

## My Way of Fostering a Culture of Peace

Sanjoy Bandopadhyay

Rabindra Bharati University, India

United Nations resolutions as resolved in the year 2000, the Culture of Peace was defined as:

*"A set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations." [A/RES/52/13]*

The absence of peace under any periphery is the output of mental state that is not satisfied with the prevalent status of existence. The periphery of the problem may be unitary, regional, national, intra-national or global. The human mind naturally imbibed certain basic features like, as we call in Sanskrit, *kama*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *matsarya* that means desire, anger, greed, affinity, zeal to conquer and jealousy. These mental attitudes, within limits, are essential components for human growth and development. But, the excesses or disproportionate mix of these qualities attract acts leading to disturbance and killing of peace at any level of human life and society.

For peace and non-violence to prevail, we need to foster culture of peace through education by appropriately revising the educational curricula to promote qualitative values, attitudes and behaviours, including peaceful conflict-resolution, dialogue, consensus-building and active non-violence. The educational components for such development of qualitative values to promote peace will also automatically build-up positive attitudes and supporting behavioural patterns in the future adults. Music is one of the mediums that can play an important role in this. Exposure to different heritage music may prove to be important component to help in developing supportive behavioural patterns. The exposure to such music will allow the students an opportunity to get more exposed to different cultures and getting introduced to the cultures' intrinsic virtues. As the culture conflict plays a role against peace, so widening the understanding will also help in increasing tolerance.

Incidentally, music can also be used for promotion of culture of peace through different medias and there may be larger number of "Music for Peace" festivals that may produce a direct impact on the community.

In India the heritage music is considered to be a path to salvation. Music, as we discussed earlier, can be used as an effective vehicle for promotion of Culture of Peace concept. This along with other tools may be appropriately adapted in the curricula with an object to develop a mind-set of the future adults to build up the Culture of Peace.

As my area of studies is Indian Music, I take the opportunity to suggest some tools through examples through this style of music. This may also be partially or totally applicable to music of other cultures with due modifications. Music can excite human minds or put it to sublime state. Musical themes can be anything that a mind can think of. Researches also proved that music's emotional messages are understood cross-culturally<sup>1</sup>. So, with the incorporation of

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<sup>1</sup> Music is highly powerful in communicating emotions and setting moods. However, it is generally believed that this capability is learned within each culture. To test this assumption, Laura-Lee Balkwill and William Forde Thompson presented Western culture listeners with various excerpts of music they had never heard, specifically from *Hindustani ragas*. The subjects were asked to rate the emotions expressed in each selection: joy, sadness, anger and peace. The authors found that the Western listeners were highly sensitive to emotional messages, despite the fact that they were completely unfamiliar with this type of music. The findings suggest that music's power to communicate specific emotions is not merely cultural but reflects more basic human processes. [Balkwill, L-L and Thompson, W.F., (1999), *A Cross-Cultural Investigations of the Perception of Emotion in Music, Music Perception*, 17, pg. 43-64]

appropriately chosen music and music styles in the academic curricula should help to develop the peace-oriented mind-frame. The recent researches at the UCLA [*University of California at Los Angeles, USA*] shows that joining the music courses in the school level helps in “--- *higher achievement grades in history, and also significant increases in positive social behaviors, including helping and sharing, increases in empathy for others, and beneficial attitudes including reduced prejudice and racism. Teachers also found that students were less aggressive.* [Konrad, R.R. (2000), *Empathy, Arts and Social Studies, Dissertation Abs.: Human. & Soc. Sci., 60, pg 2352*].”

Thus, the mind-set achievable through incorporation of music in the academic curricula with appropriate selection of music and right mode of teaching should work as a good tool for developing Culture of Peace.

Now, I shall perform some Indian *raga*-music that signifies peace or incorporated in the tradition through cultural exchanges.



Items for musical demonstration:

No.	Raga	Music parts	Description
1	<i>Yaman</i>	<i>Alap and gat in Rupak [7 beats]</i>	<i>Yaman</i> means welfare or peace, attributed to 14 <sup>th</sup> century Persian poet <i>Amir Khusro</i> . This is one of the most popular <i>raga</i> even now.
2.	<i>Bahar</i>	<i>Gat in Ektala [12 beats]</i>	Depicts joy. A seasonal <i>raga</i> for the spring.
3.	<i>Anandi-Kalyan</i>	<i>Alap and gat in Teentala [16 beats]</i>	Depicts the mood of peace and joy. ‘ <i>Anand</i> ’ means joy and ‘ <i>Kalyan</i> ’ means peace or welfare.
4.	<i>Darbari-Kanara</i>	<i>Alap and gat in Jhaptal [10 beats]</i>	Depicts grandeur of a court. This <i>raga</i> is a creation of the legendary musician <i>Mian Tansen</i> who was the court musician of the Emperor Akbar.
5.	<i>Mian-ki-Malhar</i>	<i>Gat in Teentala [16 beats]</i>	A monsoon <i>raga</i> and signifies washing out of bad qualities. ‘ <i>Mian</i> ’ is God [ <i>Muslim religion</i> ] and ‘ <i>Malhar</i> ’ means ‘diminishing the bad’.
6.	<i>Vachaspati</i>	<i>Gat in drut Teentala [16 beats]</i>	A <i>raga</i> of Carnatic [South Indian] musical tradition and adapted in the Hindustani music style.
7.	<i>Bhairavi</i>	<i>Alap and gat in Dadra [6 beats]</i>	<i>Bhairavi</i> is the name of a deity [wife of <i>Bhairava</i> ]. The treatises describe this as a morning <i>raga</i> . This <i>raga</i> is very popular and usually performed in lighter mood these days. This is usually performed as the final item of a concert and accepted as a <i>raga</i> for all time. This <i>raga</i> depicts devotional mood. All the twelve notes are used in this <i>raga</i> .