

**Folk and Minor Art in India**  
**Prof. Shatarupa Thakurta Roy**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur**

**Lecture - 16**  
**Secularity and Religious Plurality**

As we try to look at the visual culture from a purely aesthetic perspective, to understand what is the sadistic identity and how the sadistic identity gets established over the long period of time. In spite of facing lots of a changes in terms of its socio-political conditions, the other factors which are connected to economy, the change in the religious dominants and there are stories that is going to be open to you in the coming lectures, and there are certain things that I would like to repeat to emphasize on the aspects where our viewer viewing the tradition and the traditional art forms which are connected to the folk art and minor art will get justice in terms of its critical viewing.

So, it is very important to understand the secular aspect of the practice as well as the religious plurality that they enjoy and we enjoy argues and that is one factor because that is some kind of contradictory connection that a must not be a ignored. If I just give you some clue to understand that till understand that when you see its community practice, even now to be very frank that in our country at least we cannot see that people from different community lived together and the same roof under success a urban place which is a having metropolitan culture. So, in the rural India when we are talking about the rural art we see that it is almost like a challenge where the communities they are staying together in harmony through the art and culture.

So, there are certain factors which when move the conflict that they have and make them get trout and stay in harmony. So, it may sound highly utopian, but that is the possibility that folk and minor art provides us with. So, when performance of this saw takes place which is a combination of some visual aesthetical images along with some interesting and free flowing lyric, beautiful tunes, music, dance rhythm and all the combinations they create harmony.

It does not really matter whether there are multiple religion and culture that are coming together, there it is for sure that they will come with conflicts and get harmonized at the end of it and that is the basic idea perhaps and I would like to also mention quite a few

tradition which ever are from a neighboring countries and the explain with the example to realize this particular spirit that is working as a positive factor for the habitual are practices for years.

What we see in this visual culture that in many of the places when somebody is working on religious states. It is only a religion that is connected in the story telling and the characters are becoming more human. So, they are getting humanized as in our previous lecture I was mentioning about the character chance, the other in the part that I showed it is a Mansa support, what we could make out that Mansa is one secondary gorgeous, she is a gorgeous which who was not getting in of respect queue out and she is just get trying to get a some kind of an importance for a particular community in a particular time which is part of the medieval era her stories are part of the medieval literature and in that time whether she exist on not, but her followers are trying to introduce this character to the larger community by injecting fear fantasies that is connected to a visual which also very rich the stories are often coming with a great visual possibilities.

So, that the paint is field inspire to paint images on the basis of that story no matter which religion they believe them, but it is the story as feeling enough that becomes universal. So, all though he mentioned many stories about the expansion of the artist from the communities which are quite wide spread without much of an authenticity like if, I make you remember that is, I told you about a very funny story, very interesting one I should not call it funny, but it has some kind of interesting part in it that the painter who was painting Shiva without Shiva's permission. Then Shiva comes in to the picture and in the fear that Shiva would get often it and something very disastrous have been take place that painter is got scared and what he does is he hides the paint version inside his mouth.

So, instead of being felt it with his act of painting the image of Shiva, the Lord Shiva himself he got angrier for the fact that the art is disrespected, his material that is paint brush. So, why should he put it inside his mouth? Because that is here sign of disrespect that he was showing into the paint brush, he gets angry and he explained the artist and his entire community. So, this is indicative a of course, it cannot be a fact because the nobody has seen Lord Shiva to be part of the human community, but that is a character which is imaginary and that the religious stories that they are connected to it and then the

artist encounters that he himself and the story finally, provides us with the lot of visual possibilities.

So, when see that has the possibility a strength visually making in a story the stories are getting very randomly and the stories are always welcome from any tradition anywhere. So, this is one aspect of expansion that we get to see there are also other stories where these artists were commissioned by some pretence and they felt that is people cannot be controlled and any royal images. So, they said that is the people are too indeed to be accommodative in the royal coat for the public commissions.

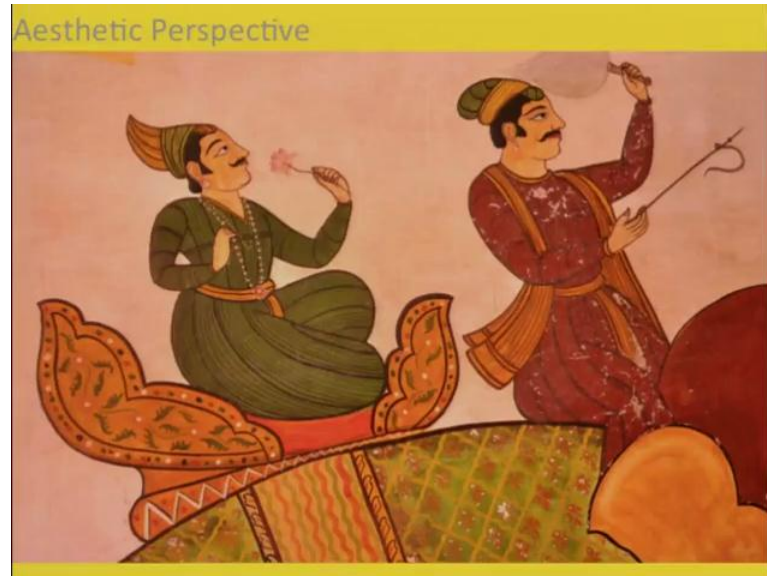
So, thus the people again thrown out and they go back to their own community in their own comfort zones and they lived like a proper happily. So, there is the stories that go on, but what we are trying to understand from it, but whenever there is a visual possibility and there whenever there is new character that is taking place it stated a highly popularized in the community because through the character the viewers or the audiences they are trying to understand life and the truth of life at large.

So, when there is a character called Chand Sadagar, he is a character who is making a protest that nobody can insert fear on him and he was not willing to compromise. So, it is a story of his struggle of his fight and that keeps the people close to the character the viewers they identify themselves with the character of chance on other who is very famous there are writers who have also mentioning and writing stories on that character Chand Sadagar where they are talking about humanity they are talking about humanism which is a very, very modern aspect that is come from the medieval dark age and then modernity is all about a humanity where even the date is God and Goddesses are created by human being unless human beings are recognizing them they are insecure.

So, by the story of Mansa it shows that she also needs the support of human beings she needs the support of the community otherwise the existence of that God is may be nowhere. So, these are the aspects that kept people engaged with those stories and then form a religious purpose it move to a greater aspect that was more secular. So, let us go back and see some images that were part of the world in the public places how folk and minor art had another aspect that was connected to the popular images. So, folk art gave birth to popular art later in the modern period all though this two types of arts not

principally similar they have some differences, but we will try to see that with some images and again come back to the topic with some more realization.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:51)



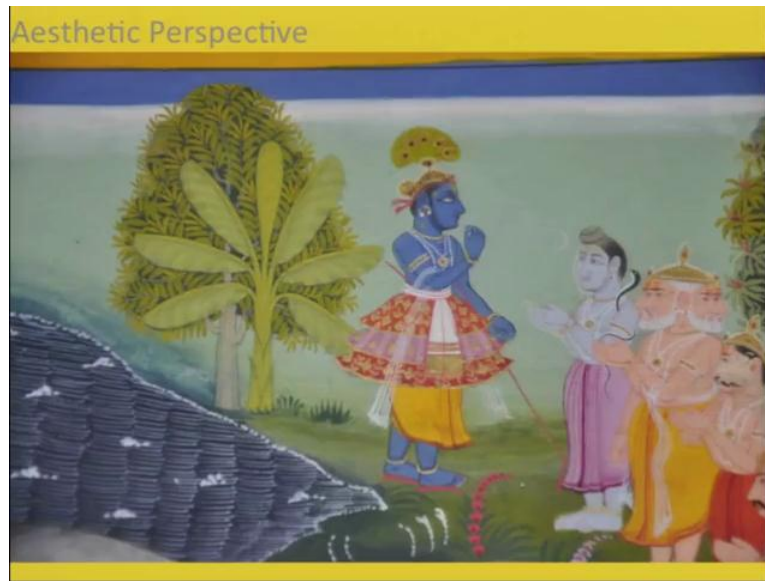
The image is partially showing some wall paintings for public display.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:02)



Another image from nature painting, it was beginning of 20th century that a hand full of scholars started recognizing the aesthetic perspective of the regional art history and through light on them through their writings and speeches in 1916.

(Refer Slide Time: 12:27)



And Kumarswami coming with on the Pahadi painting which was less sophisticated and not to own at that point of time from Rajasthan that was quite worthwhile of appreciation and collection, it was Anand Kumarswami who we are wide to try to review all forest of Indian art regardless of academic or non-academic style to the European audiences, his writings an ambiguity to the viewers to grass the aesthetics of legal and vernacular term of artistic expression, 1900 was a time when the contradictory art scenario of Europe was experiencing a dynamic idea of modernism. So, the educated and visionary art lovers and art collectives of Bengal could identify the unique virtue of Indian folk painting in non academic category with through in light on the world expression.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:35)



Fresh, spontaneity confidence simplicity of means and very distinctive style that is of folk art.

(Refer Slide Time: 13:46)



Seeing the picture is a old place that is a kept Indian museum of the traditional practice of a story telling through a shiny shine the traditional still leaving and we call it the covered painting which has its location near Udaipur, Rajasthan, but this is from a traditional one which has this typical Western Indian influence and see how the story on films in a shiny there are different factors, but opens slowly and then we also seeing the

picture that there is a central deity who was thus, who was there in the center of the shrine. So, where the entire shrine is opened and the story is told we reached the main God and Goddesses and the end of it.

(Refer Slide Time: 14:51)



There are other images where folk art is finding its new place. This is from the book building from Tara books the publication and this is stand by a gold traditional gold painter.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:09)



(Refer Slide Time: 15:15)



We also see it is used in book illustrations which are painted and then printed in cerography.

(Refer Slide Time: 15:23)



The pillars that are painted with it are also true in Javahar Kala Kendra, painted by Shrilal Joshi and family.



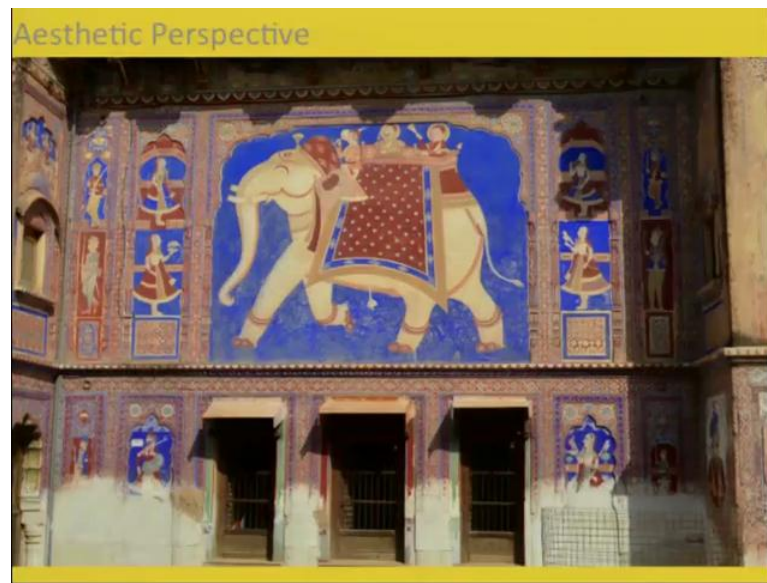
(Refer Slide Time: 15:36)



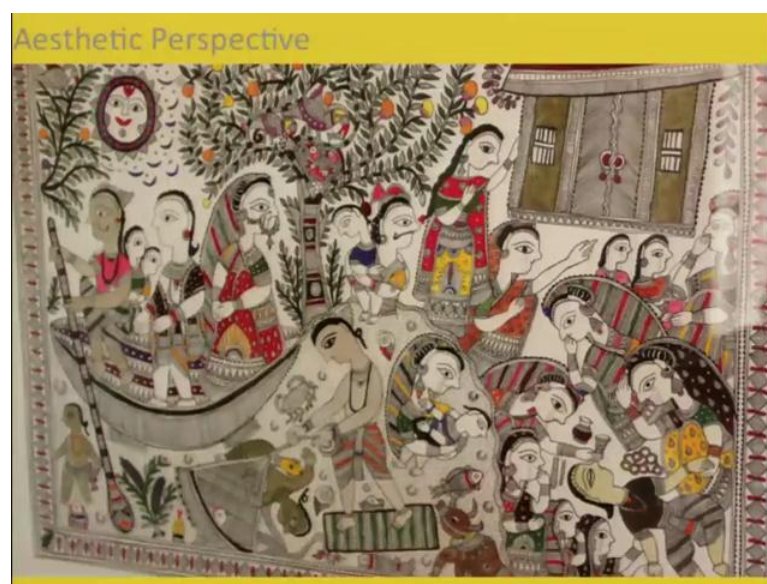
(Refer Slide Time: 15:43)



(Refer Slide Time: 15:50)



(Refer Slide Time: 15:57)



There are walls from Raghurajputh Shikhavati Navaghad a Madhubani painting on paper in exhibition place.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:03)



And see the difference that is there in a popular art which is made with a commercial means of course, the purpose is not very different, but it follows a very different aesthetic perspective

(Refer Slide Time: 16:23)



(Refer Slide Time: 16:31)



Madhubani painting painted on sarees, the road side eye dolls and some old toys broken which it found it follows the similar kind of aesthetics architect Ajighosh and Mukude, they were amongst the palace, who began to collect and preserve the living folk art in 1920s to 1930s. Indusadardatt is another name that we discussed earlier through then we get to understand, how the tradition was significant for them and the still significant to this time with that we are also going to discuss another tradition which is a purely Indonesian tradition a which is connected to the Java and other regions like which are connected places and the tradition is known as Wayang Kulit; Wayang means shadow, Kulit are the perfects.

So, this is the shadow proprietary very commonly known as Wayang Kulit, the performances you can find then internet and many other sources. They are still very popular that is during this performance the like what is known as the Wayang Kulit, the performance the master story teller who was known as the he introduces the shadow a shadow perfects and he projects it from the back drop. So, what we see other salutes of the characters and then tell the story and perfects they dance and they tell the story with proper songs and additives.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:47)



So, let see the image. This is one image that I mentioned where the master story. A master story teller who was known in the common like local language as he took the lung who conducts the shadow from behind the screen by reciting the train that appropriate sounds and movements the story calls that in Indonesia, when they had been a dominants of the Hindu rulers. They popularized this is a pocket rose they had been actors who played the roles of the characters from Ramayana and Mahabharata and they acted out on stage thus a performances whether a main mode of recreation that the local people had that time in their highly popular at that time also.

But then it was taken over by the rulers, they does not appreciate the use of characters and human images in those a stories those performances. So, what it did was very different, what did that they band it for a while and then a people started misusing it. So, to have some on them they only allowed the salutes of the figures to be shown in those images which are not highly representation. They do not have naturalize into it, there are much more patronized and hence it was allowed by the Islamic pertinent and the rules and they did not they remove the band from it.

So, what we see right now are those shadows, they are very rich and most of those performers who write the script who write the lyrics this stories and also perform their also you sing the songs make the perfects. They are mostly from the Islamic communities. So, they are the believer of a different religious faith and they make stories

which are the main characters and tell stories with those characters and they also tell the moral echoes of Hindu religious epics and stories. So, that is like combination where shows a religious plurality in its pure form and upon asking when we read the interviews of those performers.

Most of the time they have one point to make that they connect to the characters when they work with the character of Arjuna and Karna or Rama or Sita or Ravan or any other important characters of hanuman what it feel is they try to understand their personality and they get inspired by their ideologies their principles and that keeps then going in their creations. So, that is the importance of making it multi religious and also by having this kind of plurality, it no longer women's religious practice and it gets a wider spectrum.