

ROLE OF RURAL WOMEN AS A DEVELOPER OF RITUALISTIC AND TRADITIONAL ART FORM: THROUGH THEIR FESTIVAL PAINTINGS

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Abstract: India is a place which is known for its cultural and traditional art as well as known for its unity in diversity. India has sprawled with 28 states and 9 union territories. Across the country have their self own traditional and cultural identities. Rural art comes from generation to generation which going to vanish in modern era. People are moving to urban area and slowly they started following new trends and stop to draw festival paintings on their house wall. Region wise India has own style and pattern of art, which known as folk art. Most of the folk traditions are followed by women. These art works displayed with various form of art. Women have belief system and faiths on their self created drawings in the rural area. Art works are not just pure piece of unique art but an excellent medium to express one's faith on god and their natural belief system. These forms are very simple, single colour, thoughtful and rich heritage. The rural folk art in India specially in Haryana bear distinctive pattern design which are relate with ritual and religious as well as mystical motifs. These rural arts express encompassing cultural identity by conveying shared community values and aesthetics. This form of art is utilitarian and decorative form of art because of their ethnic and traditional beauty. Some of the most famous form of folk paintings is similar to the ritual paintings of like Warli paintings of Maharashtra, figurative style of Pithora paintings from Gujarat, border style of Saora paintings Orissa and Mandala style of Rajasthan. Some of these tribal folk paintings and rural ritualistic paintings of Haryana described below which is not highlighted yet. These are annual festival which celebrated by women. Some annual festivals which celebrated by women's are Ahoi Ashtami , Karva Chauth , sanjhi, Thapa ceremony on the festival of marriage, goga novami etc. These festival drawing are primary source to continue folk tradition.

Keywords: traditional, rural, festival painting, women

1. Art of Guga Novami: Guga Novami also known as Goga Novami. Guga Novami is Indian annual festival, dedicated to lord Goga "the god of snake". This festival celebrated on the Novami tithi of krishana paksha in the month of august / September and the Hindu calendar month of Bhadrapad. This day is worshiped by every family and this is a very famous folk deity which worshiped with full of devotion. In Hindu tradition, Jahar Veer Gogga also called Gogaji. This festival popular in northern India: - Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. At this day women makes a traditional drawings on their kitchen area. They make drawing of Goga Novami. Ritually drawing of Goga Novami made on the stove and they draw snakes, horse and the image of Goga Ji. Mostly places women use charcoal sticks and some of geru. These drawings carry very creative forms of art which are similar to the Indian folk art like:-Warli paintings of Maharastra ,Pithora paintings of Gujarat ,basic rectangular structure is similar to the Saora paintings.These traditional art forms are very unique and pure art form as well as excellent medium to assert one's love for God faith. This shows the value of tribal and rural art by using their motifs. Draw of these drawings is the ritual festival carried by women through generation to generation.

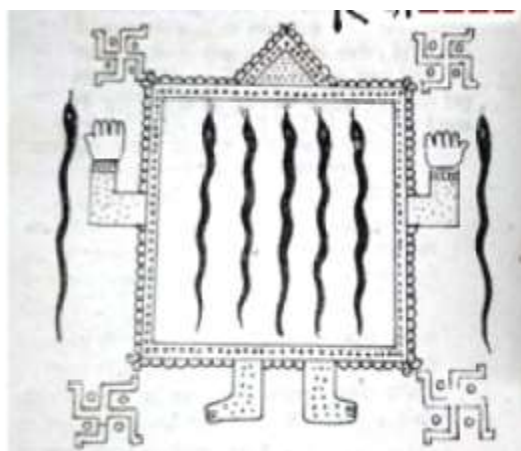


Figure 1. Goga Novami snake drawing



Figure 2. Goga Novami Drawing

These drawings are very natural and very pure. Women have faith on their self made drawings and they worshiped those. They love to narrate the story of Goga Novami on the festival of Goga. Now a day's most of the families started to move in urban areas and they started to draw on paper. This shows how the tradition slowly going to vanish, And people are coming in to the trends, but

rural women's are playing very important role to carry tradition with festival painting. In the modern era these form of art can be seen on cloth designing, bag designing, cup and mug designing etc. It shows how the traditional art is coming in to the fashion. Basic rural art form and popular folk art form are very similar but it differs from region to region. This art has specific ritual and social connotation.

2. Art of Karva Chauth

Perhaps one of the best known Indian festivals of Indian women's is the fast (upvas) of Karva Chauth. This is a Hindu festival. On this day women draw a image of Chauth Mata on the their house wall. On this festival women's drawing includes various art figures like: - stairs, moon, women, child, decorative boundary and the image of Karva Chauth Devi/Mata. Using these element women makes the rich and elegant wall art with the nearest availability from the primary source. Pattern of art form is differ region wise. This is a folk tradition which is practiced by women as like as Mithila paintings, as tribal art is also practiced by women. How south Indian people makes Rangoli on the special day, similarly northern rural houses decoration are enhanced by with their traditional drawing and painting. In the same way rural art have existence of different kind of shapes and folk tradition. But the form of arts are similar in all over India like every folk and tradition art contain the form of geometrical pattern , vertical horizontal and oblique lines . Women paint intricate designs on the wall and Festivals continued with long tradition by women.

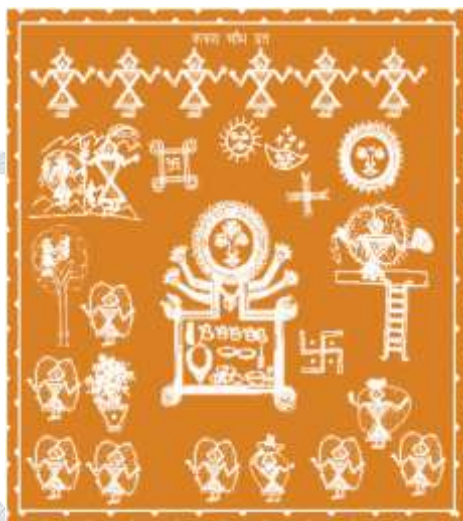


Figure 3 Karva Chauth

Show in above picture clearly can be seen the similarity in art form. Structures of figure are similar to each other, figurative style of Sanjhi and karva chauth wall pattern contains same figure as warli art of Maharashtra. It shows popular folk art is developed from the rural art . Both painting contain triangular form of art. In the publication of Lalit Kala Akademi (1968) also written about the prevalence of wall art of Sanjhi. Shape of Sanjhi is similar to tribal art form. Sanjhi festival is celebrated by northern Indian women during Navratri. Women create geometrical figure. Women paint religious motifs with the brick powder (geru) and rice powder.



Figure 4. Warli art of Maharashtra

3. Art of Sanjhi

Sanjhi is a long standing tradition in Haryana. It is celebrated like a traditional festival. It is made at home for 10 days. It is made on the wall on the new moon day in the month of October, it is made in the day of Shukla Paksha and after exactly 10 days it is bid farewell with great fanfare. It is put in the month of Ashwin, in the month of late September and early October, just 2 days before its departure, its brother comes to her house to bring her with him. Brother is made in the evening on the eighth day with a good time on the wall. It is made on the

day of Amavasya on the day the sradh ends as well as Navratri fast also starts from the same day. It is considered to be the form of Goddess and it is said that this is the eighth form of Goddess Durga, she stays in the house for the whole 9 days of Navratri and is given farewell on the day of Dussehra with great pomp.



Figure 5 image of Sanjhi in Haryana

Her brother comes at her home on 8th day, called his name Chanda. Along with Sanjhi, a working bandi is sent, who is known as Durga, it is said that after her marriage, her father sent Dhundha (servant of sanjhi) along with her to do her work, she should not be unhappy due to the work at her in-laws' house. Dhundha is a servant for Sanjhi which is sent by his father. Before making it on the wall, the wall is whitewashed, preparations are started months in advance for its making, clay is required to make it, and the entire lease is used to make the soil. It is said that after mixing a little soil release and mixing it in water, the soil becomes well prepared. To prepare the clay, it is mixed well and made smooth and thin so that it can be put in different hands, after the soil is ready, stars are prepared first. After the stars are fully formed, women started to prepare form of her hands, feet and shoes, as well as anklets also made to put on her feet and decorate as well. Sanjhi is dressed in all kinds of ornaments. So that the one came to their house as daughter-in-law also came wearing ornaments. When all these things are ready, then they kept in the sun light to dry, after few days they dry out due to sunlight, after drying, all are painted white, and kept again in sunlight. While making stars, a circle is left in the middle, now the circle is painted red ocher. After colouring stars look beautiful. In the same way, the design of mehndi is also drawn on the feet and hands. Red colour lips are made to decorate the face and a red dot is put on the forehead. To decorate Sanjhi, black color is required at some places. Charcoal is used for black colour. Boots hair and eyelid are made of black. We can see this in the village of Haryana, whatever program happens, and then Shanji competition is definitely kept in Haryana, it is made to see. It is considered to be a virgin girl of Haryana, whom people worship as the form of Goddess. at the time of making it or we can say when the day Sanjhi comes to home, songs of different days are also sung, so a song is sung in this way which is as follows---When Samjhi comes to the house, the old ladies in the house go ahead and sing the songs of Sanjhi and sing songs of omen for progeny growth of their house and make a wish in the house. Sanjhi is mostly made by unmarried girls. Sanjhi is given a farewell on the tenth day and thrown into the water. A pot is decorated to make Sanjhi float in the water. Holes are made in the pot and its face is placed in it and ghee lamps are lit. And in the evening the pot is left in some running water. It is considered necessary to break the pot, otherwise it is believed that it is inauspicious sign. Boys are already found in ponds by forming groups. Boys are very eager to break the pot and they get a lot of happiness. After the farewell of sanjhi, when the girls come to the house, they ask for omen from the neighbouring houses and bring things from the money collected, eat and celebrate together in the house. It is also said that Sanjhi has a great importance that it is also sung in the marriage ceremony. Whenever any auspicious work of marriage is done, it is remembered before priority. Thus Sanjhi is an important festival celebrated in North India. There is a different fun in understanding the form of the artwork which is done at whose time. It is celebrated by the women of the village who carry such traditions with them.

4. Art of Ahoi Ashtami

A similar form of folk art is noted at the time of Ahoi Ashtami fast (upvas) in fact I also notice this tradition since my childhood and drawn many times on my house wall, which shows the continuity the practice of traditional drawings. These are the local festivals in the north India. On the day mother keep fast for well being of their children and worshiped of the Goddess Ahoi Ashtami. This fast is observed after four days of Karva Chauth. On this day women draw the picture of Ahoi Ashtami on their wall. As described before the same way of Karva Chauth. When the day of ashtami came women draw a beautiful face of Goddess Ashtami, keeping fast and worshiped Ahoi Mata. Women pray for health and wealth for her children in the front of self made drawing. These ritualistic forms of art are very similar to the tribal art which is not highlighted yet. This kind of form of art found few numbers in the parts of northern villages of India. It has no any specific name but according to ayush (2007) "roots of rural art" research suggest that the tribal's are the predators of a tradition which originated sometime in the Neolithic period between 2500 bc and 3000bc. Their rudimentary charcoal drawings used a very basic graphic vocabulary: a circle, triangle, and square come from the observation from nature.

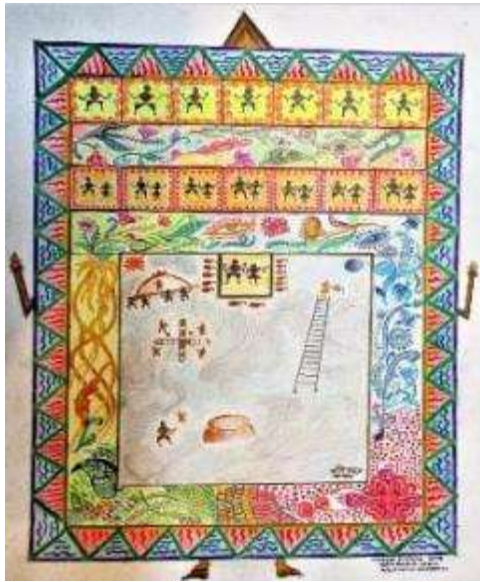


Figure 6. Ahoi Ashtami



figure7 Ahoi Ashtami 2



Figure 8saora painting

Sun and moon are represented by circle and triangle form derived from the mountains and pointed trees, square seem to obey a different logic and to be a human invention, indicating a scared enclosure or a piece of land. This is traditional rural ritualistic festival which is celebrated by women with the help of their drawings.

“Aesthetics of Indian art” by Dr. Sunil Jaiswal also described in his book the image of jar from harappa civilization, the jar is decorated with motifs of leaves, geometrical pattern and a circular design in the centre of the jar. Mostly the design have been drawn with the black colour. It was used as a storage jar in the harappa and mohanjodaro period. It shows how the basic art forms are similar and coming era to era and how the rural art is belonging to our roots. The same way of Indian women’s are expressing their culture and tradition through their occasional festival painting. This art differ from region to region, state to state, culture to culture ex:-Cholk Purana.

5.Art of Thapa design

“Thapa” in marriage ceremony- culture of India according to Hindu mythology thapa is the symbol of marriage. Thapa is a folk traditional wall design which painted by women in the occasion of marriage. It draws at both houses groom and bride houses. It is old ritual, most important role played by the girls of the family. In this boy and girl give their hand prints on the decorated place called “thapa”. Visited in a village of Haryana and found the truth behind this ritual of it (Fulla Devi 90 years old women from Pehrawar village, haryana) told me that earlier people have no proofs of marriage because of less sources and electronic media. That time there were no availability of camera and video graphy, they used to take hand prints at home walls bride and groom, for the proof. At the bride home groom gives his hand prints and same way groom house bride gives her hand prints. Slowly it became a ritual. Now a day’s people come in to trend and started to draw on paper. The outer shape of thapa is very similar to the Saora paintings of Orissa Pithora paintings of Gujarat. This brief account of the motif of rituals and method of the rural painting reveals how intimately art and religion art is connected to the rural women’s mind. Among the all folk art there is no art that is not inspired and directed by religion. This research paper effort to add the value of rural art by using the tribal motifs. Conventionally the traditional works of art are the integral part of home ritual. Every women has developed her own style for every occasion like: - Marriage, Ahoi Ashtami, Karva Chauth Etc.

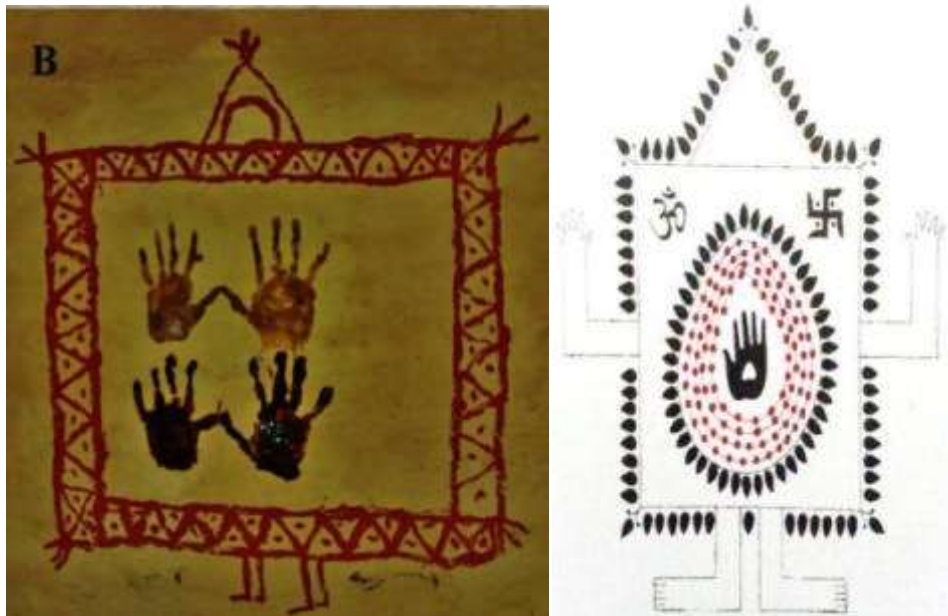


Figure 9,10 thapa design in the village of Haryana



Figure 11 Thapa ceremony at bride house



Figure 12 Thapa ceremony at groom house



Figure 11pithora painting , picture courtesy Aadi Chitra catalogue

Women are carrying the tradition very beautifully through generation to generation. They love nothing better than they narrate the stories on their design. As Warli art also based on – linking it. To the wedding ceremony the objectives is to enhance proliferation of the community, and all folk art amalgamated in the matters of social and religious expressions.

Conclusion

India is marked by its rich traditional heritage of folk arts and culture. The folk paintings are the identity of culture. Variety of art forms has untouched by modernisation. Each traditional form depicts religious epics or mostly image of god goddess. Around 75 percent population lives in the rural areas. Primarily depend on agriculture. Rural art of India are deeply rooted in tradition, ritualistic and have evolved revising techniques and characteristics. Different festival arts are increasingly designed as an independent art form and having their distinct aesthetic beauty. Folk tradition and old rituals are carrying by the rural women. Women perform the role of wife, mother home organizer, creator, disciplinarian at same time. Apart from it, a woman plays a key role in the cultural and traditional development of the society. Women are playing most important role to carry traditional ritual. Culture of human life is incomplete without the festival or occasional art. These work of art gives to our home aesthetically feelings and remind us to about our roots .further these art is not commercial but important to draw on specific culture/festivals. These are the handmade painting on the wall. Due to the growing demands of the traditional art people started to draw as a utilitarian like: - t- shirts designs dress designs and mug designs, bag designs etc. people started to sale new way of selling. Now traditional designs are coming in to the popularity. After this research it will be right to say that folk art of india is developed by traditional art, traditional art derived from festival art and the festival art is continued by women, mostly women are uneducated and relates to rural area. So it is very clear roots of ritual and tradition are carried by women.

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