

Traditional Art and Community Engagement

Name: Shilpi Nath Dey

Affiliation: MIT School of Fine Arts and Applied Arts, MIT ADT University, Pune, India

E-mail – shilpinathdey@gmail.com

Guide: Prof Dr. Anjali Bhamare

Asst. Professor, MIT School of Fine Arts and Applied Arts, MIT ADT University, Pune, India

Abstract

Art is not something different from life, it is like an ornamentation of aliveness. Indian art is culturally and traditionally very rich in every aspect of art form. Art is everywhere from mountains, rivers, desert to the core of the jungles and even in very remote areas. It is practised from one generation to another, from Primitive era to contemporary, from mythology to local beliefs, worship for Deities. In India different art forms bring colours and joy to all festivals and ceremonies. Religion, philosophy and myth always associated as a companion of any art forms. We find different art forms in every

corner of our country which represent the region and respective community. This paper will help to understand the relationship between traditional art and community engagement in India.

This Article is a journey of community engagement in Indian traditional art, I am trying to explore their unique art form, tradition, culture. The goal of writing this paper is to document the features of different visual art forms irrespective of their tradition and region.

Introduction & Attributes

Art is existed since the ancient and evolve generation after generation. A group of people who work towards a common interest can be termed as a community and they involved in creating art for their living purpose, to perform the rituals, to fulfil their daily need which added ornamentation in life. Traditional art is one of the main reasons that played a pivotal role in the communities

to survive and support their livelihood. If we are talking about community engagement in traditional art then we also have to pay little attention to the different tribal communities exist in India, because they are indigenous and practising art from ancient period without having proper education on the respective art form. They have spontaneous approach for creating their art which they are

inspired by the surroundings like nature, forest life, animals, mythology and local deities. Traditional Art is also work as a catalyst to connect adjacent communities in the neighbourhood as they find a close connect or bonding through their art like part of Midnapore of West Bengal and part of Jharkhand, both are involved in “Dhokra” art. In other hand “Chhau”- a traditional folk-dance form which is being performed in Purulia of West Bengal and part of Bihar and

Odisha by the respected communities. Traditional arts can be classified as Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Storytelling and so on. Illustrations, Painting, Sculptures, Pottery, Textile, Mural etc. can be considered as Visual Arts. Whereas Dance, Music, Nautanki, Mukhabhinay etc are part of performing arts. Puppetry, Folklores, Folktales etc included in Storytelling. All these arts can complement each other if performed together.

Different Traditional Art Forms in Different Communities

In different communities among many popular traditional arts in visual art, we can discuss about some much known art forms like Mithila or Madhubani painting from Bihar, Warli from Maharashtra, Kalamkari from Andhra, Phad and Pichhwai from Rajasthan, Gond from Madhya Pradesh, Pithoro from Gujarat and part of Madhya Pradesh, Patachitra from West Bengal, Odisha and neighbouring states, ‘Alpana’ is another traditional art form from West Bengal which is created for decorating courtyard, main entrance, floor or wall to celebrate every Puja and Bratas in West Bengal. In ‘Dhokra’ from Midnapore, Bihar, Jharkhand, Pottery from different region like Terracotta, engraving, weaving etc. we can find the

cultural diversity and community engagement. In performing arts some art forms are widely discussed like Kathakali from Kerala, Chau from West Bengal and neighbouring states, Lavni from Maharashtra, Ghoongar from Rajasthan, Garva from Gujarat, ‘Putulnach’ from part of West Bengal, Odisha, ‘Jatra’ from West Bengal, ‘Nautanki’ from UP, Puppetry from Rajasthan are different ways of storytelling and folklores represent their communities and regions. Such as ‘Tusu’ is a ‘parab’ which being performed during the Makar Sankranti in part of West Bengal and neighbourhood states as a symbol of fertility and plentiful harvest.

Deliberation of Few Renowned Visual Art Form

In India community and their existence are very wide and scattered in different part of the country as well as the subject is too vast to discuss in limited time. Hence, I concentrate my study on a few renowned

visual art forms which are traditionally, culturally and aesthetically having the weightage along with the huge involvement of the respective community.

- **Madhubani/Mithila Painting:**

Madhubani means forest of honey, it is originated specially in some part of Bihar like Mithila, Purnia, Jitwarpur and few parts of Nepal. Madhubani Painting is also known as Mithila Painting because we can find Mithila School of Style in these art forms and the community of Mithila region widely involved in creating this vivid style of work. According to Indian Epics, Mithila is the birth place of Sita and the story of Ramayana is one of the important themes of Madhubani or Mithila Painting. Madhubani or Mithila Painting mainly made by women of the community on religious or social occasion like Puja, Vratas, different Ceremonies like Upanayana (Thread Ceremony), Vivah (Marriage), Satya Narayana Katha, Nagpanchami, Batsartli (rituals of banyan tree for long live). These paintings made on white washed, newly made or renovated mud walls and floor with natural pigments of colours like Geru (Red Soil), Kusum flower for pink, Yellow from turmeric and pollen, Sindura & red soil for red, they use fresh cow dung mixed with soil to produce brown, for black they use charcoal, soot and ashes of burnt hays or different grains. Bamboo twigs is used as brush or pointed pen to make the outline drawing or filling the surface. We can find different style of Madhubani or Mithila

paintings. Wall painting called Vitti-shobha another style is Aripana is made on floor which is 8 petals lotus drawn for Durga Puja, each petal depicts as Sankha, Khadga, damaru, chakra, pasa, sala, padma and bindu yukta ardhachandra. The whole work of Aripana symbolises the presence of Shakti. The basic colour of Aripana is white made by rice flour with water or goat milk called Pithara. Their theme is mainly from Indian epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Purana, Folklore, nature and local Deities. Generally, Kulina Brahmin and Kayastha women make these paintings. Main lady who makes the drawing Aripana called Denihari. Other cast called Dalit from Ahirs, Chamar, Dushad make drawing depict other Hindu God like Govinda, Rahu, Indra and their local Deities and their rituals. Different motive of their paintings like turtle symbolize unity, fishes depict fertility, lotus & Bamboo symbolize gender female and male respectively. Madhubani painting traditionally made on the wall specially placed in three places like Gosain ghara, kohbara ghara and verandah. Now by the time new materials chemical colours are included to produce the art in mass as this art form is highly in demand but the artisan create the authentic art using their authentic process in regular life.

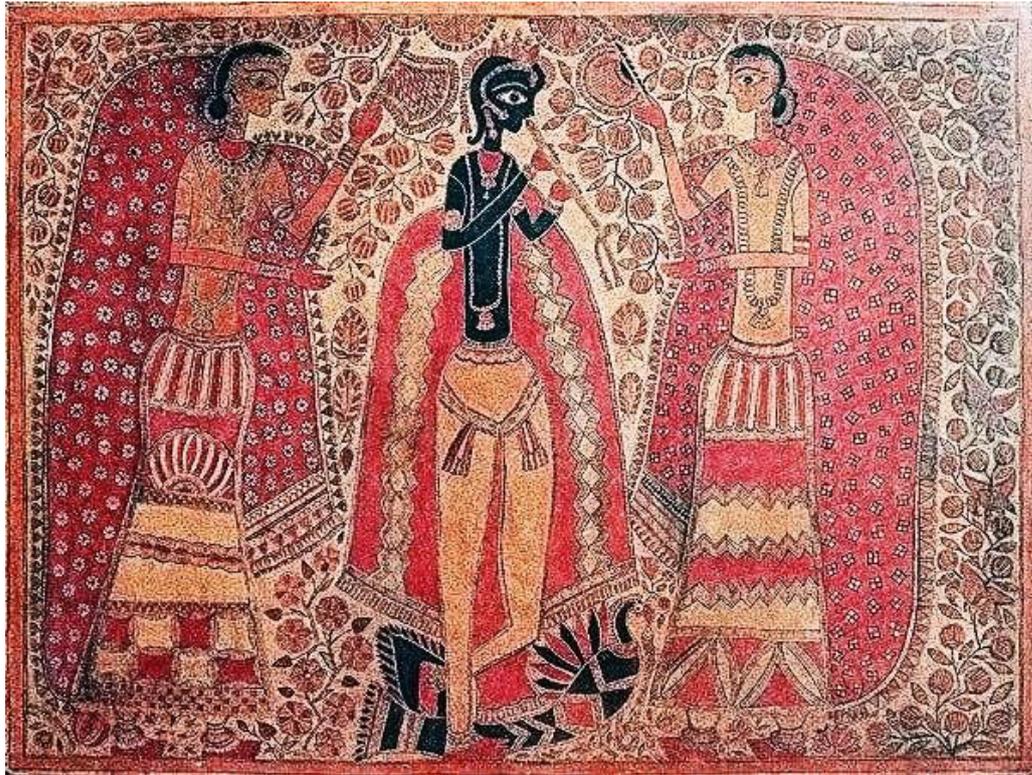


Fig-1 Radha-Krishna, Madhubani painting (Source: Wikimedia Commons).



Fig-2 Kohabara, Mithila painting (Source: Wikimedia Commons).



Fig-3 Kohabara theme, Madhubani painting. (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

- **Warli Painting**

Warli paintings is originated from Warli tribes from Maharashtra and part of neighbouring state of Madhya Pradesh. The word “Warli” derived from word “Warala” it means ‘Piece of Land or Field’. Looking at Warli painting one can find very strong historical connection. In bygone period the caveman from primitive age creates the art on the wall of cave in Bhimbetka or other such caves show the evidence of that. So, we can say that when Civilization flourished, primitive people learnt to make hut and community raised, they decorate their wall of house inspired by their regular life and surroundings. These same words can be used for Warli painting also that they decorate their house wall, floor, courtyard with few distinct styles of painting is called Warli painting. Style of this art form totally different from other

traditional art with distinct line, geometrical pattern and concentric circle. This Warli Painting Artisan mainly concentrate on the theme of their daily and social life, God and Goddess, Harvest time, marriage, magic and their rituals. This Warli tribes mainly live in very remote areas and even in the forests also. So, they believe in God or local deities or kind of magic which protect them from all harms and illness. These paintings are mainly made by the women of the house. But now men of the house also join them to create this art. With limited distinct line and geometrical shape, they create the complete composition but it seems like that they do not think about the perspective of drawing rather their painting is like a floating image. This art is practised by women transfer from mother to daughter as a custom. Warli

paintings are narrative, one can see the dialogue. The figures are involved in conversation. It is storytelling like hunting, fishing, farming kind of scenes can be seen in this art form. Any Ceremony or festival like wedding, new crop harvesting, child birth, any local rituals or worshipping of local deities, the community make these paintings on the wall, courtyard. The dance scene is the most important part of the paintings they make in concentric circles or spiral pattern is called Tarpa dance. It is symbolized the circle which does not have beginning or ending. In Warli painting we find movement; it is action oriented and dynamic. 'Chaukat' is an important feature of Warli painting,

without this 'Chaukat' marriage ceremony does not happen. In this 'Chaukat' Goddess 'Palaghat' is placed and it is the symbol of the creative energy. One Married woman called Suvasini has to do painting one day prior of marriage day. The community is linked with nature so they worship of sun moon and other God and Goddess associated with nature. Warli paintings contains the simple geometrical shapes and lines like triangle to make human figure and stick like legs and fling birds, flora and fauna. Now like other famous traditional art globalization is also arrived in Warli painting, so many new objects and synthetic materials, are incorporated in their painting to produce the art work for the global market.

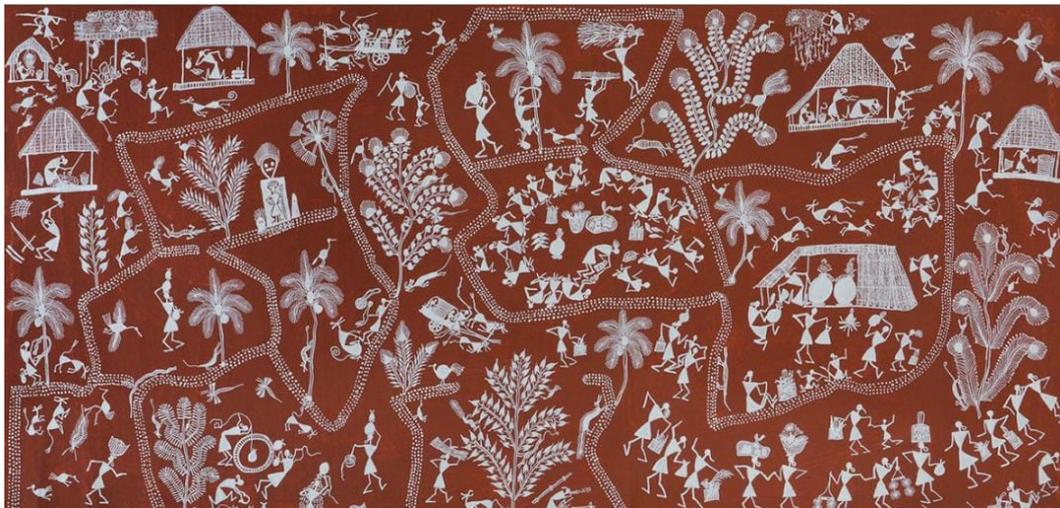


Fig 4- Village Scene: Jivya Soma Mashe, Late 20th- early 21st Century: Natural Pigment on clothes, 56x61cm, Museum of Art and Photography (Map), Bengaluru

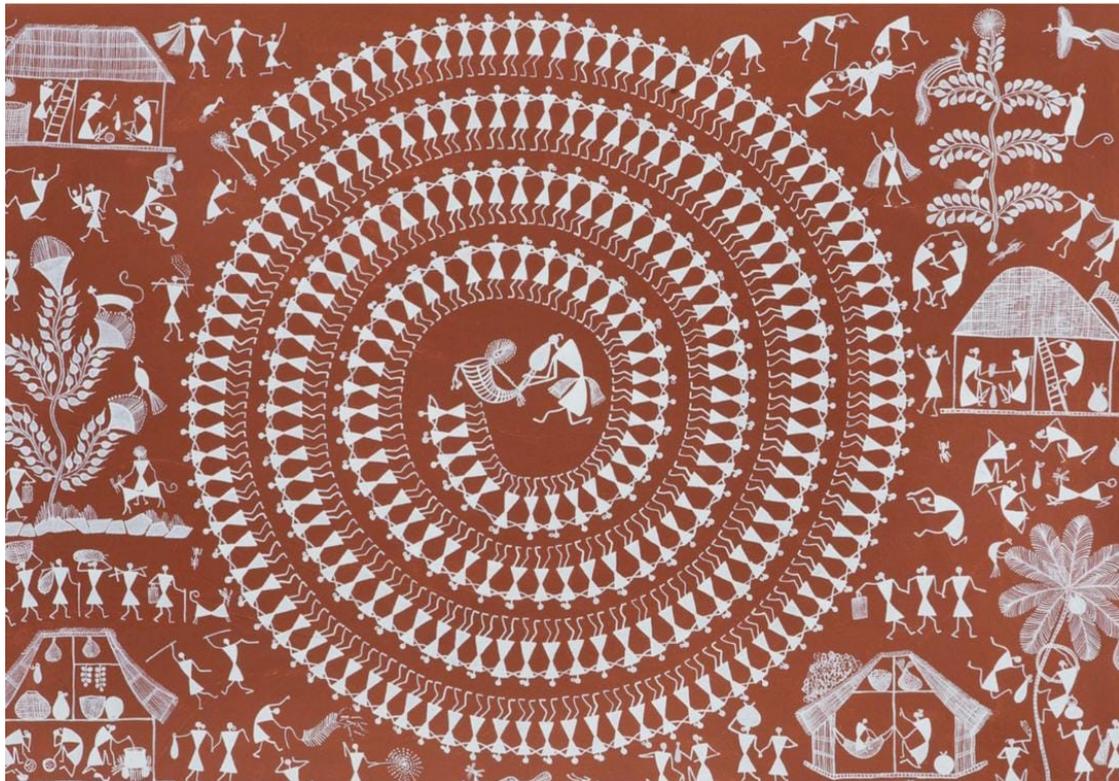


Fig 5: Diwali Night: Tarpa dance, Jivya Soma Mashe, Late 20th- early 21st Century: Natural Pigment on clothes, 56x61cm, Museum of Art and Photography (Map), Bengaluru

• Gond Painting

Gond is an adivasi group; they are one of the largest and oldest tribes of India spread across Madhya Pradesh, Eastern Maharashtra or Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha. Gond was the most significant community of original

India tribes. The word Gond derived from Kond meaning the 'Green Mountain'. Gond tribes are Dravidian and they exist before the Aryan era. Gonds believe that earth, water and air are ruled by Gods.

In Gond tribe mainly Pradhan creates the art form called Gond art. Gonds worship nature so their paintings depict Flora and Fauna with vibrant colours along with wonderful arrangements of lines, Dots, Dash, geometrical forms to create an amazing art form. Traditionally they use natural pigments for making colours like rock calcium for white, black from Charcoal and soil, yellow from river bank, ramraj soil and turmeric,

brown from cow dung mixed with mud, green from plants, red from Geru. For surface they use specially made paste from straw, cow dung and soil. After drying the surface, they use a unique type of soil known as 'Pidor' to make the surface white then the artist makes the painting with vibrant colours on the white background.

The theme of Gond painting is different kind of local stories, folktales, Gond literature, Ram Katha, Love story 'Jhitku Mitki', stories of Gond Kings, Pandava Katha and different rituals they perform and worship of local Deities and forest animals. While studying their paintings, I observed that the tree is most important part of their paintings. Probably this tree depicts the forest where they are living and another concept depicts the tree of life. In their paintings 'dot' incorporated from neighbouring tribe 'Baiga' which depict fire. Gond artist use lines

vertical and horizontal like 'dash' which depict movement, flow of the river and vertical line stands for trees. Semi circles are

used for crescent moon. So, all these symbols and signs they used with these lines, shapes and forms.

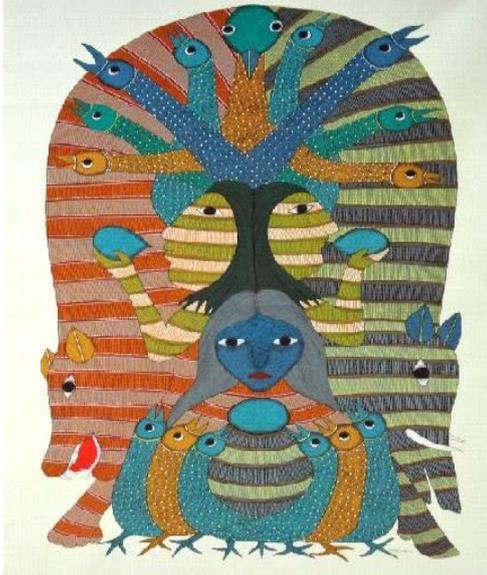


Fig 6.1: Ankita Singh, Tribal Painting Gond



Fig 6.2: Padmashri Bhuri Bai, Tribal Museum, Bhopal (my Collection)

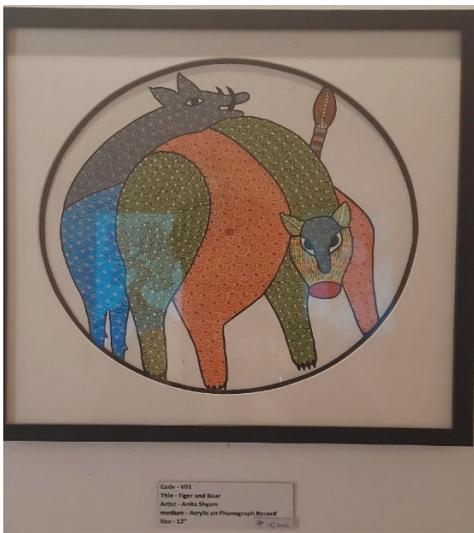


Fig 7: Picture Courtesy Muni Sharma

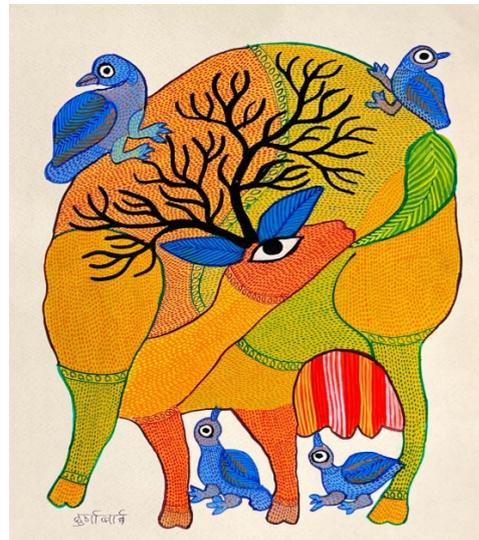


Fig 8: Padmashree Awardee Durgabai Vyam, Pic Courtesy : Pinterest



Fig 9: Collection of Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal.MP.

● Pattachitra

Patachitra is another ancient art form practiced by different communities in different corners of our country. The painting is usually made on fabric, palm leaf or paper. Another name of Pattachitra is Scroll Painting. Especially folk people from Odisha, West Bengal and part of neighbouring states, Rajasthan and Gujarat have been practicing this art form since the ancient period in different names such as Pata, Pachedi, Phad etc. The artist who makes Pattachitra is called Patua.

In the State of Odisha Pattachitra themes are based on Hindu mythology like Dashavatara of Lord Vishnu, other Hindu God and Jagannath Dev, the largely worshipped in temple city Puri and surroundings of the state and others. The sophisticated style of drawings is

aesthetically refined from other traditional art. Its visual approach is highly appreciated by the world. The themes of Pattachitra are specially made on different myths and different kind of Veshas of Jagannath Dev, Rasa painting, Ansara patti, Jatri patti (for pilgrims), Kanchi Kaveri Pata, Thia - Badhia Pata, depict the festivals around.

Pattachitra specially made on cotton cloth or Khadi, it is coated with soft stone powder and glue used from tamarind seeds. First, the Patuas make borders and outline drawings of figures. Then they fill the colour by using of natural pigment colour such as red, black, yellow, white from lamp black, charcoal for black, haritali and hingal stone for yellow and red respectively, conch shell for white. After completing the drawing, they hold

it on charcoal fire and apply lacquer to the surface to make the painting water resistant.

In West Bengal, Pattachitra is called Bengal Patas. It is made on fabric. The theme is mainly storytelling of the Hindu Mythology, local deities and their regular life of that region. This art form is the most accepted as oral tradition. In different rural areas of Bankura, Birbhum, West Midnapore in West Bengal along with Jharkhand and Bihar, the Patuas carry forward as inherited

profession. Pata which are painted vertically are being used by the performers (Patua) for their performances, they travel around different villages and showcase their paintings and explain by singing they narrate three to four stories. This performance normally takes place in a common area of the village so that all people can be gathered and observe the performance. The song they sing is called Pater Gaan.



Fig 10: Source: Dr Shruti Tiwari, Ms Hiya Shrivastava, accent journal of economics ecology & engineering peer reviewed and refereed journal, iss. no. 2456-1037



Fig 11: Bengal Pattachitra (Picture Source : Wikipedia)



Fig 12: Bengal Pattachitra (Picture Source: Wikipedia)

Phad:

'Phad' is another popular kind of Pattachitra of Rajasthan. Traditionally Phads are made on the fabric such as 30 feet long and 5 feet wide khadi silk, cotton or paper. Phad scroll also considered as ancient art form. The theme of Phad is narration of Myths, Legends worship patterns of folk deities of communities around the region of Bhilwada of Rajasthan. Mainly the cast, Joshis make the paintings. They believe that folk God and legends like Pabhuji, Devnarayan protect them from harms. Phads are specially carried by the Bhopas

who travel in different places and displaying their painting with narration of the tales and sing devotional song. Normally vegetables colours and Mineral colours are used to create Phad paintings so that it remains fresh for a long duration. The cotton cloth called Reza or Khadi is used as base for Phad and the cloth is coated by homemade gum made of boiling wheat flour or barley with water. Then they burnish the surface with local stone called Mohra. They use colours from natural elements such as Geru, hara, sindur, hingul, etc.



Fig 13: Picture Source: Pinterest



Fig 14: Folk-deity Pabuji in Pabuji Ki Phad, a Phad painting at National Museum, New Delhi

Cakapura

Cakapura is a unique art form of ritual painting which is drawn on the courtyard and house wall as we 'Caka' considers a square space on the ground, and pura considers filling up. This unique art form is performed during the festival of 'Bandana', across the land of ancient Manbhum. In this tradition the village women create sacred designs using five fingers of the hand with prepared liquid pigments, sometimes with the same pigment is sprinkled with fingers and added some impressions with palm and fingertip. It can be said that this unique style of form is easily identified in comparison to other floor or wall paintings of India. 'Cakapura' is a word of the regional dialect of Manbhum

which is now divided in Purulia, part of Bankura and West Medinipur in the West Bengal as well as part of Jharkhand and Odissa but it remains as integral part of Radhabhumi. These unique ritual paintings much like 'Alpana', another ritual floor and wall painting style of Bengal. But there is difference between both is application of pigment, where in 'Alpana' the solution of fine grind rice powder mixed in water and dipped with the middle finger covered with cotton or 'suti' cloth is applied on the floor or ground and wall and in 'Cakapura', where the paintings are drawn dripping liquid pigment with all fingers in a same distance on the ground. 'Cakapura' is a distinct art form of

'Bandana', is mostly done by the womenfolk of Kurmi and Kumbhara, especially with the surname of Mahata or Mahato. With their effortless skills they maintain their tradition through generations and performed this yearly ritual with firm belief and absolute consent.

Traditionally 'Cakapura' is an integral part of Bandna, most important festival of Manbhum region. The Bandna means "Cumana or Barana" it means welcoming someone special. Traditionally it is a greeting ceremony of Garu(cow) and Kada(buffalo) along with Jamai (daughter's husband). Mainly this ritual is performed in several indigenous clans like Baudi, Oraon, Bhumija, Kurmi, Kumbhara, Lodha, Lohara, Munda and a few more. Initially evolved from ancient harvest festival the tradition later on come in touch with Brahmanism and is influence by Bhagavati Vandana.

Bandana is celebrated yearly which comes in the month of Kartika in Bengali Calendar, some of the Saontala and Munda groups celebrate it in Pousa.

The ritual of 'Cakapura' is performed only the day of Kalipuja (worship of Goddess Kali) and continue to next four days.

In Manbhum two types of Bandna is celebrated, i.e Garubandna or Gobandna and Jamaibandna. The festival starts with Ghaoya and then Gothapuja, Anjhimanjhi, Garaya, Khunti o Dadi puja, Thenga or Lathi puja, Garu Khunta or Kada Khunta, with reciting of Kapilamangala and Ahiri song. During this celebration Cakapura performed.

The preparation of Bandna starts immediate after Durga Puja. People of Manbhum repair and clean their households including cowsheds even various agricultural tools like

ploug, yoke, helm, ladder etc. Then with the all rituals which are performed during the celebration of Bandna, 'Cakapura' also been prepared. Most important component is ground preparation, including courtyard, floors, and the exterior wall of the house done by young girls or women of the house. Sweeping with broom followed by pouring cow dung water and wiping it across the courtyard and smoothening it. The hand movement for the final layer is half circular form resembling the rising sun.

The paint of Cakapura is basic pigment, freshly powdered Atapa Cala. This Calagunda (i.e., rice powder) stained through a sieve and remove a small chunk and make a fine powder then mixed with a vegetable binder like, Gamara, Bhindi, Tila, Arjuna, Helenca. The binder called Lada and mixed it with Calagunda in a pouring consistency. It is authentically white, with a tint of ochre but nowadays blue or pink pigment is also being mixed.

The first step is final cleaning of Caka with the broom and get ready then the women of the house start doing Cakapura. This process needs physical fitness confidence and spiritual faith. Holding the container in left hand and dip fingers to pick up the paint, taking a bending position and with swift movement of fingers of the hand the women create Cakapura design. Five fingers move simultaneously and create five lines falling from five fingers and often overlap each other. On the wall right hand swings upwards and sometimes sprinkling the paint with reverse swing. The motif is called Jhau Gacha, final process is leaving different impressions on the house wall. Three dot motif, kalka motif. The uniqueness of Cakapura motif is use of vermilion dots.



Fig: 15 – Process of Cakapura ritualistic paintings -Image Source- Sanjay Sengupta

Ajrak

Ajrakh, also known as Ajrakh is a unique textile block printing technique which is done on fabric, found in the Sindh in Pakistan and village of Ajrakhpur near the border area of Kutch district Gujarat, India. Ajrak is a symbol of Sindhi culture and traditions. The term Ajrak derives from Persian words Ajar or Ajor, meaning brick and -ak means little. For many centuries art and craft have existed in nature. Ajrak is one of them popular with its aesthetic and traditional value. Traditionally Ajrak is a technique of block printed cloth with deep crimson red and indigo blue in the background. The earliest trace of this beautiful piece of art found in the civilization of Indus Valley that existed around 2500 BC to 1500 BC. The Khatri community who migrated from Sindh around the 16th century and Maldharis community print the cloth with locally available natural dyes and water from Dhamadka rivers.

Authentic Ajrak is printed on both sides by a method called Resist Printing. The printing is done by hand with hand carved wooden blocks. Artisans work layer by layer to create

a repeated pattern and this the characteristic of Ajrak. In this process Borders are aligned both vertically as well as horizontally and frame the Central field.

Ajrak is a long process including many stages of printing and washing the fabric over and over again with various natural dyes such as Harda, Lime, Alizarin, Indigo and even camel dung.

In Ajrak, the fabric is first printed with resist paste and then dyed. This time consuming process repeated again and again with different dyes to create a final pattern. This art and craft has been decreasing because modern, quicker methods and bright chemical dyes are replacing the natural muted colours and slow careful process. But with the effort of Master craftsmen and increasing awareness of sustainability and environment friendly sense among urban people, this beautiful art and crafts again gaining popularity and visibility among cosmopolitan worldwide.



Fig 16.1: First Layer, Ajrak (My Collection)



Fig 16.2: Wooden Block, Ajrak (My Collection)



Fig 17.1: Ajrak (Source- Wikipedia)



Fig 17.2: Ajrak (Source- Wikipedia)

Phulkari

Phulkari is the famous textile art of Punjab. Punjab is culturally rich with its heritage, art and craft. This art of embroidery has great importance to the Sikh religion. Guru Nank Dev said in Guru Granth Sahib the "Kadh Kasida Pehreh Choli, / Ta Tum Janoh Nari" which mean "Only then you will be considered an accomplished lady when you will embroider yourself your own blouse". Phulkari, Bagh are the traditional embroidered shawls from Punjab. The word Phulkari comes from two Sanskrit words "Phul" means flowers and "Kari" means work. "Bagh" means garden, which is a type of Phulkari. This art of embroidery is primarily made by Punjabi women for their personal use with family influence and train

in a friendly environment. The difference between Bagh and Phulkari is, in Phulkari where the base of the cloth is visible after ornamented with embroidery but in Bagh design is closely embroidered so the base is not visible. The main characteristic of Phulkari is the embroidery is done on the wrong side of the cloth so design is automatically embroidered on the right side of the cloth. Traditionally Phulkari or Bagh is given to a bride as a gift at her wedding time. It is a symbol of happiness and prosperity and a Suhag of a married woman and also symbolizes love and affection. This Traditional art of Phulkari is popular in Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Kapurthala, Hoshiarpur, Bhatinda and Patiala, Rothak,

Hissar, Ambala, Haryana. The origin of the Phulkari is not well known due a lack of evidence or documentation. The ancient word of Phulkari mentioned in the famous love story 'Heer Ranjha', written by Waris Shah in 1725- 1790. Bana Bhatt mentioned in his 'Harishcharitra' in 7th century AD that " some people were embroidering flowers and leaves on the cloth from the reverse side. It is similar to Phulkari technique. Some research on Phulkari said that it came from Iran where it is called "Gulkari" which has same meanings of Phulkari. Reference of Phulkari are found in Vedas, Mahabharata and Guru Granth Sahib. As phulkari considered as a community art, the Punjabi women sit together in a group is called 'Trijan' engaged in embroidery as well as gossiping, laughing dancing and weaving. Traditional Phulkari is made of hand woven and hand dyed cloth called 'Khaddar'. The silk threads called 'Pat' with bright colours like red, yellow, pink, green, blue, golden are used for embroidery. The embroidery is done with needle in darn stitch and without help of tracing drawing, pattern. A Phulkari takes a month to a year to complete. Phulkari has different flowers, human, animals, plants or jewellery pattern embroidery with blanket

stitch, chain stitch, satin stitch, herringbone stitch, running stitch, stem stitch etc. A rural Punjabi woman embroider motif from their households and their surroundings for creating a Phulkari. In Phulkari embroidery one can see The Geometric Motifs, The Vegetables, Fruits and Floral motifs like 'Genda', 'Surajmukhi', 'Motia' and 'Kol', 'Chhuare', 'Anar' 'karela', 'Mirchi', 'Dhaniya'etc, The Birds and Animal motifs like snakes, fish, pig, rabbit, horse, elephant, parrot, sparrow, owl, hen etc., Households articles like ghara, velna, Jewelry Motifs like phool, jhumkas, ranihaar, guluband kangan etc with some other motifs like moon, sunlight, waves etc. There are many types of Phulkari depending on motifs pattern characteristics and threads. In which famous Phulkari types are Thirma, Chope, Saloo, Vari-da- Bagh, Bawan Bagh, Darwaza, Sainchi Phulkari, Tilpatra, Surajmukhi etc. Phulkari now has reached a stage to be a source of income for the

women of Punjab. Now Phulkari is almost lost its original form and being made by machine. Now a days Phulkari made as a wall decoration, bed sheets wall hanging etc.



Fig:18- Chope and Sainchi Phulkari (Source- S.S Hitkari)

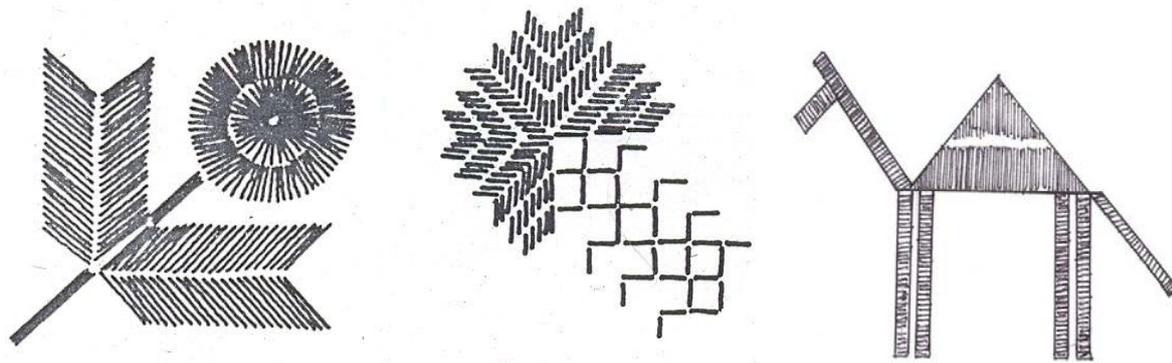


Fig 19- Different Motifs of Phulkari Embroidery

Kantha

Kantha is a kind of textile art, a type of embroidery mostly popular in Bangladesh and West Bengal, India. Kantha derives from the word Ketha, which means 'Rags' or 'Quilt'. Nakshi Kantha is a heritage of Bengali Culture. The term 'Nakshi' derives from the Bengali word 'Noksha'. In India, Kantha is a needle embroidery art practiced by rural Women of West Bengal. The main materials of Kantha embroidery are needle, old cotton fabric and colourful threads. This beautiful traditional art practice is an example to restore, recycle and revive old cloth to an art piece. In Kantha the motifs, choice of colours, arrangement of pattern speak the language of art. Kantha embroidery art became a part of Folklore, folk music. We can get the earliest evidence of Kantha art in a book, Sri Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita written by Krishnadas Kabiraj in five hundred years ago. This piece of art is found in Medieval literature. One of the famous poems Nakshi Kanthar Math (1929) written by Poet Jasimuddin. The kanth is made of old cloth, it is believed that the old cloth has a magical purpose, it is supposed to protect its user from harm. In Kantha art reflects happiness, prosperity, marriage, fertility and wish fulfillment. Traditionally old discarded sarees, dhotis, lungiare used to make Kantha. The base

material is always white thin cotton. Arrange the old sarees on top of each other in layers and tack with running stitches. The edges are folded and tacked together. The base is filled with fine quilt work with white thread with simple running stitch but the way of stitching makes it embroidery art. The Kantha embroidery has the technique of quilting and embroidery with depiction of legends and stories. A Kantha embroidery takes six months to one year to complete. Motifs of Kantha art such as human and animal figure, floral and foliage symbols. Lotus is the central design with numbers of petals, birds, boats, chariot, tree of life, kalka, spirals, creepers, palanquins are popular. Design of Kantha also takes influence from day-to-day life, surroundings and mythology. Motifs of the Kantha mainly influenced by religious belief and culture. Muslim and Hindu women of rural areas mainly engage them in the making of this beautiful piece of art in their leisure time. In Muslim culture there are a few Katha such as Dastarkhan, Gilaf, Jainamaz. They especially embroider with geometric and floral motifs, the crescent moon, star, minarets, domes, Arabic alphabet, verses of the Holy Quran. After the 12th century there was the influence of Vaisnavism and Sufi culture the Kantha art. In Kantha art the motifs show Jindu festivals, folklore, marriage ceremony, Lord

Buddhist footprints, lotus, fish, boats, birds, carts, swastika etc. Initially the threads of Kantha were taken out from the borders of the old sarees. Different bright colour silk threads are used to this piece of art. Most common stitch darning stitch or small running stitch. For the border, stem stitches are used. Filling work done with running stitch, chain stitch, herringbone etc. There are different types of Kantha available based on how they are made and their use

such as, Lep, Thalia, Durjani, Arshilata, Sujani, Rumal and Oar. Shamlu Dudeja first took the initiative to bring Kantha out from the rural households in the 1980s. She started with four women and now providing employment to a large number of women. Kantha embroidery is now done on dupattas, sarees, salwar suits, curtain, bed sheets, pillowcases, table liners, wall hanging, lampshades and so on.



Fig:20- Process of Kantha Making (Source- Home Science College Chandigarh, <https://homescience10.ac.in>)

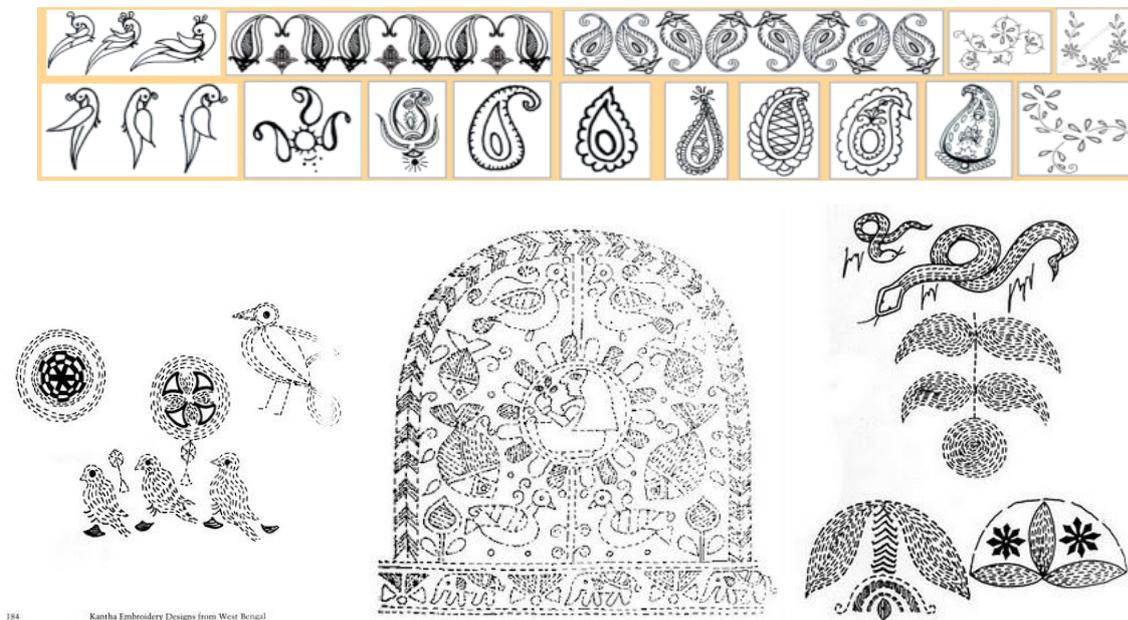


Fig 21- Different Motifs of Kantha, (Source- Home Science College Chandigarh, <https://homescience10.ac.in>)



Fig 22- Different Motifs & stitches of Kantha, (Source- Home Science College Chandigarh, <https://homescience10.ac.in>)



Fig 23- Figurative design of Kantha, (Source- Home Science College Chandigarh, <https://homescience10.ac.in>)

Pithoro

Pithoro Painting is a ritualistic painting done on the walls of house by Rathwa, Bhils and Bhilala tribes of Panchmahal region in Gujarat and Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh. Historically Baba Pithoro is a tribal deity along with local tribal deities who are honored in Pithoro Painting. Like other traditional tribal painting, daily activities of rural life such as farming, hunting, ploughing, and festivals depicting social cohesion are exhibited through colors. This beautiful mural painting has religious and mythological relevance to the indigenous tribes. An important feature of authentic Pithora art is, two paintings are not similar. They have different color

combinations, floral patterns, and symmetry. It is a male centric practice. The painters are usually males, called as 'Lakhindra'. The process begins with 'Lipai', i.e., plastering wall with cow dung, water and chuna, and painted the painting with vivid reds, greens, oranges, blues and pinks colours.

Mainly unmarried young girl whose menstruation is not started only they can get involved in this process. This painting has sacred mascots- the horses, sun and the moon. Birds, animals, trees, mythical creatures, minor deities' legends and Goddess of destiny and so on, which represent the mother earth.



Fig 24- Pithoro Mural(Source- Tribal narrative Indian Art & Design) Fig 25- Pithoro Mural (Source- Wikipedia)



Fig 26- Pithoro Mural (Source- Wikipedia)

Dhokra Casting

Dhokra casting is a popular sculptural tradition in India. In Odssa and West Bengal, Dhokra Damar tribes are the main traditional metalsmiths. This technique of lost wax casting is named after their tribe. This sculptural art form is made from lost wax technique. One of the earliest known lost wax evidence is the dancing girl of Mohenjo-daro. This sort of art is the most popular metal craft

of Bastar, Chhattisgarh, part of Madhya Pradesh, Odissa, Minapore in West Bengal. Dhokra casting is a long process. There are two main processes of lost wax casting. One is solid casting another is hollow casting. primitive simplicity of tribal people, folk motifs and horses, elephants, peacocks, owls, religious images, measuring bowls, and lamp caskets are high on demand.



Fig 27 & 28- Art of Dhokra (Source- HandmadeIndia-Housenama, Tribal Family figurines for home)

Terracotta

Terracotta, also known as terra cotta means 'baked earth'. The word derives from Latin terra cocta i.e., 'cooked earth'. This

distinguished art form is made from clay found on riverbank or pond by potters.



Fig 29- Terracotta Art (Source- Earth-Swadeshi, Wikipedia)

Conclusion

India is a country where we can find 'unity in diversity'. Art is everywhere and every aspect of our day-to-day life in every manner be it the object of household work or the house structure, any kind of festivals, ceremonies in different communities. We can see in different region of India is having different social structure and different culture are inextricably associated with the art form

in their region. So traditional Art in community engagement is a major contributing factor in world art practise. At the present time these Traditional Indian Art forms are gaining more potential. 'Sustainability' and 'environment- friendly' movement play a pivotal role in promoting these Traditional Indian Art to the world market and giving employment to the

respective indigenous people. During my research on this subject, I have found, that in mass production or export to the world market artisans compromise with materials such as surface, colours etc. Artisans sometimes adopt new mediums, new subjects, new objects to create their art forms. I met a few renowned artisans from Gond, Warli and Ajrak, art form, and came to know that authentic process of making those art remains only in their house and household activities at their own function, but when they produce this beautiful art for business

purposes, they use whatever materials available in the market. It has huge impact on various artist across the world along with the continuous research on Art. The time has come when we should give the due credit to all the artisan in different communities who are constantly devoting themselves in performing art. Community Engagement in Traditional art is a vast area for research. In this research paper a very few of them are mentioned but there is huge scope of study to explore traditional art in community engagement.

References

- Soma Ghosh, art and design review, 2020, 8, 61-78, <https://www.scirp.org/journal/adr> the living art traditions of india <https://ncert.nic.in>
- Suraj Prasad, Anjan Sen, mithila art: an analysis of various styles and symbolic values of mahubani painting international journal of arts, humanities and social studies website: <https://www.ijahss.in/> issn(online): 2582-3647 volume 3; issue 6; nov-dec 2021; page no. 43-53
- Ankita Singh, tribal painting gond, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337211020> international journal of applied home science received : 22.07.2018; revised : 08.08.2018; accepted : 23.08.2018 volume 5 (5-9), may-september (2018) : 973-977, research article issn : 2394-1413
- Dr. Shruti Tiwari, ms. hiya shrivastava, accent journal of economics ecology & engineering peer reviewed and refereed journal, issn no. 2456-1037, www.ajeec.co.in/index.php/ajeec
- Mamata Tripathy, folk art at the crossroads of tradition and modernity: a study of *patta* painting in orissa
- Mainak Ghosh, Arkadipta Banerjee, traditional folk art community and urban transformation: the case of the artists' village at kalighat, india, journal of architectural and planning research 36(1):70 – 89 <http://www.craftcanvas.com>
- Dr. K. Mrutyunjaya Rao, warli painting: aesthetics of indigenous art form of india, contemporary artists and achieved international fame. received 22 june 2022, accepted 21 august 2022, published 29 august 2022, kotamr@gmail.com, doi 10.29121/shodhkosh.v3.i2.2022.156
- Shannal Rowkith, spirituality as a guiding paradigm in community engagement in a rural context in india, submitted in fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of master of management science: public administration- public management in the faculty of management sciences at durban university of technology
- Sanjay Sen Gupta, *School of Fine Arts, Amity University, Kolkata, India. ORCID: 0000-0003-0824-9145* *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities (ISSN 0975-2935), Indexed by Web of Science, Scopus, DOAJ, ERIHPLUS, Vol. 12, No. 4, July-September, 2020. 1-18, Full Text: <http://rupkatha.com/V12/n4/v12n405.pdf>, DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v12n4.05>*
- Rajinder Kaur, Ila Gupta, Phulkari and Bagh folk art of Punjab: a study of changing designs from traditional to contemporary time, American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, ISSN (Print): 2328-3734, ISSN (Online): 2328-3696, ISSN (CD-ROM): 2328-3688
- Home Science College Chandigarh, <https://homescience10.ac.in>)
- Tanjena Mahbub, Dr. Masud Al Noor Motifs, Stitches and uses of Nakshi Kantha: A Study on a Traditional Artefact of Bangladesh, International Journal of Advances in Engineering and Management (IJAEM)
- Volume 4, Issue 5 May 2022, pp: 667-675 www.ijaem.net ISSN: 2395-5252
- Wikipedia
- <https://gaatha.com/ajrak/>