

INDIAN TRADITION ART FORMS

EXPLORING INDIAN CULTURE via VISUAL ARTFORMS

असतो मा सद्गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय।

"O God ! Take me in the light of truth from the dark of ignorance " India is a country having a very unique combination of diverse culture, so this topic - 'Exploring India ' is a very interesting journey into the heart of nature and it's vibrant traditions through the prism of visual art form. This exploration dwells deep into the significance, origin, development, history, geography, philosophy and amalgamation and evolution of some of Indian art forms offering a comprehensive understanding of India's artistic legacy through this 'exploration' readers are invited to emerge themselves in the kaleidoscope of India's cultural mocktail, offering a deeper appreciation of country's artistic heroism or expertise. We can say that India is a country of many great surprises for the word and also a great topic to study and research.

I. FOUNDATION OF INDIAN CULTURE

According to the researches the origin of India can be traced to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization around 3300 BCE to 1300 BCE. Harappa and Mohenjodaro are the other examples of Indian cultural proof over the countries. I have tried to explain Indian culture's Foundation through some of the following points.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIETY

Early man at the time of stone age used the chipped stone tools and chopped pebbles for hunting, cutting and for other purposes. In this period man barely managed to store his food and he lived on hunting only, he had no sense of farming or building or preparing any place to live in safely, he only lived in temporary shelters like in the hill and cave. They implemented animal remains and bones and started of being aware about hunting with sharp tools and weapon. carving on the walls of the cave, in which they lived to showcased their daily life routine with easy shape as circle, triangle, lines, and dots etc and symbols as well as using stone tools for chopping, digging, and skimming mainly. Later on the development of human consciousness made the way to progress. They became gatherers and aware about habitation rather than of being strollers. The Rock Shelters have served them as seasonal camp for human. This was the time Indian culture started its establishment with so many achievements in the history of human life subsequently - sharp stone tools, handaxe, animal bones use, animal remains use, group living in cave, habitation, food storage, symbols and animal husbandry etc.

III. AGRICULTURE, DOMESTICATION AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

When early man started progressing for themselves, they stepped into the Residency and became aware about agriculture, as - how to grow seeds into the soil. With the feeling of ownership they settled a piece of safe land to dwell and started farming on the land along with the storage for crop and food. Now they formed a society by living in groups. Now they focused on animal husbandry for farming, food safety and availability of transportation, but as said - blessing and boon came together - this social growth brought conflicts between two

human groups and the territory system started for the first time in history. The early man wanted to become a powerful man so Gio politics Origin for the first time on the earth.

IV. SYMBOLIC COMMUNICATION

Need is the mother of invention truly when people lived in groups and worked together and the need occurred to communicate with each other. People started to live using symbols with sound. They started simple and symbolic easy drawings with their simple shapes as line, dot, triangle, square, rectangle and circle etc on the wall of caves and on the wall of there slobe shaped round houses made of mud, stone and bushes. Thus the development of grammar took place with symbols to show their daily routine and dance patterns. Gradually early humans become aware about colours through available things as soil, rocks, stone powder, tree trunk, leaves, flowers, seed's paste, mud, fruits etc. The traces of using red colour was found for the very first time with iron rich soil and its artistic implement was seen in prehistorical cave painting, so red ochre is one of the oldest pigment still in use to colour lipstick and blush today. Ajanta Cave paintings show the use of natural colours in natural circumstances of their living time, that was the greatest achievement in the history of colors. Human brain got developed now with the understanding the process of seed sowing for a new tree farming method, word language communication, dancing, story creation & telling and art forms depiction.

V. GEOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCE

India has a varied climate and ecosystem to influence the development of its art and culture SO the geographical influence affected art theme according to the availability of river water they showed boating, fishing, swimming, farming of rice and many other water based activities in their artforms. The people mostly situated in the tropical zone draw monsoon related artwork. The Indian subcontinent is a well defined geographical unit. Monsoon has a very important role in tropical zone of south west with kharif crop. In winter season the rain destroyed the western to northern India where the crop of wheat and barley produced. Thus considering geographical diversity, it is true that not only the cultural art forms affected with but the wide range of these artforms developed with so many unique characteristics, as Himalayan region in the plane areas of Northern India have distinct cultural expression and style. Each and every fact is interconnected with each other directly or indirectly. This interconnection is the reflection in art forms, spirituality, Dance, music, cuisine and traditional crafts and all these factors can be seen in their spiritualism, their expression of devotion in form of timeless stories and moral value. This is our Indian unity in diversity of life. The beauty of Indian culture, the beauty of various art forms, the richness of spirituality, the heights of ultimate perspective, profound emotions and finally ultimate Unity of everything in existence. This is our India. The one fact is needed to mention that mostly cultural artforms are passed on from father to son traditionally, so hardly any solid proof about ancient culture can be found.

VI. WARLI ARTFORM

Warli art form believed to be quite ancient visual artform of the history of Indian culture which originated about 2,500 to 3,000 years ago, by an indigenous tribe living in the western Ghats of Maharashtra and it's surroundings regions, practiced with this art for generations. They expressed their activities with geometrical patterns as dot, dash, line,

circle, Triangle, rectangle and Square etc. For coloring they used white pigment on dark background. To depict the scenes of their daily life routine they draw their activities through the simple images of expressive geometrical patterns. they draw Ladies figure with pitcher to take water from the well or from the river bank, kids playing with each other, cleaning their houses with broom, cooking, relaxing, keep the food into the storage place made of mud and bushes, going to the hills with stick, dance in a circular shape which is open from the side to let the happiness enter into their region, to show their rituals they expressed with ladies drawing Thapa pattern to worship, playing, climbing the hills with sticks, with cattles / animals, farming, seeding, watering, forest area with animal hunting, catching snakes, fishing etc. They also depicted their occupations as broom making, fishing, pottery work, farming, milking etc and many more themes to draw these Warli paintings with carving on the walls of cave. Mr. Jivya Soma masshe was the first promoter for this traditional and cultural art form. He took this art from the caves to the wall of their own houses, then on fabric and paper. This way Mr Mashe promoted this art form from cave to the market and made this art transportable for all. He took worli painting to the market and other areas far away from his tribe. now the modern Warli of 21st century in progressive and fashionable form, can be found in all over the India and all over the world, not only on wall, canvas, paper, but also on fabric, usable things, jewellery, bedsheet, terracotta and sari etc

VII. RANGOLI ARTFORM

- 1. Art of Drawing on Ground:** Rangoli making is common in India on each and every auspicious occasion and for youngsters Colorful Rangoli is always a work of attraction. Rangoli represents the happiness positivity and liveliness of the household and is intended to welcome Lakshmi the Goddess of wealth and good luck. Rangoli is an abode of adversity, So the purpose of Rangoli is beyond decoration.
- 2. Origin of Rangoli:** In the time span of 1500 to 1200 BCE, the wife of Rishi' Agastya 1200 to 1500, named Lopamudra made Rangoli for the very first time to decorate the yagykunda, the place of worship to God, where her husband wanted to worship the God. For this purpose she asked the Panchatatva (five elements- sky, wind, water, earth & fire) to give her colors blue, green, black, red white (Sky, water, soil. Fire, wind) She made these colours from rice, lentils, flowers and spices and add these colours to the rangoli. This is why Rangoli look so beautiful even today.

According to spiritual believes Rangoli was started in Gujarat when Krishna settled down in Dwarka, his wife Rukmini started the rangoli patterns .

Below are some other names for Rangoli in different parts of India:

West Bengal - Alpana.

Orissa - It is called Joti which is put in front of Lord Jaganath.

Chattisgarh Chouk Purna.

Karnataka - Rangoli.

Maharashtra - Sanskara Bharati.

Tamil Nadu - Kolam.

Utter Pradesh- purna

Thus the fact is clear that Rangoli is one of the traditional routine of Indian culture.

VIII. RANGOLI PATTERNS

In ancient time Rangoli was a very pious tradition to welcome God and happiness and well wealth. Rangoli patterns of that time were made with rice powder, turmeric powder, floor, flowers, leaves etc. ladies used to draw Rangoli patterns at the door with floor using their four finger and Thumb the shapes they used to draw were circle, half circle, triangle, square and lines etc. simple shapes. The traditional form of Rangoli uses designs based on nature as Creepers, Swan, peacock, Swastik and Bird etc

IX. TYPES OF RANGOLI

Rangoli types can be discriminate with area or geometrical situation of the place. In different states of India, different names and different pattern of Rangoli are used as Alpana Kolam, Mandana, Poorna, Jhoti, Chita, aalekhan, Mandala, Chauk Poorna, Thapa etc

- 1. Style of Rangoli:** There are so many modern styles to decorate floor area at any special place, as Water rangoli on water, portable or shiftable rangoli on wood with paint, cardboard, MDF board, plastic sheet, synthetic sheet, portrait style of Rangoli painting to draw historical portrait or of any famous personality, poster look rangoli, carpet style Rangoli with wood powder, glass rangoli on glass with glass colours, objective Rangoli which is made with any type of objects that are available in bulk quantity to make a rangoli, paper rangoli with colourful papers, and quilling style of paper to make any pattern with the choice of artist. Later on the rangoli style is changed into a different Outlook as floating rangoli on water, With paper of different colours, using quilling style, paper tearing or paper folding etc to make special decoration anytime anywhere.
- 2. Modern Rangoli:** Rangoli in new era of experiments and modernity is much more vivid and three dimensional art work on floor, completed with shading colors and with different shades and aspects of art in life. There are no limits and boundries used. Traditional Rangoli are now become rast and expanded into the field of fine arts, and abstract art and modern artwork with sketches and portraits, If any characters either from history or from present time. Experimental forms with all materials as colors, sand, nuts, bolts, plastic waste, any similar items. There is not any specific promoter for this art form but all of happy occasion in India promote rangoli making as it is considered as a good luck bringing pattern. nowadays there is no restriction or boundaries to draw rangoli patterns, anyone can draw any theme with any material . Now rangolies are attractive freestyle paintings even on wood, water or on any surface. we can say now this art form of rangoli making is on the peack of its height.

X. MADHUBANI ARTFORM

The word Madhubani is made with two words --Madhu + Ban. In ancient time Bihar district was of a very dense forest area and honey production was too much and so that was supplied in all over the country since decades. This special painting that is called Madhubani, named after this above described fact-- Madhuban to Madhubani. This is special painting was

done in a very large scale that time and passed from mother to daughter traditionally. Story of Madhubani goes back to the time of Ramayan when Mithila King Janak Commissioned Artists to do paintings at the time of marriage of Sita to lord Ram from two villages named Jitwarpur and Rathi Initially women of upper castes (Brahman and Kayasth) were using such paintings but later on followed by other castes also. At that time this artform was called Mithila painting but afterwards followed by most of ladies of Madhubani district, it became popular with the name Madhubani. Originally the painting was done on freshly plastered mud wall huts but now it is also done on cloth, handmade paper, canvas, papermache and other materials too. Madhubani paintings mostly depict nature, Hindu religious figures and the themes generally associated with Hindu deities. Natural objects like sun, moon, peacock, birds, tree, flowers, leaves and religious plants like Tulsi. Besides this scenes from the royal court and social events like weddings are also widely drawn.

Styles of madhubani painting

There are three styles based on drawing style of Madhubani painting:

1. Kachni only line work is done in the pattern of two lines of four lines only in red and black colors are used for this type of Kachni paintings
2. Bharni - draw with black and the subjects which are drawn for Madhubani painting are filled with solid colors. No shadings are required.
3. Godana the figures appear in the concentric circles or in parallel lines in which patterns are repeated in circular motion or in between parallel lines.

Two Varieties based on surface - Bhattichitra and Aripana

Bhattichitra is done on the mud walls & houses particularly at—

1. Room of the family God / Goddesses.
2. 2 Rooms of the newly wedded couple
3. 3 . The drawing rooms.

Outer and Inner walls are also painted on some auspicious occasions like Upnayana, Nominal ceremony, Dussehra, Diwali, Chhath Puja, Marriage, Birth, etc. 16 ceremonies.

Widely used figures are of various God- Goddesses -- Kali, Durga, Ram, Sita, Radha Krishna, Shiva Parvati, Ganesha, Sun, Moon, the ten incarnations of Vishnu as believed that these figures bring prosperity and joy to the family. Various animals birds, leaves, plants, flowers along with Swastic, Shankha, Kalash, etc pious symbols.

Deep colors like red, blue, green, black, yellow, pink, lemon are also used. All these colours are prepared by indigenous -methods from some household products like banana leaves, milk and vermilion. There are some strict rules and guidelines for using colors as --all line work is to be done only with black colored double lines = that indicates shiva-shakti, colors are used fill flat (no shading) Patterns are used in allover the background, no space should be blank.

Aripana or Alpana is also practised which is stand for line drawings on the floor of the house. Originally the purpose of this type of painting is the only to cultivated land fertile and fruitfully by magically performance,

Now it is Aripana is done on the eve of rituals and ceremonies as puja, Vrat (faste) and Samskara, A special feaddre Sanskara, A special feature of this is that these are to be drawn fresh and new every morning and occassion especially in the courtyard, door front and other important places. In fact presence and popularity in Bihar and west Bengal which was very popular during Gupta and post Gupt era, is clearly and visually manifested in Aripana.

Madhubani Painting has a great cultural, historical, traditional and religious significance in Indian culture. This art reflects beliefs., daily life of people in the religion over the year and gained recognition and popularity worldwide with artistic capability and skill. Madhubani techniques are seen in a wide range of product, live painting, mural home decoration item, accessories and dress material. These paintings are the real mirror to the rich cultural heritage of Madhubani, that has become now a source of livelihood for so many local artists. They contribute in the national development. Today Madhubani painting continued to evolve with contemporary influence while connecting its roots. Madhubani painting is overall eye catching art form with vibrant colors of beauty and celebration of India's folk tradition and culture with the real glimpse of the creativity and talent of its artisan.

XI. PICHWAI ARTFORM

Pichwai art is a traditional Indian art form that originated in the town of Nathdwara in Rajasthan, India. It is a type of cloth painting that depicts scenes from the life of Lord Krishna. The name "pichwai" comes from the Sanskrit words "pichh" (back) and "wais" (hanging), which refers to the fact that these paintings were traditionally hung behind the deity in temples.

The earliest known Pichwai paintings date back to the 17th century. They were created by the Vallabh Sampradaya, a Hindu sect that worships Krishna as the supreme being. The Vallabhs believe that Pichwai paintings can help to connect devotees with Krishna, and they commissioned these paintings to be used in their temples.

Pichwai paintings are made on a special type of cloth called "kantha". The cloth is first sized with a mixture of gum arabic and starch, and then it is stretched on a wooden frame. The artist then begins to paint the image, using a variety of natural pigments. The most common colors used in Pichwai paintings are red, yellow, green, and blue.

Pichwai paintings are typically very large, and they can take months or even years to complete. The artist must have a great deal of skill and patience to create these paintings, as they require a high level of detail and precision.

The style of Pichwai paintings is very distinctive. The figures are typically elongated and slender, with large eyes and almond-shaped faces. The backgrounds are often painted in bright colors, and they often feature floral motifs. Pichwai paintings were traditionally used to decorate temples, but they are now also popular as works of art. They are often displayed in homes and galleries, and they are also sold as souvenirs.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in Pichwai art. This is due in part to the efforts of organizations such as the Pichwai Artists' Society, which is dedicated to promoting and preserving this art form. The society organizes exhibitions and workshops,

and it also provides training to young artists. Now this art has become a very decorative, stylish and ornamental type of artwork that is also in high demand and fashion.

Gond art is an ancient tribal art form that originated about 1400 years ago with the Gond people of Madhya Pradesh, India. These tribals used to live in caves and forest areas, and their art was primarily created on cave walls using pointed stones for engraving and colors. This form of art is known as "Bhajkal Gond painting."

The Gond people worshiped animals, birds, and trees, considering the forest as their nurturing home because their life depends on forest and they treated forest as their God. Their paintings depict various animals and birds intertwined with trees, symbolizing a harmonious connection between nature and human life. It is believed that these paintings bring good luck, and as a result, they are still commonly found on walls in homes today.

Gond art reflects the history, knowledge, and beliefs of the Gond race, aiming to spread their ideals throughout society and across the world. The influence of the forest is evident in the intricate depictions of animal horns, leaves, and bird feathers in coordination with the trees. Despite the traditional scenery, Gond art showcases a unique blend of new ideas and modernity.

Over time, Gond art has progressed beyond cave walls, and artists now paint on fabrics, sari, bedsheet, jacket, paper, canvas and other objects too, displaying their creativity in a more elaborate manner. This art form has not only survived but also thrived with the promotion of Gond culture and traditions. It has gained recognition and appreciation globally, preserving the rich heritage of the Gond people and their deep connection with nature.

XII. KALAMKARI

1. History: "The art of Kalamkari painting is one of the oldest traditional arts of India. Drawing upon a repertoire of well-loved epics for images, Kalamkari is rich with colors and precise in detail unparalleled by other art form of this genre. An expert in the field discusses salient features of this little-known textile tradition and shows how this ancient textile craft, deeply rooted in religion, has adapted to social changes and political upheavals, evolving into a market craft that is also an indigenous folk art.'

The Beaulieu manuscript (c-1734) brought to light by Schwartz, and reproduced in the journal of Indian Textile History Vol II PP. 5 to 23) Provides a brief account of dyeing for black, red, and blue by mordants, chay root and indigo in India Cotton Painting. The account relates obviously to Kalamkari work in Madras coastal region in the 18th century AD. The account of cotton printing in Ahmedabad by Schwartz.

2. Process of Kalamkari: The use of natural dye in the printed and painted is cottons of the Coromandel Coast, otherwise known as Kalamkari fabrics was well known in the 18th Century. The History of Kalamkari work in general, as it prevails in various parts of the country including Machilipatanam (Masulipatanam), is given a great detail in the July 1979 issue of magazine marg. Tanjavur is another place in the South, where natural dyes were used. For Kalamkari work in Temple hangings, as observed by the author. A collection of 168 specimens of fabric dyed by Indigenous processes was kept in the

Bangal Economic Museum Calcuto. The Kalamkari craft of Machilipatnam and Sri Kalahasti in which the natural dyes are used, still continues to exist mainly due to the effects of a few craftsman's families to carry on the work in spite of many difficulties All India Handicrafts Board of The Gov.of India has an institution for training younge people in Kalamkari Painting work.

- 3. Drawing & Coloring:** The local artisans of Madras used cow's rawmilk to dip the cloth into it for creamish color effect on fabric, than they used burnt stem of imli plant to draw the black outline of the FreeHand design on treated fabric . Only natural dyes are used, which involves 23 steps.

All traditional Indian art forms that have been practiced for centuries. They all have their own unique styles and techniques, but they all share a common thread of exploring Indian ancient culture.

Warli tribal artform is characterized by its simple, geometric shapes and its use of red and white color make it a very attractive and soothing art in fashion.

Rangoli is a decorative art form still on the peak of the decorative fashion . but the use of stikers has lost It's true essence in the soul ,as it is made with floor- rice powderturmeric powder step by step from outer to inner door to get feed for insect & pests so that inner house may be protected.

- Madhubani a folk art form that has now become a business but still most intricate, detailed and fascinating art loved allover the world.A lot of artists got selected for Madhubani awards.

Pichwai, religious art form typically dedicated to lord Krishna is one of the most popular and costly sold art with devotion.

- Gond, a tribal art form, is characterized by its bold, colorful depiction with imperfect looks as well as religious and mythological themes, has become now a celebrated attraction for art lovers.

Kalamkari is a traditional textile art form that makes the viewer feel flowing with beautiful nature and colours on fabric, sari , dupatta etc. Kalamkari art often depicts religious themes, such as scenes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, that is entirely appreciated by all.

All of these art forms have contributed to the preservation and exploration of Indian ancient culture. They provide a glimpse into the lives and beliefs of people from different parts of India over centuries. They also help to keep alive the traditions and customs of these cultures.

In addition to their aesthetic value, these art forms also have religious and spiritual significance. They are often used to celebrate festivals, to mark important life events, and to communicate religious ideas. They also play a role in preserving and transmitting oral traditions.

These art forms continue to be practiced today, and they continue to be relevant to the lives of Indian people. They are a source of pride and identity for many Indians, and they help to keep alive the rich cultural heritage of India.

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