



A STUDY OF LINEARITY IN INDIAN ART WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EASTERN INDIAN FOLK PAINTINGS

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ABSTRACT

Painting has a long history in India, dating back many centuries. Indian paintings are divided into two categories: wall paintings and miniature paintings. However, it can be classified into distinct categories based on their style, development, and emergence. Painting styles vary from one area to the next and from one time to the next. By integrating the creative with the basics of the traditional, Indian artists have maintained the authenticity of their art forms. They've created new symbols in the form of linear motifs to convey new and personal feelings outside of the world of village painting. Color and line are the main media of pictorial expression in painting. Color expresses its expressive feelings through various tones, but multi-effects of linearity, such as contour drawing, thick and thin lines, bold and quick lines against bright colour painting, make the painting more beautiful and powerful. The proper arrangement of line and colour can be said to determine the artistic taste and feeling of any painting.

Keywords:

*Tradition Of Paintings,
Indian Painting, Culture,
Folk, Patachitra,
Madhubani.*



INTRODUCTION

Every country has its own history, traditions, and culture, and each culture has its own origins in social, political, economic, and even artistic fields. In the field of art, India has its own indigenous cultural history. In India, there are two distinct artistic streams. One is based on religious practises and is nourished by the patronage of the wealthy and royal, and is mostly carried out by men. The other is rooted in women's folk culture as it is observed in daily life (www.indianart.com). It is important to understand the indigenous roots of Indian painting in order to determine its origin. Our indigenous origins, according to some literary sources, are based on folk paintings. Folk paintings are a symbol of human sorrow and pleasure in which they interact with society, and they are also an important part of our culture. Indigenous folk art and Indian classical paintings have an interpersonal relationship.

Folk painting has evolved over time thanks to the efforts of village artists from various parts of India. In general, folk painting is still practised in remote rural areas. These paintings are mostly depicted on mud and house walls and floors. However, it is now being replaced by paper and cloths. Artisans use locally sourced materials and make their own paints and brushes. Folk art is described as anything useful created using traditional methods and simple techniques that often necessitate group effort (Singh: 2011). The term 'lok' (folk) refers to the entire population of cities and towns, not just a single habitation or town. These people live an uncomplicated and uncomplicated life. Since it is the representation of ordinary people's experiences, its structure and style are based on sentiment and traditions (Sharma: 2014). Folk artists do not have any formal advanced training in the art; it is created out of a sense of beauty in people. Folk paintings are created on the floor, wall, ceiling, paper, pots, and other surfaces to depict myths, special festivals, and special occasions. Folk art is concerned with societal philosophy, rural life, and realism. It lacks a sharp mechanism and has a texturious appearance. The artists produced their composition by grouping lines and colours into distinct categories and incorporating various motifs. From time to time, several folk artists attempt to experiment with new ways in order to establish a distinctive style of folk art. Within the old format, these artists create a new style. The Madhubani painting motif, Kantha pattern, and Kalighat Patachitra are examples of these inventions. Illuminated manuscripts from Assam, patachitras from



West Bengal, patachitras from Orissa, Madhubani (Mithia) from Bihar, warliroru Maharashtra, kalamkaries from Hyderabad, phadrom Rajasthan, and other types of folk painting are unique to the Indian subcontinent (Mago). In another way, Indian art has made a significant contribution with its requisite elements as well as aesthetical values at various times. Different types of art use different treatments of the elements to reflect their own ideals. Every form of art has its own set of characteristics. Knowing the fundamentals of art will assist any artist in creating a well-balanced and beautiful piece of art. Art components should be utilised. To make every great work of art, the proportions must be just right. There are seven different types of art elements. Line, shape, type, value, texture, colour, and space are the elements. These seven elements are needed to create a successful or beautiful painting. The first of these seven elements is the line of painting, which can be used in a variety of ways to produce various compositions.

In a piece of art, the line represents the conceptual proportion. Painting is a harmonious combination of line, shape, and colour in general. A full picture of seemingly three-dimensional forms may often be drawn simply by using lines. Artists use a range of mediums to create lines, including pencil, charcoal, brush, and sketch pen. The smallest amount of line will bring out the most of an object's or shape's character (Pathy: 2001). Depending on its functional features, a line has a different character and structure, and it signifies a different meaning. Thin and dense lines, fine and bold lines, sweeping and staying lines, dark and heavy lines, faint and delicate lines are all possibilities. Line produces lucid and graceful shapes that are both hard and soft. Chiaroscuro is generated by a line, which stresses the illusion of depth. Vartana, Patrajaan, and Vishnudharmottra describe the three types of lines used in chiaroscuro. 6 V/nduJa V/nduJa V/nduJa V/ndu [Pathy, 2001] [Pathy, 2001] [Pathy, 2001] Line work is commonly regarded as the most challenging and important form of artistic expression. Any artist's line drawing shows his creative skill. Line is one of the most significant aspects of western and Indian art. Printmaking is a form of art that expresses linearity through a technical process that produces a distinct line texture. According to Parker's argument, sculpture is another medium that expresses its linear rhythm in a number of ways "Of course, the artist did not create the beauty of line in sculpture; nature produced it in the human body (2011). In terms of painting lines, Pathy argues that in Renaissance painting, line is muted, obscured by an abundance of



colour, while in the East, line reigns supreme. Lines are delicate in Indian classical paintings. The lines become more prominent in mediaeval art, but they are still within the classical norms in Rajput, Mughal, and Pahari (2001). However, in Indian art, linearity is a mediaeval style. ', says Parker "Lines show us not only how our bodies move, but also how they act. They may be rigid or dignified or joyfully expending, or they may be horizontal lie down and rest, or they may be sorrowful; or the shapes outlines they form may be heavy or light, delicate-or ungainly or graceful as bodies are" (2011). We don't see any outline in nature, but our eyes construct a linear framework for any natural entity based on its visual capacity. Nandalal's figurative drawing, for example, is not equivalent to Jamini Roy's figurative drawing because their methods of observation are distinct. As a result, line drawing is dependent on the artist's creative ability and familiarity with any natural object or idea. Folk art is based on the lineal reproduction of symbolical motifs of natural objects such as flora, fauna, plants, human beings, and so on. The simple Indian art alphabet relies heavily on the use of pure line and a vibrant colour scheme with a flat treatment. It is typically characterised by a free realism and simplicity in conception as well as technique, with a notable use of formal design (Dutta: 1990). Despite the fact that folk art received little support during the colonial era, independence sparked a renewed interest in folk paintings. Artists exploit these elements, combining them with design concepts to create a work of art.

LINEARITY IN INDIAN PAINTING

Ancient Indian Painting

According to Berenguer "Primitive cave paintings from the Neolithic period were the first pieces of visual art produced on Indian sites.' In the caves, there are many line drawings of animal, bird, and human figures in various roles. The pigments used are all natural mineral colours, and they only use geometrical lines to produce pictures. On the cave, the people drew their interpretations of what they had seen in nature. The Gupta paintings, which are considered the ancient gallery of Indian art, made a significant contribution to Indian art history. However, the majority of the paintings in Ajanta date from later periods, mostly from 460 to 480 AD. Murals in Ajanta are world-famous and depict stories from Buddha's life as well as other plots typical of Buddhist art. According to eminent scholars such



as Ferguson, Percy Brown, A.K. Kumarswami, and Lourence Binyon, Ajanta painting is primarily characterised by bold lines and contour drawings (Mitra:1996). About the Ajanta Mural Art "What cannot be well articulated in line or silhouette should not be attempted by the mural painter," says Upadhyaya (1994). As a result, it is clear how important the line is for mural painting. He goes on to tell about the Ajanta mural that it is held in line by the Ajanta tradition's forceful freedom and strength of continuity (Fig.1.1). A closer look shows that the masters of Ajanta used line qualities to convey grossness in architecture, monumentality in shape, and so on. In this painting, they've also used contour colouring and a subtle line. Ajanta masters have used high-light lines to describe ornaments in their paintings (Upadhyaya: 1994). There are two forms of colour, shape, line, and space richness seen in Ajanta. One form is Indian, as seen in the sculptures of Bharut, Shachi, and Amravati. Murals in Ajanta are often made up of plain compositions. In these paintings, perspective and composition are given a tonne of weight, which means that there is one figure in the middle and two groups on either side. The drawings in the Ajanta painting are very vivid. Space painting became more elegant, graceful, effective, boldness, and depth as a result of the unity of colour and line. It has no economic or political classification. The painting's subject matter was derived from Jataka tales about Buddha's lives and incarnations.

Folk Paintings and Linearity in Indian Subcontinent

India, a country with over 2000 ethnic groups, has a diverse range of visual art forms, with exhibitions in every province. The majority of rural Indians produce appealing artistic pieces using the most simple and primitive materials readily available to them. From Kanyakumari to Kashmir, Maharashtra to the Northeast, India is rich in folk and traditional art forms. Folk art is a stunning contribution to our cultural heritage. These depict the socio-religious and philosophical dimensions, which are artistically and aesthetically integrated into a life experience and portrayed in a unique and imaginative way. India is home to a plethora of folk and traditional arts. Because of its conventional artistic sensibility and authenticity, Indian folk art appears to have a lot of potential in the international market. India's rural folk paintings have distinct vibrant designs that are embellished with religious and magical motifs. Folk art has its origins in primitive society art, and its longevity can be seen in the survival of Indian tribal groups who have succeeded in maintaining their



respective cultural identities in the midst of today's established Hindu culture (Jahan: 2008). The Madhubani paintings of Bihar, patachitra paintings from Orissa and Bengal, Nirmal paintings from Andhra Pradesh, Phado Rajasthan, and other such folk art forms are among India's most popular folk paintings (Mago:2007).

Folk art, on the other hand, is not limited to paintings; it also includes pottery, home decorations, ornaments, and cloth-making, among other items. In reality, because of their ethnic and traditional beauty, the potteries of some Indian regions are very common among foreign tourists. Furthermore, regional dances in India, such as Punjab's Bhangra, Gujarat's Dandiya, Assam's Bihu, and others, which represent the cultural heritage of their respective regions, are strong contenders in the field of Indian folk art. As a result, the Indian government, as well as other societies and organisations, have made every effort to encourage such art forms, which have become inextricably linked to India's cultural identity. For both eastern and western artists, folk art, which is known for its plain, bold, symbolic, and elemental forms, became the best source for abstraction. Jamini Roy and Nandalal Bose were the first to use this resource in India.

Scroll painting, mural, miniature, manuscript, wall painting, floor decoration, and patachitra are some of the many styles of folk paintings found in India. The warmth and appealing simplicity of these paintings more than compensated for any lack of formal elegance or artistic brilliance. In some respects, it is the widespread penetration of folk idiom into courtly customs that has been the distinguishing feature of Indian art, giving it its distinct flavour.

Patachitra of Bengal

Bengal pata, or manuscript cover painting, has its origins in Buddhist palm leaf manuscripts from the Pala Sena period (9th-12th centuries) "A.D. century). Bengali rural artists popularised folk style in the 15th century. Moni Singh, the king of Jaipur, invaded Bengal in 1592 A.D. and was named by Akbar as Subahdar of Bengal and Bihar (Basu: 2007).



Figure-1: Durga, Patachitra of Bengal

Consequently, a cultural intercourse took place between Rajasthan and Bengal. At that time some land lords, officers, traders, artists, sculptors came to Bengal from Rajasthan and other parts of northern and eastern India. Thus, artists carrying Rajasthan, Pahari and Mughal style of painting which assimilated with the style of Bengal art.

Folk Paintings of Orissa

Patachitra of Orissa

The patachitra paintings in Orissa are painted over a piece of cloth called a pata, which is first painted with a chalk or gum mixture. Then a vivid and elaborate image of various Gods and Goddesses, as well as a mythological scene with ornamentation of flowers, trees, and animals, is painted over the prepared paper. The character of the lines is bold, clean, angular, and sharp. Landscapes, viewpoints, and remote views are missing from these works. Both of the cases are seen

in near proximity. Mughal influences can be seen in the clothing. The backdrop, on which the figures are depicted, is outlined with floral and foliage decorations and is mostly painted in red. Orissa patachitra painting is renowned for its decorative borders. The entire painting is conceived as a pattern on a specific canvas. Painters, also known as Chitralaras, are primarily found in the Purl district, specifically in Raghurajpur, a crafts village. Patachitra's tradition is intertwined with Lord Jagannath's worship, as well as tales from the Mahabharata and Ramayana. The patachitra painting depicts three deities who are also depicted in the inner sanctum of the Jagannath temple in Puri. The main deity, Jagannath, is on the right, his brother Balabhadra is on the left, and his sister Subhadra is in the middle. The patas, made of silk or cotton, were made through a complicated process that took at least 5 days for the women to complete. It entailed applying a paste of tamarind seeds and powdered clay to the pata several times, drying it, and then polishing it with stone. The drawing itself is done in a methodical way. All four sides of the paintings are first bordered. The numbers are then highlighted in white. Body colours are applied, and fine brush strokes are used to design garments. The photos are enhanced by the use of white and yellow. Thick black lines are used to create more distinct motifs. Other floral and geometrical motifs can be found in the painting. Surprisingly, the chitrakar uses bright colours to begin and end his drawing. While most Patachitras are painted in a variety of colours, there are some exquisite black and white paintings. White, black, red, yellow, green, and blue, all derived from natural sources, make up the artist's palette.



Figure:2- Patachitra of Orissa, Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra

Folk Paintings of Bihar

Madhubani Paintings

Madhubani Painting is one of the finest art form in India's rich artistic culture. This art pattern has its roots in the Mithila region and surrounding villages in Madhubani district of Bihar. It is practised in the region since ages and has drawn attention of artists, art lovers and historians across the world. It is believed that Madhubani art originated since the times of Ramayana. Traditionally this art was practised by women of the village. But now man and woman both are practicing these art forms. During any festival of ceremonial occasion, the women decorate the walls of the houses and huts with these paintings.



Figure: 3 - Scene of Ramayana, Madhubani Painting on Paper



Figure: 4 - Madhubani Painting, Design on Cloth

Manuscript Painting of Assam

Before the arrival of paper in India, an early book form was the palm-leaf manuscript in Indian subcontinent, known as puthi. It had a long and narrow horizontal format and was hardly ever more than 60 cm long and 6 cm high. Manuscripts were illuminated with miniature images of deities to whom the text was dedicated. This delicate and stylish art form comprises fine line drawings etched with a steel stylus on rectangular strips of palm leaves that are carefully strung together. These manuscripts served as standard books before the use of paper gained predominance (Neog: 2004). Manuscript painting is a very ancient tradition of Assam. Assamese manuscript painting is considered as the traditional painting of medieval Assam. In medieval Assam, the art of manuscript illustration was flourished with the emergence of three major distinct school of painting. These are: (1) Tai-Ahom school, 2. Satriya School and 3. Ahom court style/ Royal school.



Figure: 5 - Vishnu in Vaikuntha (lieaven), Kirtana Manuscript

CONCLUSION

After studying Indian subcontinent folk paintings, it was discovered that mythological scenes, as well as geometrical and floral motifs, inspired folk painters. They have been inspired by scenes from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Purana, Gita-govinda, Gods and Goddesses such as Siva, Durga, Ganesh, Kali, Saraswati Gagannatha, and human life. In their drawings, they also include figures of birds and animals. The artisans in the village use organic or natural colours that are readily available in the region. Natural sources of colour include lamp soot, leaves from various trees, flowers, and so on. Tamarind seeds, Ze/fruit, are used to tie the colours together. Indians are well-known for their numerous festivals and events. During the occasion, Indians create a series of linear designs on the floor that include a variety of religious and stylized natural symbols. Village women are especially skilled at this style of floor painting. The basic elements of these paintings are line and colour. As a painting medium, rice paste and powdered colours are used. They wipe with their fingers. Folk art is an art form developed by rural people for rural people, based around various types of rituals,



customs, and festivals, according to a detailed examination of the social, historical, and cultural remnants of the Indian subcontinent. Folk art does not need any grammatical understanding developed by any ancient author of folk art and culture. Folk art is an art form developed by a rural artist's spontaneity in the simplest possible way using natural colours and ingredients. Every area of India has its own distinct style of folk painting, but bright colours and bold lines are a common feature. It's also worth noting that not all folk paintings feature sharp or smooth lines. The smooth linearity of Orissa's Patachitras and Bihar's Madhubani paintings is well-known. Shaded lines are a feature of Kalighat paintings. Light and shadow are not used by folk artists. These paintings have a two-dimensional quality to them.

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