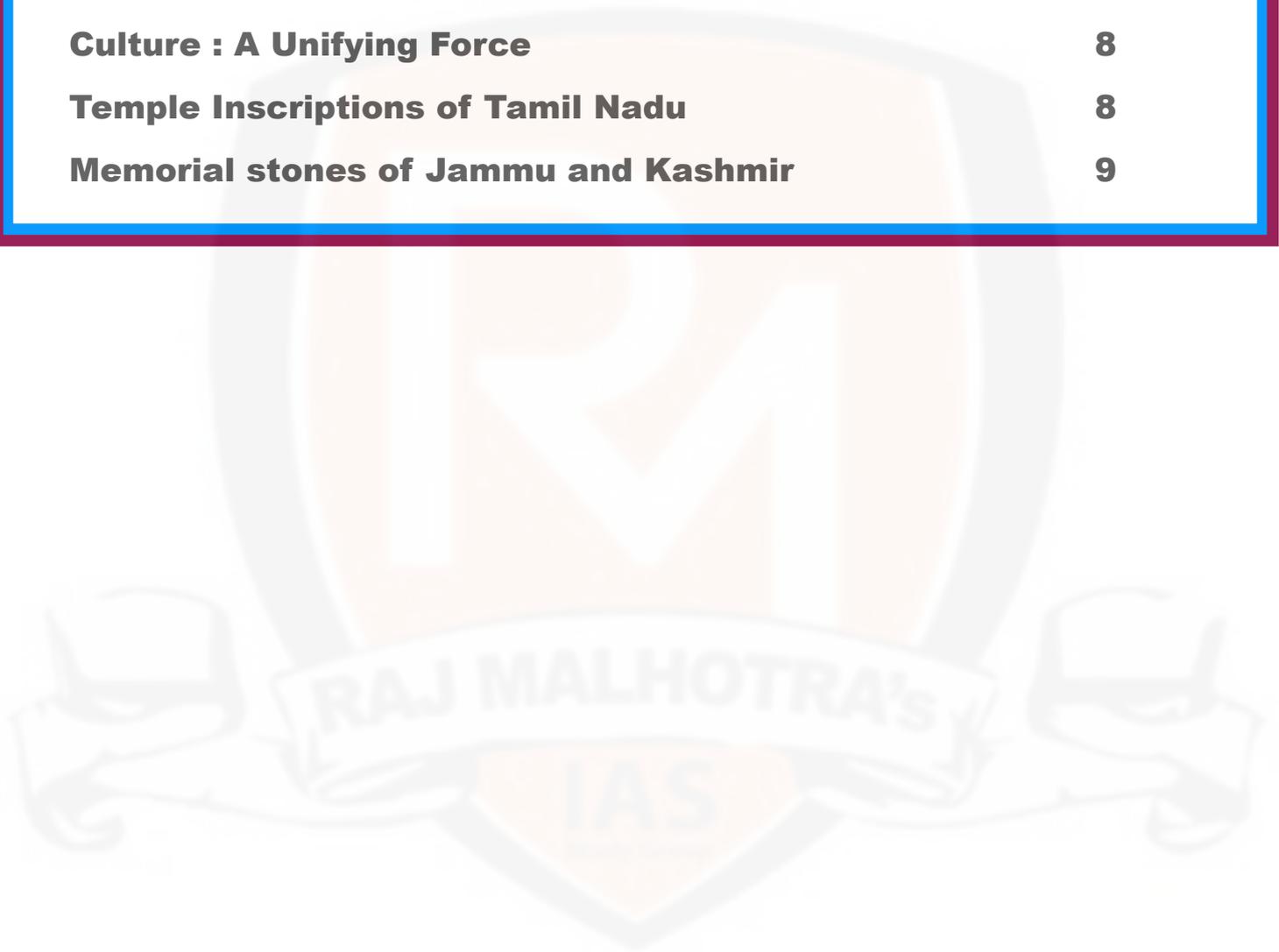


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Philosophical Nature of Indian Music

The Indian classical music, be it Hindustani or Carnatic, has essentially got a spiritual component in it. Tracing down the history of Indian music, one would find that since ancient times, temples have been providing a platform for many diverse forms of the artistic expressions of Classical music. And, it was *Bhakti* or selfless devotion that was the underlying essence of various art forms that developed in India. The artistic principles of Indian classical music are formulated and structured in such a way that it becomes an inward journey for its practitioners so that they get intimately connected with their within. This is one of the reasons why the word “spiritual” is frequently used in describing the Indian classical music.

Nadopasana - The invocation of the primordial sound -

For a true practitioner of classical music, the approach used to be *Nadopasana* - the invocation of the primordial sound. For these practitioners, music became an internal journey for the realisation of the ultimate truth.

The Guru-Shishya and Gharana tradition -

- The Guru-Shishya *parampara* is another crucial feature which is common for all the classical music traditions of India. For centuries, this Guru-shishya transmission has made it possible to carry forward the intense experiences innately embedded in this great tradition of enlightened practitioners of music.
- The musical gharanas of north Indian or Hindustani classical music have also contributed to the diversity of their form of music by presenting a distinct style of it. These Gharanas or the “households” of specific styles of music have preserved and distilled the unique principles of Ragas through Guru-shishya lineage.

Background of Indian Music -

- The origin of Indian music can be traced back to the chanting of Vedic hymns and mantras. The **Chandogya Upanishad** talks about the seven styles of **gana (musical modes)**, highlighting the importance of **Swara (phonemes)** of a Vedic *mantra* that should be pronounced with absolute accuracy. The impact will only be then felt. This Upanishad further states that the innermost **self (utman) of all swara** is the chief Vedic God Indra.
- In the post-Vedic age came the **Natyasastra**, one of the ancient most compendium on Indian art forms. It was compiled between 200 BCE to 200 CE. It is said that **NatyaSastra** author, the sage **Bharat Muni, created the Natya (theatre)** by integrating speech from the Rig Veda, music from the Sama Veda, acting from the Yajur Veda, and emotions from the Atharva Veda. This further contributed to the tradition of **Gandharva Veda - the Vedic science of music**.
- Another distinction, concerting the ritualised chanting of Vedas and the singing style of performing arts that might have existed around the 10th century CE is noted by **Acharya Abhinavagupta of Kashmir**. He mentions the **difference between religious Gandharva and the universal Dhruva-gana**.
- One of the earliest references of Ragas used in the Indian classical music can be found in the Buddhist textual sources. The 10th century manuscript of **CharyaGiti** (performance-songs) obtained from Tibet, is attributed to the 8th century CE **Mahasiddhas Sarahapa**.
- In the southern part of India, Prabandha-gana was the popular performing genre that existed between the 11th to 16th centuries. The word Prabandha, connotes a well-bound composition. Each Prabandha, it is said, was exhaustive and would take several years to master. It was the Prabandha tradition that gradually influenced the emergence of two associated, yet distinctive, styles of classical music that are now known to Hindustani and Carnatic music.
- In the northeastern region of India, with the efforts of 15th-16th century saint-scholar of the Vaishnava tradition, Srimanta Sankardev, a figure of importance in the cultural and religious history of Assam, a cultural reformation took place and the traditions of the past were revived. He devised new forms of music (Borgeet) and dance (Sattriya).
- **Sikhism** - Sikhism is perhaps the only religion that uses music as chief mode of worship, where poetic teachings of Gurus, composed in classical music, are used as prayer and offering. Using different styles, the Sikh kirtan are rendered in the Raga and Tala of Indian classical music. This music is used as a direct means for formal worship. **In the Guru Granth Sahib, the notation of thirty-one Ragas of classical music** has been supplied with necessary particulars.

- **Islam** - There is a popular perception that music is forbidden in Islam. However, this prohibition of music in Islam is contextual. The prohibition is applicable only when the music is associated with the worldly temptation and it becomes an obstacle to meditate upon the transcendental reality of Allah. Nevertheless, music has been honoured and incorporated in dervish dances or qawwali singing by the Sufi mystics for triggering their consciousness to its union with the divine supreme.
- With regards to Indian classical music, it should be noted that the term 'classical' only suggests that it has its foundations in the standard convention or **shastra**, in accordance with the textual tradition. The Indian name for this music is **Shastriya Sangit**. It is sometimes also known as **Raga Sangit** since it is the Raga that is at the centre of the structure of this art form. Thus, the term 'classical' does not connote any old style or a specific time period, as the way it exists in the Western tradition.

Embracing Pluralism and Particularism -

- The distinctness of Indian classical music is categorised in geographical or ethnic labels. In the *Natyashastra*, the musical style of northern India is mentioned as '**Udichya**' while the musical style that was prevalent in the **deccan region** is recorded as the **Andhriya**.
- **Khayal Music** - The development of Khayal style of Hindustani music appears around the time period of the 17th century CE. Historically, its popularity coincided with the breaking down of the Mughal empire and the rise of **riti** (romantic) poetry of Hindi literature. The Khayal style, which was an offshoot of its precursor classical music form called Dhrupad, particularly suited to the courtesans who preserved and served the classical music and dance to their customers in a rather mundane context. Majority of Khayal artists were Muslims and much of its technical vocabulary is derived from Urdu. Although, Khayal has been developed as a structured and systematic form of classical music tradition, yet most of its terminologies come from the vernacular languages.
- **Ragamala** - A typical example of the amalgamation of Indian classical music with visual art and poetry was the evolution of Ragamala (garlands of musical modes) painting series of medieval India. It was a form of Indian miniature painting that depicted various Indian classical modes or Ragas. These paintings are considered to be an indulgent imagination and testimony of creativity of the Indian artistic tradition.
- **Purity of Svara** - Another unifying factor of different forms of Indian classical music is the emphasis on the purity of Svara (musical note). The text Sangeet Ratnakar gives the etymological meaning of Svara as - swayamevaranjayatiitishwara. The term 'sva' stands for self and 'Ra' stands for standing forth. So, the atman or self is expected to shine through the svara.

Conclusion -

Thus, we can observe that the specific cultural forms and historical traditions have contributed to the emergence of epistemological diversity of Indian music. It is also reflected that spirituality has constantly remained the underlying core principle of this music.

Northeast Region: Unique Identity

India's northeastern region has a long and glorious history. Earliest human footprints here have been traced back to the early Stone Age or Palaeolithic Age (between 40,000 and 35,000 years ago).

It has been home to people belonging to various human races, with ethnologists pointing at the presence of traces of Negritos too, apart from prominent existence of people of pre-Dravidian, Eurasian, Austroloid, Mongoloid, Alpine or Armenoid, Mediterranean, Indo-Aryan and Irano-Scythian stocks.

The people of the region can be divided into three broad groups from the ethnological point of view-hill tribes, plain tribes and non-tribals of the plains.

Demography and population -

- Over 68 percent of the region's population live in Assam alone. The population varies from as low as 43 per sq km in Arunachal Pradesh to 398 per sq km in Assam, the latter being more than the national average of 382.

- Barring Assam, all the other states comprise predominantly of hilly terrain and are home to an overwhelming tribal proportion. The tribal population ranges from 12.4 percent in Assam to 94 percent in Mizoram.
- The region has over 160 Scheduled Tribes and 400 other tribal and sub-tribal communities and groups. Over 80 per cent of the region's population live in the rural areas.

Language -

- Ethnically, most tribes belong to the Indo-Mongoloid racial stock, and speak languages of different divisions and subdivisions of the great Sino-Tibetan linguistic family.
- The Bodo, Rabha, Dimasa and Karbi languages of Assam. Garo of Meghalaya, Kokborok of Tripura, and most languages spoken in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and the hills of Manipur belong to the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan group.
- Assamese on the other hand belong the neo Indo-Aryan family, while Khasi is a Mon-Khmer (Austro-Asiatic) language spoken in Meghalaya.
- Practically most languages and dialects spoken across the region, barring Sikkim, belong to the Tibeto-Burman group.
- Nepali, Bhotia and Lepcha are the three major languages in Sikkim, which is ethnically different from the other Northeastern states.

Religion -

- On the religious front, a sizeable majority of tribal communities in Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur in the past 200 years have embraced **Christianity** by leaving behind their respective traditional faiths of nature worship.
- Majority of people in Assam, Tripura and the Imphal valley of Manipur on the other hand subscribe to different forms of **Hinduism**, among which Vaishnavism is the most prominent in Assam and Manipur. Among major indigenous faiths are Donyi-Polo in Arunachal Pradesh and Niam-tre in Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh also has a significant presence of Buddhism; the Mongpa, Sherdukpen, Membo and Khamba tribes follow the Mahayana school, while the Khamti, Singpho and Tangsa tribes follow the Theravada school.

Festivals -

- **Bihu** - Bihu, the most popular festival in Assam, has its roots in agrarian practices of ancient times. Thus, while Bhogali Bihu is celebration of the harvest, Rongali Bihu is about the New Year. Assam also observes Kongali Bihu - which comprises of a solemn prayer for a good crop. While the Bodos call their New Year festival Baisagu, the Dimasas call it Bisu, the Karbis call it Rongker, the Mishings call it Ali-aye Lrigang and the Rabhas call it Baikho.
- In Meghalaya, the **Khasis** celebrate Shad Suk Mynsiem, the Jaintias celebrate Behdeinkham and the Faros Wangala.
- In Mizoram on the other hand, all three festivals - **Chapchar Kut, Mim Kut and Pawl Kut** - are related to agriculture, during which Mizos perform Cheraw, the amazing bamboo dance.
- In Arunachal Pradesh on the other hand, the Adi community celebrates Solung, the Apatanis celebrate Dree, the Niyishis celebrate Noykum, the Galos celebrate Mopin and the Monpas celebrate Loser - all related to agriculture. Some festivals of Nagaland tribe-wise are Sekrenyi (Angami), Aoling Monyu (Konyak), Moatsu (Ao), Tuluni (Sema), Tokhu Emong (Lotha) and Amongmong (Sangtam).

Dance -

- Two of the dance forms of the Northeast-**Manipuri of Manipur and Satriya of Assam** - on the other hand have been recognised as "classical dance forms" of the country introduced in the 15th century AD by the famous Assamese saint reformer Sankaradeva, the Satriya dance is governed by strictly laid down principles in respect of hastra mudras, footworks, aharyas, music etc.
- The Satriya dance is primarily preserved and propagated by the several Satra or Vaishnavite monasteries located in Majuli, largest inhabited river-island of the world.
- Manipuri dance, which had developed in the 15th century over the ancient dance traditions of Manipur, has a large repertoire, the most popular forms being Raas, Sankirtana and Thang-Ta.

Occupation -

- Assam's traditional handloom industry has been basically **silk-oriented**, because the state is also home to the unique muga or golden silk - a variety of wild silk geographically tagged to Assam. Known for its extremely durability, muga silk has a natural yellowish-golden tint with a shimmering, glossy texture.
- In Assam, they commonly weave **mekhela-chador**, while the ceremonial set also includes a riha, and these could be of the golden muga as well as the paat - the latter made of mulberry silk and is brilliant white or off-white in colour. Bodo tribal women of Assam weave the dokhona and jwmgra dress, while the arena is a beautiful scarf normally worn by men. Likewise, the most common handloom products of the Mishing tribals are sumpa and galuk, a two-piece dress for women, while Rabha women weave khanbung and riphon.
- In Manipur, some of the popular traditional fabrics include the phanek of the Meiteis, kasan of the Tangkhuls, and the various types of plan of the Paites, Vaipheis and Zous, khamtang of the Thadous, punkophoi of the Koms, and so on. In Arunachal Pradesh, Apatani women weave bilanabi, chinyu-abi and jig-jiro, Singpho women sew pukang, Nyishi women weave par-ij, Khamti women weave siu-pashao and sin, to name a few.

Music -

The wide variety of musical instruments that the different communities possess - from the long dama of the Garos of Meghalaya (they play 100 drums in unison during the Wangala festival) to the bhor-taal (large brass cymbals used in Assam's Satra monasteries) to the bengbung of Mizoram (similar to a xylophone) - provide virgin areas of research.

Maharashtra: Richly Diverse and Vibrant

The rich visual art forms of Maharashtra range from the enthralling rock sculptures found in the caves and grottos, to the astounding wall paintings, to the distinct temple architecture, to the very unique Chitrakathi and Ganjifa paintings to the appealing Warh paintings to the attractive Rangoli to recently discovered Petroglyphs (rock carvings).

CAVE ARTS -

Ajanta and Ellora -

- Maharashtra is home to the largest number of caves in India of all sizes, shapes and hues, from ancient rock-cut ones to one with intricate sculptures. The Elephanta caves, the Ajanta and the Ellora caves are enlisted in the UNESCO World Heritage Site List.
- The caves at **Ajanta and Ellora near Aurangabad** are a striking reminder of an **age of Buddhism** at its peak. There are about 800 caves spread across various districts but of these the 32 caves at Ajanta stood out distinctively because of their architectural splendour, legacy and artistic masterpiece. The caves include paintings and rock-cut sculptures described as among the finest surviving examples of ancient Indian art, particularly expressive paintings that present emotions through gesture, pose and form. Caves 16, 17, 1 and 2 of Ajanta form the largest corpus of surviving ancient Indian-wall paintings.
- **Ellora**, also called **Verul**, dates back to the **Rashtrakuta dynasty**, about 1,500 years ago. There are over 100 caves at the site, all excavated from the basalt cliffs in the Charanandri Hills, 34 of which are open to public, that have evidence of **Buddhist, Hindu and Jain 'viharas' and 'mathas'**. **Cave 16** features the largest single monolithic rock excavation in the world, the **Kailasha Temple**, a chariot shaped monument dedicated to Lord Shiva.
- The **Pitalkhora caves** located in the **Satamala Hill Ranges of Maharashtra**, about 40 kilometres from Ellora, consist of 14 rock-cut cave monuments which date back to the third century BCE.

Elephanta and Kanheri Caves -

- The **Elephanta Caves** are located on a small island in the sea near **Mumbai**. The caves are hewn from **solid basalt rock**. The carvings narrate **Hindu mythologies**, with the large monolithic 20 feet Trimurti Sadashiva (three-faced Shiva), Nataraja (Lord of dance) and Yogishvara (Lord of Yoga) being the most celebrated.
- The Kanheri caves, around the outskirts of Mumbai are considered to be very important to understand the development of Buddhism in Western India. They contain Buddhist sculptures and relief carvings, paintings and inscriptions dating from the 1st century CE to the 10th century

CE. The Bhaja, Bedse, Pandavleni, Lenyadri, Manmodi and Shivneri caves are well-known for their architecture, sculpture and paintings.

Petroglyphs -

- The recently discovered **1,000 rock carvings in Ratnagiri district**, which are estimated to be 1200 years old, have immense archaeological significance.
- The carvings cover over 52 sites, which have a huge range of images from human and animal forms to abstract patterns and fertility symbols.
- They are carved into the flat open surface of the laterite stone, cutting deep inside, which gives a scale and unique look to the images.

PAINTINGS -

Warli Paintings -

- The Warli art is a **painting style of the tribals** who predominantly inhabit Dahanu, Talasari, Jawhar, Palghar, Mokhada and Vikhramgad, all in Thane district.
- The art uses very basic representation- a circle, a triangle and a square - to depict nature and daily activities of the tribals.
- The circle represents the Sun and the Moon, the triangle is derived from mountains and pointed trees, and the square indicates a sacred space or a piece of land.
- The central motif in these ritual paintings is surrounded by scenes portraying **hunting, fishing and farming, festivals and dances, trees and animals**.
- Apart from the ritualistic paintings, the other Warli paintings portray the daily activities of the people. **Only white colour is used in Warli paintings**. The white pigment is a **mixture of rice paste and water** with gum as a binder. A bamboo stick crushed at one end is used as a paint brush.

The Pinguli Chitrakathi -

- The **Thakkas tribe of Pinguli village** near Kudal in **Sindhudurg** has been practicing Pinguli Chitrakathi since the 17th century.
- Their unique style of painting is done using a **paper, brush, and handmade colours**. It follows a sequence and is based on the stories of the *Mahabharata and Ramayana*.

The Ganjifa -

- Ganjifa are handmade **playing cards** which were earlier used by the **Royal family of Sawantwadi** and have reached several museums all over the world now.
- These cards are made from circular pieces of paper on which intricate designs of **Dashavatara (Ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu)** are hand-painted.
- A set of Dashavatara Ganjifa consists of 120 cards. There are ten suits, each having 12 cards. The cards are made from paper that is covered with a mixture of tamarind seed powder and oil, painted and coated with lac.

Bhitti Chitra -

- Bhitti Chitra is an art style that depicts **themes on the walls of houses or temples**. The Matheran of Mahatma communities, who are well-known for their mineral-painted depictions are traditional Bhitti Chitra artistes.
- The paintings are embossed with gold and silver to enhance the depictions. This is commonly created on temple walls and is often intricate.
- Frescoed walls and intricately painted ceilings reveal the religious context of the work of this community. The Matherans live in Godvard near Pali and are known for their paintings of the Gangaur idols.

Rangoli -

Rangoli is a traditional floor art which is practiced in almost every household. Mesmerising patterns are created on the floor or the ground using materials such as coloured rice, dry flour, coloured sand or flower petals.

PERFORMING ARTS -

Tribal Music -

- The tribes of music Bhil, Mahadev, Koli, Gond, Warli, Kokna, Katkari, Thakur, Gavit, Kolam, Korku, Andh, Malhar and Pardhi, are concentrated mostly in the districts of Khandesh, Kolaba, Nashik and parts of Pune and Ahmednagar.
- An important feature of their music is **a close blend of movements and vocals**. All important events, such as childbirth, initiation, marriage or death, as also change of seasons and harvesting, have specific music associated with them.

Nandiwala -

The *nandiwala* is a specialist performer who presents animal shows. Combining tricks with some soothsaying he employs *gubgubee* (a double-sided membranophone), *ghadyal-tipru* (a mallet used to strike a metal disc) and tiny bells as instruments.

Bahuroopi -

The term literally means one with many disguises as the performer parades in different disguises impersonating pregnant women, young mothers, etc.

Dhangari Oriya -

This movement oriented song is associated with goatherds (dhangars) and centred on Biruba, an incarnation of Lord Shiva.

Vasudev Geet -

Vasudev, the performer, is an incarnation of Lord Krishna, as is apparent from the distinctive headgear of peacock feathers and flute.

Waghya-Murali Geet -

The songs form a sub-variety of *gondhal*, a known form of ritual theatre. *Waghya* and *murali* are respectively the male and female devotees of Khandoba. The murali is the chief dancer and the waghya is the accompanist, participating in the performance known as jaguar (keeping awake).

Ritualistic dance forms -

Ritualistic dance forms can be seen in Khandoba Jagran of the waghya-murali, together with Amba, Bhavani, Renuka, Gondhal of the Gondhalis. Waghya-Murali perform the ritualistic folk play with jagran. The participants through the dance express their devotion to God Khandoba and Goddess Renukadevi.

Devotional dance forms -

- The bhaurud and the kirtan are spontaneous devotional dance forms. In bhaurud, the bhaurudkar (performer) sings the opening line, then preaches delivering a spiritual message, and between and after indulges in dancing. The warkari kirtan or dindi dance is performed during the Pandharpur pilgrimage. The dance is not choreographed but is extempore with an overflow of devotional expressions of the warkari pilgrims, ardent devotees of Lord Vitthal.
- Bohada which is also known as Panchami, Akhadi, Chaitee constitutes a dance drama associated with mythological stories. It is popular in the tribal belt of Thane, Palghar, Nashik and Nagar districts. The stories of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Lalit and Dashawataara all form part of the repertoire.

Social awareness dance forms -

- There are various dance forms which do the noble job of conveying social messages. Amongst them, powadas (ballads) have been popular ever since the time of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Powada has an in-built veer ras (valiant spirit) in it and successfully narrates the tales of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and other brave warriors.
- A powada essentially consists of the shahir (bard) who enacts the stories entwined with dance forms.

Entertaining dance forms -

- Lavani is an aesthetically combination of singing, enactment and dance, and is one of the most popular folk dance forms of Maharashtra.

- Tamasha is rich in sringar ras (romanticism). There are two types of tamasha, dholki fadacha tamasha and sangeet baricha tamasha. Lavani is performed in both these forms.

Assorted Folk Dance Forms -

- In the Rangad and Ratnagiri districts of Maharashtra Naman, Khele and Balya Dance are prominent folk themes. Naman and Khele are purely dramatic forms which are performed during the Holi season whereas Jakhadi (also known as Balya dance) is performed during Ganesh festival.
- In Sindhudurg district, Sawanatwadi Tehsil, the chapai dance of the shepherd community is popularly known. It resembles the gaja dance of western Maharashtra. These dances are performed to honour the home-deities of the shepherds Biroba and Jotiba.
- Koli dance is the dance of the fishing community (Kolis). It is performed on festive days and at marriages.

Culture : A Unifying Force

A language that is more than 700 years old, Gujarati is spoken by more than 60 million people in the cities, towns, villages and every bylane of Gujarat. Among the various dialects of the language spoken throughout the state, standard Gujarati, Saurashtra Gujarati, Gamadia Gujarati, Kathiawari, Parsi, Bohri and Kutchhi are some of the famous ones.

Along with language, flourishes Gujarati literature with well-known laureates like Narsinh Mehta, Akho, Premanand, Shamal Bhatt, Dayaram, Dalpatram, Narmad, Govardhanram Tripathi, KM Munshi, Umashankar Joshi and Pannalal Patel.

Music -

- Right from the very base of music - **a number of ragas** like Khambavati, Gujari Todi Bilaval, Sorathi, Lati and Ahiri have emerged from various regions of Gujarat, making for several majestic creations since generations.
- **Garba**, while most popular across the world, is not the only form of folk music in the state. The melody of Chavan's and Gadhavis in their pure forms is as richly celebrated in the state even today.

Festivals -

- A festival that spreads the colours of Gujarat culture in the skies, is **Uttarayan**, also known as Makar Sankranti, and popularly called the kite festival.
- In the past decade, **Rannotsav** has become the most sought-after fair of Gujarat with global fame, a time when the locals celebrate the most colourful and vibrant aspects of their culture; for tourists all over the world to come and experience.
- Living in the tent city built at the white sand desert, enjoying the local cuisine, entertaining with folk dance and music are all part of the fair that the **Rann of Kutch** offers every winter.
- **Tarnetar fair** is one of the biggest fairs in the state. It is most popular for rural sports and exhibits of the most spectacular human pyramid formations for which participating contingents prepare all year round.

Outfits -

- Gujarat is popularly known for the hand-crafted **Patola silk**, with a few weaver families in Patan engaged in the craft. Its exclusivity is well-known, making it a much coveted silk.
- **Chaniya Chois and Kediya**s, heavily embroidered and embellished with mirrors and trinkets are other festive wear that can be seen adorned by Gujaratis, not just during celebrations.

Agriculture -

The northern part of the state is known for the cultivation of maize; Saurashtra has abundance of maize; South Gujarat is rich in its cultivation of jowl. The staple diet in each of these regions has been influenced by these locally cultivated crops.

Temple Inscriptions of Tamil Nadu

India's oldest inscriptions maybe from the Indus valley and the more famous ones maybe of those of Ashoka in the North, but in terms of sheer diversity of subjects and comprehensiveness of coverage of medieval India, Tamil Nadu temples have the maximum number of inscriptions.

Temple inscriptions -

- Most inscriptions deal with local administration of land and water. They give us a lot of information on how land was cultivated, how water was conserved and used and, in all disputes - and there are many of them - the underlying principles seem to be swift resolution and a basic premise that individual rights are subservient to community being harmonious and that everyone living together is a non-negotiable.
- Also, land, food and water are seen not as rights to be enjoyed or abused but as gifts of the divine that are sacred and need to be treated with respect. A great act of merit was to construct local irrigation facilities. Sick people were respected and rewarded. In many instances, women Devadasi's funded such efforts as well.
- Temple walls also record the resolution of caste disputes. **Brahmadesam in the Tambraparni banks** is a magnificent temple forgotten by art lovers of the state. It has on its walls a short arbitration judgement that enjoined two castes to live peacefully for the well-being of the entire village. Another in **Tirumeyyam** records the partition of an entire village as the only way to end a bitter feud.
- Administration in medieval Tamil Nadu was very orderly and the level of freedom local village had was unprecedented by today's standards. A small inscription from 898 CE in the **Shiva temple in Manur, Tirunelveli** is of vital importance. It mentions the village land owners meeting on a night and redrafting the rules of election into the Judicial cum legislative assembly of the village.
- The 10th century **Tiruninravur Perumal Temple** inscription sheds more light on the terms of office and how in some occasion legislature and judicial functions were different.
- Some inscriptions mention hospitals/medical colleges and educational institutions supported by temples. Inscriptions give us a lot of detailed information on their functioning and income. The Maths in Tiruviyottiyur was so well-known that the King of Valluvanad in Kerala, called Vallabha, renounced the world and moved to Tiruvottiyur to head the Matha as Chaturanana Pandita.
- In **Tirumukkudal**, not far from Kanchi, the Perumal temple had a hospital attached to it. The lengthy and perfectly engraved inscription that spans the entire length of the temple mentions a massive land grant by Rajendra Chola in 1068 CE. There was a Vedic and Agama teaching institution employing at least 14 teachers and a hostel for the boys.
- A 1425 CE inscription in the **Vrinchipuram Shiva temple** mentions how there had by then a corrupt practice among the Brahmins of the bridegroom's father paying money to the bride's father. Based on lengthy deliberations with members of the community from Karnataka, Telugu, Tamil and Kerala regions, it was decided to punish those who gave or received such gifts. The most severe punishment for Brahmins was excommunication and this was also listed.

Agriculture produce -

Some of the common produce trade in that time are - salt, paddy (unhusled rice), rice, green gram, flat beans, tuvar dhal, castor seeds areca nuts, pepper, turmeric, dried ginger, onion, mustard, cumin seeds, gooseberry, beleric myrobalans (used for consumption), iron cotton, thread, thick cloth, thin cloth, a fine thread, wax, gunny cloth, sandal wood, honey, Agil cedar wood, silk, rose water, human hair for wigs, camphor oil, khol, civet oil, Javvadhu (an intensely fragrant plant), healthy cows, horses and elephants.

Memorial stones of Jammu and Kashmir

The earliest examples of memorial stones recorded from Kashmir date back to circa 2nd-3rd century CE. Seen in every nook and corner of the Valley, these memorial stones reflect a widespread practice based on the tenets of 'hero worship' as well as 'ritual death' like 'Praya' and Sati. The widespread practice of raising memorial stones seems to have been discontinued after Muslim rule in the 4th century.

Memorial stones of Jammu -

- One of the three divisions of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu region is the name given to the part of the outermost hills of the Himalayas that stretch from Himachal Pradesh to the Pothawar in Pakistan.
- Known in the Puranas as **Darva-Abhisara** and situated between the ancient Madhya Desha on the one hand and the Gandhara on the other.
- It was marked by natural boundaries of river Ravi in the east and the river Jhelum in the west, the area of Jammu has played an important link in spreading the religious and cultural ideas from Indian mainland to Central Asia via Kashmir Valley.
- Due to its strategic location, the region, while being a part of the pan-Indian ethos, also imbibed influences which came in the form of numerous waves of migrating tribes from the north and north-west.
- Notwithstanding the diversity of races and ethnic communities which included the races from the hoary past such as Pishaca, Naga, Kinnara, Gandhavara, along with races from the early historic period like Audumbara, Madra, Vahlika, Darva, Abhisara, Yavana, Saumantikas, Kiras et al.
- Many ballads and song sung by the folk singers called as **Gardi, Yogi and Daraes**, are a characteristics feature of Jammu and folklife.
- In the historic context, the most frequently found type is that of Hero/Warrior Stones which as part of pan-Indian practice are raised in honour of warriors. Locally called as **mohras**, these memorial stones are invariably **found near a water source like ponds and baolies** - the freshwater springs and especially in the post-17th century freshwater springs.
- In such stones, the hero is shown either riding a horse or standing. He and his horse are shown wearing armour. The hero usually holds a lance or a sword. In another variety, the hero is also shown as standing and holding a sword and a shield. In another type, the hero is depicted along with with a Sati who generally rides a palanquin carried by bearers, while the hero rides a horse.

Sati Stones -

- The 'Mohras' of ladies called as **Satis, Shilvantis, Syabatis** are one of the most commonly found forms of memorial stones. This category of memorial stones relate to the age-old practice where women used to immolate; with her dead husband (**Sahagamana**) or after receiving the news of the death of her husband (**Anugamana**), or at the death of a brother, son or any other hero or to save her honour or of the family, clan, village or for some social causes.
- Such stone depict a figure of standing women holding a Kalasha in one hand while the other hand is raised quite high. Sometimes, in later varieties, she is even shown holding a fan in her one hand.

Concept of Hatya -

- The memorial stones also are raised in the honour of a dead ancestor, or one who has died an unnatural death or died for a cause or all those who spirits demand setting up of a mohra.
- The wish of the spirit of the dead to set up a mohra so that it rests in peace or appeased is known through dreams of a family member or a relative or all those who get affected by the turn of untoward events in their day to life and linked with the wandering spirit.

Memorials of the Childless -

Another form of memorial stones which were raised in the past was for those family members who die as childless. Locally called as '**autar**' mohras, in these memorial stones a half-standing man with a folded hand is shown. These stones are not kept inside the house as there is no one to remember them. These mohras are worshipped on special sacred days and festivals.

Time frame -

While the practice of raising memorial stones dwindled at a fast pace with the advent of Muslim rule in the Valley, surprisingly raising of memorial stones seems to have proliferated in Jammu region after the 15th-16th century and continued till today as a living tradition.

Form and style -

- Jammu memorial stones exhibit two distinct varieties. One which in continuation to the pan-Indian tradition is **three-dimensional structures** shaped like a miniature temple to be viewed frontally. Such tall stones fashioned like a small temple are divided into three segments. The lower register depicts the dramatis personae while its upper part tapers into a conical spire.

Such examples dateable between 14th to 17th centuries are mostly reported from upper reaches of Jammu region.

- Another variety is of those stones that are in the shape of a rectangular relief. The dimensions mostly range from three to four feet to smaller versions which measure between two to one and a half feet.
- As far as the artistic style of the carvings on the memorial stones of Jammu is concerned, one finds an amazing variety with a range from semi-classical to folk. But as a rule, the early examples seem to have been carved by sculptors well versed in 'Margi' traditions entrenched in aesthetics of **Shilpa Shastra**.

Conclusion -

Presently, memorial stones are mostly seen placed in open on raised platforms under trees, near a source of water such as ponds, springs, temples or housed in special memorial structure locally called as Dehris. Mohras are also kept in courtyards of temples. Some of the well-known places like Baba Jitto's temple at Chiri, near Jammu and its surrounding area like Babe da Tlaa, are strewn with hundreds of debris of kuldevtas or kuldevis of different communities, castes and clans.

Memorial stones are now no more created by traditional carvers called as 'Batede' or 'Slaede', as these families have abandoned their ancestral trade. Instead, masons, carpenters, are making stones as either simplified and crude carvings of human forms or in a popular style and a medium like marble, concrete where figures are incised with a stylus and coloured with emulsion, thus presenting a total contrast from the past practice.