Chapter 5

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Maqbool Fida Husain had been exposed to the works of many great and Master European artists, when he joined the 'progressive Artists' Group (PAG), during the days of independence of India, “It is possible that Newton introduced Husain to these 20th century experiment artists.”¹ The P.A.G had been greatly influenced by the German Expressionists and its reproductions of works technique and style.

M.F. Husain saw Jain and Basohli miniature paintings in his early days. Many Basohli, Jain and Mughal miniatures paintings impressed him many of the Jain collections have miniatures illuminating manuscripts as well as independent miniatures that impressed him to a great extent. These miniature paintings as Basohli were produced in the Punjab hills at the end of 17th century Kangra Velly miniature were very fond in numbers of large scale, these miniatures did not produce attention for him thus did not attract any significant attention for Husain. These miniatures collections many Museums Galleries as Shimla Museum, J. Nehru Gallery in London, Victoria and Albert Museum London. Husain visited these collections at a later date.
In 1952, he went to China as a member of a cultural delegation. There he met Mr. Ch’i Pai-shih then China’s leading contemporary painter, he was very much influenced by Chinese calligraphy and brush work. A new door opened for him. The heavy lines employed to separate the colours. In the painting ‘Marathi woman’ Husain executed on his return. The heavy lines employed to spare the column which confirms another element of his subsequent technique. Later, his sweeping brush strokes in ink in later work echo the Chinese techniques.

Husain’s style evolves through the ‘Maulavi’ the drawing of the figure and application of colour, “In this painting, the bearded Maulavi, a Turkish fez on his head, is sitting on a striped seat, ‘Holy Quran’ in his hands. A seated figure is seen on his right. Instead of a brush, the painting has to be executed with a palette knife. The technique shows the touch of a master stroke. He painted ‘Duldul Horse’ its very stylish picture theme is Imam Husain horse, who played an important role on the karbala battlefield. He painted at that time Muharram on the surface, it appears disordered. Two female figures depicted. These paintings ‘Maulavi, ‘Duldul Horse’ and ‘Muharram’ indicate the profound religious grooming that has been part of Husain since his youth. He has included this religious streak both as an individual and as an artist.

In 1952 Husain’s painting ‘Malwa Landscape’ is important
painting because it is a rare work which depicts the local culture where Husain grew up. Its perspective is artificial, like that of a miniature. In the distance we see a range of mountains and houses, in the foreground there is a large tree with a woman and child engulfed in branches. The ground is seen in the center, and also depicting a road. This ‘Malwa landscape’ is a soul-stirring painting. He has followed the dictates of his heart in painting this landscape.

Husain's first visit was to Europe in 1953. In Berne, Switzerland, and the Kunst museum, he saw Paul Klee's paintings. He visited museums and Galleries in other cities in Europe and gained a broader view of western art, he had known Paul Klee's work in India, one of Klee's remarks. "I should like to demand, over and above feeling, movement." Struck a responsive chord in Husain. Husain had an intimate look at Paul Klee's work at Berne, had a liberating influence on his view of line and form and space.

Husain's 1954 Khajuraho Sketches have many salient features. An elephant with two men astride, it remind one of the Khajuraho Sculptures. The picture of the woman astride the elephants head with a sword held in her hand is similarly striking. The feminine grace of the Khajuraho sculptures is echoed in her sketches. Husain's consummate skill is seen in these sketches.

Husain's 1955 Painting 'Zameen' won the Lalit Kala Academi
award at its annual exhibition. Eight squares have been drawn on a rectangular canvas and in them symbols—house, wheel, a tree—had been painted. The human figure had no importance in this scheme. A few figures are seen on one side and in another corner there is a snake done in the Tantric manner.

In 1956, Husain painted a memorable painting ‘Between the Spider and Lamp’, some letters have been scribble on the back wall, four women are in front. One has lantern on her head, other one holds a spider with a tant thread. The Women’s face shows fear, only the heads of two other women are seen and the last woman is shown is her full posture but she looks away. The unknown of this painting, unlike that of ‘between the spider and the lamp’, has a sense of lowering menace about it. Good-humored mystery is replaced by cosmic anxiety. “as Herbert Rad, discussing the evolution of Expressionism remarked, metaphysical anxiety is no longer only Germanic and north European, it now characterized the whole of the modern world”, as sensitive artist like Husain.

Contemporary painters rarely paint such a simple but meaningful picture. Husain has reached the towering highest of deep symbolism. This painting and the film ‘Through the Eyes of a painter’ have a relationship that needs to be explored to understand a basic continuity in Husain work. In both the ethic and Myth is Rajasthani and symbols Legendary of Indian such as
the lantern are common to both. This big also plumps the soul of Indian womanhood with the help of one comic incident.

Satyajit Ray’s first film “Pather Panchali”. This film as a very poetic touched all its viewers. Husain who had been raised in the world of the cinema, expressed his actions through some powerful drawings, the exhibition of which was held on the veranda of the Bhulabhai institute. Husain’s strokes are inherently strong one picture of a bullock, the bullock is the backbone of Indian agriculture, equally useful for a plough and pulling a cart. ‘Pather Panchali’ is set in rural Bengal. He did not blindly imitate Satyajit Ray’s images.

In the ‘Pather Panchali’ hoarding Apu and Durga are running towards a train that is semi-through a fence of ‘Kaash’ flowers. Husain has previously sketched or painted this scene. In a corner, Husain has painted the grandmother of that poverty stricken Bengali village family. He has also painted a heart wrenching symbolic scene, of the idol-immersion that takes place during Durga Puja. Husain created that hoarding is completely different style with the charcoal he quickly sketched a back view of there picture execute perfect likeness, but only if he feels like.

Satyajit Ray’s images, and the strength of Husain’s figure of the bullock reminds of the bison painted in the prehistoric cave of Altamira in North Spain. Husain’s strokes are as rhythmic as
they are powerful. These qualities in his pictures belong to ‘pather Panchali’ which is five decayed old.

M.F. Husain, representing both the common man and the creative artist, progressive Artists Group heralded a whole new freedom for Indian Art. Social background had seemingly become irrelevant. He was nominated eminent artist member of the Lalit Kala Akademi which organized the first national exhibition a year later, in 1955 he got his first national award for his huge painting ‘Zameen’ his reputation was entrenched. Husain says that “In this painting I brought the village life together. The other thing was that like the Jain miniatures. The sections idea, but given an organic feel in which you tell a story. This was the first time I used this method. R. Von Leyden referred the work to Beckmann’s wild beast force, but at that time I did not know about German Expressionism. After that I got a few books on German expressionism. His themes were especially drown from rural life, there was a romanticizing of the life the people, his early works conform to the general pattern Husain’s paintings. There is already inherent in the otherwise conventional naturalism a sureness of forms. Sense. of rhythm sets the picture surface into a sweeping movements.

His painting ‘Zameen’ had been purchased by the national gallery of Modern Art and the sale of his paintings brought him a very respectable income.
Husain’s has painted ‘Dolls wedding’ in 1956, has used the colour bronze almost like water colour. To patches of white stand in contrast one could say that the children playing in this have painted very differently than in his usual style “The influence of Picasso’s manner is evident in the lines”? On one side of the painting, a young girl beats a drum. The lines and colour scheme composition and method of applying colour are all angle of the painting, completely different from moral technique, this work is of particular significance.

He has painted in 1957 ‘Self Portrait’ to show the influence of Souza, padmasee and Tayeb Mehta’s ‘Heads’ Husain has also independently painted a ‘head’ in the same fashion. Husain has narrowed his own forehead. The figure is enclosed in thick lines. Impost has been used freely with large areas in white, Husain has been dressed in bourgeois style. This is an excellent self portrait.

The ‘Cactus’, which is almost a monochrome, he shows a nude woman with her breasts prominent. Her baby is around with that of the horse as if they are a lovelorn couple in the throws of sexual position.

In the 1958 a painting an title, ‘Woman and Horse’ and in 1961. Horses these paintings are of the most powerful symbols in Husain’s works are brought together. The woman and the horse is compositely rendered as an explosive change of life in both
paintings. The figures in horse are painted in staccato lines and flat patches of colour. The woman in unquiet yellow, brown, and orange, where as the horses mostly in white and dark brown. The sky at back is a restless blue, a black sun rolls on the ground at the horses feet these are symbolic, as though she role wind. There seem to be enough ecstatic of sex in this paintings together all of life.

Blue Night shows a woman reading to a prayer book, this theme recurs frequently in our ancient sculptures. The lamb is the only blue part of blue Night. Husain created the exquisite ‘Fatima’. This also goes by the Title ‘Padmini’. He also shows in this figure a woman sat with a prayer book in her hand, here he has used a subtle shade of blue colour in the woman’s face and in clothes also. The locket around the woman’s neck brings to mind a similar decoration affected by the woman in ‘Blue Night’. ‘Infact, Fatima’ should have been titled ‘Blue Night’ Husain has made free use of the colour blue, it would certainly have been befitting to call the painting of this blue faced, and blue clothed woman. ‘Blue Night’ Husain has used night as the theme and showed that the woman is literally bathed in the blue colour. Being her is also seen a blue light. Husain often uses a lamp or lantern and Horse in.

M.F. Husain’s art originates from his tackle contact with life and brings to it an interpretive insight, recognizing the moment
when the subject reveals its truth. He establishes a relationship with the movement of life, and his art is not of the moment. The dynamic and elemental forces are held in tension within a captured movements. He selects images that hold essences and can be made to enact a persistent visual drama in the picture space.

The Indian parliament is adorned by a painter and artist whose genius has been acclaimed all over the world. Husain starting his carrier as a cinema poster painter. Husain blossomed into a unique and human artists, who has painted an astonishing range of subjects including the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Mother Teressa, Horses, Sunil Gavaskar, The doll’s wedding, Duldul Horse, Durga, Holi, Jawaharlal Nehru. Three monks etc. which are of Roman effects.

Early days of his carrier, deliberately pick up modern art of Indian history to create his own style in art and Indian contemporary painting form the classical period of Guptas, Mughals and modern art. The sensuous was started from the female body. Next, was the old period of Indian tradition, folk elements. M.F. Husain is acquiring a control over different mediums, from brush to pen and pen to charcoal and now paper cuts. His creativity lies in the coordination of hand and mind. Husain is creating one of the greatest painting of life. An eighteen feet land mural on canvas in oil entitled, 'Village life' is
descriptive of a village panorama, sweeping the Horizon with its situation of human life.

Husain gained International fame and reputation (as contemporary artist) with very success has added more colour and subjects to his personality and accelerated the pace office itinerant's foot loose and fanciful life. the life freedom as he obviously regards position.11

Husain creates human characters that confront his emotive ideas; to reach further into the terrain's of the human condition he introduces with them. a dialogue of metaphorical characters. Thus his art is studied with symbolic - images that are introduced naturally and in continual Juxta position with more explicit images. These symbols are not to be read in any literal sense. To be comprehended as he has painted. intuitively, with his own fluid logic, element reveals itself in relation to other happening within the content and seldom needs outside reference. The symbols are generally borrowed from traditional pictorial conventions and mythology : a bird in cage, a lamp, a cactus, a spider. an outspread palm, several times when they are not sufficiently transmuted or when he is more pictorial flourishes dilute the deeper intentions of the statement.

At the time when M.F. Husain started his career, there was a great dearth usual material concerning to modern western art
available to the Indian Artist. In 1947, under the influence of his new found artist friends, he took in all sorts of influence in the same breath. On the one hand Picasso, Nolde, and on the other, Indian Sculpture especially the smiling, big breasted lakis of the Kusana period.

Husain has always painted, along with his figures a variety of metaphors and symbols that are literary scared, eccentric, or merely decorative. The sources of these are varied: the bird in cage, the lamp, the sun and the moon are literary images as frequent in Sanskrit as in urdu verse. And other important experiment had done was to give to his viewer every thing that helps communicate, epics forms, classical symbols mythology and characters from the puranic lore in his paintings. Husain even writes on the canvas He is obsessed about the viewer grasping the theme about being able to reach Indians at large thinking for the social life.

Husain’s interest in cinema has been with him since childhood. He says “I wanted to be a film-maker. In Indor my father used to let me go only twice a year for films but I was so crazy about cinema, I joined an evening class for painting only because I could go to the cinema. Even in those days I used to see the structure of the images. I was a great fan of Cohn ford and Frank Capra.”

To begin his adventurous foray as a poster painter he took
up a steady job with a firm designed and manufactured children’s nursery furniture. He did this job for many years, until 1947, and earned enough money for his family and paintings.

Husain has painted this in a completely different manner as boldly, fearlessly. This is truly modern art. Judges were of the Bombay Art Society and why they have not awarded Husain with a gold medal remains a mystery. Yet it is true, his painting ‘Man’ would shock the traditionalists. Man is an ambitious work in his early days, which was displayed at the annual exhibition of the Bombay Art Society and was expected to win the gold medal. That did not happen and after that Husain never entered his paintings in that exhibition. The main figure in this painting is a man squatting on the floor. Surrounding him is a madely of human and animal figures. Some of the figures look like dolls one is upside down and stand behind the hump of a jet black bullock. The configuration of the various figures is indeed intriguing”.

There we see that many patched resembling copper plates he has painted this in a completely different manner. It is true that ‘Man’ would shock the traditionalists.

Peerbhoy says, “This is an analytical work, bringing to the surface the psychosis which has torn the man from his happily home and hurled him into a conflict. Here colours express a new emotion, with dark colours emphasizing the evil in the nature of man colour and symbols are the content of the conflict man
dreams of destroying before creating"\textsuperscript{14}

The figures in the ‘Holi’ painting in 1951 are arranged in the Indian tradition theme seems conventional. The colours however, evoke the joyous spirit of Holi festival.

Along with the Ramayana and Mahabharata series, and Hanuman, he also painted Ganesh Darwaza. Husain has drawn a Ganapati with a nymph like figure on his lap showing lord Ganesha is accompanied by Riddhi and Siddhi, two goddesses draped in traditional nine yard series, the participation’s around it are so realistic that one can almost see a warrior on horseback with his sword in hand emerging from this Ganesha Darwaza.

Herwitz says: “He takes pride in the fact that when his epic series were taken out to the villages and exhibited on site, reaction was immediate and comprehending. Husain’s aim of recovering India’s roots is also the aim of reaching and acknowledging a popular Indian audience by speaking directly with the common stock of symbols and images. Husain loves art that exists right out in the open in the context of daily life. This has led him to become involved in producing a monumental stream of murals, tapestries and, recently, architectural works. These enter the unbroken tradition of public-on site art in India. Art that exists in temples, churches, houses, and on the streets in the form of saris, Jewels, religious objects, bullock carts and animal
decoration as well as in sculpture, painting, architecture, music and dance. His toys, furniture, tapestries, rugs, and paintings on perspex and murals are made to exist in the world at large."

Husain really surprised everyone when he began painting as abstract by no stretch of imagination who can be considered an abstract painter of course, it is his privilege as to what he chooses to paint. He started on a completely different kind of painting which caught his fancy at that moment. This creation of Husain was inevitable. He answered his inner yearning and he proclaimed his Indianness. Husain who was steeped in the Muslim tradition and could respond to the Ramayana- Mahabharata as well. Husain, who was raised and enriched with ancient tradition, derived unique dynamism from the ethnic narrative tradition.


REFERENCE


