

RETHINKING ON TRENDS AND TRADITIONS OF INDIAN ART AFTER INDEPENDENCE

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Abstract:

Indian art had its roots back from pre historic period to modern and from folk tradition to craft oriented art forms, the development in art is a continuous scene time to time and new art created always. The radical changes would be seen in folk art, and many Indian artists were inspired by the folk forms. Now art is totally characterized by an immense freedom. The artist has out gone the past and now working according to those principal which are purely painterly and which has rejected the dominance of the subject matter. Every artist has got inspired by Indian folk trends and tribal trends developed from past to present. The modern Indian art was unfortunately caught within the confrontation of westernization on one hand and its Indianization on the other hand. In the Indian art scene the 1st half of the 20th century saw a revaluation in the arts. Many modern Indian Artists like Jamini Roy, Amrita Shergil and others were confronted with the problems occurred in the beginning. Due to these conflicts the new progressive group was formed in 1948, the active members of the group were the young emerging artist from India, later became masters of Indian Modern Art they had preoccupied subject matter and new techniques with purely formalistic and coloristic approaches somewhere influenced by western masters.

Keywords:

Folk Art, Tribal Arts, British Colonial rule, inspiration from Traditional Art, 20th Century Indian Art, Post-Independence Art, Neo Tantric Art, Installation, Performance and Video Art, Modern Indian Art techniques.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Dr. Rakesh Bani,
RETHINKING ON
TRENDS AND
TRADITIONS OF INDIAN
ART AFTER
INDEPENDENCE,
Artistic Narration 2017,
Vol. VIII, No.2, pp.13- 18
[http://anubooks.com/
?page_id=485](http://anubooks.com/?page_id=485)

Indian art had its roots in mythological and sociopolitical aspect, this would be seen in folk art, and many Indian artists were inspired by the folk forms. Looking back to our history we cannot fail to notice that efforts were made at various times to identify the style of what we call a tradition in one field or another, although they differed widely in motivation and objectivity. At the simplest they were part of the effort of individuals or group to exceed their limited status and work themselves into cultural relationships with their past. Now art is totally characterized by an immense freedom. Indian art has now reached a significant point of maturity. Some dedicated artist, especially those hailing from the different regions of the country have played a pioneering role in its development ¹By employing local and regional symbols, myths, and colours they have opened up new and unlimited directions in the creation of forms, designs, textures and techniques. They have introduced a vast scope of thematic originality as well as philosophic perfections. The artist has out gone the past and now working according to those principal which are purely painterly and which has rejected the dominance of the subject matter. ²

It is easy to copy or imitate or follow the trends but it is very difficult to carve on original and individual path for oneself. Today an individual who is also the part of our society has to face these challenges all by himself, on one side whole experiences of physical and non-physical culture of the world artist, artisans and art writers right from the pre historic period to today are available to the modern artist, on the another side for him the complex, tedious, hard, exciting, challenging unknown creative journey is ahead.³ Artist has supposed to be very sensitive, sharp vision and creative faculty of a different kind. Especially in a situation where choices are unlimited and the creativity of an individual artist is subjected to a type of challenge where he has to create a work of art in his own idiom. In a sense the cultural assault of British Colonial rule in India was more fundamental and total than any of the previous ones. British rule and the new education that came with it certainly effected a change on the Indian cultural landscape.

The modern Indian art was unfortunately caught within the confrontation of westernization on one hand and its Indianization on the other hand. The image of Indian art tradition that we have grown up with is what had emerged in this manner, certainly out of a nationalist western confrontation but out of attitudes inherited from the western culture impact.⁴ Almost from the beginning most modern Indian artist sought contacts with their traditional art, but there were a great many artist who did not manage to do so even in spite of much study and earnestness. What confounded them and frustrated their true contact with tradition. Our art traditions has few parallels in the world for its depth, breath, antiquity, diversity and unbroken hierarchy and even today, certain of its models are active at the folk art and craft level. It has professional and non-professional areas, it has simple as well as

sophisticated technology, it has spectrum of expression that extends from pure abstraction to involved visual metaphor, it has a language of gesture which is unique at each level it works differently, its concepts are different, its visual ingredients are different, its dramatic interactions are different and its expressions are also different.⁵

Indian art scene the 1st half of the 20th century saw a revaluation in the arts. Many Indian artists like Jamini Roy, Amrita Shergil and others were confronted with the problems occurred in the beginning. The period from 1947 to 1960s showed marked internationalism because of western influence. Due to these conflicts the new progressive group was formed in 1948, the active members of the group F. N. Souza (**Plate No.1**), S. H. Raza (**Plate No.2**), K.H. Ara, H.A. Gade, S. Bakre, M.F. Hussain (**Plate No.3**), K.K. Hebber (**Plate No.4**) they had preoccupied subject matter and new techniques with purely formalistic and coloristic approaches. Others in the post-independence era- K.C.S. Panikar, Pradosh Das Gupta, Sankho Choudhary, Akbar Padamsee (**Plate No.5**), Tayeb Mehta, tried to reconcile eastern and western characteristics in their works.⁶ The artists of the 1960s searched for realism in their imagery as evidence in their art works; it was accompanied by social consciousness and the storytelling formation. 1970s also show political and social consciousness as well as representation of individual experiences. After that too these traditions and trends were seen prominently in the art of 1980s, many artists emerged as pioneers. Bikash Bhattacharya (**Plate No.6**), Anjolie Ela Menon (**Plate No.7**) can be seen for their realism. Ram Kumar, Akbar Padamsee, Jehangir Sabavala (**Plate No.8**), G.R. Santosh, (**Plate No.9**) many examples can be seen of different trends- tantric, expressive, cubistic, futuristic, abstract, impressionistic and so on. Some drew from folk and village like, some from miniature and mural traditions, some from tantric and neo-tantric, some from mythology and religion.⁷ Some from western isms, some from popular art forms individualistic approach, search for new styles, techniques, mediums, exploring the possibilities to the fullest became the 'mantra' of these years. After 1990 Indian art became vital and boost up with the economic liberalization. Mumbai became the art bazaar of modern India. Where art lovers identify and recognize the Indian elements in Indian Art. Till the nineties the art world in India was rather small and insular. There has always been tradition for collecting art amongst the bourgeoisie, especially paintings and drawings, artist like Vivan Sundaram and Nalini Malini who studied in the west at the end of the sixties early seventies were exposed to new forms like Installation, performance and video art.⁸ Experiments and results like these arts might well bring to us to reconsider the possibilities of translating trends and traditions of different cultures. New Media art, including video using technology that we all share, could be the best suited medium to cross over the boundaries in the future Indian art world.⁹ Soon after the independence there was a tendency

and even necessity to, rediscover suppressed or lost links with one's Indian past. Artist like the rest of us were self-consciously Indian at all. Today the artist is still conscious of his tradition, but rarely self-conscious about it.

Art in our country was a priestly function which undoubtedly enriched the lives of millions in India. The Artist can play a big role in reviving a decaying culture. The Artist has power to see the unseen and he can carry the society along with him to create a beautiful life for all. It is actually the development of the aesthetic sensibility in man that enables him to be distinguished from animals.¹⁰ Art is capable of leading men from lower to higher status, in this age of technical emphasis and automation not only India but the whole world turned in to a state of radical transformation and the main feature of general metamorphosis was the change that took place in the very fundamentals of art.¹¹ Inspiration for work of art comes from various aspects of life and nature.

Gradually the trends and traditions of Indian arts totally changed due to the impact of several influences of west.¹² Now Indian Avant-grade has miles to go, our younger artist advised to take a close look at their own heritage, traditions and forms before they accept or reject it that might be the beginning of new era in Modern Art.

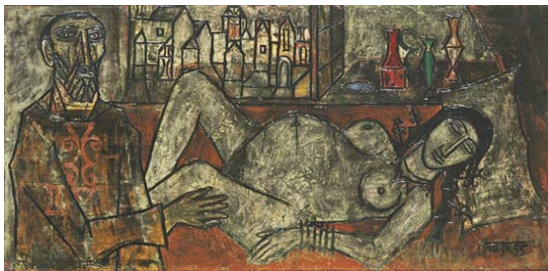


Plate- 1



Plate- 2



Plate- 3



Plate- 4

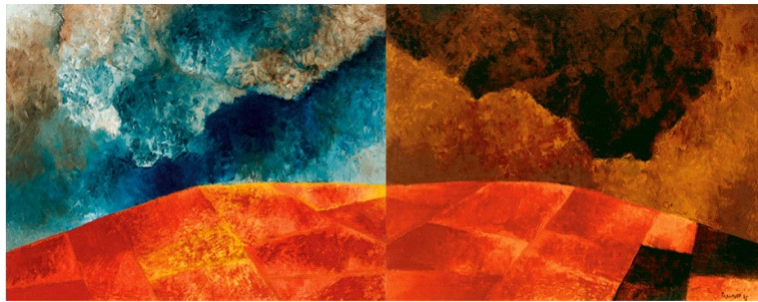


Plate- 5



Plate- 6



Plate- 7

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Plate- 8



Plate- 9

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