailed double hood, exhibiting a frontal ornate figure that created the atmosphere of an excellent, ceremonial boat. It had been used by the well situated families, and sometimes to carry people or goods for trading (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Construction Materials Used Making Country Boats (Fig. 21)**

On average the nation's 147,570 square-kilometer land mass lies five meters above sea level, and during the monsoon period up to 60 per cent of the country is flooded (Sarker et al. 2003). It is thus not surprising that powered boats, whose hulls cost a fifth the price of wooden ones, have been so successful, especially given that diesel engines overcome the navigational problems faced by traditional vessels with sails unable to stand up to strong winds. But the cost of modernization is the loss of the traditional fleet together with the skills needed to build and maintain wooden boats (Palmer 1992). Some of the most used materials for the construction of country boats in Bangladesh are wood, bamboo, jute, cloths (Bin-Doza 2015).

#### **Wood**

Considerable quantities of wood are required to make country boat, not only for the hull, but also for the mast, rudder, oar, and the roof of some boats. The quality of the boat is largely determined by the quality and quantity of wood used. The commonest sort of wood used in making country boats is 'Sundari' from Sunderbans. Other more inferior species, such as 'Gajari', 'Zarail', 'Kathal', 'Shilkoroi', 'Jam', and 'Am' are increasingly being used (Bin-Doza 2015).

#### **Bamboo**

Bamboo is used in almost all types of country boats, although a notable exception is formed by some of the larger boats built at Chittagong, Khulna, and Barisal. It is mainly used in roof construction, and in the case of smaller boats, for mats and oars. Bamboo is available all over Bangladesh, and is marketed by special traders. The traders often import bamboo from surplus areas and send it by river on large rafts, usually during the monsoon, to boat building centers. Bamboo which has been soaked in water for long time fetches a higher price because it lasts longer (Bin-Doza 2015).

## **Iron Products**

Iron products used in a country boat include nails, staples, wires and anchors.

Wires are factory-made. The nails are made by local blacksmiths who also make the 'patams' from second-hand oil drums (Sarker et al. 2003).

## **Jute Ropes**

Considerable lengths of jute rope, lines, and backstays are needed on a large country boat. Some heavy crude ropes, such as those required for bending and fixing planks and in making the roof, are manufactured on the spot. Thinner ropes, made by especially skilled people, will have to be purchased in the market. Nylon ropes are also finding wider application (Sarker et al. 2003).

## **Protective Paper**

Protective paper usually covered with a layer of tar, is used to make the roof waterproof. This paper is losing ground to synthetic materials, notably polythene, which are cheaper. The quality of the tar paper is, however, superior to plastics and lasts longer (Sarker et al. 2003).

## **Coal Tar**

Coal tar is used to smear the boat under the water line to prevent leakage and damage by insects and saline water. It protects the wood from decay, and the nails and staples from rust. On the larger boats, special oil is applied to the wood above the waterline (Sarker et al. 2003).

## **Cloth or Canvas**

A special cloth or canvas is used for the sails, although some boats make use of inferior quality materials, including second-hand jute bags. The canvas is purchased from shops in the market, and supplied to a tailor who is experienced in sail making (Sarker et al. 2003).

## **The Traditional Role of Country Boatmen**

Historically the country boatmen were a comparatively prosperous sector of the agricultural economy. The boatmen were a proud and freelance cluster with robust identities and revered positions in society. They lived a life that was self-sufficing and freelance. Typically, they were free-ranging entrepreneurs that they had the social standing that enabled them to get product on credit and take it too remote markets wherever they judged that it may well be oversubscribed at a profit (Palmer 1992). 'Baidyonath Sutradhar' could be a builder by lineage. His



name — Sutradhar — stands for it. It is, in fact, the Bangla of ‘carpenter’. Each his father and grand fathers were boat builders. He hails from a Char Kalyanpur on the stream Jamuna, within the district of Pabna. For the builders, the tip of monsoon sometimes meant the season of boat building. The mahajans accustomed return from far and wide to position their orders. The Kalyanpur Char, after remaining submerged throughout the season would transform into an active workplace. Malar, Panshi, Dingi were the boats that Baidyonath used to build. He focuses on them and conjointly makes all the opposite varieties, – such as Ghugi, Balam, Ghashi, Padee and Horonga (Sarker et al. 2003). A mahajan once asked Baidynath to build a 70 hat (yard) boat. He took it up as a challenge and started gathering Shal and Garjan wood with this huge project in mind. It took him 20 days to complete the boat and in the end, the cost stood at eight lakh taka. Their main sources of income were these profits on the goods which they traded. The upper limits to their income and prosperity would have been strongly linked to the credit which they could secure and their abilities as traders and businessmen. Their abilities as boatmen were secondary. They lived much more from the power of their intellect and social standing than from the power of their bodies (Palmer 1992). Boat Races additionally demonstrate the boatmen's technique and superior skill in giving their boats the utmost speed. In the contest of national race, the boats ought to cover a distance of 650 meter. Every boat will be manned by 7, 25, 50 or 100 persons. It is known as *nouka baich* in Bangladesh (Bin-Doza 2015) (**Fig. 22**)

### **Popular Boats in Boat Races (Fig. 22)**

It is worth note that different districts have different kinds of boat. In Dhaka, GAFFARGAON and MYMENSINGH kosha variety of boats are principally used for sport. These boats are slender in form and may be as long as 150-200ft with straight front and back (Sarker et al. 2003). These boats are manufactured from timber of native shal, shil, garjan, karai and chambul trees. Different type can be seen in FARIDPUR, TANGAIL and PABNA districts in the shape of slim and long which are utilized in sports. Their lengths may be vary from 150-200ft, however, the back of it is about 5ft higher from the water level whereas the front is virtually facing down to the water with some ornamental works. In COMILLA, BRAHMANBARIA, AJMIRIGANJ and SYLHET, Sarengi boats are used for sports. These boats are basically 150-250ft long while 5-6ft wide.

During the Muslim rule, NAWABs and different rulers accustomed organize race, and consistent with some sources, they used their service fleet for this purpose. Within the coastal belt of East Bengal it absolutely was necessary to keep up navy to shield the dominion or occupy different kingdoms. The BARA-BHUIYANS of Bengal fought against the Mughal on the idea of their

service strength. A service force was additionally wont to suppress Magh and Harnad pirates. Their fleet wanted to have sleek boats called 'Chhip'. The boat-based service fleets of these days aren't any longer there however because of racing, the joy of their speed is enjoyed even currently by the people of People's Republic of Bangladesh (Bin-Doza 2015).

In Bangladesh boat races are typically takes place throughout the Bengali months of Bhadra and Ashwin. While competing, the boatmen sing in sink to seek God's blessings. The boats are named uniquely, proclaiming their speed or style, for instance, the Jharer Pakhi (bird of the storm), Pankhiraj (the king of birds), Saimun, Tufan Mail, Mayur Pankhi, Agradoot, Dipraj and Sonar Tari (golden boat) (Sarker et al. 2003).

Before boarding their boats, boatmen purify themselves and wear uniform vests and scarves of same color around their head. People who row standing take their position at the rear. The leader stays within the middle. The drummers and also the singers offer beat and tempo to the boatmen (Sarker et al. 2003).

To encourage racing and improve its organization, the Bangladesh rowing Federation was built in 1974. It helped establish link between ancient racing and trendy row. The federation could be a member of many international rowing federations. To encourage this sport, each year a colorful national race is organized. In 1990, a world boat race was conjointly organized by the authorities of Bangladesh which illuminated the unique values of traditional boat craftsmanship (Bin-Doza 2015).

### **Changing Times and the Dilemma of Implementing Power Engines**

As a result of the modern technology and the machine driven craftsmanship, the communities that produced traditional boats were challenged and accommodated the low cost diesel engines. It can be argued either way, however, one may assume that their appreciation can return once the dynamical pattern is aligned with the abilities of the carpenters and their community, further like the neighborhood's rhetorical tradition. during this the diversifications may realize some buffer to orient them underneath gift circumstances (Bin-Doza 2015). Whatever the reasons, the characteristics of the modification are those of a once closed financial set-up being subjected to external forces on the far side either its management or understanding with the increase of world trade and economic interdependency, the agricultural transport of Bangladesh has become subject to the vagaries of world markets. A lot of direct influences are at the speedy rise within the cost of raw materials for boats (wood) because of deforestation and export demand. Similarly, they need knowledge to demand the increasing

competition from heavily sponsored roads and government-backed water transport operations (Sarker et al. 2003).

Due to the ongoing parameters and the challenges faced by the great majority of boatmen, tend to make their living by wage labor. Many boats are now owned by absentee owners, but even the remaining owner operators mostly hire out their boats to carry goods that belong to others. All that they sell is the cargo-carrying ability of their boats. This relies heavily on their human labor as it can be no more than the product of the capacity and speed. The average speed is extremely dependent on the number of heavy labor that the crew will give while the capability is mounted by the scale of the boat. The upper limit to their income is therefore much reduced. It is determined only by the carrying power of their boat and is thus limited by the level of human power inputs from the crew. Thus, in common with several rural individuals in modern-day Bangladesh, unlike agricultural day laborers, they sell the renewable energies of their bodies in an economy which offers little scope for their intellect and which accords them very lowly social status (Palmer 1992).

### **Traditional Boats Being Cultural Heritage**

Boats of deltaic Bangladesh gained the respect of ‘inner meaning’ in relevancy cultural heritage. They are a nonstop half in normal people’s lives, a shining cultural gist within the spirited pattern of riverine life. An expensive tale of vestiges and endurance, these boats are still floating on the stream and therefore the ocean, wherever they need been serving since prehistoric times. The traditional terracotta plaques in historic temples prove to the unsurpassed history and culture with its intact with a tradition of boats. At the Bengali New Year pageant, celebrations happen in association with boats: there is a popular culture developed throughout the season, a game that evolves aboard the stream banks with interactions on the landing steps wherever crowded individuals gather and watch the big vessels whereas boatmen sing the center touching *Vatiali* song, a joyful chant invoking our memory, jam-packed with respect for our native land.

Except being a widespread, these boats are a particular class of cultural heritage and their crafting is closely connected to the intangible cultural heritage of this society. An excellent variety of intangible cultural heritage problems are nothing but related to boats, like the songs of the stream, the race, the New Year festivals, social interactions, fishing, etc. Connected to the living of the country men is the boat crafting that has been the prime occupation of the region. Every region has had its own characteristic boat varieties, custom-made to native conditions. However, the method of conserving the maritime cultural heritage of Bangladesh remains pretty much behind. With relevance ancient boat industries,

virtually twenty years of incorrect policies have passed, and if these practices continue, we would lose our precious cultural heritage and nothing will be left for our future generations. .

### **Scoping Heritage Management: Needs and Potentials in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh as a country of rich cultural heritage needs to give special attention for formulating a comprehensive master plan for identifying, developing, preserving and protecting its' cultural traditions and cultural properties which have historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ecological, ethnological or anthropological values. An integrated cultural heritage management plan needs to provide an institutional architecture to connect wide range of agencies from both public and private sectors. Government agencies, civil society organizations, NGOs, Corporate Institutions, international agencies and academic institutions needs to be brought under a common operational framework to work together to implement the cultural heritage management plan (Sarker et al. 2003).

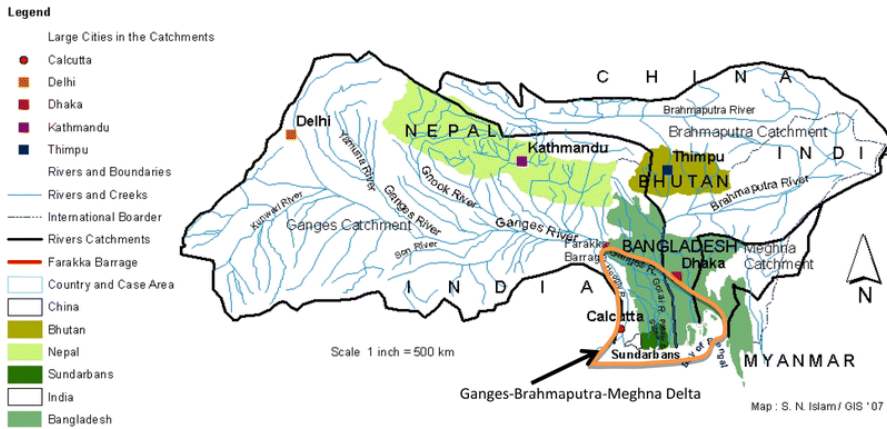
By doing so, the following measures can be applied to secure ancient practices:

1. that the solely intangible cultural heritage recognized by communities or teams is inventoried.
2. Respect customary practices concerned access to intangible cultural heritage.
3. Adopting and following a code of ethics that ought to take under consideration the teachings from smart practices worldwide (Bin-Doza 2015)
4. Offer general orientation to the mass of individuals living at the boat landing areas of the rivers concerning the worth of their cultural heritage, concerning native boats and also the benefit to retain their originality (Bin-Doza 2015)
5. Pass a regulation on the standard boats, establishing that no manually crafted boats ought to install motor engines, and shaping admissible diversifications, like a steel hull (Bin-Doza 2015)
6. Standard worker/craftsman receives a grant from the ministry in charge (Bin-Doza 2015);
7. produce a ship museum wherever folks will see and participate within the building of ancient vessels (Bin-Doza 2015).

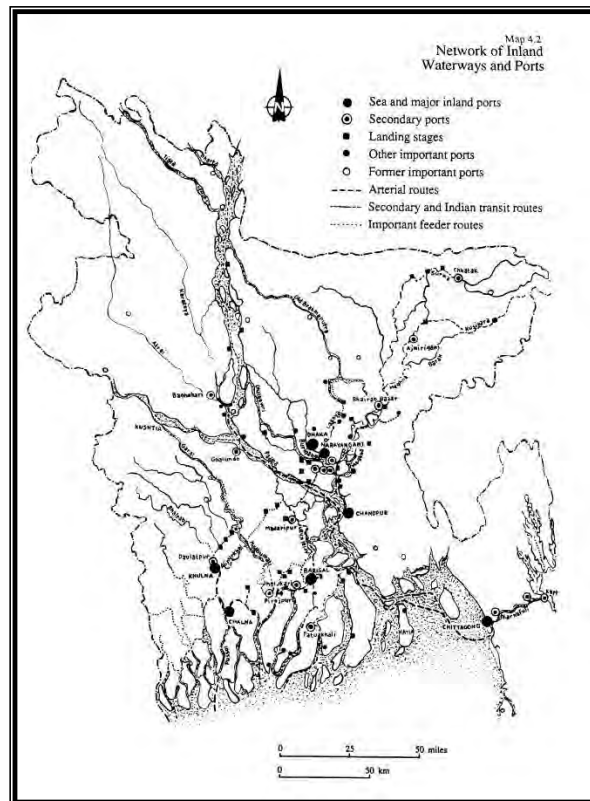
## **Conclusion**

Within many thousand years of maritime history, boats got their place within the narrative of ‘times gone by,’ severally of their being associated with the ocean, the oceans or the watercourse. Boat producing and crafting could be an ancient observe that has been inherited to the current space. Notably the versatile vessel of Bengal demonstrates a series of various morphological aspects. The talent of crafting a vessel could not be a wide known intangible sort of heritage, an art that is still practiced and passed on to the descendants of the traditional fishermen. The inheritance of sculpting these ancient regional lineation boats, along with the knowledge base of a way to create them float safely within the middle of the watercourse within the ocean remains in situ, and practiced while folks choose fishing for one or two days or months.

Concerning twenty or twenty five years ago, the watercourse in People's Republic of Bangladesh still maintained a series of versatile boat sorts floating on river routes. As mentioned, People's Republic of Bangladesh could be a bank of each tangible and intangible cultural heritages, country boats is one in all the versatile one that is on its manner of extinction attributable to enough recognition and preservation. Protection of such cultural resources and heritages isn't solely needed for taking them to the long run generations however is additionally needed for showcasing the wonder and variety of our country to alternative regional and world cultures. Such protection conjointly needs learning, concerning the success stories of cultural resource and heritage management of assorted countries for developing an integrated cultural heritage management strategy for the country. The identification, conservation, restoration and protection of cultural heritage of People's Republic of Bangladesh so need completely different sort of world and regional cooperation, monetary help and technical support to face the assorted challenges and threats of heritage management.❧



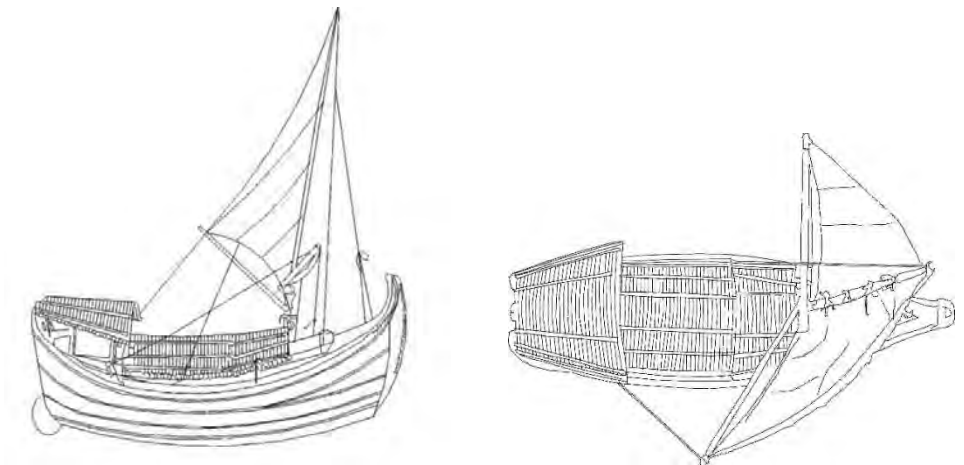
**Fig.1:** Geographical location of the Ganges–Brahmaputra–Meghna Delta and the GBM catchments (Islam and Gnauck 2008)



**Figure 2:** Inland Waterway Networks (Country Boats of Bangladesh)



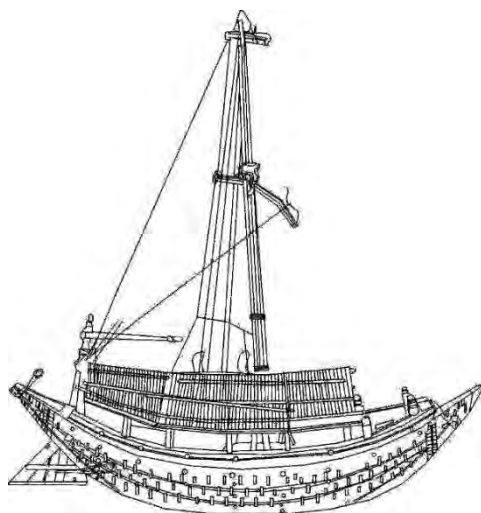
**Figure 3: Sampan**



**Figure 4: Details of Sampan**



**Figure 5:** Malar



**Figure 6:** Details of Malar





Figure 7: Panchi

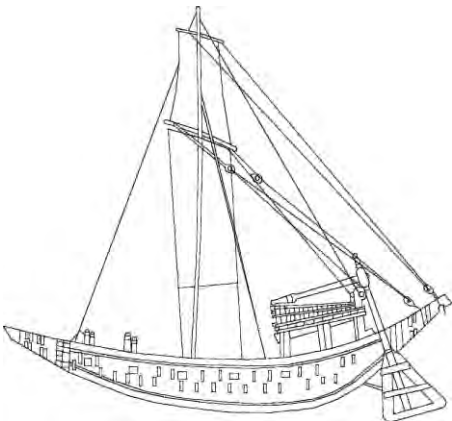


Figure 8: Details of Panshi



Figure 9: Ghashi

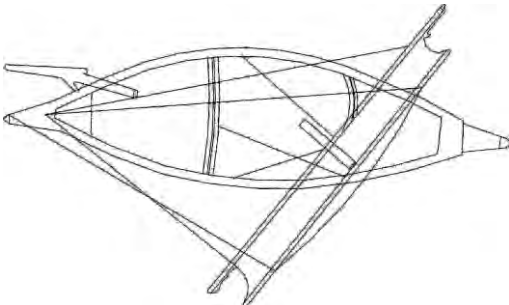
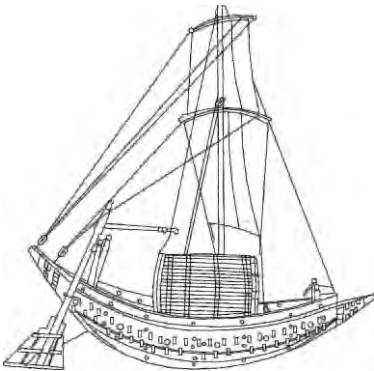
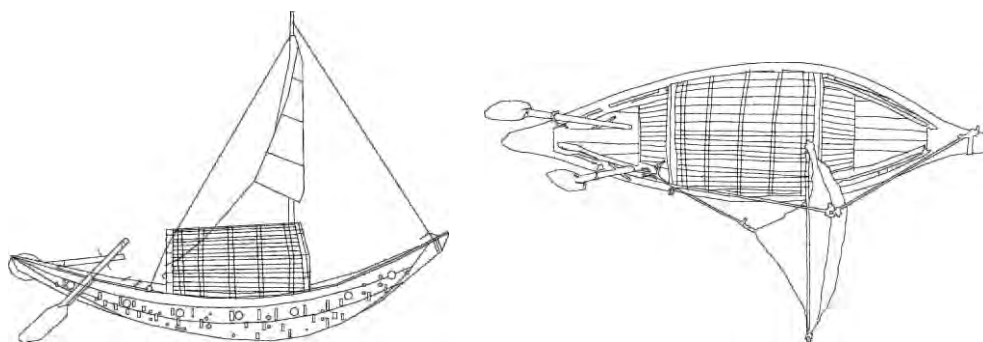


Figure 10: Details of Ghashi



**Figure 11: Patham**

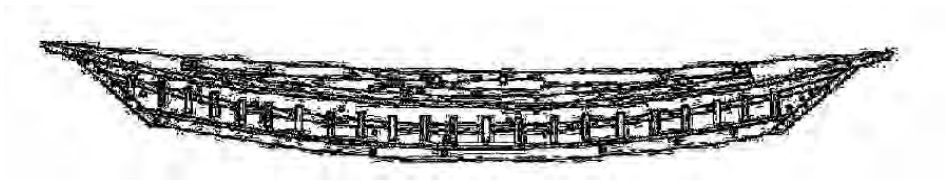


**Figure 12: Details of Patham**





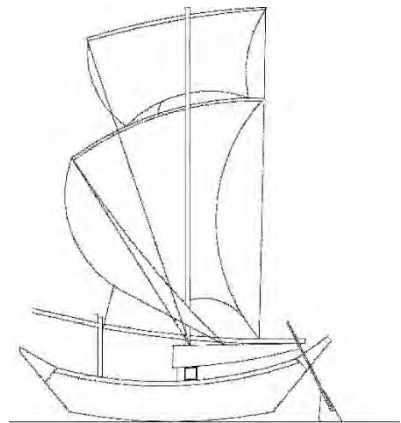
**Figure 13: Kusha**



**Figure 14: Details of Kusha**



**Figure 15: Palowari**

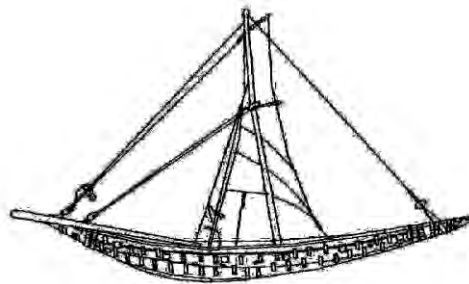


**Figure 16: Details of Palowari**





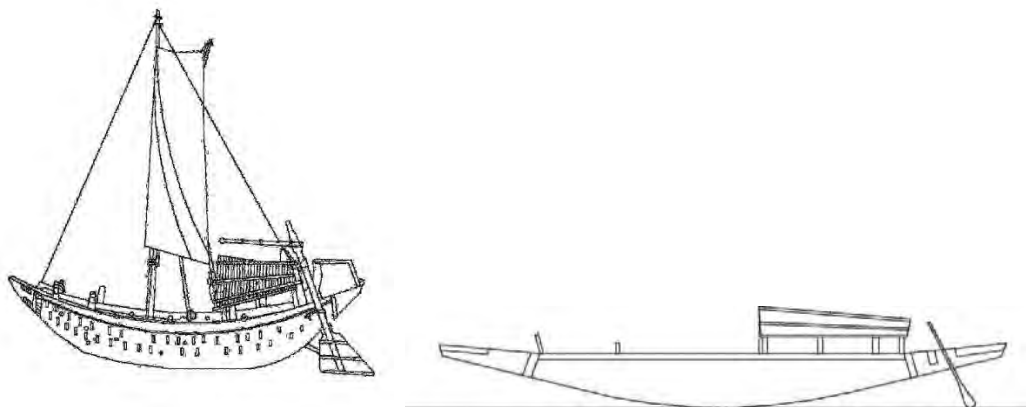
**Figure 17: Dingi**



**Figure 18: Details of Dingi**



**Figure 19: Sharonga**



**Figure 20:** Details of Sharonga



**Figure 21:** Construction Materials



**Figure 22:** Captain of Nouka-Baich



**Figure 23:** At the sound of the whistle, the race begins

# **Traditional Building Craftsmen and Their Livelihood in Bhutan**

*By Karma Tenzin and Pema Pema*

## **Abstract**

*Bhutan is known to the world for its myriad of rich, unique, and beautiful cultural heritage which are well-preserved to date. The preservation and promotion of tangible heritage buildings are the results of the culmination of efforts by the Royal Government of Bhutan (state) and the people, with due respect and recognition. The works on heritage sites are primarily undertaken by the Bhutanese craftsmen who have an invaluable traditional knowledge system that is passed down from generations. Their roles and responsibilities are of paramount importance for the sustenance of Bhutanese cultural heritage, thus respect and recognition need to be realized. In this paper, we present the traditional practice and means of livelihood of craftsmen in the traditional Bhutanese building construction and the initiatives undertaken by the Government to preserve and promote traditional construction skills and techniques of craftsmen in Bhutan. We describe the change in the labor requisition format and their course of evolution, aligning to the evolution of the construction works system, thus providing the basis for understanding the past and current trend of livelihood of the craftsmen.*

**Keywords:** Traditional construction practices, Cultural heritage, Craftsmen, Livelihood, Bhutan





*nyes* (sacred sites). Whereas the intangible heritage aspects include the Buddhist principles, values, mask dances, rituals, ceremonies, thirteen traditional arts and crafts (*zorig chusum*), etc.

The traditional approaches to building and architecture are still very much alive in Bhutan (Gyeltshen 2020). The alterations to the heritage sites in Bhutan were made to maintain their functions or to improve the buildings in response to changes in modes of living and hails that the alterations '*principally conform to traditional construction methods, and relevant technologies have been preserved*' (Saito 2000).

Likewise, the intangible heritage aspects of arts and crafts which form an integral element of the built heritage known as *Zorig Chusum*, are still very much alive and well preserved to date. These thirteen traditional arts and crafts in Bhutan termed *Zorig Chusum* includes six secular crafts and seven religious arts and crafts which can be categorized as follows;

### **Six Secular Crafts**

1. Thagzo (weaving),
2. Shingzo (woodwork/carpentry),
3. Dozo (stone works),
4. Tharzo (bamboo and cane weaving),
5. Trezo (gold/Silversmithing),
6. Garzo (blacksmithing)

### **Seven Religious Arts**

1. Lhazo (painting),
2. Jimzo (sculpture),
3. Parzo (carving),
4. Yigzo (calligraphy),
5. Lugzo (bronze casting),
6. Daezo (papermaking),
7. Tshemzo (embroidery and applique).

Some form of these arts and crafts dates back as early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century and 15<sup>th</sup> century, which was later said to have been further fostered and codified in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century by the 4<sup>th</sup> Desi, Tenzin Rabgye (J. Choden and Yangden 2015). Although every element of *Zorig chusum* is used in the traditional building and architecture such as houses, temples, monasteries, and dzongs, the most prominently and extensively used elements are Shingzo, Dozo, Lhazo, and Parzo.

However, with the advent of modernization, the number of heritage sites that are being renovated or altered has increased drastically towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Gyeltshen 2020). With the introduction of foreign materials, techniques, and equipment, the trend of building construction techniques and skills in the urban areas has considerably changed posing threat to the sustainability of traditional construction techniques, skills, and livelihood of traditional craftsmen.

### **Traditional practice and means of livelihood of traditional craftsmen in building construction**

The importance of craftsmen was explicitly realized in the construction of the Dewa chenpai phodrang Dzong (commonly referred to as Punakha Dzong) in the 16th Century, where the Trulbi Zow Balingpa (Balip), the master craftsmen constructed the magnificent Punakha Dzong by realizing the practical and spiritual objectives of the patron in the form of an architectural synthesis (Dujardin 2000). The Bhutanese craftsmen played a vital role in the sustenance of the heritage sites, which are largely intact today (Gyeltshen 2020).

In understanding the sustenance of cultural heritage sites and the role of craftsmen, it is important to understand the mobilization of the labor system in earlier days. In Bhutan, the most common practice in the past while building a house in the community or village is through free labor contribution by the entire community (T. Choden 2003). The master carpenter known as *Zopen* takes the overall responsibility of the construction works supported by the free labor contribution from the community. While the community labor contribution is for free, the *Zopen* and in the case of hired skilled workers such as *Dozo lopen* (master mason) for stone masonry houses and *Pa lopen* (master rammed earth expert) for rammed earth houses were paid in kind such as rice and other essential items which later got replaced and paid in cash. There master carpenter was provided with *La-gho* (La means work, gho means dress) during the initial phase of construction works and *Drup-gho* (Drup means complete gho means dress) after the completion of the construction of the house as a token of gift to please and thank for initiating the overall construction works. Similarly, the entire community would also come forward to provide resources and efforts in carrying out major projects in the community such as building and repairing monasteries (T. Choden 2003).

Likewise, traditionally *gungda woola* system was practiced whereby the labor contribution from each household was made compulsory during the construction, repair of not only important national monuments or structures in the country but communal infrastructure (Ura 2005). The *gungda woola* system

was later abolished and replaced by *Zhabto Lemi* in the year 1996 by His Majesty the Fourth King of Bhutan (Ministry of Home affairs 1996). The *Zhabto-Lemi*, a self-help system was introduced, confined to essential service schemes provided by the Government which are implemented in their respective villages, thus directly benefitting the people to fulfill the local priorities (Ministry of Home affairs 1996). Hence, the role of *Zhabto Lemi*, a voluntary and free labor contribution by the people for implementing development programs was emphasized. With the rapid socio-economic development, the labor contribution was monetized paid in the form of daily wages.

The aforementioned traditional practices and systems are now being replaced with the tender system. For instance, all the works initiated by the government are either tendered out to the licensed contractors or executed departmentally by the concerned agencies. The contractor or the concerned agencies employs both skilled and unskilled workers to execute the works. They are either paid on a daily wage rate or contemporary square feet rate system as practiced around the world. The wage rate in the country according to the skills of the craftsmen are regulated by the Ministry of Labor and Human Resources through the Wage Rate Act 1994. It was last revised in the year 2015 with a minimum wage rate of Nu. 215 per day for the unskilled workers and the highest of Nu. 324 per day for the master craftsmen. With the revision, those National Work Force working at an altitude of 8,000 feet or above 2,000 meters above the mean sea level are entitled Nu. 600 as high altitude allowance (Dema 2015). However, the current market rates are substantially higher than the wage rate approved by the Government.

Besides the aforementioned system of the Government, with a vision to benefit the rural community or village, the Government had initiated the community contract system in the year 2011, whereby a contract worth less than Nu.1.5 million is awarded to villages/community without any tendering process. One of the main objective for initiating the community contract system was to ensure the sense of ownership of the project and to directly benefit the local community people through mobilizing local craftsmen and workers (Department of Local Governance 2011).

Concerning the private construction works, the common practice prevalent today in rural areas/villages is to contract out the work to the local craftsmen on a lumpsum basis, whereas in urban areas the works are contracted out to the site supervisor on square feet system and mostly employs the imported workers to implement the works.

## **Preservation and promotion of traditional craftsmen, skills and techniques**

Inciting the importance of the craftsmanship in Bhutan, Bhutan observes the National Zorig Day which was declared by His Holiness the Je-Khenpo (Bhutan's Chief Abbot) in the year 2002, while recognizing Pel Dueki Khorlo (in Sanskrit, Kalachakra) as the Zorig Deity. The National Zorig day is observed annually on the fifteenth day of the third month of the Bhutanese calendar. The main objective of observing this day is to honor the craftsmen and artisans with traditional skills and to raise public awareness of the importance and sustenance of craftsmen in our society. Furthermore, in the year 2005, during the 108th National Day celebration, His Majesty the King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck awarded the National Order of Merit- Gold to three traditional craftsmen, in recognition of their services to the nation, for preserving and promoting traditional crafts, and contributions towards nation building and in defining our national identity. Zopoen (master craftsmen) Rinchen, Zopoen Naku, Dozop (Master Stone mason) Chado, and Lhadrip (painter) Sonam Dorji were the recipient of this prestigious award.

The Department of Culture (DoC) under the Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (MoHCA), Royal Government of Bhutan is the central agency responsible for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage in the country. The Department of Culture undertook numerous conservation projects for heritage sites of National Importance since the 9<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan beginning with the Paro Taktshang reconstruction project. In these projects implemented by the Department of culture, only local Bhutanese craftsmen are hired and their skilled developed.

Semtokha Dzong Conservation Project was the first major conservation project implemented by the DoC in the 9<sup>th</sup> FYP following the successful completion of the Taktshang monastery reconstruction project. In the 10<sup>th</sup> FYP, the DoC had implemented four major Dzong Conservation Projects viz. Paro Rinpung Dzong, Daga Trashiyangtse Dzong, Lhuentse Dzong, and Wangduephodrang Dzong, including Chukha Dzong new Construction Project which was completed in 10<sup>th</sup> FYP. In continuation, DoC had also completed the Paro Ta-Dzong (watch tower currently a National museum of Bhutan) conservation project, Tashigang Dzong conservation project, and Gasa Dzong conservation project in the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP plan, and Wangditse Restoration Project in the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP plan, a spillover project of the 11<sup>th</sup> FYP.

The conservation projects have never been outsourced to date as it requires special knowledge and experience in the field of conservation, including traditional craftsmanship. The conservation projects were departmentally

executed to set a standard conservation approach for the implementation of future projects with the aims to:

- i. Ensure sustainability heritage structure and its landscape by preserving cultural heritage value associated with these important heritage sites and,
- ii. Preserve and promote traditional craftsmen, construction skills, and techniques.

A professionalization of craftsmen was introduced while implementing projects under the Department of Culture a transition from the traditional ‘woola’ system, which was adopted based on the *Labor Chattrim* (Royal Government of Bhutan 1994). The craftsmen were graded according to their skills under different categories (I, II, III, and IV). Category IV being the entry-level for unskilled workers and level I being the highest possessed skills. For instance, the master carpenter falls under the level I category. Towards strengthening the capacity and skills of the craftsmanship and to achieve knowledge transfer and the long-term sustainability of skills, the craftsmen based on their skills and knowledge are upgraded to the next level of the category.

To preserve, promote and motive traditional craftsmanship, the wage rate for the traditional craftsmen working for the heritage sites under the Department is provided with 80% Zorig Chusum allowance as an honorarium in addition to the daily wage of the national workforce approved by the Ministry of Labor and Human Resources. Furthermore, the Zorigchusum allowance was exclusively approved for the projects under the Department of Culture for the following reasons:

1. The workers require traditional craftsmanship skills and techniques
2. The workers have to undergo apprenticeship to gain skills and techniques
3. Non- mechanized projects
4. To preserve and promote traditional craftsmanship and heritage sites.

Such noble initiatives and efforts were undertaken by the Royal Government of Bhutan in the preservation and promotion of traditional craftsmanship ultimately to motivate and uplift the livelihood of the craftsmen in the country.

## Conclusion

In this paper, we have briefly discussed the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Bhutan and how the tangible aspects of cultural heritage are supplemented by intangible qualities. The heritage sites of Bhutan are largely intact to date because of the strong leadership of our visionary Kings and the strong affirmation by the Bhutanese community. Indulging in the construction

practices and system, the Bhutanese craftsmen played a vital role in the sustenance of the heritage sites. We have discussed the change in traditional construction practices and the system of labor mobilization of Bhutan and how the role of craftsmen played a critical role in the sustenance of the unique cultural heritage of Bhutan. We have discussed various efforts put forth by the Royal Government of Bhutan to support the livelihood of Bhutanese craftsmen and the communal efforts to sustain the system of traditional construction practices. Furthermore, we have clarified how the current trend of construction practices evolved conforming to the rapid economic development and technological evolution. Finally, for the sustenance of the cultural heritage of Bhutan, the role of craftsmen cannot be neglected in any means. The state and the people should work together to sustain our unique cultural heritage for posterity. ❧

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# **The Influence of Indian Culture and Tradition on Southeast Asia with Special Reference to Cambodia.**

*By Dr. Sonia Jasrotia*

## **Abstract**

सार

संस्कृति शब्द का प्रयोग हम दिन-प्रतिदिन के जीवन में करते रहते हैं। साथ ही संस्कृति शब्द का प्रयोग भिन्न-भिन्न अर्थों में भी करते हैं। उदाहरण के तौर पर हमारी संस्कृति में यह नहीं होता तथा पश्चिमी संस्कृति में इसकी स्वीकृति है। समाजशास्त्र विज्ञान के रूप में किसी भी अवधारणा का स्पष्ट अर्थ होता है जो कि वैज्ञानिक बोध को दर्शाता है। अतः 'संस्कृति' का अर्थ समाजशास्त्रीय अवधारणा के रूप में 'सीखा हुआ व्यवहार' होता है। संस्कृति के अन्तर्गत पूरे समाज एवं सामाजिक सम्बन्धों का प्रतिनिधित्व होता है इसलिए यह कहा जा सकता है कि किसी एक या दो-चार व्यक्तियों द्वारा सीखे गये व्यवहार को संस्कृति नहीं कहा जा सकता। कोई भी व्यवहार जब तक समाज के अधिकतर व्यक्तियों द्वारा नहीं सीखा जाता है तब तक वह संस्कृति नहीं कहलाया जा सकता। संस्कृति एक समाज की संपूर्ण जीवन विधि का प्रतिनिधित्व करती है। भारतीय नाविक या व्यापारी बेहतर लाभ के लिए सोने की भूमि की ओर रवाना हुए। सांस्कृतिक रूप से, भारतीयकरण के गहरे निशान बहुत पहले हुए थे। पंद्रह शताब्दियों के बाद ब्राह्मणवादी-हिंदू धर्म के साथ-साथ स्वदेशी धार्मिक तत्वों को कम्बोडियन बौद्ध धर्म द्वारा ग्रहण और अवशोषित किया गया। वर्तमान समय के धार्मिक परिवेश का सबसे दिलचस्प पहलू यह है कि एक थेरवाद देश होने के बावजूद, अधिकांश आबादी हिंदू रीति-रिवाजों और प्रथाओं का पालन करती है। कंबोडिया में विद्वानों की गतिविधियों की एक महत्वपूर्ण भाषा संस्कृत जारी है। कंबोडिया में राजाओं के राज्याभिषेक (अभिषेक) जैसे समारोहों में संस्कृत जानने वाले पंडितों की भूमिका एक उदार वातावरण का एक विशिष्ट उदाहरण है। कंबोडियनों ने इतने सारे राजनीतिक अस्थिरता के बाद भी मिश्रित ब्राम्हणवादी-बौद्ध संस्कृति को बहाल किया।

एक खमेर कहावत है: 'यदि संस्कृति मर जाती है, तो राष्ट्र भी मरता है',

बौद्ध संस्कृति और स्थानीय परंपरा और अनुष्ठानों ने लोकप्रियता हासिल कर ली है। बौद्ध मठ और भिक्षु समग्र रूप से लोगों और राष्ट्र के लिए सामाजिक सेवाओं में लगे हुए हैं। कंबोडिया में बौद्ध थेरवाद संप्रदाय ब्राह्मण-हिंदू और स्वदेशी अनुष्ठानों के साथ फल-फूल रहे हैं।

South-east Asia has always been culturally diverse. The native people adapted the external influences and practiced it with their own flavor which enhanced their culture and their own society. In this processes of amalgamation, Southeast Asia encountered Indian culture and Hindu-Buddhist faith which was absorbed by locals. Before sharing the research on influence of Indian culture and tradition on Southeast Asia and Cambodia specifically lets discuss what is Culture? The concept of culture is among the most commonly used notions in sociology. Every day the word culture is used as ‘this is not in our culture that is western culture and so on.’ Normally, we relate culture to art, literature, music and painting etc. However, in the viewpoint of sociologist it goes beyond such activities. Culture refers to the ways of life of the members of society, or of groups within a society. It includes how they dress, their marriage customs, language and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies etc. The conceptual meaning of culture is who we are and what shapes our identity.<sup>1</sup> No development can be sustainable excluding culture. Culture empowers the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Culture has been defined in so many different ways that one feels it is almost undefinable. The cultural history of Southeast Asia is divers and absorbing. Before going to cultural history let us discuss the history of Southeast Asia. Southeast Asian countries has seen many up’s and down, the beginning of the Christian era, Southeast Asia was known as ‘land of gold’.

Indian navigators or merchants sailed toward land of gold for better profit. Culturally speaking, deep traces of the Indianisation occurred long ago. As suggested by N. J. Krom, ‘Indian traders impressed local people with their artefacts and cultural achievements, intermarried with them, and transferred their culture to an Indianized élite. This Indianized élite adopted customs of Indian origin as a means not only to increase their dominance over local groups and to improve their contacts with other cultures but also to legitimize their political control.’

The cultural imbedding is clearly done by the traders but other adventurer also helped for promotion of culture and equal credit goes to the local people for absorbing the new trend. The ‘Indianised’ culture of Southeast Asia was ‘scholastic’ in nature which was sustained by the locals. When we talk about influence of Indian culture in Southeast Asia in particular Cambodia the kingdom of Funan was founded by the Brahman Kaundinya in the first century

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<sup>1</sup> Griswold, W. *Cultures and Societies in a Changing World*, fourth Edition, Page no. 03, Sage Publication, 2013.



A.D. and China move in into trade relations with Funan in the third century A.D., notably intaglios and seals with Sanskrit suggested the Indian presence.<sup>2</sup>

After getting a foothold during the Funan period, over fifteen centuries of adaptation and acculturation Brāhmaṇical-Hinduism as well as the indigenous religious elements have been embraced and absorbed by Cambodian Buddhism. The most interesting aspect of the present day religious milieu is that despite being overwhelmingly a Theravāda country, majority of the population observes Hindu rituals and practices. Sanskrit continues to be an important language of scholastic activities in Cambodia. For instance, the role of Sanskrit-knowing paṇḍits in ceremonies such as the coronation (*abhiṣeka*) of the Cambodian kings continues to be a typical example of an eclectic environment. Cambodians restored and carried the mixed Bramanical-Buddhist culture even after so many political instability.

When it comes to language we can see even now a days we can find Sanskrit names. The name of months in Khmer language are known as *Chait*, *Baishakh*, *Jestha*, *Asadha* etc. has Sanskrit origin and is used same as in India. Khmer language has approximately 3500 words originated from Pali and Sanskrit.<sup>3</sup> Even now Sanskrit and Pali is taught in secondary schools and M. A. level in monasteries and Buddhist Universities. I worked in Preah Sihanoukrajā Buddhist University which is one of the oldest university of Cambodia has several faculty member are scholars.

Worship of various kinds of spirits, especially nāgas, also is another example of the unique case of Cambodian example of diversity. Construction of the material milieu which inspired the creation of temples such as Angkor Wat and many other temples are living examples of the widespread amalgamation and acculturation in the Khmer territories political traditions whose roots lay in the Indian subcontinent. Coming on art and architecture the Indian influence can be seen on the walls of temple complex of Angkor vat, numerous depictions of Indian flora, fauna, deities and mythical representation have been found. Cambodians constructed huge monuments and embellished them with sculptural representations of Shiva, Vishnu, Buddha and other divinities from Indian Epics and the Puranas.<sup>4</sup> Ankorwat temple is living temple, lord Vishnu idol is still

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<sup>2</sup> COEDES G. Edited by Walter F. Vella, *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, Page no. 17, Australian National University Press Canberra, 1975.

<sup>3</sup> Jenkins, K. A Brief Historical Analysis of Khmer, Page no. 04, <https://www.academia.edu/>

<sup>4</sup> Smith, L. Monica, 'Indianization' from the Indian point of view: Trade and Cultural Contacts with Southeast Asia in the Early First Millennium C.E., Source: Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, Vol. 42, No. 1 (1999), pp. 1-26 Published by: BRILL Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3632296> .

inside the temple and people do rituals and prayers. There are many other temples also alike.

**Banteay Srei Temple:** - This temple Dedicated to Lord Shiva, built with pink colored rocks, this temple boasts of finest stone carvings and most intricate sculptures of various Gods and Goddesses

**Baksei Chamkrong, Siem Reap:** This 10<sup>th</sup>-century temple is located near the south gate of Angkor Thom. The temple looks like a pyramid and has a decorated Prasat tower at the top and a Hindu sanctuary, dedicated to Lord Shiva. The construction of the temple was started by king Harshavarman and finally completed by Rajendravarman.

**Preah Vihear Temple, Prea Vihear:** -The temple was built at the top of Poy Tadi, a steep cliff in the Dângrêk Mountain range which is the natural border between Cambodia and Thailand. It is an ancient Hindu temple, constructed during the reign of Khmer Empire. Dedicated to Lord Shiva, and was built by multiple Khmer rulers like Yasovarman, Suryavarman I and Suryavarman II.

Phnom Kulen mountain is considered most sacred mountain located in Siem Reap, which is very important for Hindus and Buddhists which is also known as 'The River of a Thousand Lingas, featuring ancient stone carvings on the riverbed. It was from this spot that Jayavarman II declared himself a devaraja (god-king) in 804 A.D.<sup>5</sup> Lord Shiva is known as Preah Eysor in Khmer tradition and remained as protector king along with other Hindu deities.

**Banty Sarai :-** 10<sup>th</sup>-century temple dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva Banteay Srei or Banteay Srey is located near the hill of Phnom Dei, 25 km North-east of the main group of temples that once belonged to the medieval capitals of Yasodharapura and Angkor Thom. Baksei Chamkrong is a small Hindu temple located in the Angkor complex. It is dedicated to Shiva.

**Koh Ker** was a veritable city of Shiva or Lingapura was is also important site having many stone lingas.

**Kabal Spean** are also popular site of Shiva having carved lingas which are also known as Valley of the 'Lingas' or 'River of the Lingas'. There are thousands of these carvings found from the stream down to the waterfall of Kulen the lingams are said to create ripples and froth in the water, enhancing their association with fertility. It is a revered spiritual place for Cambodian people and it is said that the water from Kabal Spean will help couples to conceive. There are many of

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<sup>5</sup> Harris. Ian, *Cambodian Buddhism: History and Practice*, Page no. 11, University of Hawai'i Press, 2005.

temples all over Cambodia which are still in jungle all are not reported or listed are illustration of Indian influence of culture and tradition.

During my stay in Cambodia I visited many monasteries also and noticed that in many monasteries the Śiva Linga and idol of Ganesha, is placed. They still worship them with Buddha or consider them protector. When Buddhism was first introduced to Cambodia, Brahmanism had already been prevalent in the country. Archaeological evidence indicates that the earliest forms of Buddhism was brought into the present-day Mekong Delta during the Funan period (c. 100 BCE and 500 CE) by traders. Despite being ardent followers of Viṣṇu and Śiva, the kings of Funan were not only religiously tolerant and eclectic towards Buddhism but they also permitted Buddhist missionaries to work freely within their realms.

Local rulers promoted Hinduism during the early Common Era as it greatly boosted the legitimacy of their reign. Buddhist teachings that almost simultaneously arrived in Southeast Asia and developed through centuries has marked a glorious phase and eventually came to be perceived as more appealing to the demands of the general population, a belief system and philosophy that addresses concrete human affairs. Emperor Ashoka initiated the tradition to send trained monks and missionaries abroad who spread Buddhism that includes a sizeable body of literature, oral traditions, iconography, Art and offers guidance to common people and emphasis on individual effort and conduct<sup>6</sup>.

It should be noted that at the time when Buddhism was first introduced to Cambodia, Brahmanical system was already prevalent in the country. Although Buddhism was accepted by the Cambodian people at the time of its introduction, the new belief did not become dominant at the beginning of its dawn. Latter the practical philosophy suited people of that time, its influence gradually spread all over the country.

According to Goege Coedes, the existence of Buddhism in Cambodia during the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> Centuries CE. was because of the royal patronage. The forms of Buddhism that have been prevalent and flourishing in Cambodia from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A. D. up to the present be classified as under: - The three Buddhist Schools are:

1. Theravada Buddhism or Sarvastivada (from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> centuries AD)
2. Mahayana Buddhism (from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD)
3. Theravada Buddhism (from the 13<sup>th</sup> up to the present)

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<sup>6</sup> Bapat, P. V., *2500 Years of Buddhism*, Page no. 60, Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1956.

Buddhism flourished in Cambodia and got royal patronage. The three schools may have differences but root was same. They were known for their own special characteristics. In 14<sup>th</sup> century it became permanently rooted and was regarded as the state religion from then onward, Buddhism grew an importance and remained the only religion practiced by the Cambodians. The two major Indian religion became the way of life in Cambodia and Buddhism still exists and has strong hold in Cambodia.

### **Buddhist Education**

India has a rich tradition of learning and education and passed it generations to generations either through oral or written medium. Ancient Indian education system molded and shaped in the course of its history more by religious than by political, or economic influences. Gurukul system of education was popular in India and India produced world's famous ancient universities like Nalanda, Takshila, Sharada and Vikramashila. Highly formalized methods of Vedic education helped to stimulate the establishment of large teaching institutions such as Taxila, Nalanda, and Vikramashila known to be India's early universities.

When Buddhism was introduced in Cambodia, the Buddhist system of education was also introduced there. The method of teaching and learning was carried out in the traditional way in the monasteries, with abbots or senior monks as teachers of young monks and novices<sup>7</sup>. With the passage of time Cambodia developed very popular Buddhist Institute and Monasteries. There was also a rough time in Cambodian history, the pol pot regime was active during that time the institute were closed and also destroyed. Buddhism was totally banned, Buddhist temples and schools were closed down, by the government of the Democratic Kampuchea headed by Pol Pot. Buddhist Institutions started developing and rapid growth can be seen after 1993 general elections. Under the flagship of Ministry of Cult and Religion Buddhist institute started growing. That ancient education system of monastic education is still going great here in Cambodia. Indian Philosophy is very famous in Cambodia and I teach Indian Philosophy at Preah Sihanuk Raja Buddhist University. Yoga is also very famous here in Cambodia.

Buddhism and Hinduism became an important bridge between the south Asian countries through cultural exchanges of value-based education. Ancestor's festival is one such phenomenon. Cambodian people celebrate festival called

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<sup>7</sup> Sovanaratana, Khy, Ven., *Buddhist Education in Cambodia: surviving the storms of history*, Page no. 23-24, Publication of Mongkolvan Temple, Phnom Penh, 2016.

Pheum Ben veneration to the departed ancestor which is similar to Pitri Paksha in India.

### **Common Rituals**

Pchum Ben Festival is yearly fifteen days celebration of Cambodian people according to lunar calendar. In this festival ceremonies and rituals performed for the departed souls of dead ancestors. It is believed that the souls will attain peace by the rituals performed during the fortnight. Indian festival Pitru Paksh which is celebrated across India is also annual festival for the departed souls. It is also fifteen day's ceremony which is celebrated by Hindus in the seventh month of Hindu calendar.

### **Choul Chnam Thmey (Khmer New Year) and Baisakhi**

The connection between Choul Chnam Thmey and Baisakhi day makes the ancient links and strong bond between the two countries. It never completely vanished or been destroyed from this land. The cultural amalgamation can be seen in these rituals and festivals. Choul Chnam Thmey (Khmer New Year) is the name of the Cambodian Lunar New Year celebration which usually falls on April 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> signifying the harvest, and celebrated as a harvesting festival similar to Baisakhi celebrated by Sikhs and Hindus.

### **Bon Om Touk:**

A true water culture, The famed navies of the Angkorian Kings fought and won many a battle on the waters of the Mekong and the Tonle Sap, and these mighty rivers have given life to some of the greatest Empires in Asia. Originating as a Khmer thanksgiving ceremony to celebrate the end of the monsoon, kick off the Cambodian fishing season and appease the river divinities, the Water Festival was also seen as a showcase of military prowess, with the 12<sup>th</sup> century victories of King Jayavarman VII immortalized in the colorful boat racing traditions and adorned upon the walls of the Bayon and Banteay Chhmar Temples.

Historically, the boat races were conducted to train and prepare people for the war. Through this festival King select the champions and include them in army to defend the Kingdom. In Kerala, during an early 13<sup>th</sup>-century war between the feudal kingdoms of Kayamkulam and Chembakassery, King Devanarayana of Chembakassery ordered the construction of a war boat to a famous carpenter Chundan Vallam. Hence, the technical methods for creating these snake boats are around 8 centuries old in India. Vallam kali has mainly been conducted during the season of the harvest festival Onam in autumn.

**Reamker or Ramakerti** is a Cambodian epic poem, based on the Sanskrit Ramayana epic. The name means ‘Glory of Rama’. The earliest mention of this epic's manuscript in Cambodia dated back in 7th century based on Veal Kantel inscription.

Cambodian Shadow Puppet Ramayana (Sbek in Khmer):- Puppetry is a kind of sacred tradition from the time of Angkor. This is reflected in reliefs from the 7<sup>th</sup> century Sambor Prei Kuk temple in Kampong Thom, showing the image of the puppetry ceremony.

It is performed during sacred temple ceremonies, at private functions, and for the public in Cambodia's villages. The popular plays include the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics, as well as other Hindu gods.

### **Sutra that Connects India and Cambodia.**

While the fact of Southeast Asia being referred to as the ‘Greater India’ is a well-known and documented, nevertheless the connecting dots between the two countries requires further elucidation when it comes to textiles and clothing. To this date every wedding in Cambodia rehearses the legend of the first CE of Indian Prince Preah Thong or the Prince Kaundinya who married the Naga Princess Neang Neak or Princess Soma daughter of a Naga King. What is of importance is that, this legend by some, also states that the Prince gifted the cloth or dress to the princess. This itself, corroborates the historical fact of Indian trade in the area and also the introduction of cloth to the mainland of Cambodia. Replete are patterns and motifs inscribed for posterity in the monuments that are reminiscent of Indian textiles that would have found their way into the Mekong – Ganga region along with the varied styles of the typical krama (Indian Angocha/Gamcha) of Cambodian peasants worn in the lehenga (khmer samloy) style or dhoti (khmer chwang kben) style .

Inscribed are also distinctive Indian patterns on the walls of Angkorwat that even today can be traced to contemporary variations of Indian Textiles.

*A Khmer proverb said: ‘If culture dies, so does the Nation’*

It goes very accurate for Cambodian people. Cambodia has seen hard times also and underwent a rough period from 1975 to 1979 AD when the country was ruled by the atrocious regime headed by Pol Pot, but they come out very smartly and began revival of Buddhism and culture started 1979.

Now, Buddhist Culture and local tradition and rituals has regained its popularity. Buddhism is followed by a high percentage of Cambodian population. Buddhist monasteries and monks have been engaged in social

services to the people and the nation as a whole. Buddhist Theravada sects in Cambodia with Brāhmaṇical-Hindu and indigenous rituals are flourishing in the country. ☒

# Lok Dohori (Nepali: दोहोरि) Song of Nepal

By Tula Ram Poudel

## Abstract

लोक दोहोरि गीत नेपालको मौलिक कला र संस्कृतिको अनुपम वरदान हो। नेपालको ग्रामीण जीवनमा उत्पत्ति भएको यो संस्कृति पछिल्लो समयमा मनोरञ्जनका धेरैजसो कार्यक्रमहरूमा लोकप्रिय बन्दै गईरहेको छ। विशेष गरी महिला र पुरुषहरू बिच मायाप्रेमको भावमा सवाल जवाफ हुने यो लोकसंस्कृति अहिले जीवन, समाज र राष्ट्रका सबैखाले आयामहरूमा आवाजहरू बुलन्द गर्ने सशक्त माध्यम समेत बनेको छ। अन्ता इस्टर जस्ता विदेशीहरूले नेपालमा आएर लोक दोहोरि क्षेत्रमा खोज, अनुसन्धान र अभ्यास गरिरहेको अवस्थाले नेपालीहरूमा यो अमूल्य संस्कृतिलाई अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय मञ्चहरूमा पुऱ्याई आफ्नो पहिचान र संस्कृतिलाई अझै ओभिलो बनाउनु पर्ने जिम्मेवारीको बोध पनि भएको छ। यसै सन्दर्भमा गीतको परिचय र महत्त्व भक्तिकेने “Lok Dohori (Nepali: दोहोरि) Song of Nepal” शीर्षकमा यो लेख तयार गराइएको छ। लोक दोहोरि गीत कुनै जात, धर्म, भाषा, वर्ग र क्षेत्रविशेष नभइकन सम्पुर्ण नेपालीहरूलाई सांस्कृतिक एकतामा बाध्ने बलियो माध्यम हो। दोहोरि साँभ, मनोरञ्जनात्मक कार्यक्रम, उत्सव र चाडपर्व साथै समय समयमा भईरहने दोहोरि गीत प्रतियोगिताहरूले यो संस्कृतिको संरक्षण र विकासमा सहयोग पुऱ्याएका छन्। संस्कृति सभ्यताको जननी भएकोले सेवा, सन्देश र मनोरञ्जन एकैसाथ भन्ने नाराका साथ इन्द्रेणी जस्ता कार्यक्रमहरू रोडियो, टेलिभिजन तथा सामाजिक सञ्जालहरू मार्फत लोक गीतको उत्थानमा लागिरहेका छन्। लोकगीत विदेशमा रहेका नेपालीहरूमाँभ पनि उत्तिकै लोकप्रिय छ। यसले विश्वभरी रहेका नेपालीहरूलाई गाउँघर, उकाली, ओराली भञ्ज्याङ्ग र चौतारीहरूको भक्तिको मेटाउने र पारीवारिक सामीप्यताको आभाष दिनुने काम समेत गरेको छ। सुचना प्रविधिले फइको मारेसगै दोहोरि गीत सर्वसुलभ रूपमा रेकर्डिङ्ग, भण्डारण र प्रसारण गर्न सकिने भएको छ। स्वामित्वको हनन, कलाकारहरूको जीविकाको प्रश्न, राज्य तर्फबाट हुनुपर्ने सम्बोधन, गायकीमा अपाच्य शब्द छनोटको शैली आदी विषयलाई लिएर कहिलेकाँही आवाजहरू समेत उठ्ने गरेका छन्। तथापि विद्यमान बाधा, अहचना एवं विकृतिहरूलाई नियमन गर्दै उच्च मनोबलका साथ स्रष्टाहरू यस क्षेत्रको उत्थानमा लाग्न आवश्यक छ। यस संस्कृतिको संरक्षण र विकासका निम्ती सरकारी निकाय र स्रष्टाहरूको संयुक्त प्रयासमा आवश्यक नीति नियमहरू बनाई अगाडी बढेमा विश्व समुदायका सामु नेपालको विशिष्ट संस्कृतिक पहिचान समेत स्थापित गराउन सकिन्छ।

## Introduction

*Lok Dohori Geet* (duet folk song) is very popular amid the diverse cultures in Nepal. *Dohori* is a type of folk singing between the two teams normally consisting of men and women in a contesting fashion (Stirr 2008). In *Dohori* song, lyrical impromptu verses or stanzas are used in the form of question-and-answer by contesting teams. This unprepared back and forth of lyrical couplets from both teams similar to conversation or debate evokes the unique characteristics of the song. *Dohori* song is also played with the typical Nepali musical instruments such as *madal* (like dholak), *harmonium*, *sarangi* (violin like) and *bansuri* (bamboo flute). This traditional culture was originated from rural areas of Nepal. Now, this culture is presented in television shows, *Dohori* restaurants, stage programs, charity shows, local fairs and festivals. Nepalese feel proud to have this rich culture as this song can rarely be found in other parts of the world. *Dohori* singing can be regarded as a signature cultural asset of Nepal.



## Composition of *Dohori* Song

Like general song, *dohori* song contains the fixed or repetitive piece called *sthayi* (or chorus) and changing piece called *antara* (or verse). Before start singing, both teams agree upon the melody of *sthayi* (chorus) borrowed from any folk songs and they continue the battle for lyrical *antara* (verse). The competition starts with the first team asking the question to the second team and in return the second team responds with equal impromptu lyrical verse. The contest continues with each team involved in back-and-forth questions and responses. Every time the audience and the team are curious to hear the response from the opponent team. If there is tit for tat response from the opposite team then audience laughs with big round of applause. *Dohori* song can be sung in free context that depends intuition and thought of the singers at that time. However, most the contexts are based on love affair, separation for employment (as breadwinner and caretaker roles of family), bridal lamentation and maternal home seeking as well as social awareness.

## *Dohori* Team Formation and Sitting

Normally one team consists up to four singers with additional supporters in many occasions. Key singers sit at the middle and they are supposed to think the impromptu lyrics to respond and counter the opponent team while other members provide company to the main singer. In most *Dohori* singing, male and female teams compete with each other. Nowadays differentiation has been practiced to provide new taste and entertainment. We can see the teams competing between role of father and son or elder brother and younger brother or slave and boss etc. Similarly, women teams can assume mother-in-law and daughter-in-law or elder sister and younger sister etc. In *Dohori* competition, the judge briefs the context, fixes the number of *tukkas* (poetic couplets) and assigns roles to both team lead.

With the mushrooming of social media, commercial *Dohori* songs have also been proliferated in Nepal. *Indreni* programme is one of the popular televisions show of *Dohori* song. Figure 1 shows the typical sitting of the *Dohori* performance in *Indreni* show (Indreni 2019). Artists are playing their instruments sitting in upper row and contesting singers are sitting in lower row with audience at both sides. Here, men team consists of three members and women team consists of five members.



**Figure 1:** *Indreni* Episode February 14, 2019; Prakash Saput Vs Tika Sanu; Hosted by Krishna Kandel

### Promotion and Institutionalization of *Dohori* Song

*Dohori* song originated in rural areas, where people used to sit together to express their emotions like sorrows, joys, nostalgias at night times. In the past *Dohori* was termed as *Juhari* which sometimes is said to have extended even for seven days and nights. It is also said that when the female singer runs out of the words then it was considered to be a defeat. In such cases she had to surrender as wife to the male singer and if the men singer runs out of the words then the female singer has her choice.

These songs started to spread in urban areas as well through rural to urban migrants. *Dohori* was supported by the state in 1980s by the most prestigious organizations like Radio Nepal, Ratna Recording, and the Cultural Corporation such as Sanskrit Sansthan, Rastriya Nachghar (Stirr 2008). Cultural policy of Nepal 2010 has also emphasized on protection of folk song through survey, collection and study (Stirr 2008). Rastriya Lok Tatha *Dohori* Geet Pratisthan (National Duet and Folk Song Academy) has been already established as an umbrella organization to preserve, develop and promote this culture. In commercial market, there has been many doubts and confusions regarding ownership and copy right issues of *Lok Dohori* singing. Collaborative effort with Government is still required to promote this unique culture through regulation in various concerns such as minimum wage of singers, copyright, royalty, singer's welfare, code of conduct etc.

This culture has also been preserved and promoted by *Dohori Sanjh* (*Dohori* Restaurant or *Dohori* Club), concert, stage programme and television show. National, regional and local level *Dohori* competitions have been frequently conducted by many organizations. *Dohori* restaurant aims to cater to the

luxurious customer and *lahure* (persons returned from Indian, Singaporean, British army or workers of foreign employment). Any customer can enjoy joining with singer in *dohori sanjh*. In many occasions, *dohori* celebrities are invited by Nepali speaking diaspora abroad.

### **Role of Digital Media for Promotion of *Dohori* Song**

Nowadays *Dohori* songs have been extensively digitized and broadcasted through social media. Many YouTubers are dedicated only for *Dohori* songs. Those talents who did not get opportunity to release commercial cassette and to reach platform like Radio Nepal due to financial constraint are now using readily available digital facilities to record and broadcast. Rural *Dohori* legends in the past are now invited in *Dohori* club. Pabitra Rasaili, a seventy-five years old widow, while singing with her son BB Anuragee in Junkiri Dohori Ghar expressed her sufferings and struggles in the past. The show was so heart touching that almost all audience teared up as she recalled her misery and hardship through singing (Junkiri Live Studio 2020). During the lockdown and movement restriction due to COVID-19, owners of *Dohori* club also produced the songs with minimal gathering and have uploaded in digital media. Now, one can find the upload of new episode of *Dohori* song almost daily in YouTube.

### **Awareness and Social Service by *Dohori* Song**

In local fairs and festivals, *dohori* artists also sing to promote the local products, service and arts. *Dohori* song can also be organized as a charity avenue. Large number of needy people are supported with the fund donated by helping hands during the program. For instance, *Indreni*, a popular show led by singer and social activist Mr. Krishna Kandel is coming up with the motto of ‘cultural movement for bright and prosperous Nepal’ and ‘respect to senior artists and promote to new talents; social service, awareness and entertainment simultaneously’. This show has distributed millions of rupees to the victims of natural calamities, patients suffering from various diseases and poorest people (Indreni 2019). The program also highlights the sufferings of the people from the natural disasters and various illnesses. Nepalese communities within Nepal and abroad pour in to support through financial aid which is distributed to the sufferer and victim through the *Indreni* episodes.

## Growing Popularity of *Dohori* Song Abroad

Since 2008/09, the department of foreign employment in Nepal has issued over four million labor approval (Government of Nepal, Ministry of labor employment and social security, 2020). Many other students and diplomats have been staying around the world. *Dohori* song is quite popular amongst the Nepali speaking diaspora mainly in the UK, US, Bahrain, Malaysia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Japan, South Korea. Most of these people recall their home hearing the songs at off hours and night time. In some countries *Dohori* lovers are associated with foreign chapter of *Dohori* Song Academy and they have set up *Dohori* restaurant too.

## Conclusion

*Dohori* singing is one of the rich intangible cultural assets of Nepal. It has the potential to unite the culturally diversified Nepal with peace and harmony. *Lok Dohori* is providing not only the entertainment but also the social services, message and awareness. It has broadened the cultural identity and image of Nepal around the world. Emergence of digital media like YouTube and Facebook have greatly helped to store and protect the traditional *Lok Dohori* culture. Government and artists should work collectively to preserve, develop and promote this culture through appropriate policy intervention.✂

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# **The Acanthus Leaf Motif: A Story of Two Migrations from West to East**

**A Comparative Study of its Stylistic Profile and Aesthetic Relevance**

*By Naela Aamir, Dr. Aqsa Malik*

## **Abstract**

*The study explores the historical prevalence of acanthus leaf motif as an architectural ornamentation. The origin of the motif is associated with the Corinthian column introduced by the Greeks and then it became a part of ornamental repertoire of almost every culture that followed. With the fall of Roman Empire, the motif took two major routes through the Byzantine and Persian Empires. In the case of former, it resurfaced with greater affinity to the original in the Italian Renaissance, whereas, in the latter it became one of the most frequent motif in Islamic art. The study explores two migrations of the motif to the Subcontinent. In the first, it became a part of religious symbolism in Gandhara art, whereas, in the second it was more of a decorative motif that came into Subcontinent through Central Asian sources and the Italian Renaissance. Acanthus plant does not grow in the Subcontinent, which supports the migration of the motif. The study brings to light how the motif adjusted to a new aesthetic vocabulary through stylistic modifications serving various artistic purposes.*

## Abstract in Native Language

"ایکنتھس کے پتوں پر مبنی آرائشی نمونے کا مغرب سے مشرق تک کا تاثراتی جائزہ"

نقابلی، اسلوبی اور جمالیاتی تجزیہ

خلاصہ:

یہ تحقیق ایکنتھس کے پتوں پر مبنی آرائشی نمونے کا عمارتی سجاوٹ کے لیے استعمال، تاریخ اور بتدریج مقبولیت کا جائزہ لے گی۔ یونانی دور میں یہ نمونہ منظر عام پر آیا۔ جیسے سب سے پہلے کورنتھین ستون کی آرائش کے لیے استعمال کیا گیا۔ وقت کے ساتھ ہر تہذیب کی عمارتی آرائش کا جزو بن گیا۔ تاریخی حوالے سے اس آرائشی نمونے کی منتقلی کا سفر یونان، روم کے زوال کے بعد بہریتینی، ایرانی عمارتوں کی سجاوٹ میں نظر آیا۔ اطالوی نشاء ثانیہ میں یہ بھرپور انداز میں جلوہ گر ہوا۔ اسلامی تہذیب میں بھی ایکنتھس کو ستائش حاصل رہی۔ تاریخی تجزیے کے بعد یہ تحقیق ایکنتھس آرائشی نمونے کی برصغیر میں آمد اور استعمال کو دو نکات پر جانچے گی بطور مذہبی علامت اور بطور سجاوٹی عنصر۔ ایکنتھس کا پودا برصغیر میں نہیں اُگتا تو یہ پہلا اہم ہے کہ یہ آرائشی نمونہ مغرب سے استعار لیا گیا ہے جو کہ اس خطے کی عمارتی سجاوٹ اور جمالیاتی اسلوب میں اضافے کا باعث ہے اور یہ مختلف تخلیقی عوامل میں بھی منظر عام پر نمودار ہوا ہے۔

## Introduction

The migration of motifs in artistic vocabulary of a region from foreign lands and culture is a significant aspect of art history. As a motif enters into a region, it is absorbed by the host culture in terms of form and meaning but such absorption is never a simple process. Both the meaning and form undergo a change depending upon the specifics of the host culture and its artistic tradition. The inclusion of foreign motifs in art forms sometimes poses a challenge since the migration of the motif does not necessarily involves the migration of the techniques and materials deployed for its making in the first place. As a result, stylistic changes are inevitable. Through certain unavoidable modifications the motif adjusts into

a new culture but remains bound to a new unfolding of historical process. With time, it assumes a course of evolution that is also defined by the specifics of host culture and artistic traditions. Due to this inevitable process of change, the stylistic evolution of a motif in different regions and cultures provide a window to understand the currents that dominate the historical process. Its various manifestation, if observed closely, document the preferences and aspirations of a culture and art at a particular time.

The acanthus leaf motif is one of the most frequent and familiar motifs that is found mainly amongst architectural ornamentations. It is originally derived from the acanthus plant that belongs to a family of thirty species that are found in temperate and tropical regions of the world. In both Asia and the Mediterranean region, it is found in abundance. The name is derived from Greek *akantha*, which means ‘thorny leaf’. The forms that became a part of artistic repertoire are *A. mollis* and *A. spinosus*.

From Greek period to present, there is a continuous presence of the motif in the decorative repertoire of art coupled with stylistic modifications in its appearance. Probably, the most important visual characteristic that underlies its consistent usage is the lyrical and swirling line that adorns capitals, friezes, doorways, etc., and even illuminated manuscripts. However, a historical overview suggests that the motif not only went through stylistic changes but also was the answer to various aesthetic objectives. This paper explores the journey of the motif from the West to the East. The paper compares the motif in terms of its stylistic profile and aesthetic relevance with particular reference to the migration of the motif initially from Greece to Gandhara, and then from Europe to Mughal India. These migrations are roughly two thousand years apart and provide significant insights into the mechanisms of change that exist in lieu of cultural and aesthetic considerations. The comparative study of stylistic profile of the acanthus leaf motif and its cultural connotations helps in understanding the transference and transformation of motifs in art and provides an evolutionary background to our present understanding of the motif.

### **The First Migration**

The origin of acanthus leaf is shrouded in mystery. Considering Greek mythology, it becomes obvious that it had a cultural connotation associated with burial rights and funerary arrangements. The initial usage of the motif in architecture was not decorative or ornamental, but superstitious. It is argued that the natural growth of plant at burial places and its usage on grave stones was prevalent in the Greek antiquity and probably it was considered as a protection against evil spirits (Adam 1991, 228). The cultural connotation could not

withstand the rational culture of Greek period and acanthus leaf motif became a powerful ornamentation in classical Greek architecture.

The use of acanthus motif in architectural embellishments spread under the Romans, however, its birth is usually associated to the Corinthian capital of Greece, where it reached through a long process of stone carving. In this context, the earliest example is the Doric Temple of Apollo in Peloponnese dated 450 BCE (figure 1) (Thodis 2018). However, this finding is contested and it is argued that the Corinthian capital in its form where acanthus leaf motif appears in the stylized form of *A. mollis*, is later. The earlier form, such as the one found in the Temple of Apollo at Bassae is more akin to *A. spinosus* (figure 2) (Billot 1993). The decorative use of acanthus in an inspiration drawn from *A. mollis* and can be witnessed first in the Tholos of Epidauros (figure 3) where 14 Corinthian columns display the use of acanthus motif in a stylized form. The use then continues in Greek and later Roman periods with much of its formalization by Vitruvius, an architect and engineer who lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. One of the profound examples of Roman stylization can be seen in Ara Pacis altar's floral frieze (figure 4). The leaf appears with sharp edges and tight curls in variety of formations.

The stylistic profile of acanthus motif in the Greek and Roman period have been differentiated by Constantine Uhde in an insightful way (Uhde 1871). He argues that the Greek acanthus motif is inspired in a Greek way, which is to take an idea from raw nature and then work it out towards perfection. For instance, if we look at the Corinthian column in the monument of Lysicrates (figure 5), we observe that the joining of the base of the leaf and its lobes does not occur through the principal vein, as in the case of natural plant. From the base to the edge, the size of the lobes becomes greater, which results into the formation of curve. The lobes appear in close proximity due to internal divisions and therefore each lobe contributes to the overall effect of harmony. The lobes and their points are raised in a gradual fashion with sharp incisions of the veins. In comparison, the Roman form is bold and inflated. The lobes are not discrete, in most cases, they overlap and therefore preclude the natural group formation of the leaves. The points are rounded instead of sharp, which disturb features of light and shading. The principal vein is also extended in an unnatural way. The description corresponds to what we observe in the case of Pantheon (figure 6). When Theocritus said that 'Round about the pliant acanthus weaves its coils, a brilliant sight to see, whose marvel will delight your soul', it was certainly about the Greek stylization of the motif (Hauglid 1950, 163). Whereas the Roman acanthus is heavier, less crisp and more drooping (Sherer 1934).



The migration of the motif to the Gandhara region and its stylistic modification is a study in its own right. Gandhara stands for the northern regions of Pakistan, alongside the ancient silk route. The region was subject to foreign influences particularly from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE due to excessive trade between Mediterranean, South Asia and China. The migration of the motif and its subsequent inclusion into Gandhara architecture and sculpture is attributed to the Greek contact established when Alexander the Great invaded the region in 326 BCE. After his death, the region was invaded by Central Asian Parthians and Scythians before the arrival of Kushan dynasty that moved inward from the borderlands of China.

The Greek influence on both sculpture and architecture is evinced with sculpture of Greek gods found in Gandhara region, the attires of Buddha and then the Corinthian capitals. The acanthus leaf appears as a decorative motif alongside figurine of Buddha on Corinthian capitals of religious monuments. The stupas, which are the most frequent architectural forms show a transition from the round base to a square one highlighting the Greek influence (Samad 2011, 112). The acanthus leaf is found on the square base stupas which belong to later Gandhara period. The motif is not strictly Greek in stylistic profile, it is more akin to the Roman style where the ends of the leaves are muted and there is not much attention given to the features of light and shade. However, the stylistic profile in Gandhara can be the result of three interrelated factors, which explain the muted expression.

The first is the use of materials in architecture and sculpture. The principal medium for embellishment in stupas was stucco instead of carving in marble, which gave a lesser room to stylization, precision and sharpness that we find in Greek versions. The second is the local craftsmen, who were not trained in Greek tradition and could only mimic to an extent. For instance, the following image from the region of Jamal Garhi shows a Corinthian column with seated figure of Buddha (figure 7). The placement of acanthus in this composition is a convention that belongs to the indigenous repertoire instead of the Greek. Elizabeth Errington noted, 'Figural additions are very common in the classical world, and from an early period, usually take the form of heads or busts, but the Gandhara treatment is original in that the acanthus leaves form a canopy over it' (Errington, Trust, and Museum 1992, 205). The third factor is the aesthetic governing the style. In the case of Greeks, it was perfection of form, but in the Gandhara region, the entire idea of architecture and sculpture was rooted in religious symbolism. Therefore, it is difficult to draw a conclusion to ascertain a Roman influence instead of Greek, the above factors are to be considered.

## The Second Migration

The second migration of the acanthus leaf motif from the West to East cannot be ascertained at a particular time. It seems gradual and probably have taken place through multiple channels. These channels can be traced back to the Persian and Byzantine Empires. The historical development of art and aesthetics in these two empires followed different paths. The art and architecture of the Persian Empire evolved under the aesthetic ideologies inspired by Islam in regions surrounding Arabia while in the case of Byzantine Empire, the aesthetic ethos contributed to the Italian Renaissance (Geanakoplos 1989, 35). The Mughal Empire in the Subcontinent, as we shall see, drew artistic inspirations from both.

The earliest examples of the use of acanthus motif in the Persian Empire can be traced back to 4<sup>th</sup> century Sassanid period. For instance, the rock reliefs from Taq-e Bostan dated around 4<sup>th</sup> century CE, display the acanthus leaf motif right under the figure of Mehr god (figure 8). The religious significance is obvious. Another usage can be observed in Taq-e Kasra or the Arch of Ctesiphon located in Iraq (figure 9). The acanthus leaf motif appears as an ornamentation alongside, lotus, palm leaves and pomegranate leaves. The motifs are carved in stucco and can be seen in the porch. These motifs are believed to be the origins of the arabesque design patterns that became the hallmark of Islamic decoration later on.

The acanthus leaf motif continues to flourish under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates. Under their patronage the arts developed to a great degree as many artists from all over the world to their capitals influencing the architecture for times to come. The major cities became centers of learning where Greek knowledge was taught by Christian scholars (Lockard 2014, 232).

The acanthus motif appears as a decorative motif in interior octagonal arcade pier of the Dome of the Rock built under the Umayyad rule (figure 10). It is used in the Corinthian fashion in the great mosque of Cordoba (figure 11). The acanthus motif can be clearly seen as a decorative motif in stucco on the walls of Al-Hayr palace in Syria, which was built under Umayyad rule in 727 CE (figure 12). Interestingly, the stylistic profile is quite different from the Greek and Roman manifestations as multiple lobes emanate from the central vein and each lobe has carved veins as well. Moreover, the leaf motif is used in conjunction with circular and triangular geometric forms, which imply a symbolic use of motif instead of mere decoration. At the Al Mshatta palace built in 743 CE, the leaf motifs appear inside circles and triangles, a clear example of the inclusion of leaf motifs in the larger schemes of aesthetic configuration of Islam where geometry plays a central role to express the Divine (figure 13).

A more frequent use of acanthus leaf motif developed by its inclusion into arabesque patterns. These patterns represented an infinite series of leaves abstracted from their natural form and growing out of each other. The acanthus leaf fitted well into the scheme and became a central motif. Interestingly, the arabesque patterns can be traced back to Sassanian period, however, their clear formulation and underlying philosophy came into being with the rise of Islam. Islam imparted a significance to geometry and vegetal motifs as expressions of Divine order and symmetry. Moreover, religious concepts of unity and infinity in their mystical connotations also contributed in attaching a sacred value to arabesque pattern that symbolized infinity (Ali 2000, 63).

The arabesque pattern developed under Iranian dynasties between 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries at an unprecedented pace and was used in conjunction with calligraphic script. A folio from Ghaznavid Quran from middle of 11<sup>th</sup> century shows that each calligraphic letter ends to form an arabesque pattern, the acanthus leaf motif is clearly visible (figure 14). A similar use can be seen in architectural decorations from Khargid Madrassah in Khurasan from 11<sup>th</sup> century (figure 15). The arabesque pattern also found its place on illuminated manuscripts, the acanthus motif can be observed in *Warqa wa Gulsha*, a 13<sup>th</sup> century manuscript from Istanbul (figure 16). The arabesque pattern as an ornamentation further developed in the Ilkhanid dynasty (1256-1353), and then in Timurid times (1370-1506), it was widely used in paintings, tiles, stones, and woodcarvings in Samarqand and Herat (Khazâie 2005).

Given the continuity of the use of acanthus leaf in Islamic art and architecture, it is not far-fetched that the Mughal arrival in the Subcontinent was became a means for the migration of acanthus to the Subcontinent. The arabesque pattern is abundantly visible in Mughal art and architecture due to its strong connection with the Persian World. In fact, acanthus migrated earlier than Mughals. Muslim invaders that came from Central Asia to the Subcontinent had this vocabulary due to their cultural grounding in Persian tradition. Therefore, the arabesque pattern replaced Hindu floral depictions in the Sultanate period. The engraved arabesques of Qutub Minar are a clear influence from Central Asia (figure 17). The extreme stylization of many vegetal patterns in the arabesque pattern makes it difficult to trace acanthus leaf motif but still it remains discernable. A rather definitive use of the acanthus motif, which greatly resembles to the Greek stylization occurs in the Mughal period through the craft of inlay art or *pietra dura*. This craft that came to the Mughal stylistic and technical repertoire from Italy was a migration of acanthus leaf motif from the second channel, i.e. Greco-Roman resurfacing in the Italian Renaissance through Byzantine Empire.

The Byzantine empire inherited the aesthetic ethos of the Roman Empire. The columns of Hagia Sophia built in 6<sup>th</sup> century in Istanbul show the use of acanthus motif in a manner which is far removed from the Greek (figure 18). These acanthus leaves are called ‘wind swept’ due to their appearance in opposite directions. The leaves are two-dimensional instead of three-dimensional representation in the Corinthian column, nevertheless, the acanthus formation is close to the natural appearance of the plant. Hugh Honour notes that the ‘richly carved three-dimensional acanthus foliage of a Corinthian capital has been replaced by a flat lacy open-work patterns, deeply undercut by drilling, so that the sustaining core is left darkly indeterminate. The effect of these so-called basket capitals is of an almost weightless piece of starched lace veiling the structurally all-important join between the vertical and horizontal’ (Honour and Fleming 2005).

The use of acanthus leaves continued to grow throughout the Roman Empire and reached its height during the Byzantine period, when many buildings featured all over acanthus decoration. The Venetian palaces from 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century amply show the Greek influence in their columns adorned with acanthus leaf (*The New Palaces of Medieval Venice*, n.d., 54). This influence becomes most obvious in the Renaissance architecture where a deliberate position was to rediscover Greek sources and recreate the glory. For instance, the Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome constructed in 16<sup>th</sup> century has multiple Corinthian columns with acanthus leaf motif in a fashion that is much similar to Greek versions (figure 19).

The Italian Renaissance with its drive to renew Greek intellectual tradition had an elaborated aesthetic taste. In the Italian renaissance, the laced and muted expression of acanthus leaf motif was renewed to mimic the Corinthian glory. This became the reason for the highly stylized use of acanthus motif in *pietra dura*. *Pietra dura* emerged from *Opus sectile*, which was an art technique popularized in the ancient and medieval Roman world where materials were cut and inlaid into walls and floors to make a picture or pattern. It was this technique that probably inspired Mughals to use their vocabulary of arabesque pattern in a new way.

It is important to note that the origin of *pietra dura* as an Italian or Mughal technique is debatable. V. A. Smith is of the view that, ‘a revival of the ancient Roman *opus sectile* first appears according to Major Cole in the *Fabbrica Ducab* built by Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1558. The earliest certain Indian example being considerably later in date and identical in technique, a strong presumption arises that the art must have been introduced into India from Italy’ (Smith 1911, 438). However, the opposite camp believes that it evolved in the

Subcontinent as an extension of Mosaic work (Nath 1972, 72). The Mosaic work at Buland Darwaza of Fatehpur Sikri and Jahangiri Mehal of Red Fort are considered to be precursors of the *pietra dura* found in tomb of Itmad-ud Daula. Various examples of the use of acanthus leaf motif in *pietra dura* can be seen under Jahangir's patronage such as at Shish Mahal, where the motif appears from a pot (figure 20). And given Jahangir's fascination with Western art it can be assumed that it was a Western import. The Wazir Khan Mosque in Lahore exhibits the acanthus leaf motif on the marble carvings at the parapet (figure 21). The Inlay art of Taj Mahal is the finest example of incorporating acanthus leaf in *pietra dura* (figure 22). The finesse in the stylistic profile is remarkable and it is due to the fact that the Mughal aesthetic looked for elegance and beauty through symmetry and proportion and in many ways coincided with the ideal of perfection that informed Greek and then renaissance aesthetic. The acanthus continues in the later Mughal monuments and leads to its presence in Sikh period.

Another important instance of migration can be attributed to the woodcarving tradition of Chiniot.<sup>8</sup> The significance of Chiniot apart from its strategic location in the Subcontinent lies in its association with arts and crafts. Till date, it is famous for its woodcarvings. Due to the strategic location, it was inevitable that during each invasion, it had to host the incoming influences. These influences certainly affected the local vocabulary of arts and crafts and particularly the woodcarving that has a remarkable quality to it. The woodcarving of Chiniot was commended by Lockwood Kipling in 1883:

Chiniot has long had a reputation of its carpentry and woodcarving. In the native scheme of town life, the house is frequently built to fit the irregular space at the owner's disposal, and its chief decorative features are elaborately ornamented doors and window-frames...it is for this kind of work that Chiniot woodcarvers are chiefly known...the design of this really admirable work, though ornate and tending like many other branches of Indian art, to excessive minuteness, is still remarkably pure and good. The carving is sharp and clear.

The woodcarvers of Chiniot claim that their art initially borrowed from Italian sources. The claim cannot be supported by literature however, given the long history of the region and its absorption of various incoming cultural

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<sup>8</sup> Chiniot, a city of Pakistan is located on the North West bank of the Chenab River. The city has a rich history that goes back to pre-Greek period. It has been mentioned in the Mahabharata and was a significant town when Alexander the Great invaded the region. The Chiniot region over the centuries was ruled by Maurya Empire, Indo-Greek kingdom, Kushan Empire, Gupta Empire, White Huns, Kushano Hephthalites and later the Shahi kingdoms followed by the Mughal Dynasty.

influences there is a possibility. The argument gains some weight due to the fact that the direct translation from marble to wood is less likely as a mimicking from a woodcarving source.

The acanthus leaf motif can be clearly witnessed in the woodcarvings of Chiniot with multiple stylistic profiles. Although there are other vegetal motifs used in the exquisite woodcarvings but acanthus is far more pronounced. It becomes acutely noticeable in the doorways, wherein, flanking columns display an intriguing view of the motif spiraling from a pot forming the base of the columns (figure 23). Another display, which is a stylistic variant of the first is observable on the crown of the doorways (figure 24), manifested as a serrated, convoluted leaf, almost mannerist in style. The motif can be yet again observed at the point where the column merges with arch, in a formation that is remarkably complex and decorative while bestowing a character to transition (figure 25). An extraordinary exposition of acanthus leaf motif can be seen in Umar Hayat Mahal built in early 20<sup>th</sup> century (figure 26). In this example, the acanthus leaf formation is reminiscent of infinite vegetal spiraling motifs that are hallmark of arabesque patterns in Islamic art. With these examples, at least four different stylistic profiles can be witnessed. All these profiles, as we shall see, are comparable to the manifestation of acanthus leaf in both foreign and indigenous architectural ornamentations.

## Conclusion

The acanthus leaf motif in ancient Greece was originally associated to burial rites and immortality, but its inclusion in Corinthian column became much of a decorative initiative instead of a symbolic one. The Greek aesthetic that looked for perfection, order and symmetry became the main aesthetic purposes that defined its stylistic profile. The arrival of the motif in the Subcontinent was through the Greek contact established in the time of Alexander the Great, however, in terms of stylistic profile, the motif was closer to the Roman variant. The reasons for resemblance have been spelled out in the study and conform to the use of materials, a different order of craftsmanship and an aesthetic purpose which was symbolic instead of decorative. The Gandhara region had its own symbols such as the lotus, which had a greater significance for people of the region imbued with a religious worldview and powerful local symbolism. The acanthus motif became an auxiliary motif to the lotus and the figure of Buddha but could not become a symbol on its own. Probably, this is the reason we do not observe a continuity of the motif in Indian Subcontinent until the arrival of Muslim rulers in the Sultanate period and the Mughals.

The second migration can be seen as a composite migration. The acanthus motif had become a part of the Islamic repertoire due to its continuation in the Persian Empire evinced by the prevalence of motif in the Sassanid period and then later examples in the region of Central Asia. In addition to architecture, it became a motif used in Calligraphy and book illumination. It came to Subcontinent with Central Asian rulers in the Sultanate period but a greater inclusion can be observed with the Mughals establishing contact with the Europeans at a time when the motif had gained a greater prevalence in the Italian Renaissance in its decorative spirit. The Mughal aesthetic which was more conducive for a decorative use of the motif also became the reason for the use of motif using *pietra dura*, a technique that also came from Europe. The decorative drive and the connection with the arts and crafts of Europe also became the basis of the inclusion of motif in the woodcarving tradition of Chiniot. The migration is composite in the sense that the motif came into Subcontinent as an expression of both routes that came into being with the fall of Roman Empire, i.e. the Byzantine culminating into Renaissance and the Persian absorbing into Mughal.

Through a comparative study of stylistic profile of the motif that can be observed at different times and under varied aesthetic relevance, brings to light factors that play significant role in the adjustment of a motif in host cultures. A more comprehensive study can be conducted by including more examples from history and with a more detailed analysis focusing on the changing form of the motif and its correspondence to the materials, means, aesthetics, and craftsmanship of host cultures.✠



**Figure 1.** Drawing of the Corinthian Capital of the Temple of Apollo Epicurius made by J.M. von Mauch for the German edition of the original work by Charles Normand (1819) (Normand 1825).



**Figure 2.** A reconstruction drawing of acanthus leaf in the Corinthian Column of the Temple of Apollo at Bassae (Thodis 2018)



**Figure 3.** Corinthian column from the Tholos at Epidauros (Honour and Fleming 2005).



**Figure 4.** Floral Frieze at Ara Pacis altar, 13 BCE, Museum of the Ara Pacis.





**Figure 5.** Original Corinthian capital from the Monument of Lysicrates in Athens 335 BCE



**Figure 6.** A Corinthian capital from the Pantheon



**Figure 7.** A Corinthian column with Buddha and Acanthus leaf, Gandhara period.



**Figure 8.** Acanthus leaf motif at Taq-e Bostan, 4th Century CE, Kermanshah, Iran



**Figure 9.** Acanthus leaf at Ctesiphon Palace, 3rd to 6th century CE, Iraq.



**Figure 10.** Acanthus leaf used in decoration at the Dome of the Rock, 7<sup>th</sup> century.



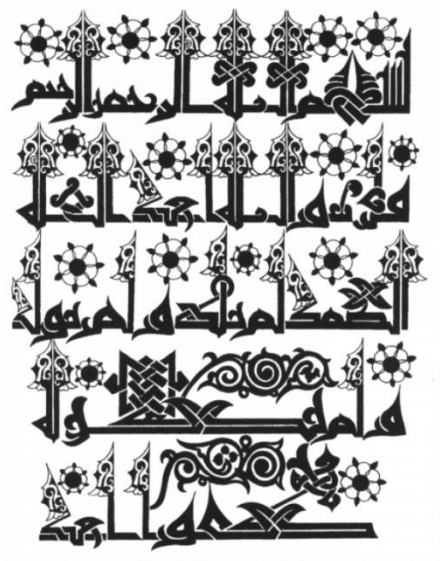
**Figure 11.** Acanthus motif used in the interior columns of the Great Mosque of Cordoba, Spain.



**Figure 12.** Acanthus motif used in the interior columns of Al-Hayr Palace.



**Figure 13.** Triangular and circular forms with plant motifs in the facade of Qasr Mushatta now in the Pergamon Museum, Berlin.

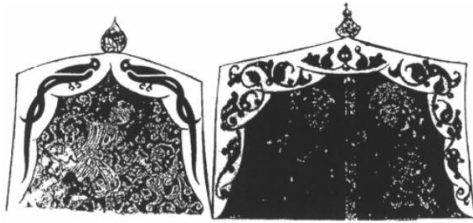


**Figure 14.** Folio from Ghaznavid Quran, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Metropolitan Museum, New York.



**Figure 15.** Kufic inscription from Khargird Madrassah, Khurasan, 11<sup>th</sup> century, Iran Bastan Museum, Iran.





**Figure 16.** A folio from Warq Wa Gulsha, 13<sup>th</sup> century, Topkapi Museum Library, Turkey.



**Figure 17.** Acanthus ornamentation at Qutub Minar, 12<sup>th</sup> century, Delhi, India.



**Figure 18.** Acanthus motif in the column of Hagia Sophia, 6<sup>th</sup> century, Turkey.



**Figure 19.** Acanthus motif in the columns of St. Peter's Basilica, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Rome, Italy.



**Figure 2.** Acanthus motif at the base of columns, Shish Mahal, Lahore, Pakistan.



**Figure 3.** Acanthus motif in arabesque pattern, at Wazir Khan Mosque, 17<sup>th</sup> century, Lahore, Pakistan.



**Figure 22.** Acanthus motif in pietra dura of Taj Mahal, 17<sup>th</sup> century, Agra, India



**Figure 23.** Acanthus motif emerging from pot, Chiniot, Pakistan.



**Figure 24.** Acanthus motif adorning the arch, woodcarving, Chiniot, Pakistan.



**Figure 25.** Acanthus motif in the wooden columns, Chiniot, Pakistan.





**Figure 26.** Acanthus in arabesque pattern, wood carving, Umar Hayat Palace, Chiniot, Pakistan.

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# **A Study of the Themes of the *Jātaka* Tales: with special reference to 'Good Advice'**

*By Professor Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage*

## **Abstract**

*This paper deals with one of the narrative traditions of 'Madhyā Dēśhā' in ancient India. It is clear that, the *Jātaka* tales have a most significant status in Buddhist literature. I have analyzed here, 547 *Jātaka* tales with regards to the theme of 'Good Advice'. The 'Theme' always plays a very important role in the narrative and without this particular element, the narrative is empty. It is evident that, the narrative traditions always try to arm people with good advices.*

**Key words:** Narrative tradition, Theme, *Jātaka* tales, Good advice

## **Abstract in Native Language**

මෙම පර්යේෂණ පත්‍රිකාවේදී සලකා බැලෙන්නේ පුරාණ ඉන්දියාවේ 'මධ්‍ය දේශය'ට අයත් කතාන්තර කීමේ එක් සම්ප්‍රදායක් පිළිබඳවය. බෞද්ධ සාහිත්‍යයේ ජාතික කතාවලට වඩාත් සුවිශේෂ කැනක් හිමි වන බව පැහැදිලිය. 'සද් උපදේශ' හෙවත් 'යහපත් උපදේශ' තේමාවට අනුකූලව මවිසින් ජාතික කතා 547 විශ්ලේෂණයට භාජන කරන ලදී. කතාන්තරයක 'තේමාව' යන්න අතිශය වැදගත් භූමිකාවක් හොඳවන අතර, එම විශේෂ සාධකය නොමැති කතාවක ඇත්තේ ශුන්‍ය බවක් පමණි. කතාන්තර කීමේ සම්ප්‍රදාය හැම විටම 'සද් උපදේශ'වලින් ජනයා සන්නද්ධ කිරීමට උත්සාහ දරන බව පෙනෙයි.

## **Introduction**

This study is based on the *atītāvattu*, or tales of the past, of the 547 *Jātaka* tales in the *pāli jātakatthakathā*. The 'Book of *Jātakas*' is one of the fifteen collections of texts forming the *khuddakānikāya* (collection of smaller texts) of the *tripiṭaka*.

The 'Theme' of the tale is the core factor that completes the aim of the tale. The tale becomes meaningful with the theme. The significance of the theme is based on 3 facts; the tale teller, the tale text and the audience.

## **The Themes of *Jātaka* Tales**

It is noted that, the background of the *Jātaka* tales are religious. Therefore, the themes of the *Jātaka* tales are vastly inspired by Buddhist philosophy. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that, the religious, social, political, economical, geographical, and cultural circumstances of the common folk society are depicted in these stories. Also, the tales which are based on common facts or



subjects, were incorporated in the *Jātaka* tales to advise the followers of Buddhism or laymen. The aim of this act, was to establish a virtuous-laymen-society equivalent to the Buddhist-monk-society.

Ven. Ānand Kōsalyāyān Thērō states that, *'It is very difficult to say something about the themes of the Jātaka tales. There is no aspect of life, of the human being, that is untouched by these tales. The reason is that, the Jātaka tales were able to leave a mark on the human society in many ways'* (Kōsalyāyān, Ānand: 1985).

The main objective, of every religion is related to the contemplation of the life after-death scenario. However, it doesn't mean that contemplation about the material world is not included in this collection. In fact, it is very clearly depicted in the *Jātaka* tales. Ven. Ānand Thērō discusses this subject further: *'Sometimes, it is said that the literature of India is related to the life after-death state. There is no thought of the mundane or secular world. So we understand that, it is the appreciation of our erudition. There is nothing one can achieve, by only considering the life after-death scenario. The Gautām Buddha established equanimity of thoughts of both, the mundane and life after-death worlds. This is the reason as to why, Jātaka tales have acquired an important position in Buddhist literature and then developed'* (Kōsalyāyān, Ānand: 1985). A noteworthy fact, is that there seems to be an unprecedented picture of Indian culture along with the geographical and economic statuses. Ven. Ānand Thērō states: *'...Jātaka literature, in terms of the meaning of the word, is the literature of people, which widely includes our simple behaviors, food and beverages, clothing etc. to art and crafts, trade, economics, politics and the comprehensive history of the system of our society. Geographical evidence relating to India's history is also available, especially regarding the water canals and roadways. ...'* (Kōsalyāyān, Ānand: 1985).

Themes of the *Jātaka* tales have been divided into 11 categories:

1. Good advice
2. Religious advice
3. Karma (deed) and result
4. Illustration of the character of Buddha
5. Wisdom of the Bodhisattva
6. Virtue of the Bodhisattva
7. Usefulness of conducting traditional customs
8. Meaninglessness of blind-adherence to traditional beliefs

9. Demonstration of good and bad characters in the monk-society

10. Demonstration of good and bad characters in the lay-society

11. Women

According to my analysis, most *Jātaka* tales are categorized under 'Good Advice'. It is not an unusual occurrence that most of the *Jātaka* tales have a didactic sense, in comparison to other categories. I have found 92 sub-categories under the category of 'Good Advice':

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1.1 Intelligence and resourcefulness | 1. <i>apaṇṇakā</i> (001)<br>2. <i>sērivāṇijā</i> (003)<br>3. <i>naḷapānā</i> (020)<br>4. <i>kurungā</i> (021)<br>5. <i>kukkurā</i> (022)<br>6. <i>munikā</i> (030)<br>7. <i>sakuṇā</i> (036)<br>8. <i>dummēdhā</i> (050)<br>9. <i>puṇṇpāti</i> (053)<br>10. <i>phalā</i> (054)<br>11. <i>vāṇarindā</i> (057)<br>12. <i>rukkhadharmā</i> (074)<br>13. <i>mahāsārā</i> (092)<br>14. <i>kūṭāvāṇijā</i> (098)<br>15. <i>sālittakā</i> (107)<br>16. <i>vaṭṭakā</i> (118)<br>17. <i>bandhāṇamokkhā</i> (120) (492)<br>18. <i>kusānālī</i> (121)<br>19. <i>ghaṭṭāsānā</i> (133)<br>20. <i>babbu</i> (137)<br>21. <i>sakuṇagdhī</i> (168)<br>22. <i>tindukā</i> (177)<br>23. <i>valāhassā</i> (196)<br>24. <i>sunsumārā</i> (208)<br>25. <i>kakkārā</i> (209)<br>26. <i>sunākhā</i> (242)<br>27. <i>maṇi-kaṇṭhā</i> (253)<br>28. <i>gāmāṇi caṇḍā</i> (257)<br>29. <i>baḍḍhākīsūkārā</i> (283)<br>30. <i>cullā-kālīṅgā</i> (301)<br>31. <i>tacāsārā</i> (368) |
|--------------------------------------|--|

32. *sutānu* (398)
33. *mahākapi* (407)
34. *suppārakā* (463)
35. *dūtā* (478)
36. *taccā sūkārā*
37. *vidhurā paṇḍitā* (545)

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1.2 Bravery

1. *vaṇṇupathā* (002)
2. *bhōjājāniyā* (023)
3. *ājaññā* (024)
4. *khadiraṅgārā* (040)
5. *pañcāvudhā* (055)
6. *tēlapattā* (096)
7. *vaṭṭakā* (118)
8. *baḍḍhakīsūkārā* (283)
9. *cullā-kālīṅgā* (301)
10. *brahmāchattā* (336)

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1.3 Victory of perseverance

1. *cullaseṭṭhi* (004)
2. *gāmāṇī* (008)
3. *lakkhāṇā* (011)
4. *khadiraṅgārā* (040)
5. *mahāsīlāvā* (051)
6. *cūlajanakā* (052)
7. *pañcāvudhā* (055)
8. *kancānakkhandhā* (056)
9. *tēlapattā* (096)
10. *ambā* (124)
11. *pañcagaru* (132)
12. *alīnācittā* (156)
13. *sakuṇagghi* (168)
14. *tindukā* (177)

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1.4 Harm of foolishness

1. *tanḍulānāli* (005)
2. *lakkhāṇā* (011)
3. *kaṇḍinā* (013)
4. *nandā* (039)

5. *makasā* (044)
6. *rōhiṇī* (045)
7. *ārāmadūsakā* (046)
8. *vāruṇi* (047)
9. *vēdabbhā* (048)
10. *nakkhattā* (049)
11. *bhērivādā* (059)
12. *saṅkhādhamanā* (060)
13. *littā* (091)
14. *kūṭavāṇijā* (098)
15. *sigālā* (113)
16. *akālāravi* (119)
17. *dummēdhā* (122)
18. *naṅgālīsā* (123)
19. *gōdhā* (141)
20. *sōmadattā* (211)
21. *vīṇathūṇā* (232)
22. *pādañjali* (247)
23. *ārāmā-dūsā* (268)
24. *vyagghā* (272)
25. *kacchapa* (273)
26. *mahisā* (278)

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1.5 Become a worthy man

1. *dēvadharmā* (006)
2. *kuhākā* (089)
3. *ēkapaṇṇā* (149)
4. *sañjīvā* (150)
5. *mahāsukhā* (429)
6. *cullāsukhā* (430)

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1.6 Harm of disobedience

1. *kharādiyā* (015)
2. *kapōtā* (042)
3. *vēlukā* (043)
4. *vēdabbhā* (048)
5. *phalā* (054)
6. *bhērivādā* (059)
7. *saṅkhādhamanā* (060)
8. *rukkhādhammā* (074)
9. *mittavindā* (082)
10. *dubbacā* (116)

		11. <i>ghaṭāsana</i> (133) 12. <i>gōdhā</i> (141) 13. <i>kandāgalākā</i> (210) 14. <i>gumbiyā</i> (366) 15. <i>migālōpā</i> (381) 16. <i>gijjhā</i> (427) 17. <i>catuddvārā</i> (439)
1.7	Good results of obedience and desire of edification	1. <i>tipallatthamigā</i> (016) 2. <i>naḷapānā</i> (020) 3. <i>rukkhādhammā</i> (074) 4. <i>saṅgāmāvacārā</i> (182) 5. <i>valāhassā</i> (196) 6. <i>tittirā</i> (319) 7. <i>gumbiyā</i> (366) 8. <i>mūsikā</i> (373) 9. <i>saṃvārā</i> (462)
1.8	Changing behaviors with association	1. <i>mahilāmukhā</i> (026) 2. <i>sañjīvā</i> (150) 3. <i>sattigumbā</i> (503)
1.9	Pleasure of using good words	1. <i>nandivīsālā</i> (028) 2. <i>sārambhā</i> (088) 3. <i>sujātā</i> (269) 4. <i>maṃsā</i> (315)
1.10	Harm of improper behavior	1. <i>naccā</i> (032) 2. <i>kākā</i> (140)
1.11	Destruction of mutual quarrels	1. <i>sammōdāmānā</i> (033) 2. <i>rukkhādhammā</i> (074) 3. <i>dabbhəpuphā</i> (400) 4. <i>phandānā</i> (475) 5. <i>mahāvāṇijā</i> (493) 6. <i>mahāsutāsōmā</i> (537)
1.12	Harm of greediness	1. <i>kuddālā</i> (070) 2. <i>illīsā</i> (078) 3. <i>suvaṇṇəhaṃsā</i> (136) 4. <i>babbu</i> (137)

5. *sigālā* (148)
6. *kalāyamuṭṭhi* (176)
7. *kōsiyā* (226)
8. *vikannakā* (233)
9. *asitābhū* (234)
10. *jarūdāpānā* (256)
11. *dūtā* (260)
12. *lōkā* (274)
13. *rucirā* (275)
14. *sālūkā* (286)
15. *mittāvindā* (369)
16. *cullādhānuggaha* (374)
17. *kapōtā* (375)
18. *mayihākā* (390)
19. *kākā* (395)
20. *cakkāvākā* (434)
21. *cakkā-vākā* (451)
22. *kāmā* (467)

1.13	Stubbornness is an obstacle	1. <i>varāṇā</i> (071)
1.14	The man who protects himself, protects others	1. <i>āsankiyā</i> (076) 2. <i>jāgārā</i> (414)
1.15	Self appreciation is useless	1. <i>bhīmasēnā</i> (080) 2. <i>kuhākā</i> (089) 3. <i>ēkapaṇṇā</i> (149) 4. <i>sañjīvā</i> (150) 5. <i>mahāsukhā</i> (429) 6. <i>cullāsukhā</i> (430)
1.16	Harm of using liquor	1. <i>surāpānā</i> (081) 2. <i>kumbhā</i> (512)
1.17	Pleasure of real friendship	1. <i>kālakaṇṇi</i> (083) 2. <i>kusānālī</i> (121) 3. <i>santhāvā</i> (162) 4. <i>nakulā</i> (165) 5. <i>kurūṅgā migā</i> (206) 6. <i>suvaṇṇakakkāṭā</i> (389) 7. <i>mittāmittā</i> (473)

		8. <i>mahā-ukkusā</i> (486)
		9. <i>rōhantā migā</i> (501)
		10. <i>haṃsā</i> (502)
		11. <i>cullā-haṃsā</i> (533)
		12. <i>sudhābhōjānā</i> (534)
1.18	Harm of ungratefulness	1. <i>kuhākā</i> (089) 2. <i>gōdhā</i> (138) 3. <i>ādiccuppaṭṭhānā</i> (175)
1.19	Retain in mind the help received	1. <i>akētaññu</i> (090) 2. <i>suvaṇṇāhaṃsā</i> (136) 3. <i>kuruṅgā migā</i> (206)
1.20	Harm of using things without observing properly	1. <i>littā</i> (091) 2. <i>sigālā</i> (152) 3. <i>kandāgalākā</i> (210) 4. <i>sōmaṇassā</i> (505)
1.21	Be attentive when trusting others	1. <i>vissāsabhōjānā</i> (093) 2. <i>sigālā</i> (113) 3. <i>biḷārā</i> (128) 4. <i>gōdhā</i> (141) 5. <i>indāsamānāgottā</i> (161) 6. <i>cammāsātākā</i> (324)
1.22	There is success with deeds; not with name	1. <i>nāmā siddhi</i> (097)
1.23	Harm of accompanying enemies	1. <i>vēri</i> (103) 2. <i>ghaṭāsānā</i> (133) 3. <i>kapi</i> (404)
1.24	Frightfulness brings sorrow	1. <i>dubbālākāṭṭā</i> (105) 2. <i>tuṇḍilā</i> (388)
1.25	Benefits of studying something	1. <i>sālittākā</i> (107) 2. <i>bāhiyā</i> (108)
1.26	Harm of unlimited talk, untimely talk and talkativeness	1. <i>sālittākā</i> (107) 2. <i>tittirā</i> (117) 3. <i>akālāravi</i> (119)

		4. <i>kaṭāhaka</i> (125) 5. <i>kalaṇḍuka</i> (127) 6. <i>kacchapa</i> (215) 7. <i>kōkālīka</i> (331) 8. <i>takkāriya</i> (481)
1.27	Should accept the alms of the poor	1. <i>kuṇḍakapūva</i> (109)
1.28	Deceiving is ungrateful	1. <i>sigāla</i> (113) 2. <i>biḷāra</i> (128) 3. <i>aggika</i> (129) 4. <i>kōsiya</i> (130) 5. <i>makkata</i> (173) 6. <i>baka</i> (300)
1.29	Harm of laziness	1. <i>mittacinti</i> (114) 2. <i>gajakumbha</i> (345)
1.30	Harm of thinking more and thinking less	1. <i>mittacinti</i> (114)
1.31	Advising others without following rules	1. <i>anusāsika</i> (115) 2. <i>sālaka</i> (249) 3. <i>samudda</i> (296)
1.32	Harm of false allegations	1. <i>bandhanamokkha</i> (120) 2. <i>tēlōvāda</i> (246) 3. <i>maṇi sūkara</i> (285)
1.33	Harm of talking without considering the context	1. <i>naṅgalīsa</i> (123)
1.34	Good and bad results can occur from the same object	1. <i>asilakkhaṇa</i> (126)
1.35	Harm of communal behaviors	1. <i>kaṭāhaka</i> (125) 2. <i>kalaṇḍuka</i> (127)



1.36 Ungratefulness

1. *asampādānā* (131)
2. *suvaṇṇaḥamsā* (136)
3. *gōdhā* (138)
4. *vinīlakā* (160)
5. *sālākā* (249)
6. *javāsakuṇā* (308)
7. *udumbārā* (298)
8. *hiri* (363)

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1.37 Asking more and more is useless

1. *babbu* (137)
2. *sigālā* (152)
3. *vikaṇṇakā* (233)
4. *sālukā* (286)
5. *maṇikaṇṭhā* (253)
6. *aṭṭhisēnā* (403)

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1.38 Harm of unsuitable company

1. *dēvadharmā* (006)
2. *gōdhā* (141)
3. *sañjīvā* (150)
4. *indāsamānagottā* (161)
5. *santhāvā* (162)
6. *makkatā* (173)
7. *dūbhiyā-makkatā* (174)
8. *ādiccuppaṭṭhānā* (175)
9. *mittāmittā* (197)
10. *giridantā* (184)
11. *dadhi-vāhānā* (186)
12. *catumatṭā* (187)
13. *sālākā* (249)
14. *kapi* (250)
15. *rōmakā* (277)
16. *dōṇasākhā* (353)
17. *kuṭidūsakā* (321)
18. *gōdhā* (325)
19. *ahiguṇḍikā* (365)
20. *manōjā* (397)
21. *bakā* (236)
22. *pūtimamsā* (437)
23. *mahāummaggā* (546)

1.39	Harm of imitating	1. <i>virōcāṇā</i> (143) 2. <i>vinīlākā</i> (160) 3. <i>vīrākā</i> (204) 4. <i>daddābhā</i> (322)
1.40	No benefits of engaging in useless attempts	1. <i>kāḱā</i> (146) 2. <i>gaṅgēyyā</i> (205) 3. <i>puṭa-dūsākā</i> (280)
1.41	Harm of wickedness	1. <i>ēkapaṇṇā</i> (149) 2. <i>sañjīvā</i> (150) 3. <i>suhānu</i> (158)
1.42	No advantage of fighting with unfitting people	1. <i>sūkārā</i> (153)
1.43	Pleasure of accompanying good people	1. <i>dēvaḍḍhammā</i> (006) 2. <i>santhāvā</i> (162) 3. <i>giridantā</i> (184) 4. <i>dadhi-vāhānā</i> (186) 5. <i>sīlānisamsā</i> (190) 6. <i>sādhūsīlā</i> (200) 7. <i>kuruṅgā migā</i> (206) 8. <i>rōmākā</i> (277) 9. <i>kōmāyā-puttā</i> (299) 10. <i>araññā</i> (348) 11. <i>suvaṇṇākakkatā</i> (389) 12. <i>juṇhā</i> (456) 13. <i>bhallāṭṭiyā</i> (504) 14. <i>mahāummaggā</i> (546)
1.44	Benevolence of help	1. <i>guṇā</i> (157) 2. <i>gijjhā</i> (164) 3. <i>kuruṅgā migā</i> (206) 4. <i>tirīṭā-vaccā</i> (259) 5. <i>mahāassārōhā</i> (302) 6. <i>daḷhāḍḍhammā</i> (409)
1.45	Harm of visiting unsuitable places	1. <i>sakuṇagghi</i> (168)

1.46	Depicting stupidity while talking	1. <i>daddārə</i> (172) 2. <i>sīhəkōṭṭhukə</i> (188) 3. <i>sīhəcammə</i> (189) 4. <i>kacchəpə</i> (215) 5. <i>jambu-khādəkə</i> (294) 6. <i>antə</i> (295) 7. <i>takkāriyə</i> (481)
1.47	Harm of unsuitable livelihood	1. <i>satədhammə</i> (179)
1.48	Bad behavior of low-born and great behavior of high-born	1. <i>vālōdəkə</i> (183) 2. <i>udəpānə-dūsəkə</i> (271)
1.49	Pleasure of stable mind and sorrow of perturbed mind	1. <i>anəbhirati</i> (185)
1.50	Granting pardon to a criminal is suitable	1. <i>pabbətūpatthərə</i> (195) 2. <i>khantivaṇṇənə</i> (225) 3. <i>udəpānə-dūsəkə</i> (271) 4. <i>khantivādī</i> (313) 5. <i>mahāummaggə</i> (546)
1.51	Inappropriateness of discussing good and bad with unsuitable people	1. <i>rādhə</i> (198) 2. <i>kuṭidūsəkə</i> (321) 3. <i>avāriyə</i> (376) 4. <i>dīpi</i> (426)
1.52	Worthy of serving the Buddhas	1. <i>kēlisīlə</i> (202) 2. <i>nandiyəmigə</i> (385) 3. <i>gijjhə</i> (399) 4. <i>kaccāni</i> (417) 5. <i>takkəḷə</i> (446) 6. <i>māti-pōsəkə</i> (455) 7. <i>sālikēdārə</i> (484) 8. <i>jayaddisə</i> (513) 9. <i>sāmə</i> (540)
1.53	Harm of pride	1. <i>lakkhənə</i> (011) 2. <i>kandəgaləkə</i> (210) 3. <i>gūthə-pāṇə</i> (227) 4. <i>mūlə-pariyāyə</i> (245)

		5. <i>jambukā</i> (335) 6. <i>sētākētu</i> (377)
1.54	The king should be unbiased	1. <i>bharu</i> (213)
1.55	Not suitable to create a division among monks	1. <i>bharu</i> (213)
1.56	Harm of doing work during an unsuitable time	1. <i>kalāyā-muṭṭhi</i> (176) 2. <i>kōsiyā</i> (226)
1.57	No one is weak in his area/in his subject/in his place	1. <i>haritā-mātā</i> (239)
1.58	Harm of fury: revenge is inappropriate	1. <i>tilā-muṭṭhi</i> (252) 2. <i>daddārā</i> (304) 3. <i>avāriyā</i> (376) 4. <i>pīṭhā</i> (337) 5. <i>kuntāni</i> (343) 6. <i>cullā-bōdhi</i> (443)
1.59	Harm of consuming limitless meals	1. <i>sukā</i> (255)
1.60	Benefit of the ability of talking	1. <i>padumā</i> (261)
1.61	The combat of the Crow and the Owl	1. <i>ulūkā</i> (270)
1.62	Benefit of distinguishing friends and enemies	1. <i>satāpattā</i> (279)
1.63	Pleasure of unity	1. <i>baḍḍhākīsūkārā</i> (283)
1.64	Profiting from unrighteous acts is inapt	1. <i>lābhā</i> (287)

1.65	False appreciation is inappropriate	1. <i>jambu-khādakā</i> (294) 2. <i>antā</i> (295)
1.66	Pleasure of becoming righteous	1. <i>sīlavimansānā</i> (305) 2. <i>sirikālakaṇṇi</i> (382)
1.67	Inappropriate to insult Dharma-shāstra	1. <i>chavakā</i> (309)
1.68	Suspicion is suitable in the case of suspicious acts	1. <i>pucimandā</i> (311) 2. <i>thusā</i> (338) 3. <i>kōṭisimbāli</i> (412)
1.69	Not suitable to get angry about behaviors of unknown people	1. <i>kassāpammāndiyā</i> (312)
1.70	Apt to respect the wife	1. <i>succājā</i> (320) 2. <i>pakkagōdhā</i> (333)
1.71	Harm of telling lies	1. <i>kakāru</i> (326)
1.72	Losing benefits of ones own acts	1. <i>kālābāhu</i> (329)
1.73	Law should be unbiased for all	1. <i>rathalaṭṭhi</i> (332)
1.74	King should be religious-minded	1. <i>rājōvādā</i> (334) 2. <i>kukku</i> (396) 3. <i>gaṇḍatindu</i> (520) 4. <i>tēsakuṇā</i> (521)
1.75	Losing benefits of unmeritorious people with the birth of	1. <i>bāvēru</i> (339)
1.76	Inappropriate to swear with faultless people	1. <i>ambēcōrā</i> (344)
1.77	Righteous people will be protected spontaneously	1. <i>ayākūṭā</i> (347)
1.78	Harm of back-biting	1. <i>sandhibhēdā</i> (349) 2. <i>vaṇṇarōhā</i> (361)

1.79	Harm of understanding that all are equal	1. <i>kāraṇḍiyā</i> (356)
1.80	A righteous person is noble than an erudite person	1. <i>sīlavimansā</i> (362)
1.81	When trouble approaches, the virtuous have no worries	1. <i>tacāsārā</i> (368)
1.82	Good qualities of worthy men are noble	1. <i>dīghītikōsālā</i> (371) 2. <i>mahādharmāpālā</i> (447) 3. <i>kaṇhā</i> (440)
1.83	It is harmful to stand with people who think that all are equal	1. <i>nēru</i> (379)
1.84	Pleasure of less desire	1. <i>vaṭṭakā</i> (394)
1.85	The duty of the leader is to protect his dependents	1. <i>mahākapi</i> (407)
1.86	Suitable to be conscious about future calamities	1. <i>kōṭisimbālī</i> (412)
1.87	Acceptable to take care of old servants, before attending to	1. <i>dhūmakāri</i> (413)
1.88	Harm of experimenting useless matters	1. <i>padākusālamānāvā</i> (432)
1.89	Unsuitable to experience fears, where there should be protection	1. <i>padākusālamānāvā</i> (432) 2. <i>sēggu</i> (217) 3. <i>paṇṇikā</i> (102)
1.90	Appropriate to take care of relatives	1. <i>bhaddā-Sālā</i> (465)
1.91	Pleasure of having good alliances	1. <i>phandānā</i> (475)
1.92	Harm of disloyalty to a friend	1. <i>mahākapi</i> (516) 2. <i>paṇḍārā</i> (518) 3. <i>sambulā</i> (519)

## Conclusion

I want to draw attention to this particular fact; what is the purpose of preaching *Jātaka* tales? In analyzing the above themes, we found that they are aimed to yield good advice or moral/ethical advice, predominantly to the society of Buddhist monks. In other words, these tales have been used to develop or improve the quality of the monk-society and the secular-society as well. We have to consider this fact, because the society of Buddhist monks has been established in the normal mundane society. The preponderance of religious societies have been established, far away from the lay society, for example in the forests (forest hermits, ascetics etc.). Perhaps, we can assume that the 'Good Advices' we discussed prior, were used to impart the knowledge of *dhammā* and the practical understanding of living in the lay society, for monks.❧

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## Review

### **'Mahatma@Gandhi.Com' Stage Drama on the Sri Lankan Stage**

*By Gaya Nagahawatta and Piyal Kariyawasam*

Based on the shooting of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948, and subsequent developments, the Hindi language, Indian play 'Godse@Gandhi.Com' by playwright Professor Asghar Wajahat written in 2012, is a political play with insightful, alternate re-creation of history. The original Hindi language theatre script has been translated into Sinhala and produced for the Sri Lankan stage as 'Mahatma@Gandhi.Com' by Prof. Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage. In this article we attempt to review the original script and its Sinhala language production, viewed at the Tower Hall Theatre, Colombo, Sri Lanka on 30<sup>th</sup> August in 2020.

In actual fact, the Indian National Congress Party which was formulating into a formidable force in particular with the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru comes into conflict with Gandhi's ideology on politics and governance. If Mahatma Gandhi had lived, his traditional approach to governing based on ancient principles would have created a situation of conflict within the modern state. Mahatma Gandhi's vision was to establish a welfare state with meaningful inclusion of the ancient *Vedic* principles of *artha*, *dharma*, *kaama*, and *moksha*. However, within changing conditions of a modern state, this attempt was understood by fundamentalist Hindutva groups as removing their powers and rights to govern. There are diverse views and opinions on this matter and it is interesting how the playwright Wajahat attempts to discuss these.

In conversation with Dipti Nagpal for The Indian Express, Prof. Asghar Wajahat states:

“The play is ... a dialogue between Gandhi and Godse. Today, when we see people divided into two extremes by their ideologies, it is only through dialogue we can hope to resolve it. The play has been controversial ever since it was published. (Among other things,) it depicts Godse as a popular figure, which many object to. But I have merely portrayed the truth” (19<sup>th</sup> January 2020).

While in the factual world, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by Nataram Godse, the play explores a situation where Gandhi survives the assassination attempt on his life. Once recovered from the gunshot wounds, in this 'alternate-history' version, Gandhi gets to meet Godse while himself in jail. In the play



'Godse@Gandhi.Com', Gandhi is portrayed as living to respond to the criticism directed at him and also to converse and make peace with his assassin.

The play is a noteworthy interpretation of post-Gandhian Indian society reaching out to the peripheries. It foreshadows the future ramifications that will shape politics in the Indian subcontinent. Meanwhile, it also foregrounds a discussion on how Godse should be judged and whether his critique of Mahatma Gandhi's actions were justified. In this regard, the real Godse's final historical statement at the court hearing at his trial, which is available in book form, titled '*Why I Killed Gandhi*' (1949), is of importance. In this, the real Godse ends his 14-page long, final statement to court, in which he takes responsibility for what he did and says he expects no mercy, with, "I have no doubt that honest writers of history will weigh my act and find the true value thereof some day in future." In this background, Wajahat's contribution in interpreting real life to help continue the evolving dialogues is of much importance.

Asghar Wajahat uses narrative styles from ancient Sanskrit plays as well as Indian folk plays and epic Indian traditions, juxtaposing them with the Brechtian alienation effect (*virfromdung*), to bring alive politically fused arguments on the application of historic situations to modern day needs. Discussing the bureaucratic system of governance prevailing in India, the stifling effects of the Congress, and such aspects as doubt, cultural dominance, party politics, the play strives to discuss situations prevalent in the modern welfare state.

It is interesting that Wajahat also uses a character from a prominent Hindi novel written in 1954, *Maila Aanchal* (The Soiled Region), by Phanishvar Nath Renu to populate his Gandhian world. The character Baavandaas, representing the common citizen, is re-created thus. This explores the potential that an existing piece of popular literature has, to enhance the qualities of a new tale and add further meaning to a new dramatization, within the complex contexts of modern conditions. Structurally such re-alignment of characters is also a mechanism used in formulating ancient lore such as mythology and fairytales. While it is an example of a postmodern style of writing, it also goes back to the roots where anthropological narratives influence the formation of modern playwriting.

The play, 'Godse@Gandhi.Com' finds relevance in modern times with its discussion of a historical figure in the context of his existence beyond his real death, to address and react to his 'rivals' and explore new possibilities. It opens up different dimensions to reading history and thus empowers audiences to rethink the legitimacy of law, racial differences, individual rights, gender issues and their empowerment, cultural diversity, and so on.



Original Hindi  
writer Professor  
Asgar Wajahat



Translator, Adapter,  
Music Composer,  
Producer and  
Director Senior  
Prof. Upul Ranjith



Maulana, Patel, Nehru, Pyarelal and Gandhi



Kasturba and Gandhi



Bavandas, Gandhi and Pyarelal



Nathuram, Gandhi and Pyarelal



Navin, Gandhi, Sushma, Nirmala Devi and  
others

### **Sinhala Production: 'Mahatma@Gandhi.Com'**

The original play, 'Godse@Gandhi.Com' takes on a title reflective of our internet-oriented age. In the Sinhala translation and adaptation of the play, the title has been recreated as 'Mahatma@Gandhi.Com'. Here, the prominent markers of web-based communication, '@' and '.com' are retained from the original while leaving out the reference to Godse, which is fairly unknown to the Sri Lankan viewer. World over the more common term used to refer to Gandhi, 'Mahatma' is used instead. In this manner, the title sets out to reflect a man in conflict with himself—possibly that the Gandhi-Godse clash is, at another level, an inner conflict within Mahatma Gandhi.

The Sinhala production initially staged 16<sup>th</sup> October in 2019, was translated from Hindi into Sinhala and directed by Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage. Renowned actor Wasantha Vittachchi portrays the main role of Mahatma Gandhi, with his 'rival' Nathuram Godse being portrayed by Uditha Gunarathna. In the Sinhala version, we can see strong characterisation by Vittachchi in bringing to life the character of Gandhi, with Gunarathna convincingly articulating his opposition to Gandhi's principles, through the portrayal of Godse. Experienced actors including Udeni Chandrasiri, Maali Jayaweera, Prabha Sandaseeli, Tharanga Bandara, Channa Kularathna are among the cast.

The director Upul Ranjith, also composed the music for the play. Bringing in an innovation of his own, he transformed the audio-narratives used in the original production into lyrics sung by a chorus. The use of live music and the chorus in the Sinhala production is of particular significance. It succinctly captures the emotional range of the characters while allowing the smooth transition of scenes and the unfolding of the story. Using experienced actors alongside novices, the director has been able to bring alive a theatrical act, initially enacted in India, to our own native soil.

In the Sinhala production, the proscenium stage is used engagingly, with balanced employment of upstage, downstage and apron areas. The actors also move among the audience (house area) at certain junctures, expanding the connection built with the viewers.

With over 25 characters and some actors taking on more than one character, this production involves a formidable task of theatrical creation. The script of 'Mahatma@Gandhi.Com' has the potential to create magical possibilities of theatricality utilizing symbols, expressions, metaphors, rhythm, irony, and so on. Upul Ranjith's production has used these elements to his advantage, in engaging us to re-think history and question long-ago decisions.

It is enlightening to see the production of plays from neighbouring India, being translated and enacted in the local languages of Sri Lanka. Such innovative scripts that re-interpret history in the subcontinent allow us to critically evaluate our views and bring in new interpretations and enrich history and thereby our times. Such activities in the theatre create cross-cultural bonds and enable us to experience innovative and critically engaging productions that resonate with us with their shared cultural and regional associations. Accordingly, the Sinhala language translation and local production of Prof. Upul Ranjith Hewawitanagamage's 'Mahatma@Gandhi.Com', is a much welcome addition to the local theatre milieu.✠



Siri Baabu and Gandhi in Purnia



Nathuram, Vishnu Karkare and Nanaa Aapte



Puraka and Chorus



Curtain Call of the premier show, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Lionel Wendt Theatre, Colombo, Sri Lanka

*Photo Courtesy – Mr. Udeni Abwis*

## **Our Contributors**

### **Abdhul Moquim AFGHAN**



Abdul Moqim Afghan perceived bachelor degree of Public Administration from Osmania University in India and has completed his MBA from Kardan University, Afghanistan.

Mr. Afghan has worked in key government institutions for the past eight years. He led the Directorate of Information and Culture of Zabul Province for four years, and since 2016 he is working with Ministry of Information & Culture of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as planning & policy director.

He represented Afghanistan in several international conferences and seminars as in charge of managing foreign relations of the MOIC.

Mr. Afghan is Afghanistan's focal point to the International Network of Silk Roads Online Platform of UNESCO as well as member of National Commission for UNESCO & ISESCO of IRoA.

### **Rubina Rafat CHAITY**



Rubina Rafat Chaity is an architect of having own firm named Studio S, an architectural design consultancy specializing in using environmentally friendly interior architecture and cultural aesthetics values to drive consumer emotions. She is a behavior design instructor and has more than ten years of behavior insights experience working with different companies to design the most important behavior challenges with cultural values along with environmental concern.

Rubina did her master's in Environmental Science and Management and has experience of teaching the school of architecture to constructing the bridge between the cultural values with environment. Rubina lives in Dhaka, Bangladesh with her husband and family.

## Karma TENZIN



Karma Tenzin (MA), is the Executive Architect / Head Archaeology Section, Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites Department of Culture, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs. He obtained the MA in Archaeology of Buildings (2015-2016), from University of York, United Kingdom and Bachelors of Architecture (2005-2010) from Dayananda Sagar College of Engineering, Bangalore, India. As an architect(Sr.) / Head Archaeology Section under DCHS, and provides instructions and supervises the day to day technical back stopping in terms of scrutinizing drawings, conservation proposals and any other matters related to conservation of heritage sites to the 20 districts in the country. He has been an active member of numerous archaeology projects in Bhutan under Bhutan Swiss Archaeology project and worked towards restoring Sangkha ruins under Sarpang District, Bhutan in 2011, participated in documenting Gasa Obthso Dzong ruins under Gasa District in 2012, Chubjakha Dzong ruins under Paro District in 2014, and Dochoeten Geonpa under Paro District Archaeology project in 2014-2016. Additionally, he has coordinated various training programs for cultural officers and relevant stakeholders on the importance of archaeology in Bhutan including enabling them to report and make decisions with regard to protecting of such heritage sites.

## Pema PEMA



Prem Pema is an Engineer from 2012 at the Division for Conservation of Heritage Sites, Department of Culture, Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs, Bhutan. Graduated in Master of Disaster Management (2020) at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Tokyo, Japan, with a Post Graduate Diploma in Earthquake Engineering (2020) at the International Institute of Seismology and Earthquake Engineering (IISSE), Tsukuba, Japan. Attended the advanced training course SA2-Structural Analysis Technique in Structural Analysis of Monuments and Historical Construction (SAHC) at the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Czech Technical University, Prague within the Erasmus Mundus Programme (2013). Working member for the Project for Evaluation and Mitigation of Seismic Risk for Composite Masonry buildings in Bhutan, a technical corporation project funded by Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan Science and Technology (April 2017- March 2022). Project Coordinator, Restoration and Adaptive Reuse of Wangduechoeling Palace (March 2016- August 2019). A member of Bilateral U.S.-Bhutan Project Engineering Panel for formulating ATC-20-1, Bhutan Field Manual: Post-earthquake Safety Evaluation of Buildings (June 2013- March 2014). Permanent Technical Core group of Engineers for Disaster Management framework of Bhutan. Focal Person, Disaster Management of Heritage Sites of Bhutan. The research domain: structural and seismic engineering with a focus on strengthening of vernacular Bhutanese houses; historical built heritage; architectural heritage conservation; traditional knowledge system; sustainable materials; and disaster management.



### **Dr. Sonia JASROTIA**



Dr. Sonia Jasrotia is the visiting Professor, ICCR, Chair for Buddhist and Sanskrit Studies, Phnom Penh, Cambodia from April 2017- Sept 2020, and was a visiting Professor, ICCR, Chair for Buddhist and Sanskrit Studies, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She obtained her PhD in Buddhist Studies from University of Jammu, India, (2008-Thesis Title: The Buddhist Art and Architecture of Kashmir Gandhara Region with special Reference to Innovation in Images) and a MA in, Buddhist Studies, University of Jammu, India, (2003). She is a Graduate of the same University and obtained her Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in 2001.

She has been participating in several Research Conferences and published some scholarly articles with the new research findings on Buddhist Art in India, Cambodia and basically on South Asia. She has immensely contributed to develop research culture on Asian art and edited books on particular subjects: i.e. 'India-Cambodia and Buddhism' (2018) published by Shubhi Publication, Gurugram. She also edited Book on 'Buddhism in Southeast Asia', published by Embassy of India, Phnom Penh, Cambodia when she was serving as the Director ICCR, Cambodia

She has the membership in many National and International Organizations and Institutes i.e. Life member (ISBS) Indian Society for Buddhist Studies, (FOL) Friends of Ladakh Society, and INTACH and a Member of the World Archaeology Congress

### **Tula Ram POUDEL**



Tula Ram Poudel has been deputed and joined SAARC Energy Center (SEC), Islamabad in December 2019 as a Research Fellow (Energy Trade) from Government of Nepal. He is a Senior Divisional Engineer in Department of Electricity Development (DoED), Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation (MOEWRI) in Nepal. He received Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University, Nepal and Master's Degree (M. Tech.) in Alternate Hydro Energy System from Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee. During his professional career he has involved in various energy related projects, government policy making, drafting of regulatory guidelines and implementation activities.

Besides, he is a Lyricist and occasional singer of folk and folk-pop genre. He has written many poetic creations. He prefers spending his leisure time in researching and singing.

### **Dr. Aqsa MALIK**



Dr. Aqsa Malik, Assistant Professor, works at the College of Art & Design, University of the Punjab, Pakistan. Her Doctorate degree was on the use of political Symbolism in Pakistani Art. She received a gold medal in her academic pursuits. Aqsa is also a well known Pakistani landscape artist who has bagged numerous awards in the National Art scene. She has participated in several group exhibitions across the country. She is currently settled in Lahore.

### **Dr. Naela AMIR**



Dr. Naela Amir, Assistant Professor, works at the College of Art & Design, University of the Punjab, Pakistan. She holds a PhD in Fine Arts from the University of Punjab, Pakistan, and a Master's Degree in Fine Arts with a 1<sup>st</sup> Division Honours. Throughout the past few years, she has conducted various researches on Arts and published in National and International Journals. She has also conducted some exhibitions for which she has been awarded with prestigious honours. She is currently working on Life Diversity in Pakistan portrayed through painting.

### **Chair Senior Professor Upul Ranjith HEWAWITANAGAMAGE**



Senior Prof. Upul Ranjith is the Chair Senior professor of Hindi Studies, Dept. of Hindi Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and the Director, Centre for Contemporary Indian Studies [CCIS], University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. He holds a PhD in Hindi Language and Literature from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.

He has participated for more than 25 international research symposiums and webinars in India, Thailand and Sri Lanka and published research papers in international journals on the fields of language, literature, art, folklore, culture etc. He has published translations in various literary fields such as short stories, novels, articles, dramas, poems etc. He is a writer, translator, musician, poet (in Hindi and Sinhala), radio-presenter, dubbing artist, language researcher and teacher. He has been awarded several International awards and National literary awards as well.



### **Gaya NAGAHAWATTA**



Ms. Gaya Nagahawatta is a writer, editor, translator, television programme producer, lecturer, photographer, and theatre activist, working in both Sinhala and English in Sri Lanka. Her writing and translations have been published locally, regionally in Pakistan and through Women Unlimited, India, as well as on the Literary Shanghai website. She has extensive work experience in the development sector in international, state and private sector organizations.

### **Piyal KARIYAWASAM**



Mr. Piyal Kariyawasam is a writer of fiction, script writer, theatre activist, and lecturer on theatre who has won State Drama Awards; State Literary Awards for best short story collections and best theatre script; Presidential Scholarship for Postgraduate Studies in Theatre Arts and International Scholarship on Documentary Film Making in the U.S. With a preliminary qualification in Law – LL.B. from the University of Colombo, he now serves as a Visiting Lecturer in Theatre at the University of the Visual and Performing Arts, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

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