

Folk and Minor Art in India
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Lecture – 08
Early Literacy Resources

The second topic for the second module is all about discussing the available literary resources that we count on to track the timeline, as well as to understand the importance of this habitual factors that spread it all over. In our country to realize that we must also consider these three basic difference aspects that appears of all art practices. If we consider these three as the trade, temple and court that mostly epitomize the three constituents that constantly endorse advocated and influence the cultural spectrum and the aesthetic range of Indian art practice.

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Since its formative years, folk paintings have been associated with the temple tradition by laying its foundation on impermanent grounds. The art works were mostly in their characteristic unlike the paintings that are commissioned by the court, by the rulers that considered some kind of your permanence. They considered the longevity, they wanted that to say almost forever, whereas the folk painting it was perhaps the legacy that they wanted to get continued and become permanent. So, it was more like a knowledge that is quite in nature that had to be preserved and passed on through generations.

So, the entire thing followed a very definite principle together the court paintings were done under royal patronage, which was folk painters hardly enjoyed any patronage from resourceful section of their community as a murals on the wall or ceiling of the shrines temples, whereas folk paintings were made on the backdrop screens of the popular temple and they use to be taken out from time to time for the common people to proliferate the divine messages.

The paintings were made as souvenirs to be brought and taken away by the pilgrims often the formats were to support the purpose of the portability in the form of wall hangings or rolled up painted scrolls. So, every time we see that when they stick it with the wooden sticks or some kind of a stick and rolled it up and then the entire thing is very easy to carry. So, we can either carry it by buying them taking at back home by packing them very conveniently or its more like you get the thing and then unfold and it a massive size. So, that was a wonder factor it was also true that story used to get unfold in sequence so that made it fascinating, interesting because it had a linear formation.

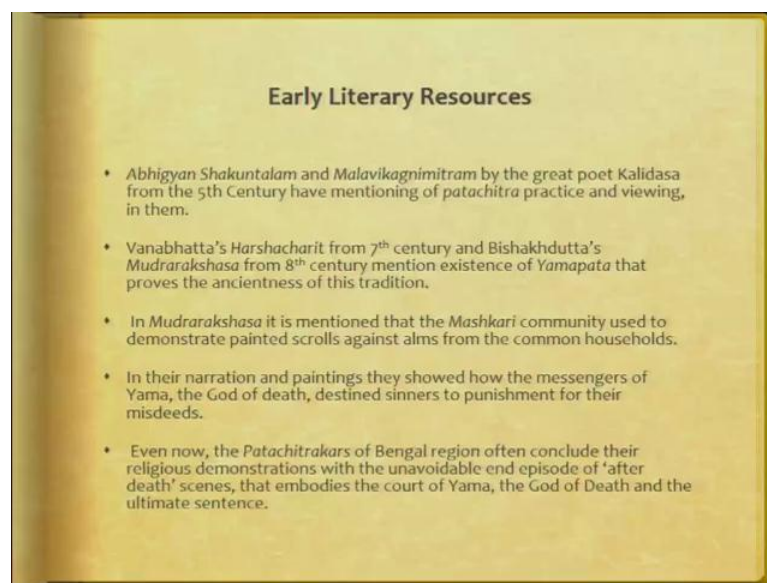
It still has and that linear formation does not let you go to the end and see the stories and that way the nonlinearity is not their ever, although their stories were based on the key frames the narratives where much more continuous and the stories were based on the basic key frames which used to be picked up very decisively, for example, when it is a known story like Ramayana, which is almost known by everybody, there the artist need not to pick up too many frames. The artist could afford to skip quite a few frame and only show the key frames which are very important and the audience can easily connect those stories with their own knowledge, whereas if there is a new story we saw that the artist thus incorporating many more frames to depict that, but they had been fakes to rules fakes formation of those things.

So, the paintings were made only for common viewing and divide of any political persecutions of any kind. There were not to be preserved for ages made to recreate perennially. They were not meant for one sided viewing rather than wanted audiences to participate and that way it was more like a performance where music dance movements some bit of an acting the scripts with conversations and also the tune the other songs lyrics as well as the visuals compositions colors line everything blended together and they all together made the thing very, very happening for the people and it was now like

a mode of very effective communication that was the only mode of entertainment enagements and whatever we call it.

So, if we go back to the early literary sources we see the history of origin of Patachitra from Persian and authentic sources and common saying claim that the painted scrolls have been widely used for the purposes of social reformation to educated modally trained the common people literature levels that during to the time of Buddha, they had been communities titled as Maskari or the Mashkari who were appointed for such tasks.

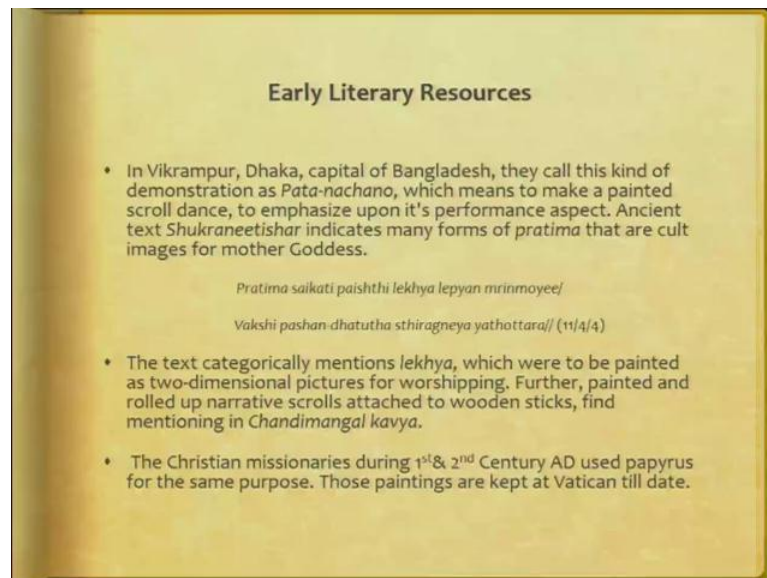
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Abhigyan Shakuntalam and *Malavikagnimitram* by the great poet Kalidasa from the 5th century have mentioning of *patachitra* practice and viewing in them. Vanabhatta's *Harshacharit* from 7th century and Bishakhdutta's *Mudrarakshasa* from 8th century mention existence of *Yamapata* that proves the ancientness of this tradition. In *Mudrarakshasa* it is mentioned that the *Mashkari* community used to demonstrate painted scrolls against alms for the common household. In the narration the paintings they showed how to messengers of Yama, the God of Death or in addition some of the *patachitrakas* say that the Yama is not the God of Death that how he is commonly recognized by people, but he is rather the God of Forgiveness. So, the chances one can do something good to cover the persons evil scenes and then they may achieve some kind of forgiveness that particular deity.

So, most of the time we see that in the narrations the painting, they showed that had the God of Forgiveness or Death thus thing seen us to punishment for the misdeeds, even now the patachitrakars of Bengal region often conclude the religious demonstrations with the unavoidable end episode of after death conditions that embodies the court of Yama, the God of Death and the ultimate sentence and after death. They show the situations where the dead persons achieves a new life were the past through difference stages before they reach Yama and in each stages they are asked to perform certain things to do some kind of cleansing and cleansing is only possible if the amount of scene is minimum. So, the more we can avoid scene, the more we can avoid interaction with Yama and then the people can straight away rich heaven. So, these are the motivation that was there behind show telling all those stories that insert of the modal characteristics the moral lessons to its audiences to a large extent.

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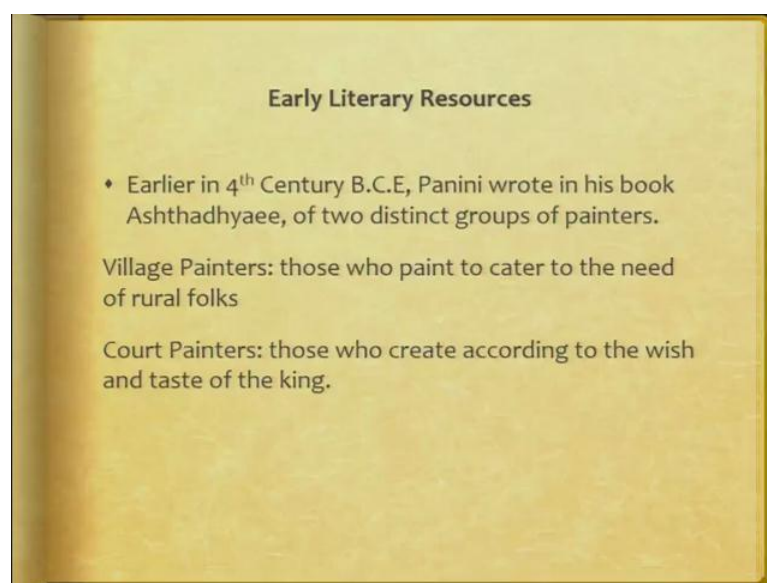


In Vikrampur, Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, they call this kind of demonstration as pata-nachano, which is like make a painted scroll dance to emphasize upon its performance aspects. Ancient text Shukraneetishar indicates many forms of pratima that are cult images for mother Goddess. 'Pratima saikati paishthi lekhyas lepyan mrimoyee, Vakshi pashan dhatutha sthiragneya yathottara'. The text categorically mentions lekhyas, which were to be painted as two dimensional pictures for worshipping. Further, painted and rolled up narrative scrolls attached to the wooden sticks find mentioning in Chandimangal Kavya.

The Christian missionaries during 1st and 2nd century A.D. used papyrus for the same purpose. Those painting are kept at Vatican till date, the cave paintings of Ajanta also have some stylistic of the 1st and 2nd century B.C. what we get to see and the 5th century B.C.E. depicting stories from Jataka that is the stories of past lives of Buddha that display the similar formation of continuous narration. Sanchi Stupa complex has combination of miniature carvings as stone relieves cultures on its narrative panels and that give us some kind of impression that telling stories through images had been very common all over in India. It was also true that the number of literacy was very less than in that time to educate those people and era. It was also very important that the stories are told to pictures then the stories and morals could actually had possibility to create larger impact on the human mind and make it more memorable.

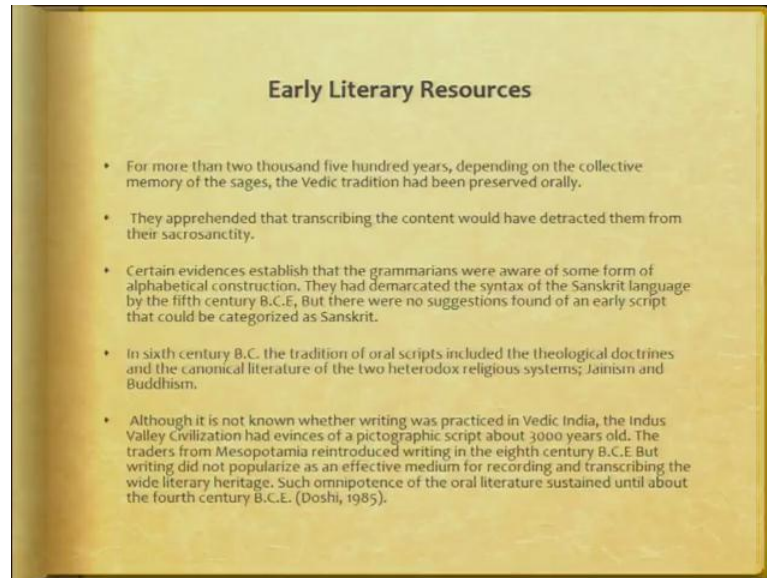
Devi Prasad Ghosh in Bharatiya Shilpadara mentions of Buddhist monk from the 6th century B.C. named Mataliputra Goshala well known philosopher, who was the son of the patachitrakar from Nalanda and is in his writing he mentions about the father of Mataliputra and that gives us the information that patachitra was popular in that time also and one could take it up as a full time profession. It was only identity of that person that he was a patachitrakar. He made painted scrolls Patanjali, the author of yoga sutra in his reinterpretation of Panini Sutra mentions of a painter community named Shobic, who created scrolls to demonstrate and took it as their profession.

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Earlier in 4th century B.C.E., Panini wrote in his book *Ashthadhyae*, of two distinct groups of painters. Village painters – are those who paint to cater to the need of rural folks and the court painters, those who create according to the wish and taste to the king.

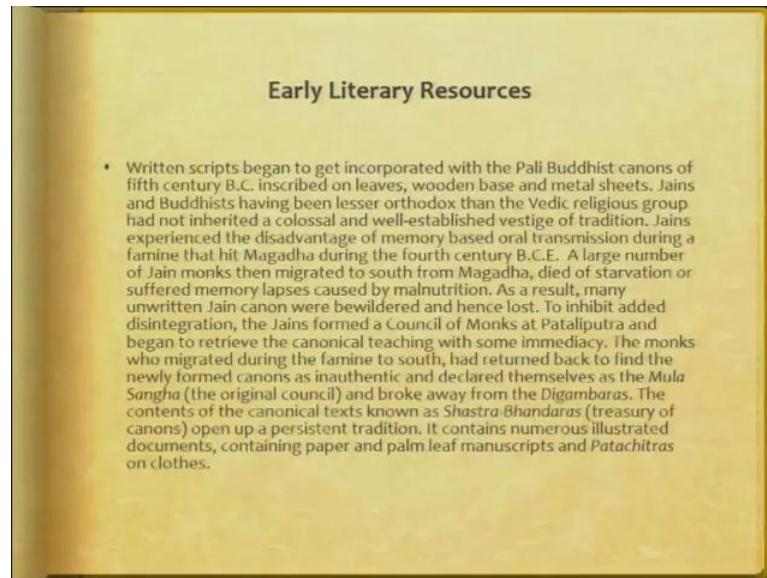
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For more than 4500 years depending on the collective memory of the sages, the Vedic tradition had been preserved orally. They apprehended that transcribing the content would have detracted them from their sacrosanctity. Certain evidences establish that the grammarians were aware of some form of alphabetical construction they had demarcated the syntax of the Sanskrit language by the 5th century B.C.E., but there were no suggestions found of an early script that could be categorized as Sanskrit. In 6th century B.C.E. the tradition of oral script included the theoretical doctrines and the canonical literature of the two heterodox religious systems Jainism and Buddhism.

Although it is not known whether writing was practiced in Vedic India, the Indus valley civilization had evinces of the pictographic script about 3000 years old. The traders from Mesopotamia reintroduce writing in the 8th century B.C.E., but writing did not popularize as an effective medium for recording and transcribing the wide literary heritage. Such omnipotence of the oral literature sustained until about the 4th century B.C.E.

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The information are authenticated from the writings of the Saryu Doshi in 1995 in written scripts began to get incorporated with the Pali Buddhist canons of 5th century B.C. inscribed on leaves wooden base and metal sheets. Jains and Buddhists having been lesser orthodox than the Vedic religious group had not inherited a colossal and well established vestige of tradition. Jains experienced the disadvantage of memory based oral transmission during a famine that hit place in Magadha during the 4th century B.C.E.

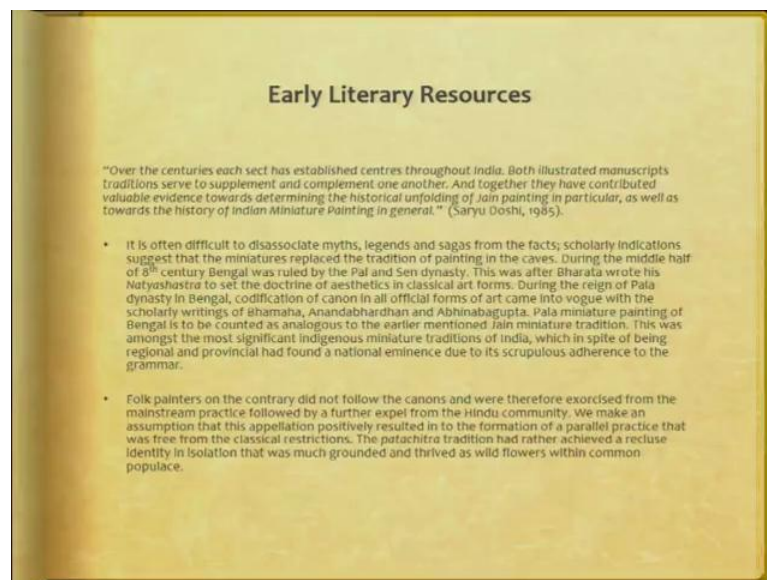
It was known like story that gives some clues about why was it that they started shifting towards written scripts and they reduce the pictorial formation and images the use of the image of to some extent and slowly the images disappeared from the text only use as illustration or illumination to compliment the writings. It was not they were pending on it a very long because of a story a fact based story that made them realize. Perhaps we can assume that way that it was during the famine in Magadha during 4th century B.C.E. where a group of gem monk they had to the moved to the Southern part of India.

Now, once they moved the other part, the other group they stayed back some of the saint would not move and the group they shifted to Southern India and that way what happens that to the many of the people, who were there in the famine of vacated areas. They either died due to starvation or suffered memory lapses due to malnutrition and that was very unfortunate that as a result many of unwritten Jain canons were bewildered and hence lost to inhibit added disintegration. The Jains formed a council of monks at

Pataliputra, present Patna and began to retrieve the canonical teaching of journalism with some immediacy.

The monks who migrated during the famine to the Southern India had returned back to find the newly formed canons as inauthentic and declared themselves as Mula Sangha, means the original council and broke away from the Digambaras, the contents of the canonical texts known as Shastra Bhandara, the treasury of canons open up persistence tradition. It contains numerous illustrated documents containing paper and palm leaf manuscripts and patachitras on clothes.

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Over the centuries each sect has established centers throughout India. Both illustrated manuscripts traditions serve to supplement and complement one another, and together they have contributed valuable evidence towards determining the historical unfolding of Jain painting in particular, as well as towards the history of Indian miniature painting in general, quote from Saryu Doshi. It is often difficult to disassociate myths, legends and sagas from the facts scholarly indications suggest that the miniatures replaced the tradition of paintings in the caves.

During the middle half of 8th century Bengal was ruled by the Pal and Sen Dynasty. This was after Bharata wrote his Natyashastra to set the doctrine of aesthetics in classical art forms. During the reign of Pal and Sen dynasty in Bengal, codification of canon in all official forms of art came into vogue with the scholarly writings of Bramaha,

Anandabhardhan and Abinabagupta. Pala miniature painting of Bengal is to be counted as analogous to the earlier mentioned Jain miniature tradition. This was amongst the most significant indigenous miniature tradition of India, which is in spite of being regional and provincial had found a national eminence due to the scrupulous adherence to the grammar.

Folk painters on the grammar did not follow the canons and were therefore, exorcised from the mainstream practice followed by further expel from the Hindu community. We make an assumption that this appellation positively resulted into the formation of a parallel practice that was free from the classical restrictions. The patachitra tradition had rather achieved a recluse identity in isolation that was much grounded and thrived as wild flowers within common populace.

The next and the facts are so closely connected that it gets difficult at times to separate the two and that creates a basic confusion and that also kept us trusted to its research. So, in our next lecture, I am going to tell you certain maids which are popularly known. It is almost speeded all over in the country, everybody knows about it. If you go there interview people, but there are hardly any written resources that are there. Of course, there are certain things which are quite authentic and takes still available and it needs proper preservation, but let us see how the maids are connected to the this stories and how the whole culture and the tradition of folk and minor art gets more and more life that is also very grounded very down to at an human. Though those stories which are facts, fantasy, fictions authenticities and everything have become almost blended and that is the basic life of it.