

Folk and Minor Art in India
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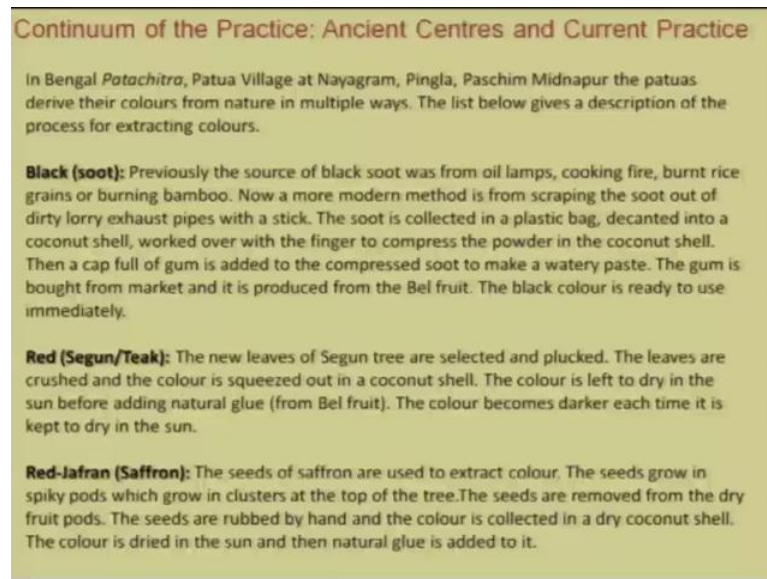
Lecture - 26
Continuum of the Practice: Ancient Centers and
Contemporary Scenario, Method, Material 2

Now, it is likely information based that I will give you some data on the available content of the method and material how traditionally in Bengal Patachitra the colors were extracted, what had been the old sources. And it is purely for our information many of the painters are still continuing with this some of this colors which are extracted from leaves, flowers, local stones etcetera and it give it very different look and right now they are using commercial paints for their convenience it also providing them with better longevity.

So, it is nothing like what we can call as the right or wrong, but we are trying to focus on the ancient practices and the current condition. So, this is just a part of it and other end of this information that is collected from the Bengal Patachitra I am also going to show you quite a few video clips from Madhubani that was shot and I this is just my personal opinion that viewing those work in progress will give you some better understanding because it is not always can be described through words and the paintings they have their own charm. So, just by watching some people into the process of their creation can make the understanding deeper. So, I am just explaining the purpose of showing those videos.

So, right now we are concentrating on the local color making that is common for all this region Bihar, Jharkhand, Bengal and Odisha there are commonalities. So, I try to compile it form the sources that I found in Bengal and before that I talked about methods that they follow in Odisha they are slightly different, but the sources are more less a same.

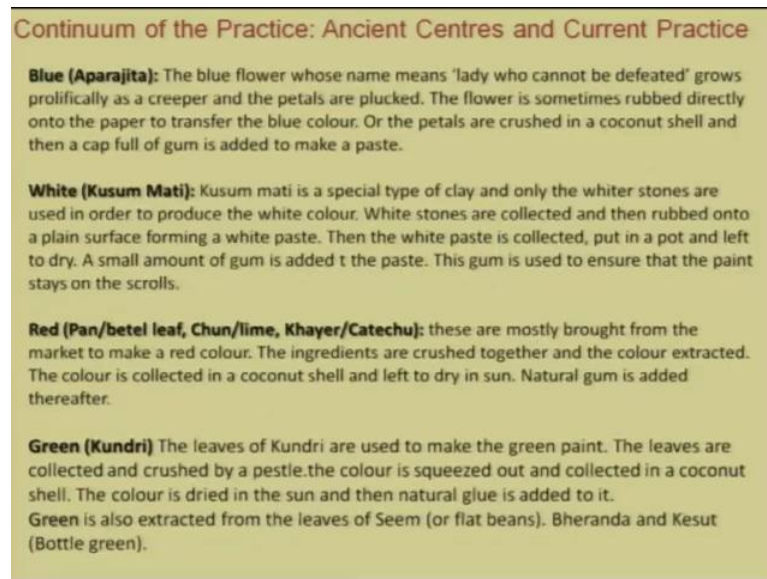
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So, let us see that in Bengal Patachitra patua village at Nayagram, Pingla, Paschim Midnapur district. The patuas derive their colors from nature in multiple ways till now. The list below gives a description of the process for extracting colors. Black soot previously the sources of the black soot were from oil lamps cooking fire burnt rice grains or burning bamboo.

Now, a modern method is from scraping the soot out of dirty lorry exhaust pipes with a stick. The soot is collected in a plastic bag decanted into coconut shell worked over with a finger to compress a powder in the coconut shell then a cap full of gum is added to the compressed soot to make a watery paste. The gum is brought from market and it is produced from the Bel fruit. The black color is ready to use immediately red Segun or Teak the new leaves of Segun. Segun tree are selected and plucked the leaves are crushed and the color is squeezed out in the coconut shell. The color is left to dry in the sun before adding natural glue from Bel fruit. The color becomes darker each time it is kept to dry in the sun. So, it develops slowly. Red-Jafran or the saffron, the seeds of saffron are used to extract colors the seeds grow in spiky pods which grow in clusters at the top of the tree. The seeds are removed from the dry fruit pods, the seeds are rubbed by hand and the color is collected in a dry coconut shell the color is dried in the sun and then natural glue is added to it.

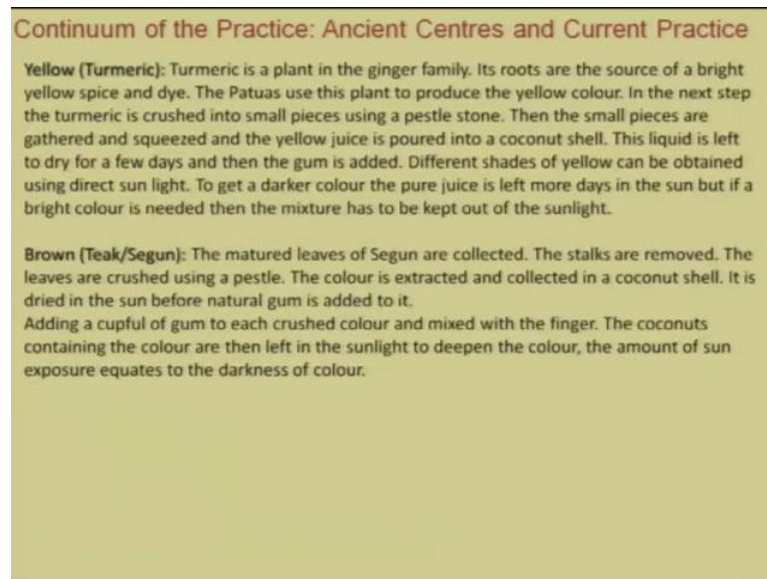
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Blue or Aparajita that is from the source of Aparajita flower, that is a blue colored flower. The blue flower is whose name means lady who cannot be defeated. Aparajita grows prolifically as a creeper and the petals are plucked to make those colors. The flowers are some them are rubbed directly on to the paper to transfer the blue color directly or the petals are crushed in a coconut shell and then a cap full of gum is added to make paste that works as a binder. So, White Kusum Mati or the Kusum Mati is a special type of clay and only the whiter stone are used in order to produce the white color white color stones are collected and then rubbed onto a plain surface forming a white paste then the white paste is collected put in a pot and left to dry a small amount of gum is added to the paste. This gum is used to ensure that the paint stays on the scrolls.

Red Pan or betel leaf, Chun, lime, Khayer, Catechu these are mostly brought from the market to make a red color the ingredients are crushed together and the color is extracted the color is collected in a coconut shell and left to dry in sun natural gum is added thereafter. Green Kundri, the leaves of Kundri are used to make the green paint, the leaves are collected and crushed by the pestle the color is squeezed out and collected in a coconut shell. The color is dried in the sun and then natural glue is added to it. Green is also extracted from the leaves of Seem or flat beans, Bheranda and Kesut bottle green.

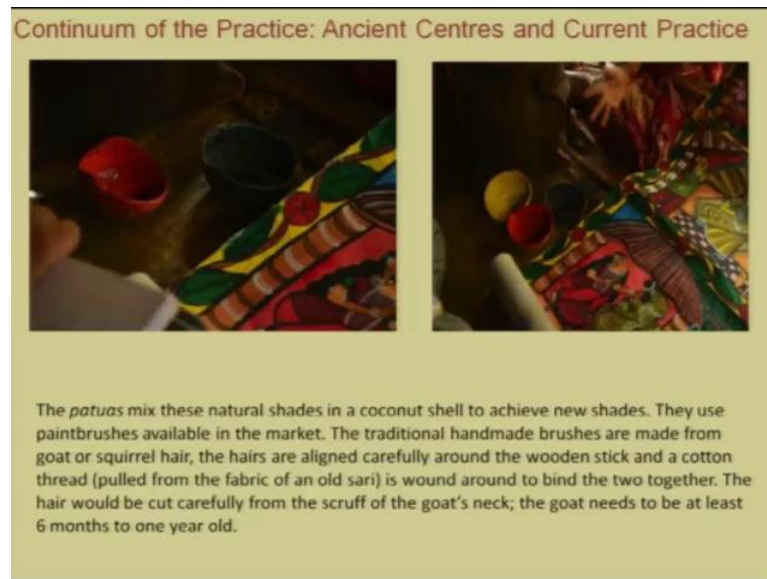
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The yellow paint that the painters make from the source of turmeric which is like the plant of turmeric which is the plant in the ginger family, its roots are the source of a bright yellow spice and dye. The Patuas use this plant to produce the yellow color. In the next step the turmeric is crushed into small pieces using a pestle stone then the small pieces the small pieces are gathered and squeezed and the yellow juice is poured into a coconut shell. This liquid is left to dry for a few days and then the gum is added. Different shades of yellow can be obtained using direct sunlight to get a darker color the pure juice is left more days in the sun, but if a bright color is needed then the mixture has to be kept out of the sun light.

Now, the source for the brown which is Teak or Segun the matured leaves of Segun are collected. The stalks are removed the leaves are crushed using a pestle the color is extracted and collected in a coconut shell; it is dried in the sun before natural gum is added to it. Adding a cup full of gum which is extracted from the Bel again which is the apple wood, Bel to each crushed colors and mixed with a finger. The coconuts containing the color are then left in the sunlight to deepen the color. The amount of sun exposure equates to the darkness of the color.

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The Patuas mix these natural shades in a coconut shell to achieve new shades. They use paintbrushes available in the market now. The traditional handmade brushes are made from goat or squirrel hair the hairs are aligned carefully around the wooden stick and a cotton thread pulled from the fabrics of an old sari is wound around to bind the two together. The hair would be cut carefully from the scruff of the goat's neck, the goat needs to be at least 6 months to 1 year old.

So, we gathered some information about how the paints were extracted from the different natural sources in Bengal. It is not very dissimilar from the tradition of Madhubani and the information like if I be very precise then as we know that apart from the floor and wall decoration that is part of their daily ritualistic practices they also paint on paper and for all cases like unlike the rice paste that is the known as Pither an occasional red dots which are made out of vermilion for the regular used Sindhur. The walls both inner and outer spaces are heavy painted in the village as well as those things are there on paper. So, the mandapas during these are like shrines the sheds during some ceremony like weddings and other auspicious ceremonies. The mandapas at the courtyards colorfully painted and there is variety of color that they use earlier pigments derived from lamp black lime, geru that is (Refer Time: 11.52) dust and other oxide and earth colors, local berry, flowers, twigs, branches, leaves, soil, burnt branches etcetera mixed with goat

milk cotton tipped straws; and also the bamboo sticks that were used to fill the colors and as well as making the line on the borders. Then acacia gum or the gum extracted from the local bubble tree was used as a fixative or a binder for the water-soluble paints to give it some permanents. The painting done on paper are open to paints available in the market they often apply Multani Mitti or china clay and cow dung tent to have the feel of the mud wall on the handmade papers. In fact of the work of Channudevi that we have seen earlier there we seen that the paper is already coated they often use off white colors that give the sense of the wall no painted with lime, but it is done on the prepared wall most of the time.

So, with sequence of the videos that is shot in the real condition in the village named Jitwarpur. We will see Geetadevi and other painters from the Jitwarpur village where mostly the Brahmin painters are located. So, I will show you quite a few video clips from the 2003 just two show how it was done on the different surfaces traditionally and also from the video let us just get a hang of the glimpses of the local life that is there. And it is very important when we talked about the context the context civilization, contextualization in our previous module it is very important to see the things in its existing context separately and also have some experience of viewing the same objects in the artificially lighted museum space.

So, let us switch to the videos, take your time and watch them very carefully and we will discuss those things in our following lectures.

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