

# WORLD CULTURAL REVIEW

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OF BENGAL

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## ABOUT US

World Culture Forum is an international Cultural Organization who initiates peacebuilding and engages in extensive research on contemporary cultural trends across the globe. We firmly believe that peace can be attained through dialogue, discussion and even just listening. In this spirit, we honor individuals and groups who are engaged in peacebuilding process, striving to establish a boundless global filmmaking network, we invite everyone to learn about and appreciate authentic local cultures and value cultural diversity in film. Keeping in line with our mission, we create festivals and conferences along with extensively researched papers to cheer creative thought and innovation in the field of culture as our belief lies in the idea – “Culture Binds Humanity. and any step towards it is a step towards a secure future.

## VISION



We envisage the creation of a world which rests on the fundamentals of connected and harmonious co-existence which creates a platform for connecting culture and perseverance to build solidarity by inter-cultural interactions.

## MISSION



We are committed to providing a free, fair and equal platform to all cultures so as to build a relationship of mutual trust, respect, and cooperation which can achieve harmony and understand different cultures by inter-cultural interactions and effective communications.



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Vol-1; Issue-3, Delhi, November-December 2019

Printed and published by  
Prahlad Narayan Singh on behalf of  
World Culture Forum and printed at  
Thomson Press India Ltd - 18/35,  
Mathura Road, Sector 15A, Faridabad,  
Haryana 121007 and published at  
Room No. 1003, Gate No.01, YMCA  
Tourist Hostel, Jai Singh Road, Near  
Parliament Police Station,  
New Delhi-110001 India,  
Editor - Prahlad Narayan Singh



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**World Cultural Review promulgates acknowledgment of similarity and vicissitudes of cultures all over the globe with the intent of understanding and instilling mutual respect for every culture in the global community.**

## Dear Readers,

**I**t brings me immense joy to present the third edition of World Cultural Review, this issue explores the confluence and commitments of various cultures pertaining to their expression and identity.

World Cultural Review promulgates acknowledgment of similarity and vicissitudes of cultures all over the globe with the intent of understanding and instilling mutual respect for every culture in the global community. Through the wings of myriad cultural practices such as cuisine, clothing, festivities, languages, customs and various forms of artistic and cultural expressions which are the frequent features of the review, World Cultural Review aims to provide a platform for an insight into the cultural design of communities that are spread all around the world. It furthers the value of placing every culture on an equal pedestal while remarking that every individual is the product of their culture and similarly, every culture is the product of the amalgamation of collective practices of the individuals that are consisted under its ambit.

World Cultural Review is the bimonthly magazine issued by World Culture Forum, an organization which envisages the creation of a world which rests on the fundamentals of harmonious cooperation and co-existence while creating avenues for connecting cultures and perseveres to build solidarity through inter-cultural interactions while being committed to provide free, fair and equal platform to all cultures so as to build a relationship of mutual trust, respect, and cooperation which can achieve harmony and understanding of different cultures through inter-cultural interactions and effective communication.

As cross-cultural simulations have been rooted in every important development that humanity has led and been subject to. The World Cultural Review creates an avenue to explore and further such simulations that have enriched

the lives of people and imparts the due reverence that every culture deserves due to its peculiarity. Instead of the common misconception regarding 'culture' as an involuntary repetition of the actions committed to replicate the practices of genealogical predecessors, World Cultural Review reinstates the prestige of culture as the ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society along with the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively.

This edition initiates with a brief history of jazz exemplifying how the confluences of cultures give birth to artistic expression, followed by Spanish passion of Fandango, which emerged in the 18th century as a popular music and dance form, constituting an important attribute of regional culture. The narrative of Semperoper highlights the resilience of culture through the tale of its resurrection in the face of trials and tribulations while the Hermitage Museum reflects the glory of Russian aesthetics exhibiting more than three million artifacts from various eras across the world. Art Nouveau personifies the amiability of culture through the hands of its practitioners as it sprouted as a reactionary movement against eclecticism and historicism of art.

The invention of language would be a unanimous contender amongst the best inventions that human civilization has ever come up and the next segment shed light on the most linguistically diverse country of the world- Papua New Guinea. Language needs to be conveyed, therein, the art of Japanese calligraphy - Shodo picturesquely projects emotions, feelings, and content of the writer through certain fundamentals of artistic writing.

Food is the route to one's heart, therefore getting familiar with fellow cuisines is

essential for understanding the lifestyles of various cultures. This segment portrays Bhutan as a land of culinary exquisites served in a platter and celebrates the inculcation of Hyderabad into UNESCO's list of Gastronomically Creative Cities.

This issue also highlights the Khasi tribe of Meghalaya as progenies of seven huts whose folklores dictate them to be the caretakers of the Earth's habitat. The tribal lifestyle prolongs the craftsmanship which the modern industrial society has long forgotten, hence the pertinence of Dhokra's wax metal casting process remarks the reverence for the traditional crafts in today's scenario.

The observance of World Television Day explains the origins of the idiot box which transformed telecommunications and many lives along with it. The issue also covers the 7th Woodpecker International Film Festival which screens 65 movies from across the world and awards the most critically acclaimed films from the nominated lot.

The last segment deals with the submerging islands of Kiribati, the Pacific nation faces an existential threat due to the rising sea levels caused by climate change and poses the question of ecological refugees and the loss of cultural practices of the island nation.

The team of World Culture Forum has worked immensely to deliver this issue which deals with a wide array of contentions regarding culture. Working on this edition has been an intriguing and fulfilling task, I hope that the readers feel the same sense of elation while reading the issue as our researchers had in its completion.



**Prahlad Narayan Singh**  
**Editor**



# THE GIANT STEPS OF JAZZ

The exhilarating, eccentric sound of jazz subliminally narrates a tale as complicated and magnificent as its music. The interaction of stochastic rhythms and melodies in a syncopated fashion compels the audience to swing with sheer joy, excitement and appreciation. This art form resonates the confluence of various individuals belonging from myriad cultural backgrounds yet connected by the fundamental virtue of humanity. One extremely simplified definition of Jazz, is the synthesis of African melodies and rhythms with European harmonies and instrumentalization but this definition only scratches the surface of cross-cultural stimulations that jazz owes its inception to. Jazz resulted from the synthesis of many predecessors of various origin— some African, some Latin American, some European, and many, by the time the music started to take shape, uniquely American. The fascinating thing about jazz music is that almost everything that is said about it is subject to contestations and the opposite of the assertion that one makes is just as true.

Jazz is an evolving and constantly changing form of music culture which perpetuates certain characteristics over the course of its evolution, for instance, jazz is quintessentially homophonic (where one melody is supported by harmonic movement). The instruments play peculiar roles which can be broadly classified into: -

**Melodic Instruments (Horns Section):** comprising of saxophone, trumpet, trombone and clarinet which are wind instruments and share a close resemblance with human voice enabling them to convey a wide range of emotions/expressions.

**Rhythm Instruments (Rhythm Section):** contains piano, violin, vibraphone, bass (or tuba), drums and often guitar which work together to provide



Image Courtesy: etsy.com

accompaniment for horns. This section plays important functions of music, Percussion serves a structural role, driving the ensemble and articulating important structural movements. The Bass serve as a timekeeper, providing steady articulation of the beat, whereas Pianist provides harmony.

Although, these classifications regarding the roles of each musical instrument is not water-tight but in fact fluid because Piano and Guitar often serve the melodic functions and the horn instruments may provide rhythm depending on the preference of members of band/ensemble or the requirements of the song.

Few signature traits of jazz music could be identified as (i) improvisation, (ii) individual voices, (iii) swing, (iv) syncopation, and, (v) polyrhythms. Jazz can be thought of as a new language with a huge vocabulary, rules of grammar and punctuation, and dictionaries full of slang. A jazz player's goal is to learn techniques and tunes so well that playing them comes as spontaneously as talking with a friend. Even though much jazz is improvised, musicians must know a lot of theory and songs before they become masterful improvisers. Melodies are only part of this knowledge.

(Sutro, 2006) According to musicologists, "jazz" connotes a living, breathing tradition encompassing hundreds of musical influences from dozens of countries, fused with local folk and popular traditions. Jazz music essentially follows a 32 bar AABA or 12 bar AAB structure but due to its constantly changing nature, the structure has been subject to various permutations and combinations over the years.

## The Cue that stirred Jazz

The story of jazz begins in New Orleans where

African, blues, classical, funeral, marching, and ragtime music come together to create a musical form that shall excite and intimidate all subsequent musicians to come. The term "jazz" essentially referred to the New Orleans style of ensemble playing, which gained the city its reputation as the birthplace of jazz that it continues to hold today. New Orleans had a rich and diverse ethnic composition since its earliest days and its atmosphere was conducive to new combinations of culture and fresh forms of expression.

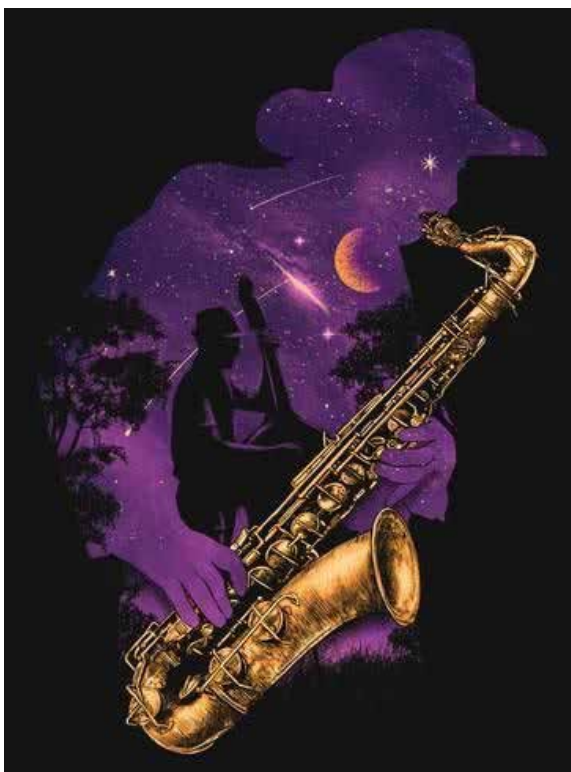


Image Courtesy: art.com

Large communities of French, Latin and African cultures interacted on a daily basis, and Creoles of colour, who were of African and mixed ancestry, were for some time a skilled and educated class with full rights of citizenship. A popular scholarly theory about the creation of jazz is that Creoles of colour, with formal musical training, interacted with the folk stylists of the black community. This kind of cross-cultural influence that was happening in New Orleans, as Creoles of colour lost their class status as the Twentieth Century approached due to implementation of code 111 which proclaimed Afro-European Creoles and African Americans to be of equal status. The earliest jazz was born during the 1880s and 1890s, played primarily by African Americans who brought their blues, spirituals, and work songs together with European music and instruments. In 1895, Buddy Bolden formed what may have been the first jazz band including bass, drums, valve trombone, clarinet, guitar, and his own cornet. Bolden combined brass band music with blues, spirituals, marching music, and traditional styles such as polkas, funeral dirges, and ragtime into his own prototypical jazz. Although the sophistication of Bolden's technique was contested

but no one questions were ever raised on the power of his music or that he delivered something fresh and exciting — a new sound with African rhythms and roots that compelled folks to pile on to the dance floor. The Creole Band featuring Freddie Keppard is generally considered to be the first band from New Orleans that was playing this style of music outside south, they performed on the vaudeville circuit in the United States from 1914 to 1918. One of the first jazz records was ironically titled 'Livery Stable Blues' by Original Dixieland 'Jass' Band. During the same time, another genre of music was gaining limelight namely 'Ragtime' and its fame was led by three of its most celebrated musicians James Scott, Scott Joplin and Joseph Lamb. Depending on the musician, this form of music would sound concisely European or feel like a loose, swinging precursor of Jazz. Hence, this genre is regarded as a precursor of jazz music. In 1917 Storyville, a cultural hub was closed, which coincided with The Great Migration, in which more than a million African Americans travelled from rural communities in the South to major cities between 1910 and 1930. That migration, combined with recording technology and Prohibition, brought jazz to an unprecedented number of black and non-black audiences.



Image Courtesy: [lifestyle.trendencias.com](http://lifestyle.trendencias.com)

## 1920's and 1930's: Don't mean a thing if it ain't Got That Swing

Although jazz was conventionally conceived as music for live performance but the limitation of tracing the history of jazz is that most of our understanding is derived from records. As commercial recordings for home use were limited to under four minutes per side until after World War II. This caused a constraint because jazz performers had to carefully prepare and perform short versions of tunes that might be played for twenty minutes or more live because of which Musicians were under some pressure to present their best work in a limited time frame, so it is likely that early jazz recordings contain far less improvisation than a live performance. Gradually, Chicago earned the image as a centre for New Orleans Jazz as a large number of jazz records made in the early days were recorded in the Chicago area. Gradually, along with Chicago, the attention towards jazz was drawn in New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, Kansas City, Philadelphia, San Diego and Austin. Jazz musicians agreed that the goals of live performance and recording were different. Instead of playing for immediate gratification of a live and tangible audience, the recording musician is concerned with sonic perfection. During this time Louis Armstrong was at the forefront of jazz with his evergreen songs such as 'what a wonderful world' and 'A kiss to build a dream on'. He altered the performance routine of jazz from the traditional texture where multiple musicians played melodic lines simultaneously, to what we today recognise as the individualist, soloist-plus-ensemble format. Louis Armstrong shared his time of fame with his contemporaries such as Sidney Bechet, Jelly Roll Morton and Joe "King" Oliver.

During America's emergence from Economic Depression (1928), big band swing —a music that offered upbeat escape— became a popular phenomenon. Two types of big bands emerged in the late 1920s and the early 1930s under big band swing phenomena: -

Smooth and sophisticated bands played intricate arrangements and confined soloists to smaller roles. College-educated players such as Benny Goodman, Fletcher Henderson, Coleman Hawkins, and Don Redman populated many of these smooth bands.

Rougher blues-oriented "territory" bands from the Midwest and Southwest and their successors in New





Image Courtesy: otto.de

**The story of jazz begins in New Orleans where African, blues, classical, funeral, marching, and ragtime music come together to create a musical form that shall excite and intimidate all subsequent musicians to come**

of black creativity. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1930s produced a flowering of African-American arts led by writers like Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston. Jazz was an essential part of the scene. Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway led house orchestras at the Cotton Club. Jazz is famous for its royalty, and among this circuit the Duke Ellington is considered a god. Yet there are many other players who earned their titles, including soloists like Bird and Diz, and bandleaders like William “Count” Basie and Benny Goodman — the King of Swing. Basie rose to stardom through territory bands: Walter Page’s Blue Devils and The Kansas City Orchestra, led by Bennie Moten (he served as both pianist and arranger). Members of Moten’s group formed the nucleus of Basie’s first band, the 9-piece Barons of Rhythm. Within two years Basie’s orchestra made its fame with hard-swinging tunes such as “One O’Clock Jump” and “Jumpin’ at the Woodside.” Compared with the carefully orchestrated sound of Benny Goodman and Duke Ellington’s bands, Basie’s retained the loose, bluesy feel of the territory bands. This phase of jazz propagated the key elements which have been crucial in its developments, such as: -

**Call and response:** when instrumentalists have a “conversation” consisting of traded musical “statements”;

**Improvisation:** embellishment around a song’s primary melody;

**Pentatonic scales:** five-tone scales later used as primary scales in blues;

**Polyrhythms:** the overlapping of different rhythmic patterns Swing or forward momentum: a sense of urgency created by relentless rhythmic drive; and

**Syncopation:** rhythmic accents around the underlying beat.

York City (such as Count Basie’s band) showcased talented soloists.

Big band jazz came of age in the 1930s. Through the 1920s, groups in New Orleans, Chicago, and New York City expanded in size and musical sophistication. Leaders like Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Fletcher Henderson were among the ’20s pioneers who became heroes of ’30s swing. New York became the centre of the music industry, while big band music spread to ballrooms across the country. More than any time in history, jazz was a central part of mainstream American entertainment. (Sutro, 2006) When New York City emerged as the new centre for jazz, Harlem became the core centre

## Not pop but Bebop

During their prime, big band swing, which grew out of New Orleans and Chicago jazz, became commercial music for dancing and entertainment. The schism over perception of jazz amongst the new generation of musicians to make music beyond the given mould led to the birth of 'bebop'. Bebop began with saxophonists and trumpeters blowing red hot, speedy lines that floated above equally fleet rhythm sections. Eventually, bop worked its way into every format, from soloists to big bands, and was played on every instrument. Bassists, drummers, guitarists, pianists — they all became as inventive as horn players. Even vocalists began to bop. No matter what kind of tone or range a musician had, he/she could find ways to produce bebop's challenging new mode of improvisational jazz. The word bebop may come from sound of improvised lines sung, especially when the lines ended with a pair of notes, often with the accent on the second syllable: be-BOP! Or it may refer to two syllables used by players to sing bop phrases. Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, and Dizzy Gillespie are revered as the legends of Bebop. This sub-genre marked a departure from swing in every essential element. Due to its characteristics, such as: -

**Improvisational:** The song's melody was only stated once at the beginning and end. Improvisers such as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie traded improvisations, replacing the battling horn sections of big bands.

**Small-group music:** Bebop often utilized a rhythm section of bass, drums, and piano, plus trumpet, and saxophone.

**Speed:** Bebop played at break-neck speeds; even on slow ballads, the solos sped wildly.

**Brash and harsh:** To the unskilled ear, the music sounded this way, even if it was actually carefully structured.

**Complex rhythms:** Musicians improvised rhythmic patterns around the basic beat and around each other.

**Rapid series of chords:** Instead of being built around just a few chords as in New Orleans jazz and most big band swing, bebop used rapid series of chords, many of them altered from their standard form. Passing chords, inserted between the basic chords, added texture and complexity.

**Drastically changed role for the instruments:** Bop drummers shifted primary timekeeping duties from bass drum to cymbals and snare, lending the music



Image Courtesy: npr.org

**Big band jazz came of age in the 1930s. Through the 1920s, groups in New Orleans, Chicago, and New York City expanded in size and musical sophistication. Leaders like Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Fletcher Henderson were among the '20s pioneers who became heroes of '30s swing**

a lighter, effervescent aura. They began playing multiple overlapping rhythms.

## Record Ban Shenanigans

The development of bebop jazz was followed by recording ban where American Federation of Musicians (AFM) instigated the recording ban in a dispute over royalties. This ban applied only to instrumental music. The AFM ordered its members not to record until major recording companies met demands that royalties be paid not only for the sale

of records but also for use of the music by radio stations and on jukeboxes. The process took two years before all the big recording labels met the demands and recording resumed. Unfortunately, this lapse meant that most of bebop's important early performances were never caught on tape. Starting from August 1942, almost no instrumental musicians were permitted to make new recordings for a year. Hence, record labels came up with the idea of recording completely vocal ("a Capella") versions of popular songs. Before the ban, vocalists were special soloists with big bands, and usually sang a verse or two in the middle of the song. During the ban, vocals enchanted the audience such that they were appropriated as forerunners of popular music.

### Fork in the Story of Jazz

Jazz was led into new directions during the 1950s, with hard bop refining elements of bebop and cool jazz offering a minimalist alternative.

**Hard bop:** developed primarily in New York City, was a bluesy, driving, stripped-down variant of bebop.

**Cool jazz:** was lighter, lyrical, intricately arranged, sometimes influenced by classical music.

Hard bop wasn't fast or frantic as bebop. It had a dark, gritty aura that seemed to suit New York in the 1950s. Hard bop is distinguished by a few key characteristics:

Intense, swinging momentum rooted in gospel and blues, at slower tempos than bebop.

New compositions that were more elaborate and technically demanding (in terms of group precision) than bebop.

Intuitive, subtle interplay between players in bands where the group dynamic was as important as the solos.

Musicians from various backgrounds and cities, with dozens of different styles and approaches to music making, but who shared this restraint and interest in gentle, introspective music, have been grouped by convention as purveyors of cool jazz, and usually associated with the West Coast. Some key elements of Cool jazz, were:

- Light, lyrical sound;
- Gentler, flowing rhythms, as opposed to the driving rhythms of hard bop;
- Whispery saxophones and muted trumpets;

Compositions and arrangements that incorporated the influence of classical composers like Stravinsky and Debussy Brazilian styles (such as samba and

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bossa nova) in music by saxophonist Stan Getz and others Odd meters (instead of the familiar four-beats-per measure), especially in Dave Brubeck songs like "Take Five" and "Blue Rondo à la Turk"; & Instruments not normally associated with jazz, such as French horn, oboe, bassoon, and bass clarinet, especially in larger ensembles.

### Avant Garde and Free Jazz

Avant Garde jazz is an experimental approach which often includes significant improvisation, but it also pertains to a concrete structure. This may sometimes sound chaotic, but is in fact often elaborately composed in advance. Two Avant Garde movements that originated in the '40s and '50s and continue to influence jazz musicians till date are — the Lydian Concept and Third Stream. Avant Garde jazz brought distinctive classical elements into a musical tradition that was built on blues and popular music.

George Russell, a revered pianist and composer developed "Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization" during the 1940s. Lydian refers to an ancient Greek scale which is an exotic-sounding variation of a standard major scale. The Lydian mode was effectively used by Beethoven, Prokofiev, Ravel, and Scriabin, but Russell was one of the first to bring this element into jazz. The Lydian mode became the basis for spare, moody jazz compositions and improvisations. Russell's 1953 book on his Lydian Concept set the stage for music by John Coltrane, Miles Davis, pianist Bill Evans, and others in the



1960s, utilizing only a few scales (instead of the many scales required to follow bebop's frantic chord changes) and forging a new dimension for improvisation.

In 1957, author-composer-conductor-teacher Gunther Schuller coined the phrase 'third stream' for music that combined jazz and classical elements. He asserted the term referred to a separate new genre of music not simply jazz with classical elements or vice versa. Third stream music combined jazz's rhythmic drive and improvisation with classical instrumentation and forms such as:

**Fugues:** Contrasting melodies that overlap and intertwine as they're expressed by different musical instruments.

**Suites:** Musical compositions that move through loosely related movements, like chapters in a short novel.

**Concertos:** Composed for orchestra (or jazz ensemble) and one or two solo instruments.

Free jazz liberates players from traditional structures, such as melodic themes, patterns of chords, and restrictions on the duration or format of improvisations.

While 'third stream' and 'Avant Garde' jazz was innovative for bringing together jazz and classical music, Free Jazz liberates musicians from traditional structures, such as melodic themes, patterns of chords, and restrictions on the duration or format of improvisations. Free jazz was mostly based on improvisation. Many free jazz pieces begin with a musical theme, and then, as in other forms of jazz, the players take turns soloing. A song's structure in free jazz can vary from being loose to virtually non-existent, because:

Bandmates improvised collectively or one at a time.

Music shifts occurred impulsively instead of on cue or from sheet music.

Free-jazz players used instruments in unconventional ways to produce unusual sounds such as horns generating moans, shrieks, and cries.

## Conclusion

This story is not a detailed account of all the shifts and altercations that jazz music has been subject to but paints a brief picture of its phonautograph. Jazz is becoming less renowned yet more elaborate, enhanced and amusing in today's times. Listening and appreciating Jazz needs an initiation which feels



Image Courtesy: ebay.com

like an enchantment where the listener is compelled to trace elements of jazz in every musical piece that he/she listens to. If we were to carefully lend our ears to the wedding bands of an Indian Matrimonial ceremony, we would be able to trace the influence of jazz and its evolution into various sub-genres. This exemplifies the magnanimous impact that jazz music has had in the world by embracing and sharing the majesties of every culture that it encounters. ■

Ashray Kant, World Culture Forum



# THE SPANISH DANCE OF PASSION - FANDANGO



Image Courtesy: cndxxaniversario

The craze for fandango emerged in the 18th century as a popular dance and music from across Spain and the Americas. The earliest fandango melody is found in the anonymous "Libro de diferentes cifras de guitarra" from 1705, and the earliest description of the dance itself is found in a 1712 letter by Martín Martí, a Spanish priest. The fandango's first sighting in a theatrical work was in Francisco de Leefadeal's entremés "El novio de la aldeana" staged in Seville,

ca. 1720. While in the Latin, the term mediates any festive or eventful dance form over the course. A broad line of fandango music and dance emerged that went on to constitute an important part of the regional expressive culture. This family comprised of multilistic genres, as diverse as the Cuban peasant punto the salon and concert fandangos of Mozart and Scarlatti, and last but not least the Andalusian fandango subgenres that became core components of flamenco. The word itself became a conduit for



Image Courtesy: <http://www.rafaagalan.com/blog/>

creative interaction and syncretism of music, dance and people of diverse cultures. This dance form is a good example of ethnological theatre dance form fashioned by traditional style which has still retained its impression through its ancestral folkloristic base. It is a conjecture that after the first world war, the South American dancer, La Agrenetina conquered the theatre for this dance. It exclaimed by the Russian-born French critic Andre Levinson "She alone has revived and developed an art form too long debased by the gypsies of the music hall. But it can be assumed that this dance form precedes all the European forms since the knowledge of the dances has been documented from the times of the golden age and

Hellenistic sovereignty in the 5th century, before Christ. At the time of Romanisation, the dancing girls, known as "las Andaluces deliciosas"-were already wandering the then-studied world.

When Spain became reunited and culturally important again under Ferdinand and Isabella, the dance form was introduced with the help of the drama. Even the Church, particularly in Sevilla and Toledo, opened its door to the dance and — being an ironic twist of history — Jewish dancing masters were quite active before the Inquisition. Curt Sachs, mentions that in as early as 1313, Rabbi Hacenen Salomo taught the Christians to perform a choral dance around the altar of St. Bartholomew in Zaragoza.

The need for emotional relief through dancing has always been a driving force in the Spanish dance. The Spaniards were daring navigators of that time and, from their discovery of other hemispheres, they introduced to Europe the dance forms from the Americas and India. Some of the influences can even be traced back to the Phoenicians. The fandango is related to the Reinos de las Indias of the American Indians and turned into a rage on Spanish soil, especially during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth century. Even Mozart asks for a fandango in *The Marriage of Figaro* in 1786. But in 1767, Casanova, strongly got impressed by the fandango when he saw it being performed in Madrid, records in his *Memoirs*: "Each couple, man and woman, never move more than three steps as they click their castanets with the music of the orchestra. They take a thousand attitudes; make a thousand gestures so lascivious that nothing can compare with them. This dance is the expression of love from beginning to end, from the sigh of desire to the ecstasy of enjoyment. It seemed impossible to me that after such a dance the girl could refuse anything to her partner." This dance requires a costume. The woman adopts the short skirt of bright-colored silk, and adorns it with flounces of black blonde lace. The gentleman wore an embroidered, braided waistcoat. The guitar furnishes the orchestra while dancing, both male and female alternately playing the same air, both keep time to its measure. The Fandango is said to be a foundation to all the other Spanish Dances. In the nuances of choreography, the dancers if solo, duette, or quartette, all used castanets. With the corps of eight or sixteen half castanets and half tambourines are required. If solo, the dancer has to come from L. 2d ex. If more,



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**The need for emotional relief through dancing has always been a driving force in the Spanish dance. The Spaniards were daring navigators of that time and, from their discovery of other hemispheres, they introduced to Europe the dance forms from the Americas and India**

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half came on from each side of the stage. If there is more than a duette form in column of 2s down the center of the stage.

It was born in transit between the Americas and the Iberian Peninsula therefore, was swept away by industrialisation and the growth of cities and urban space. The birth of capitalism and the process of revolution would independent the Americas. From the celebration of the humble folklore to the theatres and salons of the elite, the fandango multiplied. With its dexterous footwork, boisterous castanets and Gypsy attitude, the fandango was absorbed heartedly by nationalism and identity.

Being an art form of multiplicities, fandango can be further categorised. It can be categorised in a set of certain parameters and continua. One of these would distinguish it as a dance form; or as a listening oriented genre. The early referenced form of fandango was recorded as a dance with purely remarkable musical features. As Berlanga (2000) notes in the 19th and early 20th centuries, during this period, Juan Brea the singer guitarist popularised the fashion as a listening oriented fandango which was further cultivated as a quasi-art-song for social listening.

Another analytical idiom of fandango is that it can be distinguished as a folk or as a cultivated form of art performed by trained professionals. Such can be categorised as classical performers, such as of music and dance, sustained by elite and other flamenco performers; one belonging to the folk milieu, had no need of formal theory. They are trained as oral and informal artists. There has always been a fluid continuum which has long been transverse in both



Image Courtesy: <https://i.pinimg.com/>

directions by musicians and musical forms.

In the colonial era- the fandango complex can be translated to ramify the peninsular Caribbean area which is quite inseparable from the other genres. This category requires two-three more genres from the Caribbean, which included genres from Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Cuban zapateo. Even Hispanic genre under Afro- Latin context, has not left the thread of the time. The fandango complex has initially evolved and has represented a finalization of rhythms' with that complex itself. The Dominican merengue can also be genetically related to the complex. Therefore, the fandango must be seen as a vast, heterogeneous and extraordinarily complex of an art form which is fundamental to the exigencies of cultures and traditions. ■

Sarah Chauhan, World Culture Forum

# THE STORY OF SEMPEROPER



Image Courtesy: modlar.com

**T**he history of Sempreroper Opera House exemplifies the resilience of art and culture and its strength to swim back to the surface irrespective of the trials and tribulations that it might be subject to. This resilience of art and culture is the aspect that makes it an unfathomable force, bringing people together for resurging and reclaiming its glory. Semperoper Opera House was named after its architect Gottfried Semper (1803-79) in 1841. During his adventurous life, the German architect, scholar, and political revolutionary experienced early fame, political exile from his homeland, international prominence, and the exhilaration of witnessing European architecture being transformed by his influential body of ideas which pushed European Architecture to the brink of modernism. His sensitive understanding of the ontological significance of art and architecture, and his ambitious rendering

of art and architecture as the objects of scientific investigation and prediction earned him commissions of prestigious projects like the Dresden Hoftheater (Semperoper), the Picture Galleries of the Zwinger Palace, a synagogue, and several townhouses and villas. His book 'The Four Elements of Architecture' engaged with the polychrome architectural style which emphasised on practice of decorating architectural elements with a wide variety of colours. Semperoper reflected the architectural styles of Renaissance, Baroque and Corinthian style making it an appropriate exemplification of eclecticism, where the influences of many styles are used.

Semperoper Opera House, opened its gates to the audience on 13th April 1941 with an opera performance composed by Carl Maria Friedrich Ernst von Weber and it was then called Dresden Hoftheater but the monumental building was accidentally caught in the grips of a blaze in 1986. In the aftermath of the fire, the citizens of Dresden immediately decided and participated in rebuilding their opera house, for which they demanded that Gottfried Semper should be commissioned for its reconstruction, even though he was in exile because of his involvement in the May 1849 uprising in Dresden. The architect deployed his son, Manfred Semper to build the second opera house using his plans which was completed in 1878, constructed in Neo-Renaissance style, since then it was named Semperoper Opera House. The monument's interiors were designed by Johannes Schilling and its entrance depicted great playwright and musicians such as Sophocles, Euripides, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Johann Christopher Friedrich von Schiller, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (Molière) and William Shakespeare. This opera house has staged great conductors such as Carl Gottlieb Reißiger, Richard Wagner, Ernst von Schuch (1889–1914), Fritz Reiner (1914–1921), Fritz Busch (1922–1933), Karl Böhm (1934–1942), Karl Elmendorff (1943–

1944), Joseph Keilberth (1945–1951) and Rudolf Kempe (1949–1952).

Although the bad fate of this monumental Opera House was not limited to accidental fire but instead it was a victim to the aerial bombing led by the Allied Nations over the city of Dresden, the capital city of Saxony conducted between 13th and 15th February 1945. This had a devastating impact on the city which faced around 25,000 deaths and many more casualties. The city of Dresden was a haven of art and architecture, its inhabitants felt that they were safe of any such attacks because of the serenity of the city's architecture. Travellers who used to visit Dresden in the inter-war period were awestruck with the beauty of the city but the Dresden's serenity didn't save it from the aerial attack, as many of its inhabitants had predicted.

For the next four decades that followed, the opera house was reduced to a ruin with only its outer walls that were still standing and hardly a little more of Semperoper was left. This inspired the residents of Dresden once again to combine their efforts for organizing a rebuilding campaign for their dear Opera House and they collected 1.5 million East German marks (the currency of those days) and volunteered for the initiation of restoration work in 1974. The most important historical points of reference used in this restoration were the letters that had been written by the monument's original chief architect Gottfried Semper, who had led rebuilding of this opera house in Dresden from Vienna and Zurich through his son, Manfred Semper, during his exile. Most of the details that he had envisioned were preserved in the letters. After it's reconstruction, the outer facade was blackened as much of the original material was reused. Although the interior, on the other hand, dazzled with its colours and was illuminated by grand chandeliers, which made it a fresh sight even to older residents because the original coloration had been painted over in 1908 to favour a darker palette.

Semper's specifications included imagery surrounding the ancient gods Dionysus and Ariadne,

who were revived through opulent and extravagant artworks by 56 painters and 24 sculptors. The head architect of its rehabilitation, Wolfgang Hänsch held that the original idea was to preserve the Semperoper's 19th century exterior aesthetic, but to contrast it with a modern and functional interior space. But this assertion was eventually rejected and he said "All of the designs conceived along these lines or that tried to achieve compromises in its architectural form repeatedly showed that a 'modern festive style' cannot be put on a par with Semper's classically motivated architecture."

There was an additional consideration that was given intricate attention, which was the legendary acoustics of the venue that could only be achieved by staying true to the original interior. This mission was accomplished, according to conductor Hans Vonk, who supervised the music production in the 1985 premiere week and said "It's one of the most beautiful theatres in the world. I'm familiar with comparable acoustics only at Milan's Scala." The four tiers of the theatre created a close visual proximity to the stage, whereas the auditorium's design gave listeners the feeling of being "engulfed in sound." This resulted in a structure

that was fit for Dresden's illustrious operatic tradition.

For the inauguration ceremony German railway had to introduce a special train service to meet the demand of Berlin residents wanting to sample Dresden's musical treats.

200,000 Dresden residents rallied on February 13, 1985, for the dedication of the restored Semperoper. At the height of the Cold War, five years before German reunification, the Semperoper was reopened. The evening's performance, Carl Maria von Weber's opera "Der Freischütz" (The Marksman), was broadcast live on the radio in the US and other countries. It marked the beginning of the 317th season for Dresden's opera, and the champagne flowed freely. Four decades prior - on August 31, 1944 - the venue had also closed with Weber's "Freischütz." Its employees were sent off to war. ■

Team, World Culture Forum

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**The history of Semperoper OperaHouse exemplifies the resilience of art and culture and its strength to swim back to the surface irrespective of the trials and tribulations that it might be subject to**

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# HERMITAGE MUSEUM

## THE SOLSTICE OF RUSSIAN ETHNICITY

**T**he State Hermitage museum is one of the most conservative museums of the world. It preserves the spirit of symbolism of 18th and 19th century Russia. The Russian history veiled under the walls of the winter palace and also subsequently, came to an end. The hermitage also prevails Russian attitude towards art and culture, of Russia's syncretism towards pride and valour. The country's history is poignantly evident towards the blockade of Leningrad, during the Second World War, when the museum became a solstice of victory and culture.

During the Soviet period the hermitage became a historical ideogram despite the efforts made by the state to foist their ideology. It remains an indelible source of information to acknowledge Russia's past. It was in the hermitage that the works of the Impressionists such as Picasso and Matisse were applauded, thus creating a linkage with the contemporary world, and fostering the country during the obscure years of the Soviet reign.

The museum covers an area of 184,317 square metres, which is further divided amongst 1710 galleries. It comprises of 11 principal buildings including the Winter Palace, the Small Hermitage, the Old Hermitage, the New Hermitage, the Hermitage Theatre, the Reserve House of the Winter Palace, Menchikov Palace, the General Staff Building, the Museum of Porcelain and the Museum of Heraldry, as well as the Staraya Derevnnya Restoration and Storage Centre, an ultramodern space open to the public. Eight of these buildings are located in the historic centre of St. Petersburg. The collection houses approximately three million objects, including 16,700 paintings, 12,500 sculptures and 300,000 objects of applied art, 620,000 works on paper, 725,000 archaeological artefacts and 1,125,000 numismatic objects. The museum has an incredible collection of

rich heritage.

In the Elizabethan era, the construction of the winter palace was commissioned, which was proposed to serve the royalty as her official residence. It was designed by the Italian architect Bartolommeo Carlo Rastrelli and as an inspiration was carried from the percept of the western European architecture. It became a masterpiece of Baroque architecture.

In The Year 1762, Catherine the Great ascended the throne and made it as her official residence. The name hermitage derived from her affectionate phrase to describe the rooms of the palace as 'my hermitage'.

As a museum, the hermitage received a grand repost of collection in 1764, with the hanging of 225 paintings from the reverence of Catherine the Great from J.E. Gotzkowski, a merchant from Berlin. From that stance, the museum collection expanded rapidly, owing to the requirements of more space and galleries. Furthermore, the collection was going to be enshrined by 600 new paintings purchased from Count Heinrich von Bruhl, including works by Rembrandt, Rubens, Watteau and Poussin. Three years later, in 1772, Catherine acquired the 400- piece collection of Pierre Crozat, including masterpieces by Raphael, Giorgione, Titian, Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck, Poussin, Watteau, Boucher and Chardin. In 1779 the purchase of George Walpole s English collection from Houghton Hall provoked such an outcry in England that the works had to be shipped to St. Petersburg in great haste.

In 1764, Catherine commissioned Yury Felten to build an extension on the east of the Winter Palace which he completed in 1766. Later it became the Southern Pavilion of the Small Hermitage. In 1767–1769, French architect Jean-Baptiste Vallin de la Mothe built the Northern Pavilion on the Neva embankment. Between 1767 and 1775, the extensions were connected by galleries, where



Catherine placed her collections. During the time of Catherine, the Hermitage was not a public museum and few people were allowed to view its holdings. Jean-Baptiste Vallin de la Mothe also rebuilt rooms in the second story of the south-east corner block that was originally built for Elizabeth and later occupied by Peter III. The largest room in this particular apartment was the Audience Chamber (also called the Throne Hall) which consisted of 227 square meters.

The Hermitage buildings served as a home and workplace for nearly a thousand people, including the Imperial family. In addition to this, they also served as an extravagant showplace for all kinds of Russian relics and displays of wealth prior to the art collections. Many events were held in these buildings including masquerades for the nobility, grand receptions and ceremonies for state and government officials. The "Hermitage complex" was a creation of Catherine's that allowed all kinds of

festivities to take place in the palace, the theatre and even the museum of the Hermitage. This helped solidify the Hermitage as not only a dwelling place for the Imperial family, but also as an important symbol and memorial to the imperial Russian state. Today, the palace and the museum are one and the same. In Catherine's day, the Winter Palace served as a central part of what was called the Palace Square. The Palace Square served as St. Petersburg's nerve centre by linking it to all the city's most important buildings. The presence of the Palace Square was extremely significant to the urban development of St. Petersburg, and while it became less of a nerve centre later into the 20th century, its symbolic value was still very much preserved.

The collections of the Hermitage Museum covers a rich diversity of cultural fields, including archaeology, Oriental art, Classical Antiquity, Western European art, Russian art, numismatics, and arms and armour. This variety makes the Hermitage itself a microcosm of cultural diversity. While conscious of its status as a museum of world culture, the Hermitage also symbolizes Russia's attitude towards art and culture, as well as its openness and its excellence on the cultural stage. Thus, while confirming the Universalist ideal of the world's greatest museums, the Hermitage is also a monument to the importance of national culture in the fulfilment of this ambition.

According to Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director of the Hermitage Museum: "The most essential thing then, as now," "was to constantly remind ourselves of the objective... to preserve the Hermitage and its exceptional world heritage. The Hermitage is more important than anything else. The Hermitage belongs not only to Russia but to the entire world. "In the day-to-day life of large institutions such as the Hermitage, people often tend to complicate things, causing them to lose sight of the essential objectives of their institution. Petty internal politics get in the way of action. Periods of crisis have this in common: they bring you back to the essentials; they disrupt the daily routine, forcing people to forget about the divergences that were paralysing action. At the Hermitage, everyone's efforts were suddenly focused on the central mission: the museum and its preservation". Therefore, Hermitage is an opulence of cultural hegemony and emerges as a mark of honour for the Russian federation. ■

Team, World Culture Forum

# ART NOUVEAU

## THE NEW ART

**A**rt Nouveau is referred to the art movement which espoused as a reaction against the rigorous academic inclination of arts that was confining artistic expression into eclecticism and historicism. During the end of 19th Century, Art in Europe was developed into a sophisticated academic discipline where artworks were gauged through the parameters of lines, shapes, forms and textures while the objective of art was shaping into producing paintings or sculptures of idealized figures and landscapes, which did not appease the new generation of artists and they attempted to break through the existing mould of art through engaging with Art Nouveau. This art movement transcended the imitative historicism of the late 19th century and paved the route for more fluid and sinuous forms in artistic expression. This movement was not limited to painting and sculpture but rather aimed to bridge the gap between fine arts and applied art, its influence was the strongest in the decorative arts.

Art Nouveau was the precursor of other art movements like Art Deco and Modernism, which became the more dominant styles of art and architecture during the 20th Century. The reign of Art Nouveau as a popular form of artistic expression spanned from 1890's to 1910, but during these two decades, this art movement played a decisive role in the evolution of arts and aesthetics. As the etymology of the term suggests, this art movement originated from France but its influence was spread across Europe, giving birth to many regional art movements which followed the same paradigm, these art movements are

classified under the ambit of Art Nouveau and considered different names for the same art movement although they consisted of regional peculiarities, for instance, it was called Jugendstil in German, Stile Liberty in Italian, Modernisme in Catalan(Spain) and in English it was known as the



Image Courtesy: adin.be

Modern Style (which is not same as Modernism and Modern architecture of 20th Century).

Art Nouveau drew its influences from Japanese woodblock prints that were made during the ukiyo-e movement, which highlight incredible use of line forms, decorative pattern, and vibrant colours; and impressionism. During its brief lifespan, Art Nouveau left its mark on architecture, furniture, ceramics, textiles, posters, glass, and jewellery. The artworks resulting from the movement are characterized by linear simplicity, flowing, asymmetrical compositions, abstract plant motifs, and undulating movement.

The Exposition Universelle (Universal



International Exhibition) which was held in Paris during 1900, highlight the epitome of Art Nouveau. This event attracted nearly fifty million visitors from around the world, showcasing the paintings, sculptures, architecture, designs, glassware, furniture and decorative objects of this style. The architecture of the Exposition was a mixture of Art Nouveau and Beaux-Arts architecture: the main exhibit hall, the Grand Palais had a Beaux-Arts façade that was completely unrelated to the spectacular Art Nouveau stairway and exhibit hall in the interior. Art Nouveau was a luxury style which required expert and highly-paid craftsmen, hence its mass-production was not easy. One of the few Art Nouveau products that could be mass-produced was the perfume bottle, which is still manufactured in the same style today.

This art movement branched out in various genres, ranging from sculpture to ceramics. Apart from paintings and sculptures, it is most prominent in architecture and the decorative arts. Although, it was well-suited to the graphic arts, especially the poster, interior design, metal and jewellery, furniture design, ceramics, glass-art and textiles.

## Paintings

The artist who is most closely associated with Art Nouveau was Les Nabis, a post-impressionist who worked in Paris from 1888 until 1900. The most vital among the stated goals of this movement was to break down the barrier between the fine arts and the decorative arts. They painted not only canvases but also decorative screens and panels. Other members included Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Paul Ranson, Édouard Vuillard, Ker-Xavier Roussel, Félix Vallotton, and Paul Sérusier. In Belgium, the Wall murals by Gustav Klimt are considered a masterpiece of Art Nouveau.

## Glass Art

Glass art was a medium in which Art Nouveau found new and varied ways of expression, it was an avenue for Intense amount of experimentation to find new effects of transparency and opacity: in engraving win cameo, double layers, and acid engraving, a technique that permitted production in series. Nancy, a city in France became an important centre for glass art, housing the

workshops of Emile Gallé and the Daum studio, led by Auguste and Antonin Daum. Glass painting on tainted glass became a popular medium for artistic expression in this period.

## Sculpture

The sculpture was an important form of expression for Art Nouveau artists, architects and sculptors found inspiration in animal motifs. The porcelain figurine Dancer with a Scarf by Agathon Léonard gained recognition both as ceramic art and sculpture at the Paris Exposition in 1900. Sculptors who created ceramic sculptures were Bohemian Stanislav Sucharda and Ladislav Šaloun, Belgian Charles Van der Stappen and Catalan Lambert Escaler, who created statues of polychrome terracotta. Another notable sculptor of that time was Agustí Querol Subirats from Catalonia who created statues in Spain, Argentina, Mexico and Cuba.

## Furniture

Furniture Design of the Art Nouveau period has close proximity to the architecture of the buildings; the architects often designed the furniture, carpets, light fixtures, doorknobs, and other decorative details. The furniture was often complex and expensive due and regarded as continental designs with curving shapes. Although, the drawback of this furniture was that the owner of the home could not change the furniture or add pieces in a different style without disrupting the entire effect of the room.

## Posters and Graphics

Graphic arts flourished in the Art Nouveau due to new technologies of printing, particularly colour lithography, which allowed the mass production of colour posters. Art was no longer confined to galleries, museums and salons; it could be found on Paris walls, and in illustrated art magazines, which circulated throughout Europe and to the United States. The most popular theme of Art Nouveau posters were women symbolizing glamour, modernity and beauty. Art Nouveau was used in the typography of psychedelic rock and pop album covers as well as in commercial advertising. ■

Team, World Culture Forum

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA

## BABEL OF LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

The invention of language would be a unanimous contender amongst the best inventions that human civilization has ever come up with. Language paves the way for humans to articulate as well as express their thoughts, feelings and opinions which plays an important role in weaving individuals into communities because it is the most intimate indicator of affinity.



Image Courtesy: <https://i.pinimg.com/>

Papua New Guinea concedes for over five million people; known to retain with 820 languages on Earth. Each language dawns for a vision and cultural identity of its own. All the languages are streamlined to us as oral traditions; howbeit, many on the convergence of a threat or disappearance.

Papua New Guinea has three official languages, English, Tok Pisin and Motu. But culturally, the locals speak around 820 languages owing to two dominant language groups, namely, the Austronesians and the Papuans.

The Austronesians group originated from South China, spreading from the Philippines, Indonesia, and as far west as Madagascar. In New Guinea they encountered with the coasts and the adjacent

islands, then furthered en route to the east across the whole South Pacific, and then to New Zealand. They represent about 800 languages today, all relating to a common proto: primogeniture language.

The other group, the Papuans languages, also called as 'Non-Austronesians' are spoken on mainland New Guinea and are stretched towards west of Halmahera, till the far east of the Solomons. These languages are non homologous and thus appears to be belonging to about 60 different families. Therein, it is preferred to emphasize their non homologous nature into the group of lingua familia.

Traditionally multilingual communities are much more than a curious rarity in Papua New Guinea, as in many other areas. Speakers of small and smallish languages are likely to know the languages of their neighbours. Within the East Sepik Province, the Yalaku (Ndu family) speak the unrelated Kwoma. The Gala (also Ndu) know the unrelated Wogamusin. The Manambu used to know Kwoma and Western Iatmul, giving a figure of 870.

In pre-colonial times, different language groups had to communicate with each other, mostly for trade. They would learn more languages and use them as 'lingua familia'. Indigenous languages traditionally used this way would include the Austronesian languages Suau (Bay n.d.), and Dobu (Milne Bay), spoken off the islands of Eastern Papua. Kuanua (or Tolai), an Austronesian language with about 100,000 speakers, is still used as a lingua familia in East New Britain.

With the spread of Christianity, missionaries found it difficult to render in the multilingual Babel. It is difficult to use all the languages at places such as churches. As a result some languages were chosen as 'church languages'. Dobu is used by the Methodists in the Milne Bay area. Kuanua is adopted by the Methodist mission in the New Britain-New Ireland region. The most successful



Image Courtesy: <https://i.pinimg.com/>



non-Austronesian language used as a lingua familia of the Lutherans is Kâte, in the Huon Peninsula area. Kâte has c. 20,000 first language learners and about 80,000 second language learners. The traces of Kâte influence are there in many languages whose speakers no longer know it. New post-colonial situations required new languages for communication with the colonizers, and between indigenous people in the context of plantation work, schooling, new urban centres and the like. Three post-contact lingua familia dominate the linguistic scene in contemporary Papua New Guinea.

Tok Pisin (Melanesian Pidgin) is currently the most important language spoken in most provinces. The estimated numbers are 50,000 first language speakers, and 4,000,000 second language users English is the

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**Papua New Guinea has three official languages, English, Tok Pisin and Motu. But culturally, the locals speak around 820 languages owing to two dominant language groups, namely, the Austronesians and the Papuans.**

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official language of the colonial administration in the southern half of the country (formerly known as Papua) from 1875 and of the northern half (formerly called New Guinea) from 1919. It is now rapidly gaining ground as a means of schooling and communication, especially in East Sepik Province, Western Province and a number of other coastal provinces.

Hiri Motu is a Creole based on the Austronesian language Motu (still spoken by about 14,000 people in Central province). It developed around 1900 as a contact language for speakers from different language backgrounds in the Motu-speaking environment around Port Moresby, especially members of the indigenous police (hence its alternative name Police

Motu). Hiri Motu is still widely used in the southern part of the country (roughly corresponding to the old



## Tok Pisin (an English-based creole)

Can you guess what these phrases mean?

- 1) Haumas klok?
- 2) Em i drink planti wiski.
- 3) Mi sori tumas long yu.
- 4) Mipela no lukim dok bilong yu.

**Bo, Ak, Karawa, Likum, Hoia, ARI, Abom, Arawum, Bagupi, Bepour, Bilakura, Gweda, Gorovu, Kawacha and Kamasa.**

However, quite a number of Papuan languages are increasing their number of speakers, which is hopeful, according to the latest edition of the Ethnologue. Noticeable is that all the letters of the alphabet are represented in the names of Papuan languages

Examples of developing languages include: *Mussau-Emira, Notsi, Olo, Orokaiva, Patpatar, Qaqet, Rawa, Suena, Suki, Tokano, Tungag, Uri, Usan, Wiru, Wogeo, Yong Kim, Yopno, Zia, Zimakani, Agarabi, Adzera, Aekyo, Abau, Lote, Lihir, Kyaka, Kutong, Kerewo, Jilim, Iyo, Iwal, Imbongu, Hunjara-Kaina Ke, Hula, Gumawana, Gedaged, Gapapaiwa, Fuyug, Fore, Foi, Fasu, Erave, Edolo, Duna, Doromu-koki, Dadawa, Bwana Bwana, and Bwaidoka.*

The 1975 constitution of Papua New Guinea acknowledges all languages, specifying that every citizen has the right to literacy in English, Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu, or a vernacular language. Now the number of people with no knowledge of at least one official language is negligible. Traditional multilingualism now tends to be replaced by new diglossic and triglossic patterns with Tok Pisin and English. This, typically unstable relationship resulted in the dominance of the two lingua familia and emergence of the vernacular.

Languages can be roughly equal in status. Or one can be dominant over another, or carry more prestige — as does Tok Pisin, and now also English, in many areas of New Guinea. Relationships between languages and their spheres of use can also involve diglossia. Diglossic language situations normally involve two (or more) varieties that coexist in a speech community, in complementary distribution according to the domains of usage. For instance, English or Tok Pisin may be used at school, and the vernacular, (Tok Ples) at home. Balanced and stable di- or tri-glossia involves Tok Pisin and often also English as the language of government, local council, missions and schooling, with the vernacular used in day-today communication in other circumstances (including domestic). ■

Team, World Culture Forum

administrative division of Papua, covering Central, Oro, Gulf provinces, and parts of Milne 2 See Fry (1977), Sankoff (1980) and Paris (2012) on traditional and missionary *linguae francae*, but appears to be receding under pressure from Tok Pisin. Tok Pisin and English are perceived as a threat to Hiri Motu. It has hardly any mother tongue speakers. The number of second language learners for Hiri Motu is about 120,000.

Among the hundreds of indigenous Papuan languages, Enga is the most widely spoken. It's also called Tsaga, Tchaga or Caga, and has about 230,000 total speakers. Enga is followed by Huli, with 150,000 speakers and Melpa, which is spoken by 130,000 Papuans.

Rabaul Creole German or Unserdeutsch still manages to survive, although the number of native speakers is now down to 100. The original speakers were children who were living in a German orphanage, using German words mixed with the grammar of Tok Pisin. Most of the speakers of Unserdeutsch now live in Australia.

A number of indigenous Papuan languages have fewer than 1,000 speakers and there are other languages that are spoken by less than 100 people. Other languages are more promising because the number of speakers is increasing.

Some of the threatened and extremely endangered languages have become extinct such as:

# THE ART OF SHODO WRITING JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY

**T**he Japanese calligraphy- the fine art of writing has been a custom in Japan throughout the ages. The art of writing has been highly esteemed in Japan. There is no record of the origin, but it is assumed that a Korean scribe known as Wani introduced some Chinese books of Confucianism and ushered a novel lingo into the fabric of Japanese penmanship. It is believed that the Chinese characters (Kanji) were introduced into the Japanese Calligraphy in the second half of the 4th century. Around the same time, shuf (Chinese Calligraphy) was also incorporated. The edutainment of calligraphy witnessed one's education and culture. It is incorporated into street signs, advertisements, restaurant menus, nameplates, letters, certificates, school curricula, enrichment lessons, and art. Most of these are written with ink brushes, not pens. Why do the Japanese value brush-writing so much?

The reason to dwell into calligraphy according to the Japanese philosophy is that handwriting conveys a sense of emotion, feelings and character of the writer. They find difficult to express their feelings through the usage of the here and now advanced technology.

The Japanese calligraphy requires exceptional tools to master the art. Some of the tools are:

**The Brush (Fude):** Ink brushes are mostly made with animal hair and are available in various sizes.

**The ink (Sumi):** a compressed stick which is a mixture of sooth of burnt wood and oil. It is usually mixed with some water to produce more ink. Now days Bokuju (liquid ink) is easily available.

**Ink stone (Suzuri):** a tool to dissolve the stick ink

with water.

**Paper Weight (Bunchin):** it is required to keep the sheet in place.

**The paper (Hanshi/Kami):** the most preferred size to be attributed for writing.

**The desk pad (Shitajiki):** it is used to keep the desk tidy and ignorant of any errors while writing.

Good posture and stance are fundamental mechs to write with an ink brush. They are as crucial as a posture required for sporting. Posture is

necessitated while writing with a big brush as it becomes one's requisite to manoeuvre the entire body to write.

One should not sit close to the desk. Back muscles should be stretched and shoulders relaxed to ease the stress while writing. The brush should be held vertically. At least three or four fingers (without bending the thumb), should be positioned to support the brush. The small brush is held likely as a pen but the thumb should not be curved.

Calligraphy brushes are different from paint brushes. Generously, about two-thirds of the brush is soaked into

the ink. Then, the tip of the ink stone (Suzuri) is implemented to adjust the amount of the ink to prevent it from dripping or spreading.

One should be quite aware of the posture, grip and angle of the brush. It is easier to write if the centre of the paper is slighted towards the right; the entire arm is used for restricted movements. It can lead to better results with a smooth flair of skill and might.

The writing order of Japanese characters is predetermined. The basic flow starts from the top to the bottom, from the left to the right. Composing



Image Courtesy: fbcdn-sphotos

each character by following the exact writing order makes it easier to shape them correctly.

The following section introduces the basic strokes that should be applied when writing with an ink brush.

**Dot-Making :** Rather than bringing the brush straight down from top to bottom, place the tip of the brush diagonally from the upper left, apply pressure, and then gently lift the brush from the paper.

**Drawing a Horizontal Line:** The starting point of the stroke is referred to as shihitsu. The brush is placed diagonally from the upper left.

Following the shihitsu (starting point), the brush is moved towards the right. The part where the brush is moved is referred to as sōhitsu. Try not to twist the brush or the wrist. Instead the entire body should be used to move the brush to the right. The tip of the brush should remain in the same angle as the starting point. The tip of the brush should pass the top, where the ink is the darkest.

**The ending point:** The stroke is referred as shūhitsu. the brush is halted at the same angle as the shihitsu (starting point), pressure is applied, and then the brush is lifted from the paper.

**Drawing a Vertical Line :** the tip of the brush is placed from the upper right, in the same angle as writing a horizontal line. Try not to twist your brush or your wrist. The entire body is used to move the brush to the right. The tip of the brush should pass along the top of the line, where the ink is the darkest. Stop the brush at the same angle as the shihitsu (starting point), pressure is applied, and then the brush is lifted from the paper.

Accordingly, it is difficult to draw even a simple dot or line and that writing clean letters with a brush requires a lot of practice.

If one writes slowly, the ink will seep into the paper, causing nijimi (smudge). If one writes fast, the ink will not have enough time to soak in and will cause kasure (graininess). While it is important to write without either, these are not necessarily uneven, as they can be viewed as a streak of uniqueness or character of the letters.

**Drawing the Angled Line (ore) :** A polygonal line is called a turning or breaking. There are transfusions from side to side, transversal from side to side. The brush is gently placed on the left diagonally and is moved to the right or down. The brush is moved across the body without turning the brush or twisting the wrist. In the bending part, the brush is set to a halt



once at the same brush angle as the starting brush. the writing pressure firmly applied and then the brush is moved downwards or to the right. The tip of the brush passes over the horizontal image part and the left side part of the vertical image part thick part of black ink.

**Drawing the Curved Line (Maqari) :** the brush is placed diagonally at the top left and then moved down, the entire body is required to slide the brush instead of turning the brush or twisting your wrist. Next, at the point where the line curves, the brush is sided slowly at the same angle as the shihitsu (starting point). The brush tip is made to be passed along the darkest part of the ink.

**The shuhitsu (ending point) of any stroke is one of the following:** tome (stop), hane (upward brushstroke or hook), or harai (sweep). These are essential points while writing with a calligraphy brush. Various types of strokes end (shūhitsu) are listed below:

**Tome (stop) :** the ink brush is halted at the same angle as the shihitsu (starting point), pressure is applied, and then is slowly lifted from the paper.

**Hane (upward brushstroke or hook) :** the ink brush is manoeuvred with the handle held vertically, in such a way that one does not tip it to side. Just before one makes a move into the upward brushstroke, the hara (body) is grimly pressed of the brush onto the paper.

**Harai (sweep) :** Moving the ink brush in the same manner as sōhitsu (drawing a flowing line). The direction of the harai will determine the thickness of the line.

One's eyes drink in the slender lines, the power the rhythm and the vitality which this art imitates. One's mind forms invisible characters on the untouched paper. Such is the feeling of rejuvenation while submerging with the ideals of Japanese Calligraphy. ■

Team, World Culture Forum



# BHUTANESE CUISINE

## A SPICY AMAZEMENT



**B**hutan has a richness of cuisines and dishes which are distinctive in essence. It reflects the diversity of the country in a platter. In fact, the cuisine is a significant aspect of the Bhutanese culture.

If one wants to know the people, one should know the food, then the culture. This article showcases the dishes and the cuisines of Bhutan, which serves as a window to the lives of the Bhutanese people and their living. It gives a retrospect into the fascinating subject in a generalised manner.

The origin and the past of the cuisine are unknown; however, it seems to have existed since antiquity- as

old as the existence of the Bhutanese populace. It is not possible to describe exactly what their forefathers consumed; as there is no considerable document available on the subject. But, we have evidence that the tradition of the cuisine transversed from one generation to the next while each generation marking its impression in accordance with the ingredients available at their ease. “Dru-na-gu”, meaning ‘the nine cereals’ a term found in the ancient Bhutanese texts refers to the act of ingest which we still continue today. Or, at least, the basic components would have been the same as today.

Food is an important aspect in Bhutan. It is not just

an element to be savoured, but is entrenched with the quotidian life of the people. Most of the festivities are based on food, a symbolisation of opulence and well-being. All the dutiful ceremonies begin with the offering of “Zhudgre Phunsum Tshogpa” and “Marchang”. Zhugre literally means “seated in rows”, whereby participants’ are seated in the rows respectively. It originated from the tantric tradition of Buddhism and is adopted to perform at auspicious occasions. Phunsum Tshogpa ‘on the other hand means grace, glory and wealth to combine with jollity and bliss. Marchang is the social offering of Chang or wine mainly made from wheat or barley. Other ceremonial dishes include, Ema Datshi, Shamday and Doem Dizang which is prepared during Chogu or religious rituals. Some of the authentic dishes of Bhutan are:

**Ema Datshi :** The national dish of Bhutan, dominates the flavours with spices, chillies and regional cheese Datshi, therein, Bhutan is known as the ‘hub of spicy cuisine’. This dish is a staple to every local and locus of the state. Variations of Ema Datshi include adding green beans, ferns, potatoes, mushrooms. Etc. or banding the regular cheese for yak cheese.

**Kewa datshi :** Kewa is potato kewa datshi is potatoes and Bhutanese cheese. Surprisingly, it is much more similar to scalloped potatoes. The potatoes are typically sliced into thin pieces, then sautéed down with cheese and lots of butter. Sometimes cooks would toss in a few chillies or tomatoes, but usually, this is a Bhutanese dish that is pretty mild, but garnered with potatoes and cheese.

**Shamu datshi :** A third staple cheese dish in Bhutanese food is shamu datshi, cheese with mushrooms. If one is a chilli addict, be in ambiguity to make this datshi dish as a personal favourite variation of a Bhutanese veggie cheese dish. The mushrooms, which can be of any variety of local Bhutanese Himalayan mushrooms are cooked into a cheesy sauce and stewed along with butter. Just like with all the other variations of Bhutanese datshi, one can eat shamu datshi along with rice.

**Shakam ema datshi :** There’s just no way one can go to Bhutan and eat Bhutanese food without eating lots of cheese. Datshi is probably one of the first words one learns in Dzongkha. Shakam is Bhutanese dried beef, which is among the most favourites of meats. The beef is dried and preserved, tasting similar to



beef jerky, but thicker, and not quite completely dehydrated. For shakam datshi, dried beef is cut into bite sized pieces and simmered with cheese and butter. What a combo this is!

**Shakam paa :** Shakam paa is a wonderful Bhutanese food of dried beef cooked with dried chillies and sometimes slices of radish. Shakam paa can become one’s favourite protein dishes of choice. Again, the beef is slightly chewy from being dried and preserved, and is fuelled with dry chillies. One thing that can be loved about Bhutanese cooking



Image Courtesy: <https://www.bithedu.com/>



is how the chillies are just tossed in whole —No worries about slicing things up and making the dish look pretty.

**Shakam shukam datshi :** Shakam shukam datshi is a rather rare dish that is a bane at too many restaurants in Bhutan, but if one finds their hands and scoop in it, falling in love with the combination and especially with the unique white chillies is not perplexing.

**Phaksha paa :** Along with beef and yak, pork is also widely loved throughout Bhutan, perhaps the most

of all meats. For phaksha paa, slices of pork are stir fried with whole red dry chillies and with some mountain vegetables as well. The result is another staple Bhutanese dish that goes great with rice mixed with some datshi dishes.

**Sikam paa :** Weakness for bacon? Sikam paa is like bacon at the next level and this is a dish that many Bhutanese love with passion. One can witness strands of half transparent pork belly hanging in the sun to dry — that's sikam. The pork, which has quite an impressive ratio of fat, is dried in the sun. For sikam paa, the dried pork belly is then fried up with dried chillies.

**Yaksha shakam :** If there's meat that can be argued as better than dried beef, it is dried yak meat. Yak is similar to beef, but it has a little bit of a different fragrance (without being too gamey), and it supposedly is nutritional. For yaksha shakam, the yak meat is dried into a jerky like meat and it can be cooked in a number of different ways. One of the best versions of dried yak meat was dried yak cut up and cooked with fermented yak cheese. It is one's Bhutanese dish of dreams.

**Goep Tripe:** If you love tripe, goep in Bhutan, slices of tripe stir fried with dried chillies, green onions, and sometimes small vegetables, is an excellent dish. Just like so many other famous Bhutanese dishes, what can be liked most about eating goep in Bhutan are all the dried chillies that are included in this dish. The tripe can be a little on the chewy side, but that's the real texture of the tripe.

**Juma :** Juma is a type of common Bhutanese sausage made with minced meat, rice, and some light spices all filled into an intestines wrapper. The first thing in the first bite of juma is the wonderful citrusy zing of Sichuan pepper. Other than that, most versions of Bhutanese are a little unadorned, but very meaty.

**Gondo datshi:** Butter egg fry, or gondo datshi, is like the ultimate Bhutanese scrambled eggs one can seize to imagine. Eggs are scrambled up with datshi cheese, and a huge amount of butter, and in some cases small bits of dried chilli can be a sycophancy. The result is a very condensed scrambled egg cheese mixture that is fragrant from butter and packed with heartiness.

**Jasha maru :** Jasha maru is Bhutanese chicken stew, or sometimes called chicken curry. One of the pep ups of jasha maru is the noticeable ginger taste,



that is nearly every version of the dish. The actual dry spice flavour is quite mild, but the ginger is what really gives this dish its essence.

**Hoentay :** Known especially for originating from Haa Valley in Bhutan, hoentay are similar to momos, but they are made with buckwheat dough wrapper. The dumplings are usually filled with a combination of a local spinach or turnip leaves and cheese, and again, they can either be steamed or fried. One can enjoy numerous plates of hoentay, which are hearty and filling, and are especially good when drowned in Bhutanese chili sauce (ezay).

**Lom :** Due to the harsh winter conditions in many areas of Bhutan, vegetables can sometimes be scarce in the winter. Lom, which are turnip leaves, are one of the few vegetables that can be dried and preserved and eaten throughout the year. The actual turnips themselves are fed to livestock. For lom, it can be sautéed by itself, or cooked with some sikam (dried pork) to give it some extra delicious flavor.

**Khatem :** The bitter melon gourd is called khatem in Bhutan and is famed to be a delicacy. Something about eating something so bitter, which sometimes kind of throws off your taste buds, is exciting. In Bhutan, mostly Indian bitter melon is available as opposed to the longer Chinese bitter melon. Bitter melon in Bhutanese cuisine is often sliced into thin chips like pieces and fried with butter and a little seasoning. It can also be consumed as breakfast in early winters.

**Jaju :** Jaju is Bhutanese milk and vegetable soup. It is often made with some type of local spinach or turnip leaves or any number of light leafy vegetables. The soup broth consists of milk and butter. Overall, the taste is usually quite mellow and plain, but it goes well together to supplement a full Bhutanese feast. Some versions of jaju are very light while in others, a bit of cheese is added to make them heartier and more rich.

**Goen hogay :** Although many Bhutanese dishes can be pretty meat heavy, goen hogay is a traditional Bhutanese cucumber salad. Cucumber is sliced up and mixed with chilli flakes, tomato, cilantro, onions, Sichuan pepper, and a crumble of datshi cheese for extra flavour. Sometimes some extra oil is also added to the recipe to give it a dressing like sauce. Goen hogay is a very refreshing Bhutanese vegetarian dish. It can be especially enjoyed with the Sichuan

pepper zing with which it is often served.

**Khur-le :** Especially common as a Bhutanese breakfast food and for on the go eating in Bhutan, khur-le is a Bhutanese pancake made from buckwheat, wheat, or barley flour. One can typically nourish khur-le along with Bhutanese main dishes, like ema datshi or shakam datshi, or even just with eggs and ezay (chili sauce). It has a spongy texture, but is a bit more hearty and filling than a white wheat flour pancake. It is the type of pancake which can be devoured in a cold climate.

**Puta :** Especially common in the Bumthang region of Bhutan, puta are noodles made from highly nutritious buckwheat that can be grown at high altitudes. For puta, the noodles are prepared and boiled, and sometimes before being served the noodles are stir fried in mustard oil along with a light seasoning of salt and Sichuan pepper. Puta is a traditional Bhutanese staple and it reminds one of Japanese soba noodles.

**Tshampa :** Made from whole wheat flour, tshampa is a dough starch that's eaten as a staple filler. It is very starchy and very heavy, and has a dense dough consistency. In order to eat tshampa, one can roll it into a ball between fingers, and eat it together with any Bhutanese dish like ema datshi or shakam paa. This is one of the Bhutanese food that is traditional, but not very popular anymore, yet it is healthy and hearty.

**Zaow :** At just about every local home in Bhutan, milk tea (chai) or suja (butter tea) is offered plus a communal basket of puffed rice known as zaow. Zaow is not too puffy but more on the crunchy side rather than the puffy side — it has a texture almost like the crunchiness of unpopped popcorn. It is a Bhutanese snack food that's very common and it goes so well together with a cup of tea. Sometimes zaow is eaten with chunks of butter mixed in. The most memorable version is in Phobjikha Valley, and it came with a frighteningly large chunk of butter on top!

**Chogo (chhurpi) :** Chogoo (or chhurpi) just might be the most rock hard, yet edible, cheese snack in the world. This dried yak cheese, which is also common throughout Tibet and Nepal in the Himalayas, is the ultimate preservation of cheese, and it is so hard to gnaw on it for hours before it starts to dissolve on one's tongue. It is the type of snack one can have while walking through the rugged mountains. One

can see strands of chogoo hanging like necklaces around markets in Bhutan. Give it a try!

**Ezay :** There's no way that the compilation of the list of Bhutanese food can be done without paying full respect to ezay, which refers to any kind of Bhutanese chili sauce. Now you might be thinking, chili sauce is not really a food, but in Bhutan, ezay is mandatory to eat with every meal that it can be considered a dish of its own. And sometimes it is almost more like a salad than a chili sauce. From the first meal to the last meal in Bhutan, one cannot get enough of ezay. Ezay literally goes with and complements every Bhutanese food. Just like ema datshi, there are no two ezays that taste the same. Everyone in Bhutan has their own recipe and combination of ingredients include dried chilies, Sichuan pepper, tree tomato and a sprinkle of cheese for extra flavouring.

**Suja-** Suja is the Bhutanese term for butter tea, and appears to be of cultural vitality in Bhutan. Butter tea, which is the drink of choice throughout Tibet and parts of Nepal as well, is a tea which can be made with regular tea leaves or mountain herbs, churned with butter and salt. The saltiness of butter tea might be exhilarating at first, but it is something that can perpetuate one's sanity. It can be exclaimed as a power tea, as one cannot meditate itself without it. Sometimes Bhutanese butter tea will be saltier or less salty, and more or less oily depending on how much butter is used. You can also make suja with either cows butter or more traditionally, yak butter.

### And how can one forget Momos!

Momos are dumplings that are popularly partaken from India to Nepal via Bhutan and known as a Tibetan food – basically the entire Himalayan region – and even broader, they are very similar to any type of dumpling around the world, probably originating from China. Momos are easily the most traditional of all restaurant and street food snacks that one can discover in Bhutan. They are served piping hot, filled with minced meat, cheese, or vegetables, and

consumed with lots of Bhutanese chili sauce known as ezay.

Along with having some amazing and unique dishes in Bhutan, another thing that never fails to fascinate around is the culture that revolves around eating, and Bhutan food culture runs deep. In Bhutan, traditionally food is served in and eaten in beautiful wooden bowls, and one will be served food in wooden bowls at traditional restaurants and some local homes. However, due to ease of use and being easier to clean, eating in wooden bowls is becoming less common on a daily basis in Bhutan.

Like in much of Asia, the traditional method of eating is with fingers. And, if one uses metal cutlery on traditional wooden Bhutanese bowls, it scratches and ruins them — so it is better to use fingers.

One of the traditional methods of eating Bhutanese food is to smash a little bit of red rice into a small ball, then scoop up a dish of one's choice.

Another method, being a little messy, is to eat some of a dish with fingers, then, put some rice in the palm and toss it into the mouth, similar to eating and tossing peanuts into one's mouth.



The Bhutanese food portrays a cognition of simplicity, freshness and naturalness. One of the most essential ingredients of the food is its fierceness which remains prevalent till the food is enjoyed. It is brought out by the ubiquitous blend of chili.

Chili is not used as a spice, but as a vegetable. Most of the Bhutanese would not content themselves if they are not elicited with the burning sensation in their mouth or sweat while having food.

The Kingdom of Bhutan is one of the most enchanting and most culturally preserved nations in the world.

Although Bhutanese food is little known to the outsiders, it is a cuisine which requires one to be venerated. From Ema Datshi (chilies in cheese sauce) to dried yak, and incredibly delicious chili sauce combinations, Bhutanese food is both knife-edging and mouth-watery nutriment packed with flavor. ■

Team, World Culture Forum

# HYDERABAD

## A GASTRONOMICAL PARADISE

From the streets of the city where ravishing ghizaayat (cuisine) melts one's mouth is what Hyderabad is all about. The coveted kebabs and biryani tends to make one's mind full of flavors' and tang. The Hyderabad cuisine is mind boggling in terms of its variegated prerequisites of not only dishes but the amalgam of different cultures and old wives' tales.

This discourse was the result of the haute coquina developed after the foundation of the Bahmani dynasty, and more efficiently by the Qutub Shahi dynasty which introduced the realms of the cuisine to the locals. The cuisine has become the legacy by the royal patronage of the Nizams which instigated in accordance to the ravages of time. It is a marriage of the Mughal, Turkish and Arabic suzerainty, with influence of the native Telugu and Marathwada cuisine.

Image Courtesy: <https://hebbarskitchen.com/>



### History of the cuisine

The story revolves around the Deccan region where the native cuisine was prominent under the Vijayanagar Empire. It was after this period when the Delhi Sultanate ruler, Muhammad bin

Tuglaq, shifted his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. The process of foreign cuisines being added into the native ones, nurtured. Therein, in the 14th century when the Bahmani Sultanate was formed by revolting against the Delhi Sultanate in the Deccan, the Turkish noblemen were appointed at high positions, and introduced the Turkish cuisine.

In the Deccan, cuisine banquets were popular amongst the aristocrats. Multiple courses would be prepared and served in a style called Dastarkhān (A long cloth laid on the floor on which food dishes and dinner plates are placed). Food was generally eaten by hand, served on among commons and nobility. The food was mostly meat oriented being grilled and fried in tandoor (clay oven). The gravy was highly seasoned and flavoured by using spices. Fruits were preferred rather than dessert after a main course. Once the meals are ended Kahwa (liquid hot drink) was consumed that contains ingredients to digest food. The ingredients of the cuisine varied greatly according to the seasons and festivals, and many items were preserved in the form of Pickles.

The modern cuisine evolved from the table of the Nizams in the mid-17th century, and elevated to a sublime art form. Hyderabad has a history of continuous influx of migrants from all over the world and in general from the Indian subcontinent, particularly since 1857. Most of the foreign food had been improved to suit the culinary preferences, resulting to form the unique derivative cuisine that excels over the original. Biryani (Turkish) and Haleem (Arabic) for instance is prepared all over India, but the Hyderabad variety is ultimately from the Hyderabad Biryani and Hyderabad Haleem. Til ki chatni with Arabic tahini, Persian dried lamb with beans is modified with dalcha, tandoori naan of Uzbek (Central Asia) to create Sheermal. Most of the modern day desserts in Hyderabad cuisine were introduced and invented during the times of Nizams, today that had become an integral part of cuisine.

Hyderabad cuisine is an integral part of the cuisines of the former Hyderabad State that includes



the state of Telangana and the regions of Marathwada (now in Maharashtra) and Hyderabad-Karnataka (now in Karnataka). The Hyderabadi cuisine contains city-specific specialties like Hyderabad (Hyderabadi biryani and Hyderabadi Haleem) and Aurangabad (Naan Qalia), Parbhani (Biryani and Tahari), Bidar (Kalyani Biryani) and others. The use of dry coconut, tamarind, and red chillies along with other spices are the main ingredients that make Hyderabadi cuisine different from the North Indian cuisine.

## Present Context

The contemporaneous communiqué about Hyderabad is its perseverance into the UNESCO'S LIST of Creative Cities under Gastronomical category. By recalling that Haleem, one of its delicacies is recognised by the GI (Geographical Indication) in 2010, the locals are owe-struck by this fortune.

Available during Muslim holy month of Ramadan, Haleem, a stew of meat, lentils and wheat mixed with spices, is preferred for breaking the fast due to its energizing nature, high nutritional value and soothing porridge-like texture.

While 'Biryani' and 'Haleem' are signature dishes of the city, there are many other sumptuous delicacies which are part of Hyderabad's culinary heritage.

Many popular food joints serve 'Nihari'. Also called 'Paya Nihari', this broth made with Paya (goat trotter) and spices, and is preferred for breakfast, especially during the winter. It is usually taken with Naan, unleavened bread baked in tandoor. 'Sheermal' is another variant of 'Naan' Which is garnered with milk and sweetness is added to the flour.

'Hyderabadi Marag', a regular feature of Hyderabadi weddings, is a spicy soup made of tender mutton with bone along with milk, cream, cashews and variety of spices.

Another popular dish of Hyderabad is 'Patthar ka Gosht' (Stone Meat), known for its unique method of preparation. It used to be a favourite of Nizams, the rulers of erstwhile Hyderabad State. Marinated boneless meat is cooked on a stone heated by firewood from below.

Another royal dish is 'Shikampur' or 'Shikampuri kebab'. The kebabs are stuffed with hung yogurt, green chillies, onion etc. Then there is Boti Kebab, mutton cubes marinated in a myriad of spices and cooked in aromatic saffron.

'Bagara Baingan', made by deep frying brinjals



Image Courtesy: faskitchen.com

and adding spices and 'Mirchi ka Salan' made of curried green chillies with spices are side dishes with Biryani. The range of Hyderabadi snacks is equally tantalizing. These include Lukhmi, square in shape with flaky pastry exterior made of maida and stuffed with spiced minced meat.

Hyderabad got global recognition not just for its sumptuous food but for the fact that food culture is connected to lifestyle and livelihood of people.

While the city has over 2,200 formal registered restaurants, culinary experts estimate informal market to have about one lakh units. About 1,000 tons of meat is consumed every day in the city.

Restaurants in the city date back to about three-four generations and have a rich tradition of oral histories enabling life-long earnings for chefs. The catering business is one such illustration, particularly run by traditional families, translating knowledge in the most organic format. Therefore, it would be ignorant not to call Hyderabad as a paradise for royal fineness . ■

Team, World Culture Forum

# KHASI TRIBE

## CHILDREN OF THE SEVEN HUTS

**T**he Khasi tribe or khasishynniew and officially known as Hynniew-trep or Hynniew-skum (Children of the Seven Huts) are said to be of Mongolian origin advancing from northern part of Asia. They reached Meghalaya and found the weather conditions to be favoured to practice agriculture, eventually, they settled in here. But the ancient folklore explains this story in a completely different manner:

“There were 16 families who lived up in heaven with the almighty. There was a mountain Lumdiengiei on which there was a big tree “Diengiiei which is situated around twenty-five kilometres away from Shillong, acting as a path between earth and heaven. One day mankind requested to God to grant them to live on Earth promising that they will take good care of the habitation of the Earth. Answering to their plea, God granted their wish and allowed seven clans to come and dwell on the Earth”.

These came to be known as ashynniew-trep or hynniew-skum which means Seven Huts or Seven Families. These seven huts at the present occurrence are: Kajerka thou

Kapyneh rngiem, KapyngksanrngniewKaduwanduput, ka-kaniakakhriam, Kaiabamiasip, Ka pan map, Kapoikhapoiiman, and Lyngdoh-sohblei.

Their language, Khasi, is categorised as the northernmost Austroasiatic language. Primarily an oral language, they had no script of their own, they used the Bengali script until the arrival of the Welsh missionaries. Particularly significant in this regard was a Welsh evangelist, Thomas Jones, who had transcribed the Khasi language into the

Roman Script. The Khasi people dominate the population of the eastern part of Meghalaya, and is the state's largest community, with around 48% of the population of Meghalaya. Before the arrival of Christian missionaries, the majority of the Khasi people practised an indigenous tribal religion.

Though around 85% of the Khasi populace have embraced Christianity, a substantial minority of the Khasi people still follow and practice their age old indigenous religion, which is known as Ka Niam Khasi or Niam tre. The main Christian denominations followed by the Khasis include Catholicism, Anglicanism, Presbyterianism (largest Christian denomination among the Khasis), and others. There are also a small number of Khasis, as a result of inter-community marriages, who are Muslims. There are also followers of Khasi Unitarianism as founded

by Hajom Kissor Sing Lyngdoh Nongbri. The main crops produced by the Khasi people are betel leaf, areca nut, oranges, local Khasi rice, vegetables, etc. The Khasi people do not have sub-tribes, a confusion that sometimes arises from the expression Khynriam, u Pnar, u Bhoi, u War. This



Image Courtesy: <https://www.awaaznation.com/>

term is mainly based on the geographical location a Khasi inhabits. Khasi inhabiting the northern part are known as Bhoi, as that area is often called Ri Bhoi. People in the east are known as the Pnar, and they call their land as Rilum Jaintia. The south is called War or Ri War, because of its mountainous regions and soil fertility. The west has a number of regional names: Maram, Rimen, Khatsawphra, Mawiang, Lyngam. A Khasi who inhabits the central area is known as Khynriam.

The War inhabitants of the Khasi community designed and built the famous living root bridges of the War region. Under the Constitution of India, the Khasis have been granted the status of Scheduled Tribe. A unique feature of the Khasi people is that they follow the matrilineal system of descent and inheritance. However, it must not be wrongly thought that men are completely powerless and have no say in private affairs of the household whatsoever. In matters of inheritance, some families do give men shares of the ancestral property, though the daughters usually get bigger shares. The reason is that since women are the ones to continue the family lineage, giving them larger shares is necessary for them to run the households. In the Khasi system of asset management, the Khasi maternal uncles (Kñi) of the household (usually under the authority of the eldest Kñi), are the managers of their sister's property. No decision can be taken without their consent. In their wife's household too, they provide their children as a normal father would. In present times, many Khasis are well placed in government and corporate sectors. Many Khasis are well educated. The tribe has produced many IAS, IPS and IFS bureaucrats. Many Khasis have also settled abroad, particularly in the US and Great Britain.

The Khasis first came in contact with the British in 1823, after the latter captured Assam. The area inhabited by the Khasis became a part of the Assam province after the Khasi Hill States (which numbered to about 25 kingdoms) entered into a subsidiary alliance with the British.

The traditional Khasi male dress is a Jymphong, a longish sleeveless coat without collar, fastened by thongs in front. Nowadays, most male Khasis have adopted the western attire. On ceremonial occasions they appear in a Jymphong and sarong with an ornamental waist-band and they may also wear a turban.

The traditional Khasi female dress is called the Jainsem or Dhara, both of which are rather elaborate with several pieces of cloth, giving the body a cylindrical shape. On ceremonial occasions, they may wear a crown of silver or gold. A spike or peak is fixed to the back of the crown, corresponding to the feathers worn by the menfolk. The Jainsem consists of two pieces of material fastened at each shoulder. The "Dhara" consists of a single piece of material also fastened at each shoulder.

The Khasis are, for the most part, monogamous. Their social organisation does not favour other forms of marriage; therefore, deviation from this norm is quite rare. Young men and women are permitted considerable freedom in the choice of mates. Potential marriage partners are likely to have been acquainted before betrothal. Once a man has selected his desired spouse, he reports his choice to his parents. They then secure the services of a mediator to make the arrangements with the woman's family (provided that the man's clan agree with his choice). The parents of the woman ascertain her wishes and if she agrees to the arrangement her parents check to make certain that the man to be wed is not a member of their clan (since Khasi clans are exogamous, marital partners may not be from the same clan). If this is satisfactory then a wedding date is set.

Divorce (with causes ranging from incompatibility to lack of offspring) is easily obtainable. This ceremony traditionally consists of the husband handing the wife 5 cowries or paisa which the wife then hands back to her husband along with 5 of her own. The husband then throws these away or gives them to a village elder who throws them away. Present-day Khasis divorce through the Indian legal system.

The type of marriage is the determining factor in the marital residence. In short, post marital residence for a married man when an heiress (known as Ka Khadduh) is involved must be matrilocal (that is, in his mother-in-law's house), while post-marital residence when a non-heiress is involved is nonlocal. Generally, Khasi men prefer to marry a non-heiress because it will allow them to form independent family units somewhat immune to pressures from the wife's kin. Traditionally (though nowadays rule is not absolutely true), a Khasi man returns to his ling-Kur (maternal home) upon the death of his spouse (if she is a Khadduh and they both have no children). These practices are the result of rules governing inheritance and property ownership. These rules are themselves related to the structure of the Khasi Kur (clan system).

Therefore, the Khasi tribe reflects a multifaceted helm of culture which is diverse and unified in its own nature. It is embellished in the notion of preserving its heritage and distinguishes itself from the contemporaneous society where traditions and culture has been folded up to one's sleeve. ■

Team, World Culture Forum



# DOKHRA CRAFTS OF BENGAL

## THE LOST SKILL OF WAX PROCESS METHOD



Image Courtesy: [www.veniceclayartists.com/dhokra-tribal-art/](http://www.veniceclayartists.com/dhokra-tribal-art/)

The ancient craft of dhokra also known as lost wax metal casting, is a widespread art in India, but restricted to certain regions of guilds of artists located in distant areas. One significant nucleus of the craft resided in West Bengal, amongst the families of the Bikna Village and the nearby Dariapur. The name 'Dhokra' was formerly used to indicate nomadic craftsmen, dispersed over Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, in India and is generally applicable to a variety of beautifully shaped and decorated brassware products created by the 'lost wax' process. The craft of lost-wax casting is an ancient skill in India, and appears to have existed in an unscathed tradition from the earliest days of settled civilisation in the sub-continent. The traditional themes of these cast metal sculptures include images of Hindu Or 'tribal' gods and goddesses, bowls, figures of people or deities riding elephants, musicians, horse and rider figures, elephants, cattle, and other figures of people, animals, and birds.

The first detailed study of the lost wax process was carried in 1960's by Ruth Reeves. Presently, there is a demand for dhokra craft from urban India as well as the tourists.

### The lost wax process technique

The casting of finely detailed metal artefacts by means of the lost wax technique is almost as old as settled civilisation. The technique is simple to describe (but difficult to perfect). It involves six stages: -

**Core-making:** A clay core is made, slightly smaller than the final intended size of the artefact. The core may be hardened by firing or sun-drying; -

**Modelling:** A detailed wax model is built up around the core, to the thickness of metal desired in the finished object; -

**Moulding:** The wax model is coated with a thin layer of very fine clay, which will form an impression of every detail of the model. When this layer is dry and hard, further layers of clay are added to the mould. One or more pouring channels are provided, through which molten metal can run to fill the mould; -

**De-waxing:** The mould is pre-heated to melt the wax, and the molten wax is poured out (it may be recovered for subsequent re-use). This leaves a cavity which has the exact size, shape and surface contours of the intended artefact; -

**Casting:** Molten metal is poured into the cavity and the mould left to cool -

**Finishing:** The artefact is broken out of the mould. Traces of baked clay are removed and surface blemishes and defects repaired.

There are many refinements and variations, but the above outline applies to most of the traditional styles of the lost wax process work still extant. The sophistication of the process varies considerably, with the most advanced techniques employed in South India and Bastar in Madhya Pradesh (See Postel and

Cooper, 1999 pp 81-97). The casting process used in Bankura and in nearby Dariapur appears to be the least technologically developed of all.

## The Origins of the Lost wax method Craft in India

The earliest known examples of lost wax method work include the famous bronze 'Dancing Girl' found in Mohenjo-Daro in the Indus Valley (Agrawal, 1971). Even at such an early stage, this finely observed bronze figure already shows the highly developed creativity and mastery of the production technique typical of lost wax process at its finest. Lost wax casting subsequently spread, by communication or parallel invention, to most civilisations. The process of lost wax method casting has been very well documented in antiquity, and Krishnan (1976) and Pal (1978) both cite classical Sanskrit sources, such as Manasara, Silparatna and Somesvara, which give detailed descriptions (or even prescriptions), conceivably for the regulation of the craft. It was certainly pervasive throughout the Indian sub-continent, as demonstrated by an ample archaeological record, and examples exist in gold, silver, copper, bell-metal, bronze and brass. Our specific focus here is on the production of the range of brass artefacts, commonly known as 'dhokra'. Welch (1986, pp 103-113), provides illustrations of examples of fine lost wax method dhokra work of 'tribal' origin dating back as far as the 18th Century, from locations as disparate as West Bengal, Purulia, Maharashtra, Orissa, Bastar (Madhya Pradesh), Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Bihar. The major contemporary centres of production are in West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, though the numbers of families engaged is everywhere in decline. The craft has historically been particularly associated with the so-called 'tribal' peoples of India. Its heartland for many centuries was in the metal-rich region of Central India, covering the modern regions of Jharkhand,



Orissa, Chhattisgarh and parts of Andhra Pradesh. The practice was in the hands of family groups of non-Hindu semi-nomadic artisans, called 'Dhokras'. Some of the Dhokra families appear to have migrated into the alluvial plains of Bengal, finally settling around centres such as Bankura, Burdwan, Purulia and Midnapur. Despite its antiquity and wide geographical dispersion, it appears that the work of the dhokra makers was always marginal to the domestic economy of India, and did not achieve the importance and consequent security of, for example, the manufacture of water containers or cooking vessels. Dhokra making did not figure much in Birdwood's

magisterial survey of 'The Industrial Arts of India' (1880), except, perhaps to be included in the following way (p.143): "Beside the village and sumptuary arts there are the savage arts of the wild tribes..." Sen (1994) describes the traditional dhokra craft in West Bengal and its typical products: "... they [The dhokra makers] used to move from village to village in the south-western districts, repairing old and broken utensils and selling small images of Lakshmi, her mount, the owl, Lakshmi Narayan riding on an elephant, Radha and Krishna in different attitudes, all made in a very strong and primitive folk style. These images were installed in the household shrines of newly married Hindu couples to bring prosperity and happiness. They also made and sold decorative caskets in different shapes and sizes, purchased by housewives for various purposes. They made and sold measuring bowls in different sizes. These were considered symbols of Lakshmi and were therefore highly prized by those villagers who could afford them. Ritual lamps in different designs were also popular items. Their other products included small models of animals and birds and a variety of trinkets and bells..."

## The Ethnography

One of the major remaining foci for the dhokra craft is some kilometres to the north of Bankura in West

Bengal. Thirty six related families live in a close-knit clan community in Bikna village. According to Dhiren Karmakar, their forefathers were nomads who came from Chhota Nagpur. The actual caste origin of the Bikna artisans is obscure. Any attempt to clarify the relationships and history of the dhokra makers of West Bengal suffers from the incomplete and fragmentary nature of the records. No records of this artisan industry survive from pre-colonial days, and the standard documentary resources, such as Risley's monumental 'Tribes and Castes of Bengal' (1891) must be seen as reflecting both the anthropological fashions of their era and, perhaps more significantly, the "divide et imperia" was the priority of the colonial administration. There is certainly a great deal of confusion in evidence when one attempts to track the forefathers of the Bikna community through the pre-independence census data for Bengal. Risley defines 'Dhokra' as: "A sub-caste of Kamars or blacksmiths in Western Bengal, who make brass idols." Risley subsequently points out, regarding the sub-castes of the metal working caste of Kamars that: "It is impossible at the present day to determine whether all of them are really derived from the Kamar caste; and it seems probable that some of them may be separate castes, which have been classed as Kamars on account of some real or supposed resemblance in their occupations. Ruth Reeves (1962) refers to the Bankura Dhokra as 'Kainkuya Mal' (which possibly derives from association with the traditional measuring vessels known in Bengali as 'kunke'). In any case, earlier attempts to locate migratory dhokra makers (whatever their caste) in the region seem to have failed, perhaps indicating that the migratory way of life had ended some time before these groups attracted the attention of the great and good. Nevertheless, the evidence the essential metal founding technology used by the people of Bikna village was more appropriate to a migratory than a settled way of life, and the problem may be one of a confusion of terminology.

## The Dhokra Making Tradition as Practised in Bikna Village

### The Creative Process

Despite its stability over many centuries, the dhokra craft has not remained entirely static. As Sarkar (1998) points out: "technology in Indian artisanal industry did change in response to market

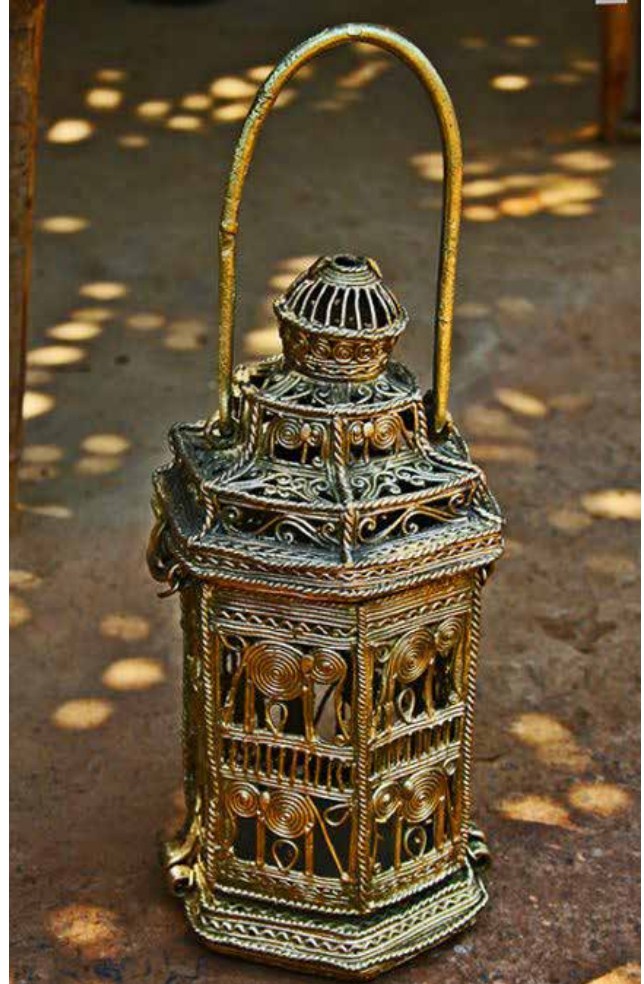


Image Courtesy: [www.veniceclayartists.com/dhokra-tribal-art/](http://www.veniceclayartists.com/dhokra-tribal-art/)

demands. If such changes appear rather timid and slow, it was because a radical transformation of the technique of production was never a pressing and unavoidable need in India." The period of nearly four decades between the publication of Ruth Reeves' study and the initiation of this project in November 2000 witnessed a number of changes in the creative aspects of the dhokra craft as practised in Bikna. This is part of a long process of change, which Rajesh Kochhar (2001) characterised as falling into four phases:

**Phase I** is defined by the original Dhokra repertoire, which is simple and stark, in keeping with the makers life style and philosophy:

**Phase II** came into being when the Dhokra artisans took to settled life and started making new items consistent with the demands of a food-surplus economy: Their work now included rather ornate icons of Hindu gods and goddesses. Interestingly, in their own shrines, the Dhokra artisans have retained worship of their own creations (horses, elephants etc.) in addition to Bhairon, who is a form of Shiva, and a deity consistent with non-vegetarianism.

**Phase III** is characterised by two major



developments: patronage extended by state and socialites; and interaction with creative sculptors like Meera Mukherjee and Pradosh Das Gupta. These artists successfully imbibed in their work techniques and motifs of the Dhokra art and, once accepted as insiders, introduced the Dhokra artisans to new forms. It was during this phase that, under state patronage, the well-known Bankura Horse, a stylised, decorated horse with long upright neck and pointed ears, which hitherto had been the preserve of the Khumbkars (clay artisans), was successfully adopted for casting in metal.

**Phase IV**, a recent phenomenon, has been thrust upon the Dhokra artisans by the demands of the cheap souvenir market. This phase is characterised by some 'novelty' items, such as a Ganesh with an umbrella.

Most of the work, however, is pure kitsch. Since the price paid to the artisans is exploitatively low, they seek to indirectly enhance their wages by compromising on the quality of the inputs as well as craftsmanship".

Even in the course of a few months, the action research described here has now led to a further phase:

**Phase V** : in which creativity levels have risen to match the technology available. Not only has the quality of realization improved but the artisans themselves have found a new creative confidence, and have thought of and created new artefacts not seen before. If the creative content of Bikna dhokra work changed over time, their technology, on the other hand stayed remarkably constant - at least until the year 2001. Beautifully adapted to the conditions of the original nomadic lifestyle, the dhokra technology did not adapt to the settled way of life. The failure of the Bankura Dhokra Karmakars to modify their technology probably contributed to their creative and economic decline over the past fifty years.

## The teleology of the method prior to August 2001

**Core-making** : Cores were made from local clay. The fine clay-loam found around the roots of bamboo was specially favoured. The clay was dried, sieved through sacking and then mixed with uncrushed sand. This sand-rich clay was mixed with water to an appropriate consistency, and used to make suitable core-figures. The cores were slowly sun-dried over three or four days.

**Modelling** : The fine detail of the object to be created is built onto the core using wax or some other suitable medium. Ideally, wax ('mom') is the best modelling medium, but the Bikna Karmakars prefer to use 'dhuna', which is based on a natural plant resin extracted from the Sal tree (*Shorea robusta*) mixed with mustard oil. Dhuna becomes very plastic when warmed, but holds its shape very well, even in high ambient temperatures. As an economic measure, many of the Karmakars had taken to using hydrocarbon pitch as an inferior substitute for mom or dhuna. This had a number of serious defects, which contributed to the decline in both creative and metallurgical quality of the final product.

**Moulding**: The completed model is covered in a layer of a very fine clay which takes an impression of all its surface details. This layer is then sun-dried. When the first layer was dry, a second layer was built onto it. The clay used for the second mould coat was usually mixed with sand. At this stage, one or more channels were created in the mould to allow the flow of molten brass into the space which would be left when the modelling medium had gone. Traditionally, a split bamboo rod was used to bore through the dried first layer. A large casting might need two or more channels. The bamboo was held in place with clay and the second coat of the mould then completed. This involved building a cup-shaped structure around the "flow channel". The clay of the mould was built up until the cup was held firmly in place and then the bamboo rods were removed. The cup would eventually act as a melting crucible, holding the brass for melting. At this stage, several moulds could be combined, sharing a single crucible – especially if the casting was a small one. This economised both on the labour of producing the 'crucibles', and, eventually, on fuel through minimising the number of separate items to be heated. The final stage involved the completion of the 'crucible' part of the mould. The 'cap' of the crucible was made separately and sealed in place with clay after the crucible had been charged with brass. The metal used was scrap brass, which had been rendered brittle by heating on the furnace and then broken up into small pieces. Recently, attempts were made to cut costs by adulterating the brass with, for example, aluminium. The result was a very inferior product and the practice only resulted in

an even lower unit price for dhokra items. A special panel was built into the crucible to provide an easily breakable 'window' to let in air so that the brass would flow into the model space. After charging the crucible and sealing the cap, the mould was given a final coat of clay prior to firing.

**De-waxing :** The closed system moulding used by the Bikna Karmakars made it impossible to recover the wax (or dhuna), which was therefore either vapourised and burnt or else absorbed into the clay of the mould. This is vividly contrasted with the practices in Bastar and South India, where a high level of wax recovery is achieved. The loss of the modelling medium might not have been problematic for forest-dwelling nomads who would have harvested natural products for themselves in the course of their travels, but became a serious cost inefficiency in the process once the dhokra people had adopted a settled way of life.

**Casting :** A crude furnace was built in a convenient open space, using loose bricks. The fire was made using cow dung and bought charcoal. Completed moulds were laid in the fire, with the cup downwards. When the mould was judged to be ready, it was removed from the fire using tongs or a pair of green sticks. It was inverted, so that the metal cup was at the top, allowing molten brass to run down into the mould space. The special weak 'panel' in the metal cup was broken through with a stick or oilier suitable implement. The traditional furnace was inefficient in two ways: Firstly it was wasteful on fuel. Each furnace was specially built for a single batch production. Fuel was wasted heating the furnace and the moulds to casting temperature, and there was no gain from multiple firing in the same oven, thereby conserving heat. Again, this would not have been a problem to forest-living nomads with ready access to free wood, but was immediately disadvantageous once the dhokra had settled down. Secondly, it was more or less impossible to control the firing temperature of the furnace. This meant that metal, particularly zinc, was lost by sublimation when the moulds were broken open. This could be seen in the colour of the fumes after opening. The loss of metal led to serious metallurgical degradation of the brass, as well as being another source of cost inefficiency; Another side-effect is that many of the people of Bikna suffer from eye problems, probably due to heavy metal irritation. Discussions with the



Image Courtesy: [www.veniceclayartists.com/dhokra-tribal-art/](http://www.veniceclayartists.com/dhokra-tribal-art/)

craftsmen showed that they were aware that metal was being wasted, but felt powerless to prevent this.

### An Artist's Contribution to the Dhokra Tradition of Crafts:

Like most traditional craftspeople, the dhokra artisans of Bikna have no formal system of apprenticeship: craft training as such does not exist. The craft is, to coin a phrase, "learned by being". Children in Bikna grow up in an environment where the dhokra craft is everywhere around them. Every spare corner of the village is taken up by drying moulds or artefacts in various stages of preparation, and the routine of the craft is part of the daily rhythm of the village. Small children soon learn to imitate their elders, playing with clay, making cores and eventually graduating to detailed modelling in dhuna (or pitch). The fastest learners soon become useful additions to a family team. It is difficult to make a living at all unless the family are fully engaged in the craft, and those with small families or who have no children are at a disadvantage. This militates against extended education. This is not to say that the Karmakars are completely uneducated. Most children manage to attend two or three years of schooling, whilst young women marrying into the village often have several years of elementary education. But the appeal of joining the adult world or work is very alluring and the social pressures to contribute are great. Over the years, attempts have been made to introduce elements of formal training into the craft. The initiative in this respect has been taken by the West Bengal Crafts Commission, who has been proactive in organising creative and technical workshops for dhokra artisans. ■

Team, World Culture Forum

# WORLD TELEVISION DAY: AN ODE TO THE IDIOT BOX

There is an intimate connection between culture and technology, as the development in either drastically impacts the other. Such an implicit connection is best exemplified through the relationship of television and its consequences on culture. Television has been a momentous invention in communication and technology, which became a tele-communicative medium used for transmitting moving images in monochrome (black and white), or in colour, and in two or three dimensions with sound. Television has played a pivotal role as a medium of recreation, education and most of all expression amongst myriad members of society.

On 17th December 1996, 21st November was proclaimed as “World Television Day” in United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 205, Session 51. Acknowledging the vital role of television in the dissemination of information, influencing public opinion and to educate people about the world, its issues and real stories that happen on the planet. The United Nations believes Television aids societies by enabling them to exercise their freedom of expression and promote cultural diversity. The UN encourages all the member states to observe this day by global exchanges of television programs focusing on issues such as peace, security, economic and social development, and cultural change enhancements. This day marked celebrating the presence of a window into the world in one’s own living room and forged a link between various cultures by encouraging interests and initiating cross-cultural programs.

The invention of television can be traced to the late 1920s owing to the experimentations that were led by the scientific advancements of those times. The world's first television stations started appearing in America during late 1920s and early 1930s. The first mechanical TV station was called W3XK, it was created by Charles Francis Jenkins (one of the inventors of the mechanical television). That TV station aired its first broadcast on July 2, 1928. Although its mass production and retail

in consumer markets was introduced later, Baird "Televisor" (which was active in UK during 1930–1933) which sold around thousand units of the device, is considered the first mass producer of television which were made possible due to Kenjiro Takayanagi demonstration of the first TV system which employed a cathode ray tube (CRT) display, in 1926. An improved form of black-and-white TV broadcasting became popular in the United States and Britain, and television sets became commonplace in homes, businesses, and institutions after World War II. The initial electronic television sets were large and bulky due to analog circuits which were made of vacuum tubes but after the invention of t working transistors at Bell Labs, Sony founder Masaru Ibuka predicted in 1952 that the transition to electronic circuits made of transistors would lead to smaller and more portable television sets. The addition of colour to broadcast television that was made after 1953 which meant a shift in technology that includes information on the colour of the picture, so the video image can be displayed in colour on the television set. This was followed by the shift from analog television to digital television which aided a wide range of developments, as this shift was the precursor of vital technological innovations that have revolutionized telecommunication.

Television has been hailed and critiqued for homogenizing culture and promoting consumerism through its broadcasts and adverts. Critiques have often referred to television as the tool of mass hypnosis to further the plutocratic agenda by influencing the consumer, civic and political culture. The apparent ambitions and objectives as imagined by international organizations, such as UN, have often been distorted in the grips of populism but television undoubtedly plays the role of being a vanguard of cosmopolitan culture by promoting the production of content across regional and national lines, which allows mutual acknowledgment to the similarities and vicissitudes of various cultures around the world. ■

Team, World Culture Forum



# 7TH WOODPECKER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL: MOVIES TO KNOW YOUR WORLD

Film Festivals are gateways to the initiation of becoming movie connoisseurs, as they provide the platform for independent filmmakers to showcase their art without being dictated by the compulsions of populism and box office while offering an avenue for movie enthusiasts to watch films that may not be commercially released in an interactive setting. Film festivals bring together people with mutual interest in cinema and offers interactions between the audiences and film-makers which enhances the experience of watching a film and provides an insight into the filmmakers perspective along with helpful feedback from the viewers. Major attractions of film festivals are forum activities such as seminars, conferences, workshops and master classes that help filmmakers and film enthusiasts in exploring contemporary issues, network with professional associates, hone their filmmaking skills and share the power of storytelling through cinema.

Woodpecker International Film Festival (WIFF) is among the most revered film festivals in India that focuses on documentaries and short films. The festival has attained globally acclimation for its noble objective of promoting issue-based cinema. It was initiated in 2013, coinciding with the completion of 100-years of Indian cinema, the festival has organised seven international editions till now. WIFF aims to showcase the rich mélange of visual creativity and cinematic diversity

across the globe, as well as to promote films, documentaries and advertisements which focus on socially pertinent themes like environment & wildlife, livelihoods, health, gender, children, art & culture, etc. This festival acknowledges that Cinema is at an important crossroads as the distinction between mainstream and parallel cinema is almost getting blurred, a new breed of alternative filmmakers, successfully blending entertainment

and meaningful cinema gaining ground amongst the connoisseurs and audience. Woodpecker International Film Festival (WIFF) aims to showcase this rich mélange of visual creativity to promote films and filmmakers focusing on socially pertinent themes.

WIFF demonstrates the power of issue-based cinema to create change and influence public opinion. With easy accessibility to technology and availability of new communication channels, the reach and impact of visual messages has grown

significantly, across rural and urban areas. Short films, documentaries or social advertisements have become an immensely powerful tool of communications aimed towards bringing desired social change. Therefore, WIFF attempts to comprehensively cover the wide spectrum of issues that have caught the attention of new breed of filmmakers in the recent past, be it gender, public health or environment.

WIFF organized its latest seventh edition between 28th November to 1st December, at Siri Fort Delhi where 65 movies were screened in the span of



three days under the theme of ‘movies to know your world’. The theme was resonated by the choice of the movies that were screened and highlighted various issues around the world ranging from human rights to gender identity. Woodpecker International Film Festival celebrates the diversity of culture by projecting films that depict cultural nuances around the world. Films are strong medium of expression which tend to highlight the subtleties of civic, political and social culture even if the film doesn’t deliberately intend to do so.

The festival also awards the movies that it’s jury adjudicates to be the best amongst the handpicked nominated films that were screened. Some of those award-winning movies were: -

### Aayi Gayi

The documentary directed by Anandana Kapur grapples the question of electricity as a human right, and instigates the viewers to question if electricity should be seen as commodity or a basic right. Set in the state of Bihar, this film explores the complex relationships that people have with the state through the lens of electricity. The film was revered with the title of “Best Film-Human Rights.”

### Ranj (Slow Burn)

Ranj (Slow burn) is the story of Amanpreet, a youth from a village in Punjab, who is forced to migrate to New Delhi, for livelihood. But he is not wired for city life. He yearns for all that he has left behind- his days without a care; and Geetu, his bride-to-be. He constantly struggles with the unfamiliar way of life. He appears painfully disoriented. Employed at an automobile tools shop, while Amanpreet’s co-workers jump at every opportunity to humiliate him, his boss constantly threatens to fire him. This film directed by Sunit Sinha highlights the struggle of migrant workers who are compelled to leave their native households in search for livelihood and expresses the plight of one such migrant labour.

### Kayantar

The film embarks around a family of Bahurupias, a community of indigenous street performers. Asia belonging to the clan of Bahurupias dresses up as Hindu deities. She wants to adopt her father Ali’s art of metamorphosing into Kali, the black



Goddess of Time, Power and Liberation, but being a woman, she is not allowed to take up this conventionally male profession. Instead, the now decrepit Ali, forces the traditional family profession onto his son Aslam who detests it fearing ridicule, persecution and for its waning popularity. Despite poverty and hardship, the small family lives freely in the fringes of the village society in the lap of nature influenced by the religious syncretism of the Baul-Fakir mystics, tolerated by both Hindus and Muslims. But a sudden surge of change transforms their lives forever. Set in the backdrop of the lush green tapestry of rural Bengal while narrating a story rooted in its milieu, the film reflects themes of universal concern. It takes an insightful look into the age-old evils of gender binaries, religious fundamentalism and communal disharmony plaguing human society even today and is an earnest cinematic appeal to look beyond such myopic glasses of discrimination and celebrate humanity simply as human beings. ■

Team, World Culture Forum

# PLEA OF A SUBMERGING NATION

**T**he Islands of Kiribati (pronounced Kiribas), officially recognized as Republic of Kiribati, located in the heart of the Pacific Ocean and home to over 110,000 people faces an existential threat due to acceleration in the rising sea level caused by climate change. The nation is a conglomeration of 32 atolls and one raised coral island named Banaba (12 of which are inhabited). Most of the populace of the nation resides on Tarawa atoll. The Republic of Kiribati attained independence from British colonial rule in 1979 and became a full-fledged member of the United Nations Organization in 1999. In 2003, during the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Honourable Natan Teewe, Minister of Communication, Transport & Tourism Development of the Republic of Kiribati stated that “Kiribati is the most vulnerable to climate change, climate variability and sea-level rise. Like other low-lying countries this is an issue of high priority to us. It is an issue that also requires an international response. Political commitment and a high level of cooperation by the international community are called for in addressing this challenge.”

The concerns of the nation haven't changed much since then and their leaders have been very vocal regarding the issue of climate change in International forums, the gradual submergence of the nation has led its populace to face the threat of becoming 'ecological refugees.' The former President Anote Tong who led the nation during from 2003 to 2016 has constantly warned that rising sea levels may cause Kiribati to cease to exist, and that its entire population may need to be resettled. In an effort to allow the republic's citizens to migrate with dignity and not as climate change refugees, Tong in 2014 supervised the purchase of 6,000 acres of land in the neighbouring nation of Fiji as a potential new home for the approximately 115,000 residents of Kiribati. "This is a last resort, there's no way out of this one, our people will have to move as the tides have reached our homes and villages" Mr Tong

said. This migration would mean a cultural threat to the people of Kiribati as Dr Alumita Durulato, a lecturer in international affairs at the South Pacific university says that “They are going to leave behind their culture, their way of life and lifestyle, which is a little bit different from ours in Fiji.”

Although culture is intangible but it emerges in a geopolitical landscape and ties itself to it intimately, as it becomes a reflection of the social, economic, geographical and political realities of the community. The people of Kiribati face a tumult where their millenniums long history might only be preserved by its people who would migrate to different parts of the world. These small archipelagos spread across a vast





expanse of the Pacific Ocean, can be considered to be the first amongst the victims of the environmental consequences of man-made climate change being pushed to the brink of existence. Instead of people with their bags packed, we may find a lot of people with no intentions of leaving the island nation because of the close affinity that they have with their land, its people and the culture that has shaped their lives. The inhabitants of Kiribati haven't been amongst the largest contributors of carbon emissions and they live their life with relative simplicity along the shore lines with fisheries being their basic source of nutrition and economy yet bear the burden of being the victims of climate change.

## Facets of Kiribati Culture:

### Familial Traditions

Society of Kiribati can be characterized by the traditional beliefs and customs that it follows. Amongst many of these unique customs in this country is the issue of land ownership. As families of

this island are organized by utu, a group of relatives and family, wherein a single person may be part of more than one utu, depending on familial ties. These utus are the root of society and determine the ownership of local land and property. Ancestors leave property and utu membership to their progenies after their demise. The centre of the utu is referred to as the 'kainga' and whoever occupies the kainga space has leverage over the decision-making power about how the familial property would be used.

### Faith

Almost 96% of the population in Kiribati identifies as a follower of the Christian faith amongst which 55.6% consider themselves to be Catholics and 33.5% attend the Kiribati Uniting Church (classified as a Protestant sect and was founded in 1968). Approximately 2.3% of the residents of Kiribati follow the teachings of the Baha'i religion, making it the second largest faith practiced on the island.

The greatest celebration in Kiribati is held on its Independence Day, which falls on the 12th of July. In 1979, Kiribati gained its independence from the colonial rule of the United Kingdom. This celebration is extended over the week up to the official date and these festivities include parades, games, sports, competitions, beauty pageants, and dancing. On the 10th of August, the inhabitants of Kiribati celebrate National Youth Day to promote the involvement of youth in social and political issues. On this day, the youngest residents of Kiribati come together to brainstorm solutions for the challenges facing the future trajectory of the nation.

### Music

Music in Kiribati is a peculiar type of folk music as it has maintained much of its traditional aspects over time. Songs are usually centred around the vocals, which has deep resonance with chanting. The fascinating thing about music in Kiribati is that it incorporates the practice of body percussion, wherein percussion provides rhythm by clapping hands, snapping fingers, or bouncing feet on the floor. Music often accompanies major life events, such as marriage, death, and religious observances.

### Dances

Kiribati is revered as the birthplace of 8 dance-forms, such as Buki, Ruoa, Te Kabuti, Tirere, and



<https://i1.wp.com/news.globallandscapesforum.org>



Kaimatoa. Irrespective of differences, these dances share a common theme of mimicking the movements of the Fregatid birds, depicted on the national flag of Kiribati. These bird-like dance moves typically involve outstretched arms and jerking head movements.

### Oral Traditions and Crafts

Due to its isolation, the exchange of stories and ideas with other cultures are limited, hence, many of the examples of literature and art are mostly derived from ancient and traditional ideas often passed down through oral traditions. Handcrafted items are mostly created from locally sourced materials, such as reed and other grasses which can be woven together. These objects primarily serve a daily purpose, like sandals and baskets, and therefore may not be viewed as art by some individuals around the world. Other examples of art and crafts produced include jewelry and carved trinkets, made of seashells. These types of handicrafts are commonly sold to tourists as souvenirs and the money from these sales represents a large percentage of the national economy.

### Culinary Practices

The nutrient deficiency of the soil makes it largely unsuitable for agriculture which is seafood is the



primary component of traditional Kiribati cuisine. Seafood may be prepared in a number of ways, including: baked, fried, and steamed. Bananas and coconuts are also important ingredients of traditional Kiribati cuisine. ■

Team, World Culture Forum





# WORLD CULTURE FORUM



World Culture Forum is an International Organization who initiates peace-building and engages in extensive research on contemporary Cultural trends across the globe.

## Felicitation



Forum honors in recognition of proactive efforts that go well towards the building of cultural harmony primarily on science, peace, economist, politics, literature, journalism, and performing arts.

## Awards



The Forum honours those who work towards building cultural harmony in the fields of peace, politics, science, economics, literature, journalism and performing arts. WCF rewards the contributions of visionaries and the torch-bearers of change.

## Conference



Conferences are where you will find the best comprehensive program on assessing and identifying challenges to the cultural harmony and proposes a sustainable plan of action to promote cultural dialogue among nations.

## Musical Event



We provide an opportunity for undiscovered filmmakers across the globe to get their films in the face of a real live audience and to have their films reviewed by professional critics.

## Fellowship



We provide an opportunity for undiscovered filmmakers across the globe to get their films in the face of a real live audience and to have their films reviewed by professional critics.



