Chapter -I
Madhubani Painting: Traditional Form
Introduction

The Indian plastic and pictorial arts, of unimaginable antiquity, have over the millennia and up till the present day, evinced a continuity that had survived every historical, socio-economic and political development to produce an art that is specifically Indian. In this process, the historic and characteristic features of folk art will be seen to have played a singularly important role. Its origins go back to the art of primitive society, while its persistence is attested by what is a by no means rare manifestation, namely the survival of the Indian Tribal Communities which have succeeded in preserving their respective cultural identities in the very heart of the developed Hindu Community of today. And on the subcontinent level, this Tribal Art or Traditional Art, as it is sometime known, bears the stamp of an achievement that is not only ancient and indigenous, but also notably creative.

In using the term Indian Folk Art, we take as our point of departure the earliest period of Indian History, a period in which art was the art of people and in which, from the point of view of social structure, all individuals and groups of the population were able to entitled to engage in crafts and to employ the functional and aesthetic objects thus produced. It was not until the peasant village art, when the hitherto nomadic group of the Tribal population had begun to settle that the process known as the division of labour set in, a process which, in Urban Harappa Art, was to become even more marked and to give birth to the specialized crafts.

In India such historical processes are not peculiar to the past, nor are they by any means unique, for they constantly recur so that even today various stages of which might be called suspended historical development continue to exist alongside one another. The contemporary tribal artist may produce works, which diverge widely from those of his counterpart in the villages. Different social factors are involved here can be glanced from its reflection in works of high art – architecture sculpture and painting – or from the sparse allusions to the subject found in early writings (Harmon, 1961).
Indian Arts and Crafts at a Glance:

The cultural history of India designated that, the country India itself is a storehouse of art forms from paintings that flourished from earlier periods, to its sensitive tradition of crafts. Its living traditions are a testimony to numerous art styles. From paintings in caves, temples to even roofs and courtyards of homes, Indians have in the arts, sought a spiritual contentment. Some art forms are homage to Gods, and are laced with humility. Artists believed that since art served a specific purpose of addressing the divine, there was no need to add their signatures to the artworks.

Indian arts and handicrafts have, since time immemorial, captivated the imagination of people globally. Every state in India boasts of an exclusivity and specialty, depending upon its historical influences, traditional skills, and raw materials. India is world renowned for its dexterity in paintings, exquisite embroidery, and beautiful sculptures in stone, metal, wood. Temple carvings and elegantly designed jewellery.

Paintings appeared on pots found in the Indus Valley Civilization as early as the 3rd century B.C. The cave paintings of Ajanta and Ellora date back to the 1st to 5th century A.D. These, including the wall paintings on Brahadeeswara temple in Thanjavur from 1st century A.D. and the Kalamkari art forms in the Vidharba temple in Lepakshi, portray advanced techniques and refinement of creative styles.

Places where murals from ancient periods have survived include the caves of Ajanta, Bagh, Bi, Ellora, Kailasanatha Temple, Talagirisvara Temple, Brahadiswara Temple and the Virupasaka Temple. Best known are the Ajanta Caves carved out of volcanic rock in the Deccan Plateau. The cave paintings were done by artists employed by Buddhist monks turned into stonewalls and then into picture books of Buddha's life and teachings. The artists, in doing so, portrayed costumes, ornaments and styles of the court life of the times. Close to the ancient trade routes, the caves attracted traders and pilgrims through whom the art style traveled to China and Japan.
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Paintings

The paintings of India have many dimensions to them. Most of the paintings are intricate with clarity in minute detail. Different techniques are used to produce the most exquisite designs and works. The colours used are vibrant and the themes range from royal portraits and events to illustrations of innumerable Gods and Goddesses. The painting techniques are exciting and abundant.

The Glass Painting technique dates back to the courts of 16th century Maharajas of Tanjore. Tanjavur or modern Tanjore in Tamil Nadu is famous for a special style of decorating the paintings which were done both on glass and board, a piece of ply covered with cloth, which is then treated with lime. The required images are outlined. Following this, semi-precious stones, beaten gold leaf and gild metal are stuck on the image with a mixture of sawdust and glue. The skill of the craftsman lies in balancing the effect of the stones. Krishna in various poses has been the main theme.

The Kalamkari technique of painting involves drawing outlines with burnt tamarind twigs dipped in molasses and iron filings. Vegetable dyes of deep shades are used to create epic scenes. With repeated subdued colouring processes, a sober but fine effect is achieved. The finished product depicts mythological themes with larger than life figures. The enormous scope of expression ascertains that no two panels are alike.

The Pata Chitra painters are attached to the family of the Jagannath Temple of Puri. In this tradition, the cloth, cotton or tussar, is coated with a mixture of chalk, tamarind seed and gum giving the surface a leathery finish. These are also drawn on palm leaves. 'Scroll' painting or parchment, is perhaps one of the oldest traditions in painting. In this technique, a pictorial account of the deities and miracles are painted. The lines are distinct and vibrant colours are used. It is also practiced by a select group of families at Warangal. So minute are the details, that they can often be missed by the naked eye.
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**Phad painting** is done by artists belonging to a family of painters in Bhilwara in Rajasthan. The themes usually depict historic tales of Rajput chieftains, painted on long cloth lengths. The outlines of the paintings are first drawn in block and later filled with colours.

**Ivory painting** involves highly delicate brushwork using the colours from crushed stone. The ivory is first treated and smoothened. Outlines of the image, usually of a *Mughal* emperor, are drawn and delicately filled with colour. Today, however there is a ban on ivory and camel bones are used instead.

**Thanka paintings** from Leh in Ladakh revolve around the Buddha and ritual worship. Forms of dragons dominate. *Thankas*, painted on silk, are popular for their brilliant colour display as wall hangings.

**Miniature paintings** used vegetable dyes and derivatives from nature. While the art exists today, it is not as refined and most of it finds itself on roadsides where tourists pick it up. It existed in different forms in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Buddhist deities, Jain forms, tales from the Ramayana and Mahabharata dominate. The paintings are replete with motifs of flora and fauna in bold and striking colours, with human figures in brilliantly designed turbans and outfits.

**The Cave Paintings**, artists applied mud plaster in two coats on the rocks. The first coat was used to fill in the pores of the rough rocks, followed by a coat of lime plaster. The painting was done in stages. The outline was made in red ochre and then filled in with brown, deep red or black. The pigments for the paints were from local volcanic rocks with the exception of lamp black. Because animal and vegetable glues were used, the paintings were attacked by insects, and suffered from blistering and flaking.

In the later paintings where the figures stand out boldly, deep colour washes were used. Patches of light colours highlighted facial expressions and various methods were used to create an illusion of depth.
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**Ajanta Paintings** a high degree of craftsmanship incorporating all the rules lay down by ancient Indian treatises on paintings and aesthetics are evident here. One cannot but notice the fluid yet firm lines, long sweeping brush strokes outlining graceful contours, subtle gradation of the same colour, highlighted nose, eyelids and lips that make the figures transpire from the flat wall surface. Animals, birds, trees, flowers, architectures are painted in their true form of beauty. Human emotions and characters are depicted with great understanding and skill.

Attenuated postures, supple limbs, artistic features, a great variety of hair styles and styles of ornaments and jewellery painted in the Ajanta caves indicate the skill of its artisans. In a mural in Cave 10, fifty elephants are painted in different poses. The bulky forms are portrayed in all perspective views, with erect tails and raised trunks, showing them sensing danger.

**Designs on Floors:** *Rangoli*, also known as *Alpana* and *Kolam*, is the art of decorating floors and walls of houses using the powder of white stone, lime or rice flour, with bare fingers in place of a brush. Most Rangoli designs are motifs of plants and animals, though there are geometrical designs as well. Each state has its own styles of painting. On special occasions, it is painted in every home, with or without formal training. Women compete with each other to draw a new design for every occasion. Rangoli is used as a tool for propitiating the Gods.

**Madhubani Paintings:** A folk art, Madhubani paintings are done by women, living near the market town of Madhubani in Bihar. The representational but stylized and symbolic Madhubani tradition incorporates the great life-cycle rite of marriage. It portrays some of the major Gods and Goddesses of the Hindu pantheon and domesticated and wild animals. The figures from nature and mythology have been painted through centuries on household walls to mark seasonal festivals of the religious year and for special events such as marriages.

The women came to be acknowledged as "artists" only in the last three decades. It was a major drought in 1966-68 that brought the region into world recognition, resulting in the All-India Handicrafts Board taking notice. It then started
encouraging the women artists to produce their traditional paintings on handmade paper for commercial sale. Even now, most of the work remains anonymous as some of them being illiterate remain reluctant to consider themselves individual producers of "works of art".

Commercialization of the folk art has been a mixed blessing. It has generated a multilevel distribution system. It has also allowed people around the world to discover a style of art with a long heritage linked to the lives of women, one that has preserved its authenticity. And, one that has created a new source of gainful employment for rural Indian women. The continuing market in this art throughout the world is a tribute to the resourcefulness of the women of Madhubani who have successfully transferred their techniques of bhitti chitra or wall-painting to the medium of paper and have resisted the temptation to adapt their traditional designs too freely in pursuit of unpredictable public tastes.

Art of Body Painting: Painting the body in stylized designs with henna paste is an ancient practice followed in India during festive and special occasions like marriages. Henna (Mehendi in the north) or Maruthani as it is known in Tamil Nadu, is derived from the leaves of the henna plant. The leaves are ground into a thick paste, and applied in geometric designs on the palms and soles of the feet and left to dry. Once washed off, a red pigmentation is left behind on the applied area. Dancers on their feet also use this style of decoration. Henna is a proven coolant for the body and is now used for medicinal purposes the world over and also as a hair dyes.

Shekhawati - India's Open Air Art Gallery: Shekhawati in North East Rajasthan that once fell on the Spice route of merchants is an open-air treasure. Its numerous painted homes linings the streets of small towns make the region the largest open-air art gallery in the world.

The architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries consists of an exaggerated display of the wealth of the merchants of the region (Marwaris). This region is special, as it has produced the maximum number of millionaires and billionaires in India. Shekhawati is named after its ruler Rao Shekha of the 15th century. Strategically
placed on the route between the ports of Gujarat and northern India, the region became very prosperous by imposing levies on the caravans of traders passing through. When the region's fortunes fell after the development of new ports like Mumbai and Kolkata, the merchants migrated in masse.

The paintings are to be found everywhere in profusion, on walls, balconies, ceilings, arches and pillars, on the dome of the cenotaphs (cremation grounds) and even on the rim or the wells.

The *havelis* (homes with courtyards) are huge. The piece de resistance is the fine depiction of various designs and characters in the form or frescoes covering all walls and ceilings. Blue and maroon are prominent colours, though vivid gold are also used. Illustrations range from floral to mythology to even scientific inventions. The paintings convey that the prosperous merchants must have been very impressed by their overseas travels as there are several paintings of English ladies, motorcars, gramophones and even the Wright brothers!

Prominent towns of the region are Nawalgarh, Mandawa, Mahansar, Mukundgarh, Lachhmangarh, Singhana, Parsrampura, Khetri, Baggar and Jhunjhunu.

**Contemporary Painting:** The blossoming of contemporary art in India has become evident to the international art community only recently. As artists in India have adapted traditional imagery and ideas to modern artistic practice, the nation has begun to contribute to the multiplicity of variations on modernism reflective of non-western cultures. Artists working with oil acrylic are in demand in India. Their works are not intended to serve any functional purpose, but as in modern Western canvases, are modes of self-expression. Contemporary art from India presents two distinct yet coexisting cultures that create art-folk and tribal and the other, urban and modern.

Maqbool Fida Husain is one of the best-known artists in the subcontinent. The most influential painter since the 1950s, his subject matter is pointedly local and indigenous. While some of his work is neo-cubistic, he has used the spectrum of Indian myths and folklore to striking effects.
Other known artists include Satish Gujaral, whose work draws inspiration from a painful and emotionally surcharged past. When the true chronicle of contemporary Indian art will be written, Tyeb Mehta will be seen as one of its benefactors. In F. N. Souza's veins seems to run a trace of the determined Vasco da Gama blood. He also seems to have been baptized in the church of the bull painting Spanish master. And if we call this artistic fun, the painter has had plenty of it. Master painter Krishen Khanna has done very different orders of work throughout the years, right from the Japanese Sumie to Che Guvera, and now there is the search into his own roots of much distinction.

Indian Crafts Traditions

A creator becomes one with the Supreme Being when involved in giving shape to his art form. He who is able to see things with a perceptive eye and is able to equate the form to matter, space and energy creates. This tradition has been established in India from 3,000 B.C. Nature's the artisans have adapted creations, be it in making pots, plates, nutcrackers hairpins, combs or utensils.

Indian handicrafts have made a name for themselves the world over. Ancient skills have been perfected by craftsmen who have learnt the trade from their fathers, as did their fathers before them. This tradition continues over the centuries, safeguarding the wide and varied artistic wealth of India.

Today, this tradition unfolds itself in an overwhelming variety of products, combining aesthetic appeal with utilitarian value. To satisfy modern tastes and meet international demand, design institutes have been giving a new look to these traditional crafts. These beautiful items are like a breath of fresh air in an age of mechanization and mass production. The high caliber of skills exhibited in creating the products has stood the test of time. What's more, craftsmen have shown great ingenuity and flexibility in adapting to the requirements of the modern age.
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**Metal Work**

The use of metals symbolized man’s understanding of his mortality and his innate desire to leave for posterity, his creations, which would withstand the vagaries of time. Deities were made both as solid casting and hollow casting, and some ancient books, the *Shastaras*, laid down proportions to enable the artisans to create exquisite figures in relation to human eyes' perception. The deities were adorned with glittering jewels and even the prayer items used in temples and households were beautifully designed and crafted. Everywhere in India, one finds idols and statues in temples and on the streets. For a people so given to idol worship, it was natural to develop sculpting skills of the highest order. Brass work from the princely state of Jaipur, the black stylized vases and urns from Pembarthi and polished brass mirrors of Aranmula have today evolved into design statements. Metal and bronze sculptures of South India continue in an unbroken lineage from the *Chola* period dating back to a thousand years.

In all villages and towns, blacksmiths are intrinsic to the milieu, producing cooking utensils and stoves in addition to kitchen accessories including spatulas, knives and hammers. The spectrum of metal smiths in India includes the simple blacksmiths serving the needs of agricultural communities to the sophisticated 'kammalar' community of metal smiths who claim descent from *Vishwakarma*.

The Buddhist blacksmith community of Ladakh carries out the most interesting brass work, making kitchen stoves, 'thap chabrik' with decorative brass Buddhist motifs. Skilled blacksmiths also make sophisticated locks with up to twelve levers with beautifully ornamented keys. Locks are a specialty of Ajmer, Aligarh and Meerut.

Quality work in silver, copper and brass is done in Chilling. Ladakh, where the 12th century-inspired copper ladles and ornate teakettles are crafted. Copper vessels are also produced in the Kashmir Valley. Copper samovars, ornamental glasses and water Jugs are not merely utilitarian but indicate a dedication to beauty. Brass, first produced in India by fusing zinc with copper, over two
thousand years ago, gets its expression in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, and the largest centre for hand engraved brass.

Engraving, the most refined of all processes, has various styles known as *Japani, mehrani, chikan* and *bidri*. Lacquer colours in deep red, yellow, black and blue are filled in the engraving. Places, bowls, ashtrays, of polished brass, make excellent decorative metal ware.

Gujarat has a wide range of brass objects made by the 'kansara' community. Storage chests made by the *kathi* community in Saurashtra has diverse uses. The large 'dhablo' or 'katordan', a round casket with three stout legs and a bowl-shaped upper portion topped with a smaller box and a large brass ring on the top serves as a trousseau chest, storage pot for grain, and in olden times, for storing jewels. The entire casket tied by a strong rope passed through the rings would be lowered in a well during battles or skirmishes to protect the jewellery. Utility items such as nutcrackers, with flower motifs and animal figures, kohl containers, foot scrubbers with bells, are a credit to the skill of the metal smiths.

Bell metal, an alloy of copper and tin is used extensively in Kerala to cast cooking vessels. In addition, beautiful lamps made for temples are over five feet high with circular recesses to hold the oil for lighting.

The elegant *bidri* work of Bidar and Hyderabad has brass inlaid upon an alloy or silver and copper and blackened by dipping the object in a copper sulphate solution. This craft was brought into India from Iraq 900 years ago and continues to be practiced. The adaptable folk idiom has produced a plethora of objects for hunting.

The bronzes of India defy age, looking as fresh today as they would have coming out or the sculptor's mould many centuries ago. Indian bronzes speak volumes about the expertise of an art form that was born very long ago and still holds the strings of continuity in the story of Indian tradition.
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The earliest mention or bronze is found in the epic called the *Matsya Purana*. The findings in the ruins of *Mohenjodaro* and the discovery of the figure of the dancing girl showed that sculpture along with the use of metal alloys was well known to people of that period.

**Sculpture the Essence of Art**

The ancient treatise on sculpture, the *Silpashastra* tells us a story that captures quintessence or the art. There once lived a devout king called *Vajra*. One day he requested sage *Markandeya* to teach him the art of iconography. The sage asked him a few questions before handing him the first lump of metal. "Do you know how to paint?" asked the sage. The king did not, but requested that he be taught it that was a pre-requisite to learning sculpture. "But for that you need to know how to dance," insisted the sage. To learn dancing, in turn the king was required to have a rudimentary knowledge of instrumental music, which needed a foundation in vocal music. So the king had to begin with the octaves to be able to pour his sensibilities into any other material and make a form out of it. Little wonder then, that the beauty of Indian bronzes lies in their efficient capturing of all these artistic forms within the figures created.

There is a unified aspect of culture evident when one sees the fluidity of movement in the bronze figures. With *Shiva* (one of the Gods of Hindu Trinity) symbolizing the cosmic forces of nature, dance becomes the epitome of life's rhythmic motion. The *sthapathi* or craftsman seeks to capture this motion in bronze. The evolved technique and the material used contribute to the magnificence of the end product.

While bronze iconography is age-old, it was only around the 10th century A.D. that there was a large-scale revival of this art form. At this time, there was a strong religious fervor in the southern states following the waning of the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. During the *Chola* reign the presiding deity was constructed in granite. But there was a need for more idols that could be carried around the village or town on festive occasions. Granite was too heavy for this
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Purpose and the alloy of five metals symbolizing the five elements. The metals were copper, brass and lead with a little bit of gold and silver.

Generally, deities are made from bronze. The Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati, Ganesha (the elephant faced one) and Lord Rama (the incarnation of Vishnu) being favorites ones. After the Cholas, the degree or finesse faded away from this art and newer styles did evolve.

Jewellery Styles

From ancient times, jewellery in India has not been mere ornamental or decorative items, but has gained the status of providing proof of various stage of a person's life. For instance, piercing a child's ear signifies its entry into the world, the man wearing the sacred gold thread from left to right shoulder, signifies his entry into educational age, while the tali (Mangalsutra) for women indicates they are married. Gold, silver, copper and bronze are the metals that have been used traditionally for making jewels which were also inlaid with precious gems and beads, that acted as talisman for protection from various evils.

Filigree work has patterns of flowers, butterflies, birds and geometrical shapes made with silver wires of varying thickness creating a delicate lace-like appearance. Orissa and Andhra Pradesh specialize in this style.

Meenakari and Kundan are styles from Jaipur and Delhi influenced by the Mughals. The jewellery can be worn on both sides. The temple jewellery of Nagercoil has traditional gold ornaments studded with red and green semiprecious stones. In Assam, soft 24 carat gold is fashioned into earrings and necklaces modeled on local flora and fauna, for instance, earnings resembling orchids.

In Nagaland, gold is used to craft imitations of the human head and long funnel shaped beads are used in combination with shells, animal claws and teeth and
precious and semiprecious stones. The designs in solid gold jewellery of Tamil Nadu and Kerala are inspired by nature.

Silversmiths of Himachal Pradesh craft large delicate and intricate ornaments. Headdresses called *chak*, long earrings and large nose-rings with papal Seat or bird motifs are the specialties of the region. In Ladakh, silver charm boxes and headdresses called *perak* with rows of turquoise, cornelian, coral and agate stitched onto it, is a common sight.

**Carpets and Textiles of India**

Traveling through India can be a sartorial adventure. Each region has an abundance of traditional outfits. The colours and the weaves are unique in each state and the ornamentation or printing, mirrors the images of the region. The peacock motifs of Lucknow, the *chinar* leaf of Kashmir, the royal scenes of *Kanchipuram* and the checks and stripes or Maharashtra, all add to make a collage rich and vibrant in colour, design and fabric.

Traditional Indian textiles have romantic origins that date back several centuries. References to weaving proliferate right from the Vedas. With the birth of weaving, associated accessories like needle work and embroidery followed. The artisans from each region formed their own styles, drawing inspiration from nature.

No other land envoys such a profusion of creative energies for the production of textiles. Styles of weaving and the choice of textiles are dependent on the topography of the region and the influences of the various cultures prevalent.

India's legendary textiles have remained unchanged in their timelessness. Carpets, silks and cottons were tabled export treasures when India was a maritime superpower in ancient times. Plush silk carpets, honed under *Mughal* design sensibilities, have graced many royal homes. Fine knotted cotton durries as well as sturdy rugs and Islamic prayer rugs or *kilims* from Rajasthan are woven even today.
Pile carpets were probably introduced into India from Iran. During the Mughal period, this craft flourished in Agra, Delhi, Lahore and Kashmir developed its carpet industry in the 15th century AD. Here carpet making closely follows the shawl-weaving tradition with designs based on Persian and Central Asian styles.

The important centres of carpet weaving in India are Srinagar in Kashmir, Jaipur in Rajasthan, Amritsar in Punjab, Mirzapur and Agra in Uttar Pradesh and Warangal and Elluru in Andhra Pradesh. Amritsar, a late entrant, developed its industry only at the start of the 19th century. It has a tradition of weaving fine quality rugs with geometrical patterns called Mouri. Jaipur, Mirzapur and Bhadoi produce quality carpets, which vary from 80 knots to 120 knots per square inch. In Andhra Pradesh, geometrical-patterned carpets of quality of around 30 to 60 knots per inch are mostly meant for export.

A variety of floor coverings are used in Indian homes. The *durree* is a cotton-woven thick fabric meant for spreading on the floor. Weaving of a *durree* is a common sight in most Indian villages. The flat woven rugs can be found all over India. Some areas only produce cotton durries, but those in Jodhpur, Rajasthan include cotton, wool and silk. The geometric designs are produced by tapestry technique, which is a slow process using separate bobbins or butterflies for each colour across the width interlocking with the adjacent coloured yarn. The weavers sit cross-legged on the side of the loom, sometimes with a weaver on each side.

In the states of Punjab and Haryana, the *Jat* women weave *durrees* for their personal use. Jaisalmer and Barmer in Rajasthan produce woolen *durrees*. Uttar Pradesh is an important commercial weaving centre for *durrees*. Other centres for weaving include Navalgund in Karnataka and Salem in Tamil Nadu. The Navalgund *durrees* are also known as *Jamkhans*. Richly patterned in rust, yellow, green and black, they depict stylized parrots and peacocks. The Salem *durrees*, woven in silk and cotton are prepared in brilliant colours with a central pattern of lotus and borders with flowing floral patterns. Warangal near Hyderabad is known for the *Bandha* or *Ikkat durrees*. Kashmir is known for
Namdas, Hook rugs and Gabbas. Namdas are made of felted wool and cotton and are embroidered with woolen chain stitches. The hook rug is made with chain stitch embroidery worked with a hook called ahri. A thick jute cloth is used and then it is embroidered fully so that the base material is not visible. The Gabba is a kind of an applique work done on worn out woolen blankets.

Sarees and Fabrics: Cottons are still woven in a myriad of colours and block-printed in animal and floral motifs in every little alleyway of India. Jewel toned sarees from the southern temple town of Kanchipuram are an anachronism in the nifty black-dress culture that's swept all global capitals. Bengal offers Baluchari silk sarees and crisp cotton ones. The bridal brocade sarees, sometimes embedded with semi-precious stones and sparkling gold threaded beads from Varanasi transform well into the modern apparel sensibility as stoles and scarves. Gold Muga silks from Assam are terrific yardage for dresses, as are the vibrant raw silks from Mysore.

Illkal sarees from Karnataka and the Narayanpet textiles from Andhra Pradesh are also much sought-after. Gadwal and Wanaparti produce materials of thick cotton, mostly in checks with a contrasting silk border. Nander is famous for its fine quality cottons sarees richly worked in sold thread with silk border. Venkatagiri manufactures sarees of the Jamdani technique with stylized motifs woven in half cotton and half gold threads. Bandhani materials are made using resist-dyeing techniques popularly called Tie and Dye (internationally this technique is known by its Malay-Indonesian name 'Plangi'). These patterns are commonly seen on long scarves, sarees, and turbans. The prosperous state of Gujarat and the princely land of Rajasthan have long been famous for the cultivation of cotton and the use of bright colours obtained through the dyeing process.

The Coromandel Coast of India was historically the source of some of the most beautifully coloured and delicately worked cotton fabrics. Here mordents, resists and brushes or pens were traditionally applied and used to produce exquisite figurative and floral designs. This Kalamkari cloth of southeast India had been
known as "pintado" by the Portuguese and "Chintz" by the English. Around the mid nineteenth century, printing blocks were introduced and from then on very little freehand kalam (pen) drawing was done. Baluchari materials essentially have a silk base with silk brocaded designs. In spite of a rich composition, the Baluchar bootidars avoid strong contrasts. The Baluchari sarees have large floral motifs interspersed with flowering shrubs. Traditionally, the Muslim community was known to produce Baluchars with figured patterns depicting court scenes, rider on a horse, women smoking hookahs and much more. These textiles were developed mainly in Murshidabad in West Bengal. Brocades or the kinkhabs have a long history dating back to several centuries. Varanasi or Benaras is the undisputed centre of India's zari-figured silk weaving (brocade) industry. Other well-known brocades are Baftas, Potthans, Kimkhab, Amrus and Tanchois. Kanchipuram—the silk brocade sarees of South India are considered very auspicious and are worn on ceremonial occasions. Today, brocades have a very strong mass market. Due to the glitter and beauty of this textile, its appeal is increasing not only in the field of garments but also in accessories like purses, belts, caps, shoes and cushions.

Ikkat is a type of weaving where the warp, weft or both are tie-dyed before weaving to create designs on the finished fabric. Ikkat fabrics of Gujarat, which involve a sequential binding of sections of yarns, are well known. Patola, which is also called double Ikkat, comes from Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Gujarat. Ikkat textiles of India have the distinction of being among the most highly priced textiles in the world. Worn during marriages, they are also used as coverings for royal elephants and horses or as hangings in temples and for the adornment of deities. The designs that predominate in Patola textiles are geometric, floral and figurative motifs. Bright colours like green, yellow, red and black are commonly used. A saree length takes two men seven months to complete.

Orissa's style of Ikkat has a long tradition dating back to the 12th century. Weavers migrated from the Patan area in Orissa, took the basic techniques which then developed over time to a unique style of flowing designs. The resist
tying is done finely on two-thread units giving greater detail and fine curves. These units are tied freehand without marking out the threads beforehand.

Andhra Pradesh has some of the busiest hand weaving villages centered around co-operative producing thousands of meters of \textit{Ikkat} each month. They specialize in warp \textit{Ikkat} particularly suitable for furnishing fabrics made from cotton. Sarees are also produced, with a never-ending demand, as the average middle class woman owns at least 100 sarees.

\textit{Jamdanis} or the figured muslins are amongst the most exclusive of Dacca muslins. These muslins had lyrical names like \textit{Shabnam} (evening dew), \textit{Malmal Khas} (muslin reserved for kings) and \textit{Abrawan} (flowing water). The base fabric for \textit{Jamdanis} is unbleached cotton yarn and the design is woven using bleached cotton yarns so that a light-and-dark effect is created.

From the south comes the Temple Saree, the \textit{Kanjeevaram}, from the town of \textit{Kanchipuram}. The \textit{Kanjeevaram} saree was first woven around 400 years ago and since then this vibrantly coloured saree has become one of India's most popular materials. It is woven mainly in contrasting colours with silk or gold threads used as borders or motifs. The colours are normally bright deep colours, and the silk is among the finest in India.

\textit{Gharchola} sarees carry tied and dyed patterns. These sarees are traditionally bought for wedding and they carry a gold thread for the checks with small golden motifs like a peacock or a lotus in the centre. The final red colour of the \textit{Gharchola} saree is traditionally dyed in Jamnagar because of the special quality of the water there. Rajkot in \textit{Saurashtra} is another important centre for the sarees.

\textit{Katwa} and \textit{sujini} and \textit{kantha} are embroideries that use a running stitch and some satin stitch to turn out a magical array of exquisite quilts, duvets and running yardage. Embroidered textiles from the desert dunes of Rajasthan and Gujarat shimmer with colour in a bid to make up for the bleak landscape. Mirrors glint, set in satiny colour-tilled embroideries that adorn houses as talismans as
well as making regular appearances as blouses, huge rich tapestries and lehengas (skirts). Each handcrafted piece is unique and amazingly well thought out. Chikan, embroidery from Lucknow that looks like lace, has recently been revived and looks beautiful on pastel coloured sarees in summer.

India's great tradition of vegetable dyeing is unequalled anywhere in the world. However, the European development or synthetic dyes in the mid 19th century ended the export market for colourful textiles as well as the natural dyes. The technical skills of vegetable dyeing were lost to all but a minority of textile craftsmen. However, today there is renewed interest in natural dyeing due to bans being imposed by Governments, because of health risks from numerous synthetic dyes developed.

Woodwork

The tradition of woodcarving has existed in India from ancient times. The early wood-carved temples bear witness to the craft. Wood-carved temples exist till date in Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. In India, each region has developed its own style of carving influenced by local traditions and wood varieties. Folk forms in woodwork include toys, puppets and religious objects and carvings. North India has a tradition of carved wooden doors with intricate designs, brass inlay and trellis work for the windows. Assam, with extensive forests, has a rich tradition of woodwork. Most places of worship include large carvings of mythical figures like halt-man, Garuda, Hanuman and lion. In West Bengal, clay houses have large wooden pillars and beams with intricate carvings.

In Kashmir, houses are lined with wood, with ceilings in geometrical patterns and lattice-worked windows made up of pieces of wood locally known as Pinjara. The State also produces items like furniture, screens, boxes and bowls, mostly prepared from walnut wood, which is found in abundance. Decorative wood panels on ceilings and pillars are called Khatamband.
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Ahmedabad in Gujarat is witness to some of the finest ornamental carvings of balconies in old homes. Sankheda is an important centre for lacquered furniture. The surface is painted with designs on a lacquered background. This is used to give a silver-like effect. Bedposts and cradles and toys for children are also made here. Surat has a tradition of marquetry work, which is also called Sadeli.

The Tanjore dolls of Tamil Nadu, made of wood, form a part of the rituals in temples that also have carved wooden pillars. In Andhra Pradesh, Tirupathi’s red dolls are sold at the temple complex.

Kerala has one of the richest traditions in woodcarving. Most traditional homes have a carved family temple. Kerala wood-carvers also work wonders on sandalwood and rosewood. In Punjab, old homes have carved doors and windows. Woodcarving and inlays are now practiced in Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar specializes in lacquer-turned furniture. In Uttar Pradesh, Saharanpur is an important centre in woodcarving. Screens and room-dividers with carved patterns and ivory-inlays with minute details are produced here.

Manipur is an important centre for Tarkashi, metal thread work, done in furniture. Kamaraka specializes in sandalwood carving. Large boxes covered with mythological scenes are an important product of Mysore, Kumta and Sagar. In South Kanada, life-size wood carving of Buddha figures is done. Mysore has an intricate form of ivory-inlay on wood that can be seen on the ceilings and doors of the Mysore Palace.

In Orissa, the main deity of the famed Puri temple, Lord Jagannath is reproduced in wood. A number of wooden masks are also made for the traditional Sahi Jatra. Nagaland has a tradition of manufacturing statues as well as commemorative pillars in wood.

Stone Carving

The art of stone carving developed in India, a little later than woodcarving. From ornate inlay with onyx black marble to the finely latticed soapstone, the appeal of
the stone has been eternal. Both Hindu and Muslim rulers of India patronized this art. The craft in Uttar Pradesh reached artistic heights of excellence during the Mughal period when the Taj Mahal was created.

The craftsman's mastery over stone is best discovered in the architecture and sculptures found in *Khajuraho* temples. The intricate carvings found at Sanchi are amongst the finest found anywhere in the world. Bodh Gaya, a pilgrim site for the Buddhists also has an ancient tradition of stone carving.

Nothing epitomizes best the ethos of Varanasi and Agra than their stone carvings. From intricate architectural masterpieces, perfectly chiseled stoneware to tabletops with inlay work, every item is a piece of exclusive artwork. For centuries, Mathura and Varanasi remained at the centre stage of development.

In the 3rd century B.C. the imperial court of Ashoka provided a great boost to the art of stone carving. The *stupas* and cave temples of this period are perhaps the earliest surviving stone structures. The red sandstone of *Chunar* has been lavishly used in the stone sculptures, which were found in excavations of Mathura and Agra areas dating back to the *Mauryan* era.

Ancient carvers were guided by the *Shilpa Shastra*, which clearly laid the rules for them. The main deity was carved by specialists who were knowledgeable in the properties of different stones, their gram, as well as their proportion needed for the carving.

Carving the deity was considered an act of worship and a sacred ritual. Stone temples are built even today and the *Sthapathis* of Tamil Nadu as well as the *Somapuras* of Gujarat and Rajasthan are in good demand throughout the country.

Agra is famous for its marble stone works. Many pieces like lattice windows, mirror frames, carved brackets, canopies, pendants and filigree works are carved here. The craftsmen are known for their inlay works. Rajasthan maintains a rich tradition of stone carving even in the common domestic buildings.
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Doorframes are commonly built of red Stones. Windows have stone trellis works and even the supporting frame for the loom is made of carved stones. Jaipur is one of the most important centres where a large community of stone carvers carves deities in marble.

In Orissa, soft stones are used for carving small souvenir items, meant for sale to the tourists. Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu has hard granite stone carvings. There is also a school for training the Sthapathis according to the rules of the Shilpa Shastras. In Karnataka, Devanahalli a village near Mysore produces carved figures in relief on black stone. The figures appear to have movement and strength in their postures. Durgi, in Andhra Pradesh is another stone carving centre where large nandis, bulls, and local deity images are carved.

Ivory carving is one of the most ancient crafts of India. Ivory is a precious material and a difficult one to carve. The important centres for ivory carving were Trivandrum in Kerala, Mysore and Bangalore in Karnataka, Delhi, Jaipur and Jodhpur in Rajasthan, Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Amritsar in Punjab, Behrampore in West Bengal and Ganjam and Puri in Orissa. Of late this craft is dying as the Indian Government has banned elephant poaching and ivory-work. Hence the carvers are turning onto other crafts, in particular, bone carving. The tribals are usually associated with this craft. The Himalayan tribals practice this craft for making ritual items. In Orissa, bone carvings of animal figures are common.

Terracotta

Terracotta is another expression of Indian art presented through clay. Pottery and earthenware are distinctly utilitarian and often decorative while porcelain and studio pottery belong to the realm of art.

Terracotta is also used for offerings to the numerous Gods in the Hindu pantheon. Hence, each region has a distinct design, content and body. Bengal has the largest array of the finest specimens of temple terracotta panels. Even in
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South India, numerous offerings of terracotta horses and elephants are made to a deity called Aiyanar who is believed to ride them.

There is usually an intriguing symbolism in the size and form of each. For instance while the horse is big, the rider by comparison is small. The explanation is that, the horse has divine essence, whereas the rider is only a human representation.

West Bengal has perhaps the best tradition of terracotta. Most of these figurines have a ritualistic connotation. The Bankura horse is famous. Heavily decorated, it is made of rich red clay. Some of the best terracottas are seen in Murshidabad, Birbhum. Jessore, Hooghly and Dighha. The style is essentially folk and designs are highly expressive. The use of coloured glazed tiles began after the Muslim conquest. The tile art called *Chini or Kashi* became highly refined. Today, many ceramic centres produce tiles - both glazed and unglazed terracotta with traditional and modern designs.

Today under the onslaught of modernity the traditions and cultures are being eroded and corrupted by the availability of mass-produced goods. For those who appreciate local crafts, it is these artifacts of everyday life, like storage containers for rice and salt, earthenware water jars, cooking pots and incense burners, which are assuming rich forms. Utilitarian yet unique, such ordinary articles are as much the result of a folk craft handled down over the generations as of the collective experience and wisdom of the people.

There are a variety of objects specially produced for restive occasions, such as lamps for *Diwali*, toys for *Dusshera*, pots for seedlings at *Sankranti* and colourful *kalash* (pots) for marriages. Many products are also used for decoration and make great gifts. Some of which are ashtrays, flower-vases, tea sets, pottery, paperweights and decorative animal figures.

Delhi is famous for its 'Blue' pottery that uses an eye-catching Persian blue dye to colour the clay. Blue pottery is glazed and high-fired which makes it tougher than the others. Another version, the Jaipur blue pottery is unique. Some of this
pottery is semi-transparent and generally decorated with animal and bird motifs. Decorative items such as ashtrays, vases, coasters, small bowls and boxes for trinkets, are made using Egyptian paste and fired at very low temperatures.

**Pottery Styles In Use:** Not readily available outside Bengal, is the Mansa pottery. It represents the snake goddess and is a quaint, double curved pot with a face painted on it. Similarly, the Dakshinirai pots, found in the Sunderbans area, are round with a mouth signifying a crown.

*Khurja*, in Uttar Pradesh, a three-hour drive from Delhi, is also well known for its inexpensive but tough tableware. Produced on a mass scale, fired at high temperatures, these pottery items retain their mud colour and are in great demand.

Rajasthan pottery has certain distinct characteristics. The mouths of water pots are small, probably to prevent spilling. Alwar is noted for its paper-thin pottery, known as *kagzi* (paper) pottery. Goa's earthenware has a charm of its own. A wide range of figures and panels, apart from attractive water and flowerpots, are made here.

Interesting buys are the black pottery and chillum (clay pipe) from Tamil Nadu. At Kottaikorai in Pondicherry, the slat-glazed pottery has a texture of orange peel. The painting is done before firing and most of the items are utilitarian - starting from candle-stands to water hirers and tableware.

**Cane and Bamboo:** In India, cane and bamboo have since ancient times been an expression of tribal art, providing them livelihood. Today the simple forms adorn the homes of the rich in various forms including elaborate cane furniture.

Utilitarian and decorative items are made from cane in different styles and motifs, of which baskets and mats are the most popular. Tripura and Bengal are famous for elegant screens and bamboo mats, made from split bamboo, finely done. Assam, a state with abundant raw materials has a large variety of beautiful products like baskets, mugs for rice beer, *hukkas*, musical instruments and floor
mats. Neighboring Arunachal Pradesh excels in cane and bamboo work too, producing items such as cane belts. From Tamil Nadu, come the famed kora grass mats.

The most delicate mats are made in Kerala, where black and white square bamboo boxes are also made in the same tradition, making excellent gifts. Cane is the natural endowment of the forest resources in Manipur. Due to Jhum (Shifting) cultivation rampantly practiced in the hill areas, cane resources have been dwindling. Bamboo, another forest resource is abundantly grown in Churachandpur, Jiribam, Tamenglong and Imphal districts of Manipur, the largest producer of bamboo products after Tripura in the entire northeast. Some of the bamboo products are sofa sets, murhas, mats, baskets, trays, chairs, tables, flower vases, ashtrays and other decorative and utility articles.

**Jingle Jangle:** Bangles, have over the centuries acquired a cultural, social and religious significance. This adornment was a purely decorative accessory until the medieval period. Around this time, the bangle was transformed from a mere decoration to a symbol of marriage.

In Bengal, the iron kada (bangle) is commonly termed loha is worn by the married woman as a symbol of her marriage. The bride is also given a beautifully crafted white conch bangle and a red lac bangle.

Ivorv bangles, like the glass ones, are an important item for brides of some communities. A bride from Punjab is traditionally given slender ivory choodas (bangles) in white and red. These bangles are given only in multiples of four. Over the years, the expensive ivory has been replaced by lac and plastic but the custom continues.

When the Gujarati bride conceives, her sister-in-law gifts her a silver chain bracelet. In the seventh month she is also asked to wear a bracelet made of black thread and five kowdis (a kind of shell). This bracelet is untied only when the woman goes into labour pains to symbolically help in an easy delivery. A similar ceremony called Valaikapu, is practiced in south India.
Muslims mostly dominate the profession of glass bangle making and selling respectively. Ferozabad, a town in Uttar Pradesh, is renowned for its glass bangle manufacturing.

In each region, bangles are made using the materials available locally, like wood in Kashmir and lac in Rajasthan.

The Ahirs of Rajasthan and Rabaris of Gujarat cover their entire hand with bangles made of bone. The Lambadis of Andhra Pradesh wear the graded bone bangles up to their elbows. The Bastar tribe of Madhya Pradesh wears bangles made of coconut shell. The Gonds and Bhils wear bangles made out of brass or beads. The Kashmiris have the moat exquisitel painted papier-mache bangles.

The researcher while visiting Mithila in Bihar and observing the nature and form of beautiful folk art "Madhubani Painting" which is very much related not only to the folk culture but also intertwined with Hindu mythology feel excited to explore such a vast enriched folk tradition in the era of globalization. The continuum between tradition and de-tradition tempted the researcher to undertake such a dissertation work.

The Madhubani Paintings of Bihar:

'Madhubani Paintings' is an important and essential part of Indian Folk Art and it is the representation of Hindu methodology. Madhubani is a District of Bihar. The pictures, produced in the North Bihar and previously known as 'Mithila Paintings', are now subsumed under the term "Madhubani Art." Moreover, they have come to be regarded as representative of Indian Folk Art generally and eagerly sought after by art covers (Mode, Chandra, 1985). In response to this growing demands for articles of a handy and readily transportable nature. The artist has ceased to confine him or her to wall painting and had begun to produce pictures executed on papers and clothes (Mode, Chandra, 1985).

The growing popularity of Madhubani art has been fostered by a number of writings, publication, photographs and educational films of E. Mozer, Schimitt, whose findings are the result of a first hand study of themes, techniques and
social backgrounds (cited in Anand, 1984). Moreover among the first outsider to
document the traditional of *Madhubani* painting were William and Mildred,
Archer, who obtained some drawings on paper that the women painters were
using as aids to memory in the colonial era.

According to earlier accounts the paintings were actually executed by *Brahman*
and *Kahayastha* women who, by reasons of their caste constituted a socially
respected minority in the villages of Bihar. Yet it should not be forgotten that
women were not counts on an equal footing with their men folk. These Hindu
women want to maintain their old traditional and teach them to their daughters.
Painting is one of the traditional skills that are passed down from generation to
generation in the families of some women. They paint figures from nature and
myth on household and village walls to make the seasonal festivals of the
religious year, for special event of the lifecycle and when marriages are arranged
they prepare intricately designed wedding proposals (Mode, Chandra, 1985).

These form of painting remained unappreciated in any wider sense until the joys,
when, with the arrival of art dealers the villager was presented with anew and
previously undreamed of source of income. Indeed, even the men are said to
have asked themselves whether they might not prove equally competent as
artist. Since the time further exhaustive investigations have revealed that *Horijon*
women, i.e., Women of the lowest social caste also decorate walls of the huts
with paintings, which however, differs slightly as regards style and content from
the works. The women are generally illiterate, and are in any case reluctant to
consider themselves individual producers of, ‘works of art’ and only a few of
them mark the paintings with their own name (Craven, 1976).

Though the paintings are drawn by *Brahmin* and *Kahayastha* women but a
distinction may also be drawn between the paintings of them. *Brahmin* women
favor a free type of composition and the *Kahayastha* women use the colors of
paintings which play a less important role than did use drawing and the
enclosure of individual scenes in well defined frames (Archer, 1977). These
paintings have become a primary source of income for scores of families. Production and initial marketing have been regulated by regional craft guilds, the State Govt. of Bihar and the Govt. of India. But the continuing market in this art through the world is a tribute to the resourcefulness of the women of Mithila who have successfully transferred their techniques of 'Bhittichitra' or 'Wall Painting' to the medium of paper and lastly on clothes, and have registered the temptation to adopt their traditional to freely in pursuit of unpredictable public tastes (Brown, 1985).

Indian folk are should be regarded not only as an essential constituent of Indian art, but also, and more importantly, as a clue to the latter's history, and this in the first place because of its long and continuous traditions, in the second because of its wide dissemination with the people as a whole. In this connection mention might be made of the twin concepts of the Great and Little Tradition.

From this point it is important to note that, this painting is becoming as a profession among the women of Mithila. So it is not only a profession of Brahmin and Kahayastha women painters now, and caste is not a factor. Many women of lower castes are associated with such profession now to earn their daily bread. But they do not use any type of computer devices to innovate a newly formed artistic design.

Though it is their hand creature but it has some exotic appeal. The colors are primarily red, yellow, blue, green and black. These colors were, at one time collected and prepared by the women themselves, their raw materials being earth, vegetable and mineral substances and powdered charcoal. But today it is drawn by normal readymade colors.

In India, today we have at our disposal a superabundance of folk art material, representing the end-product of what is an historical development. Some archaeological finds have enabled us to distinguish relatively clearly the earliest manifestation of folk art for which we possess evidence, that is, duly
authenticated and historically documented, hypothetical explanations and conclusions are, of course, unavoidable, given the perishable nature of the materials employed. Over long periods the history of Indian folk art must be traced in indirect references and in what, on the one hand, we have the adherence on the part of the many clans to ideas (that is, totemism, shamanism, or magic) uninfluenced by the higher religions, on the other, a close commitment on the part of peasant village culture to the Hinduism which prevails today. Moreover, today, the tribal structures suddenly collapse in the face of an abrupt transition to the industrial proletariat, and of absorption into modern industrial society. Thus we are see two types of confrontation:

1. Between the earliest tribal culture and Indian high culture;
2. It perpetuated ever since the Harappa period, between the peasant village culture and the urban Indian high culture.

The most important artistic link between past and present consists in a number of decorative motifs, attributes and symbols, motifs that regularly recur and can be shown to have remained constant throughout, although the message they carry may very from epoch to epoch. In this present time they are creating their paintings and arts to collect money. Hence these creations are becoming as an earning profession.

Hence, a few decades ago the whole fields of folk art may suddenly come to light. The brilliantly animated executed non-professional women artist in Mithila (Bihar) also typifies the rapidity with which such a discovery may be robbed of its original significance by the intrusion of external factors. The fashionable demand for these paintings by women has meant that the artists, compelled to step up production, have had to skimp their work. It has also meant that even in this field of Indian folk art so long untainted by commerce, there has been a loss of integrity, if not an actual distortion of traditional forms.

Present age is the age of rapid change. Under the impact of growing industrialization and urbanization, free market economy, consumerism and
globalization society is changing rapidly into various directions. It is also because of the use of computer technology and different websites and for this the production process, cost of production and lastly the quality of production now. Hence, the traditional form places itself under the circumstances of modernization and globalization.

Moreover, sometime for the sophisticated technology, the traditional art form of India is changing now. People want those, which have the exotic appeal. But they do not refute the value of their own culture. But it is also true that Indian folk art places itself in a place where it is able to meet requirements of mass production for export, and for the tourist trade.

**Madhubani Paintings: It's Tradition:**

'Madhubani Paintings' is done by the Hindu women, and it is interesting to note that it is the only painting, once which is done by the female, not by male. Moreover, few decades ago (late 60s and early 70s) the women artists had ceased to confine themselves to wall paintings what was/is known as *Bhittichitra*. But after that they had begun to produce pictures executed on paper, and it was done by *Brahmin* and *Kahayastha* women (the minority group). Yet it should not be forgotten that women particularly those belonging to relatively high and conservative castes, were by no means, on an equal footing with their men folk. Indeed, the latter regarded all feminine activity as the mere performance of a duty, regardless of any possible artistic merit. This form of painting remained unappreciated in any wider sense until the seventies, when, with the arrival of art dealers, the villagers were presented with a new and previously undreamed-of source of income. Since that time further exhaustive investigations have revealed that *Harijan* Women, that is to say women of the lowest social caste, also decorate the walls of their huts with paintings, which, however, differ slightly as regards style and content from the works mentioned above. In the present situation they are doing their creature on clothes, that may be on silk or cotton and by the by on the small or big pieces of draped cloth (*Sari*), turban (*Pugri*), Shawl (*Chadar*), blouses, or on some stitched skirts (*Ghaghra*), bodices (*Choli*).
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On the other side, their pictures are collected from Hindu mythology. Hence, these clothes get some extra gracefulness, because these clothes have no defiling character. So this observation raises its market and the unmanliness tied with it. However, it is easy for them to capture the market, when Indian society is animated by "Hindutva." As result, it is easy for them to capture the whole market easily.

Needless to say, in the present time commercialization breaks the traditional form, not the painting form but the place of creation. When it was wall painting or paper painting then the painters in their own houses created it. But now there rises new classes of Mahajon, middleman who gives all materials to their painters and the artists work at those Mahajon's house or own house and get daily wage, which is too small. But from their work Mahajon or middleman earns a lot. The artists are bound to do that because they have no capital. So in the present day a class of ribald people exploits the painters. And this graceful painting is done under a muggy environment, where mulct is a simple work (if they fail to satisfy their lord). Lastly it is important to write that this pattern of profession has created anew source of gainful employment in rural India for women and their families.

However, commercialization of such art has been a mixed blessing. It has been regulated by governmental bureaucracies (not so efficiently), has generated a multi-leveled distribution system, and has put a premium on productivity perse independent of any meaningful connection to the traditional cycles of village life and the rhythms of the religious year. But it also has allowed people around the world to discover a style of art with a long heritage linked to the lives of women, and that retains evident signs of its rootedness in a vital folk tradition. The paintings (Goddes of Kali, Durga, Shiva, Saraswati, Laxmi, Ram and Sita, Fish & Snakes, Ravana etc.) are now created by the Harijan women, who had no right in Mandir (temple) once upon a time.
Globalization and Folk Art - A Mixed Blessing:
Samir Dasgupta (2004) pointed out that 'You may not be interested in globalization but globalization is interested in you'. Again he mentions that 'It has become the focal point of attention in the social sciences since the late 1980s, and appeared as a paradigmatic concept in analyzing the economic, social, political, environmental, ecological and cultural metamorphoses occurring across the modern world.' So the term globalization may call as an umbrella term, for a complex series of economic, social, technological, and political, ecological and cultural changes seen as increasing interdependence and interaction between people and companies in disparate locations around the globe.

It is the common saying that the term "globalization" is used to refer to these collective changes as a process, or else as the cause of turbulent change. The distinct uses include: Economically and socially positive: As an engine of commerce; one which brings an increased standard of living — prosperity to developing countries and further wealth to First World and Third World countries. This view claims that economic prosperity brings about social prosperity. Economically, socially, and ecologically negative: As an engine of "corporate imperialism"; one which tramples over the human rights of developing societies, claims to bring prosperity, yet often simply amounts to plundering and profiteering. Negative effects include cultural assimilation via cultural imperialism, the export of artificial wants, and the destruction or inhibition of authentic local and global community, ecology and cultures. The term globalization is characterized and directed by and through the following dimension.

1. It involves a stretching of economic, social, technological, and political, ecological and cultural activities across the political frontiers, regions and continents.

2. It suggests the intensification, or the growing magnitude of interconnectedness that is flows of trade investment, finance, migration, culture, etc throughout the world without any political, cultural and administrative barriers.
3. The growing extensity and intensity of interconnectedness happened through the link made by the unprecedented development of scientific wired and wireless communication system, which geared up to a speeding of global interactions and a easiest processes, as the evolution of world wide systems of transport and communication increases the velocity of the diffusion of ideas, goods, information, capital and the people.

4. The growing intensity and velocity of global interactions is associated with their deepening impact such that the effects of distant events can be highly significant elsewhere and even the most local developments may come to have enormous global consequences. In this sense, the boundaries between national and global affairs increasingly blurred.

Hence it is defined that, the term globalization is a contested term and it represents a plethora of seemingly simple but complex phenomena. It symbolizes intensified corporate capitalism, neo-liberal state policies, both increased homogeneity and heterogeneity across nation-states, economies and cultures. The work highlights the effect of globalization on India's cultural side especially on folk art and more specifically the Madhubani Painting of Mithila, Bihar. And it is also clear that globalization is not new term, in the present era it characterizes distinctive features. Shrinking space and time, disappearing national borders and the velocity of change are linking people's lives more deeply, more intensely and more immediately than ever before (Human Development Report, 1999). Theoretical perspective has also seen paradigmatic changes. Globalization mediated by migration, commerce, communication technology, finance, tourism etc. entails a reorganization of the bipolar imagery of space and time. There has been a shift from two-dimensional Euclidian space with its centers, peripheries and sharp boundaries to a multi-dimensional global space with unbounded, often discontinuous and interpenetrating sub-spaces (Kearney, 1995). From the core-periphery of dependency theory and semi-periphery of world-system theory (Kearney 1995), we have moved to the 'pheripherilization of the core' (Kearney 1995). While the dependency and world
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System theories laid the base of the global study, the new paradigm became apparent as a corollary to the post-colonialism, post-structuralism and the rising tide of immigrants. The tremendous boost in information technology and communication revolution has led to movement of people from one place to another and across national boundaries and we have come from nation state to what Anderson (1991) termed 'imagined communities' and transnationalism. Transnationalism overlaps globalization but has a limited purview. It covers migration of nationals across the borders of one or more nations. Transnationalism led to deterritorialization. Deterritorialization is one of the central forces of the modern world and it is this fertile ground (Appadurai, 1991) in which money, commodities and persons unendingly chase each other around the world. The deterritorialized population in the abiding sense of placelessness and timelessness pick up and carry with them ideas and images from the 'old home' to the 'new host' setting.

Local Crafts in Global Settings:
The anthropologist June Nash (1993) argued that crafts are the medium of communication between people who live profoundly different lives, in different countries, but who can respond to the symbols, textures and forms that express different cultural traditions. She goes on to write that there is now a reverse flow of goods from the former colonies back to the industrial centers of the world as consumers seek out the exotic and unique objects of handicraft production. Western consumers want to know more about the products and producers of the items they are buying. While the activity of buying a handicraft may imbue the purchaser with a sense of buying tradition, or of supporting a struggling community, the art of craft production – an everyday activity – may itself be a form of resistance and struggle in the face of global economic and cultural changes. Craft production, like James Scott (1985) points-out in the case of Malay peasants, may in fact be a "weapon of the weak", an activity which frequently operates at the margins of the mainstream economy and the state. Importantly, it helps maintain family, household and community relations, providing the producers a sense of symbolic power and maintaining a localized
cultural identity. Despite its location at the localized or household level, artisan production nevertheless remains a highly contested form of labor production. Increasing commodification of craft production, gender segregation and discrimination, and a generational divide are evident throughout studies of artisan communities. For example, in her paper on the embroidery (chikan) industry in Lucknow in India, Clare Wilkinson-Weber (1997) shows how this industry has changed over time to become a mass-market industry, once dominated by highly-skilled male embroiders (who are mostly now the agents or middle-men) to now being dominated by Muslim women, most of who work from home (and so keeps them veiled, or in purdah) and who produce simple, coarse and cheap work for a largely local market. This raises another important point. Unlike other industries, craft production is an important avenue for women’s employment, yet the final stage of the process – the selling of the finished goods – remains an inherently masculine task. This is confirmed in several important studies of women’s home-based, subsistence production in various settings in the Asia Pacific (Kaino, 1995, Wilkinson-Weber, 1997). These studies all reveal the unique ways women are exploited by both their class and gender, and even in some instances, their religion, in the craft production process. The study of chikan production described above highlights the pitfalls of an industry that is increasingly becoming commodified. As the artisan is paid per piece, and as the market is demanding more, the artisans themselves are becoming de-skilled, only bothering to learn one or two popular stitches. Even urban artisans in Lucknow were bemoaning the work of rural-based embroiders whose work was the most simplistic. Indeed, the rural embroiderers were paid even less per piece, emphasizing the levels of exploitation between more organized or well-connected urban producers and the rural artisans. Ironically it is the relative success and popularity of the craft that is leading to its partial demise, at least in terms of level of skill and variety. Put another way, the increased demand and consumption for the chikan-embroidered shirts cannot be met by the more time consuming but authentic methods and hence, in the drive to meet the large number of orders, the craft itself is becoming de-skilled and inauthentic.
According to Jain (1995) this latter group ... mainly thrive on the new urban patronage which has arisen as a result of protection and patronizing developmental endeavors on the part of the government. The government encourages these with a view to keeping the artisans self-employed and to earning precious foreign exchange by exporting manufactured craft products. Once it is established that the 'crafts' are primarily 'commercial' rather than 'cultural' in nature, their treatment involves different strategies, one of which must be that the criteria for design and aesthetics are oriented to commerce-related development. Jain goes on to write that a schism evolves wherein tribal and village artistic products are rarely considered part of contemporary "art". Rather, the "art" of rural artisans, or more correctly "artists", is predominantly mass-produced, commercially driven "handicrafts".

At Pre-British period we had a cultural tradition which has been changed with the emergence of westernization, Sanskritanization (Srinivas, 1972) modernization and lastly globalization. The globalization of production in the world economy has undoubtedly opened-up the markets of Asia to global competition and exchange. All levels of producers and workers, from those in professional, white-collar occupations to those at the least-skilled level of employment, as well as socio-cultural environment have been radically affected. While some have gained employment in offshore transnational enterprises, or migrated to large urban centers for wage work, many others are becoming displaced, finding that their skills, and the things that they produce, are no longer required. As a relatively large, skilled or semi-skilled group of workers, artisans and craft workers also have not been immune to the impact of these global economic changes. Indeed, they have been particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of global economic change and re-structuring brought about by the implementation of economic liberalization policies in Asia and elsewhere in the third world. In the case of India for example, the United Nations estimates that over the last 30 years the numbers of artisans have declined by at least 30%, with many of those remaining having to seek employment as casual wage laborers or in other vulnerable jobs in the informal economy (Seth, 1995). Mass produced,
standardized and cheap factory items now have replaced many of the various goods once produced by the artisans. Moreover, essential raw materials like skins and hides, certain types of wood, metals, shells and so forth have become either too expensive for the artisans to purchase, or else have been diverted for mass production. In a study of Indian leather workers, for example, Ganguly-Scrase (2001) describes the way their traditional craft in making leather sandals and bags has virtually disappeared due to the influx into the market of plastic sandals, synthetic materials for bags, and rising costs of tanned leather. Many of the artisans that manage to survive produce for a global market, and so daily confront the vagaries of that market (Anderson, 1992; Balkwell and Dickerson, 1994; Nash, 1993). While this paper is concerned largely with artisans in Asia, the issues and problems it addresses are commonly experienced by artisan communities in most third world or developing societies and so reference is also made to recent, detailed studies on artisan communities from Central and South America. The significance of craft production is that it crosses all sectors of the modern global economy – from pre-industrial, industrial and postindustrial (Dickie and Frank, 1996). Unlike some other forms of labor, artisan production can also enable a degree of labor autonomy for those who have limited access to the cash economy. As craft production is generally household-based, its analysis raises important questions concerning the changing nature of gender and generational relations within the household. Finally, with the coming of a globalize economy; coupled with postmodern consumer sentiments, crafts represent a traditional form of consumer goods that, for some buyers, have great appeal. In other words, the consumption of crafts allows for a reconnection back to earlier and more earthly forms and designs in a fragmented, fractured and technological world.

Hinduanization of Folk Art:
The well-known grammar analyst, Panini, drew a distinction between artists – the rajashilpi, or craftsman employed by the court – and the gramashilpi, or village craftsman (cited in Mookerjee R.K. 1962). Originally shilpin would seem to have been a term generally applied to the technically trained craftsman; later,
however, it came to denote the artisan (Puri, B.N., 1968). Thus the writing concerning the theory of art are referred to collectively as the shilpashastras (Kramrisch, S., 1946). Being for the most part of a highly schematic character, these manuals of artistic instruction could not, of course, be expected to include a description of folk art or of amateur art practiced by women at home. By and large they form part of orthodox ecclesiastical literature with art as the handmaiden of the courts of Brahmanic orthodoxy (Coomaraswamy, 1946). But that did not cause any disturbance for the women and the commoners of India to practice various forms of creativity through various mediums on the occasion of rituals, altars, and festivals and also during the leisure period. The villagers and locals always appreciated their creativity and innovation. As a result, in Sanskrit, as well as in the folk tradition, an artist is treated as a person with a magnetic ability to create a world of imagination. Metaphorically, an artist is always compared with the Gods. "In Hinduism, Vishnu has a thousand names, many of which refer to works of art. In Islam, one of the hundred names of Allah is Musawwer, the artist. The Sanskrit word kala (art) means the divine attributes which direct human acts and thoughts. Man, God and Art are inseparable. Art is not removed from everyday life; it reflects a world view (Saraswati Baidyanath 1999). No distinction is made between fine and decorative, free or servile arts. The eighteen or more professional arts (silpa) and the sixty-four vocational arts (kala) embrace all kinds of skilled activity. There is no difference between a painter and a sculptor. Both are known as silpi or karigar. The term silpa designates ceremonial act in the Asvalayana Srautasutra, and in this sense it is close to karu, which in the Vedic context stands for a maker or an artist, a singer of hymns, or a poet. In a reference in the Rgveda, Visvakarma, a god of creation, is mentioned as dhatu-karmara, while karmara alone refers to artificers and artificers (Rgveda X.72.2; Atharveda III 5-6; Manu IV 215). Visvakarma is supposed to create things out of dhatu, "raw material" an act known as sanghamana (Rgveda X 72.2). The process of cutting, shaping and painting has been often explained in the text by the taks.
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Like the diversity of India, its folk art also presents a huge canvas and depicts the cultural mosaics of this country in a very colorful style. This art can rightly be termed as an ocean of the folk art, which, since earliest times, has been fed by the rivers of popular artistic creativity — rivers that have flowed into it from all cultural-geographical pockets of the Indian sub-continent. Indian culture has given successive generations a wonderful mindset tuned in amalgamation of tradition and modernity, and value system, which has been retained from the beginning of Indian civilization with an excellent continuity despite the passage of time, repeated foreign invasions, and the enormous growth in population. It gives them a unique personality today, as it has done in the past. In fact, these constitute enduring imprints on Indian consciousness. The 21st century is significant in many fields and art, of course, is an area to be mentioned. Culture as we know is very linked to the concept of time-space compression and sometimes it crosses the limit of time and becomes modern, sometimes post-modern. Culture has its own agenda and has habitually risen above the conditions prevailing on the ground in every period of human history. “The songs, dance-forms, literary activities and works of art produced in the 20th century have found new expressions and have gone to prove that this century has not only been the greatest in human history but has also been a period of new discoveries and radical renewals. While all the art forms have exhibited significant achievements, several entirely new ones have been invented and popularized such as cinema, pop music, and television documentary (Singh B. P., 2003)”.

Almost all the Indian traditional or folk art is based on the events of Indian mythology. Beyond serving religion in India, images of Hindu Gods serve as integral design elements throughout the culture. Religion has a deep influence on each step of Indian life. Hindu mythology is solely intermixed with folk music, traditions and most of all, art forms like drawing and paintings. Folk art is having a treasure house of symbolic language to contribute as a gift to Modern art. Folk art may be defined as the art created among groups that exist within the framework of existing society, but for geographical and cultural reasons they are largely separated from the sophisticated masses because of cultural reasons. As a result, they produce distinctive styles and objects for local
needs and tastes. The term 'folk paintings' here explain pictures made in Indian villages by both men and women, for ornamentation of their abodes, portrayals of their Gods and for their various rituals; and by local professional painters or artisans for use by the local people. All these paintings were produced in a variety of styles and themes. History, sociology, and geography infused the painting of each region with local flavor. The style and quality of the paintings depended on the materials available in the place in which they were executed, basically the very factors that are the characteristics of a region. In the Indian folk tradition, art is like nourishment to the daily life of people. Whether an artist is from Tamilnadu or a potter who creates massive terracotta Aiyanar or a Madhya tribal who creates Pithora painting at the moment of creation, the poverty-stricken, illiterate folk, transforms into a master craftsman who can create marvelous plastic and visual forms with a creative genius, handed over to him by generations. Topography and geography, too, have control over the medium of art. In the case of Uttar Pradesh we can find folk paintings on the walls of houses. On the other hand, in Assam one cannot find wall paintings because most of the walls of the houses are built with cane or bamboo. The folk and tribal traditions treat all material available in day-to-day life to be worthy of serving as a medium of expression. In this regard, artist-writer, Haku Shah writes, "When a tribal touches a blade of grass, gourd or bead, fiber, twig, grain, pin, plastic button, conch shell, feather, leaf of flower, he sees through it, smells it, hears it, and therein starts the ritual of being with it" (cited in Thakur, 1982).

Each of the country with its own trees and plants, birds and animals, hills and dales has inspired Indian folk artists to have multiple metaphors, series of symbols, and innumerable images to build a rich treasure-house of art. The somewhat lesser-known traditions of Indian painting are the so-called "folk" paintings dating back to a period that may be referred to as "timeless." These are living traditions, intrinsically linked with the regional historic-cultural settings from which they arise. These paintings have an age-old heritage that can be traced back to the beginning of the civilization on this subcontinent. It began with cave paintings drawn with natural dyes that were so strong that even century later the paintings can still be seen on the walls of the caves. The folk and tribal
painting came from the remote rural and tribal regions. Sometimes, the artists of these rustic works were not educated. They lacked the basic means to attend schools. The various forms of paintings originating in these regions served not just as paintings but also as a religious and social ritual performed daily. It began with painting the walls and floor of mud houses. The people believed that this purified the ambience and pleased the deities. Various religious and symbols were included in each painting.

Hindu religion has been a definitive influence on Indian Art for centuries. The paintings featuring Hindu Gods, Goddesses, and the various Hindu pantheons are some of the most prominent symbols of Indian art. From ancient times, artists have been depicting the various tales of Hindu mythology in colorful traditional art. Darbhanga a District of North India is the so-called capital of the Mithila region famous for its Madhubani paintings. These paintings are part of Mithila culture, which are growing in recognition. Beginning in the 1960s, this style of painting that had been used to decorate the walls of houses was transferred to paper or canvas. These paintings have come to be called Madhubani paintings or sometimes Mithila paintings, after the name of the region. Village women typically do the Madhubani paintings. They paint figures from myth and nature on household and village walls to mark the seasonal festivals of the religious year. They also create paintings for special events of life. For example, when marriages are being arranged, the artists create intricately designed wedding proposals. Madhubani, literally meaning 'from the forest of honey', is the name of the village where Madhubani paintings originated. Situated in the interior of North India, this art is an expression of creativity in the day-to-day life of the local people. Done mainly by the females of the family, this art is regarded as a part of daily ritual. Initially, only vegetable dyes were used for the paintings, but today the artists have access to a variety of poster colors that caters to their needs and enables them to experiment with colors. The date when Madhubani art came into existence cannot be traced backed to actual era. It is, however, centuries old art that is associated with the normal lives of the villagers. In the Madhubani region, it is believed that every
morning the worshipped deity comes invisibly to the household to bless the members of the family and also to bring more prosperity. Therefore, this art started as a welcome painting for deities. It started from the entrance floor and the exterior of the house. Passed from mothers to their daughters, the art of Madhubani has constantly been improving in its quality. As this tradition was initialized with a purpose of decorating the exterior of the house, the walls and the floors always served as the canvas. Folk artists or classical artists in three ways generally do painting: wall painting (Bhitti-Chitra), canvas painting (Pata-Chitra) and floor painting (Aripana). Of these, the wall painting and the floor painting are very popular in Mithila region. The wall painting or mural paintings are popularly known as Mithila paintings or Madhubani paintings.

In India, images of deities are ubiquitous, with religious stickers and posters covering virtually every Hindu-owned rickshaw, phone booth, and tea stall in the country. Sacred images are even common in Indian advertisements, with baby Krishna endorsing his favorite brand of Amul butter and Lakshmi promising prosperity to those who eat her own brand of rice. While one can hardly imagine a parched Jesus wandering through the desert and then gulping down a bottle of Coca-Cola in an American commercial, the Hindu equivalent is not uncommon in Indian advertising. Such ads are always done with an unquestionable reverence for the divine. In India, television has faster and greater impact on society. Indian television, today, has grown into one of the biggest television networks in the world. Terrestrial broadcasting, which has been the sole preserve of the government, provides television coverage to over 90% of India's population. The TV serials in India are bringing the heroes and myths of the Hindu religion to life for a mass audience. Hinduism is central to Indian culture, and many middle-aged people feel strongly that these epic TV shows are a great way of keeping these religious stories alive. The serials based on the two great Indian epics, Ramayana (Ramayana is one of the great epics of India), and Mahabharata (The Mahabharata composed between 300 BC and 300 AD), were the most popular programs on the Indian national network Doordarshan, until very recently. Rated as the most popular TV program on India's national network Doordarshan, Mahabharata had a viewership of 96 per cent - a record in the Guinness Book of
World Records (Source: 6). On these shows, computer graphics are used to create images of Gods performing miracles, sailing across the skies and moving mountains. I still remember the effects used in Ramayana (1988-90). It was great to watch the Gods and Goddesses fly, disappear, and walk on water. The effects were pretty good for Indian TV standards at that time. These serials broke all previous records of programs on Indian television. Streets became deserted as Indians abandoned work and chores to watch the adventures of Lord Rama and Krishna. After the great success of these serials, other serials, namely, Sreekrishna, Om Namasiyaya, Jai Hanuman, Japam Tapam Vritham, Jai Matha, and Jai Ganga Maiya were telecast. All these Soap Operas were based on Hindu mythology as depicted in the Epics and Puranas (The Puranas are the richest collection of mythology in the world). The promoters of these serials take advantage of the religious archetype of viewers, at the expense of the literary qualities of the source materials. To attract the viewers, in addition to archetypes, visual potentialities are effectively used with the help of modern technology. The promoters attract more and more regional viewers, and the serials produced in Hindi and mostly aimed at Hindi viewers, are dubbed in the regional languages. Since the success of Ramayana, religious serials have been produced in large numbers. Especially since the success of abhabharata, they keep competing in computerized special effects. But the emphasis on content is diminishing. While Ramayana and Mahabharata made decent attempts in presenting all acceptable versions, later serials have only tried to cash on the sentiments of people. The mythological serials command the highest viewership in India for any type of television program, drawing as many as 150 million viewers. This, in turn, has lured advertisers and sponsors by the drove. The mythological genre is perhaps the only genre of programming that maintains its repeat value, since an entire generation may not have watched it. Everyone - adults, housewives, and teenagers - watches religion on television. They all are enthralled by the struggles, sermons, and philosophical debates that they see on their screens. If children don't, the parents often force them to. The objective is to 'instill values' in the kids and make them aware of their mythological history. The best news for television producers may be that with 330 million Gods in the
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Hindu pantheon, there are plenty of episodes just waiting to be made. As a genre, mythological programs will never go out of style. What works in its favor is the family audience, including children that these shows attract. Broadcasters insist that there is good money in airing such mythological programs. According to industry estimates, normal advertising rate for mythological programs was about Rs 1 lakh ($ 2,000 approx) in February 2001 for a ten-second slot (Source: 1). The religious programs on Sony network are now the highest rated mythological across all channels. Production costs for mythological are always steep because they involve a lot of special effects. According to available industry data, the production costs of some mythological currently on air have crossed the Rs 20 lakh ($ 40,000 approx) - per episode barrier (Source: 1). "Over here, people are very religious, and they love to watch epics ... they love to watch the serials which are based on Gods." TV director Rajiv Desai said, "We have so many Gods and so many stories... we can keep on doing it again and again (Source. 2)". It is also assumed that more religion-based content is likely to invade living rooms across the country in the months to come. The broadcast channels, meanwhile, are keeping their fingers crossed that the audience will keep tuning into religious programming.

Indian mythology, which has so far been limited to TV serials and a handful of movies, could lend itself extraordinarily well to the creation of Net-based games. Mahabharata and Ramayana, two epics, stepped into the world of gaming. The idea was to understand the Indian Gods by playing games based on Indian mythology. Companies like Indiagames (India's leading game development company) have games such as "Ravana Vadh" (Killing of Ravana), where one can help Lord Rama kill the evil king Ravana and establish the victory of good over evil.

Theme and Rituals behind Mithila Art Form:
In Mithila a woman does painting on the wall, surface, movable objects, and canvas; makes images of gods, goddesses, animals and mythological characters from the lump of clay; prepares objects such as baskets, small
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containers, and play items from sikki grass; does embroidery on quilt—popularly known as kethari and sujani; sings varieties of ritual and work songs (Mishra, Kailash Kumar 2003). These artistic activities are done by a lady as a routine work that makes her a complete creative personality: a singer, a sculptor, a painter, an embroidery design maker and what not! Without knowing these primary details one may not understand the aesthetic wonder of Mithila paintings. From generation to generation the women of Mithila have produced a vigorous distinctive painting. That this traditional art has survived the innumerable vicissitudes of history is due, first of all, to the social organization of Mithila, one based on the village community, in whose corporate life the women have clearly understood roles. Beyond their extended families, the women artists work for a rural society with whose requirements they are perfectly acquainted. It is within this framework that the women continue to reproduce age-old forms; indeed countless recapitulations have resulted in an attitude of mind in which they can produce the most abstract designs without conscious effort. The possibility of any radical assertion of individuality in the modern sense is extremely limited (Mookerjee Ajit, 1977). This communal village life is strengthened and sustained by the universal prevalence of social gatherings, traditional storytelling, dancing and singing festivities and ceremonies, processions and rituals.

Aripana is an indigenous word, which means “the art of drawing embankment or wall.” The word is derived from Alimpana or Alepana (of Sanskrit origin) and, though grammatically correct, falsifies the real origin of the word (Roy, The Bratas of Bengal).

The art of Aripana or floor painting has been handed down from generation to generation. There is not a single house in Mithila in which ceremonies such as marriages are held without Aripana. The women of Mithila specialize in drawing circular patterns of designs with a white liquid paste made of ground rice mixed with water. Sometimes, vermilion is also applied, besides white, red, green, yellow, and black colors. Various Aripana designs have the images of Gods and
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Goddesses painted on different shapes and forms with multiple colors, reflecting the artist's originality and imagination.

This style of Madhubani painting belongs to North Bihar. In keeping with the tradition under which it began, the style is replete with symbols of fertility like the lotus plant, the bamboo grove, birds, fish, etc. in union. The art shifted to drawing paper in the 1960s, and this brought with it a new freedom and creativity, as paper is movable and economically feasible too. Figures from nature & mythology are adapted to suit this style. The themes and designs widely painted depict the worship of Hindu deities such as Krishna, Rama, Shiva, Durga, Laxmi, Saraswati, Sun and Moon, and the basil plant. They also represent court scenes, wedding scenes, and social happenings. Floral, animal and bird motifs, and geometrical designs are used to fill up all the gaps. There is hardly any empty space in this style. The skill is handed down the generations, and hence the traditional designs and patterns are widely maintained. One of the main features of Mithila paintings is simplicity. All that is required for the artist is a suitable surface, ordinary paints, and local brushes. Preliminary sketching is hardly required in Mithila paintings because the outlines are developed in a single sweep of the brush.

Tools of the Painting:

No sophisticated tools are needed in Madhubani paintings. Artists are still unfamiliar with modern paintbrushes. They use one brush made from a bamboo-twig by wrapping the twig up with a piece of cloth or by having its end frayed in a way that the fiber looks like a bundle of hair.

The artists prepare the colors. Black is obtained by mixing soot with cow dung; yellow from turmeric or pollen or lime and the milk of banyan leaves; blue from indigo; red from the Kusum flower juice or red sandalwood; green from the leaves of the wood apple tree; white from rice powder; and orange from Palasha flowers. The raw materials are mixed with goat's milk and juice from bean plants. Today green, blue, red and orange have been added to these colors. The colors
are applied flat with no shading. There is normally a double line drawn for the 
outlines, with the gap between the lines filled by cross or straight tiny lines. In the 
linear painting, no colors are applied. Only the outlines are drawn. Some village 
artists only produce black ink drawings. Other village artists use pink, yellow, 
blue, red, and parrot green; each paint is mixed with the traditional goat milk.

Commercialization of Folk Art and the Global Market:
In India, manufacturers try to affect the psyche of consumer by branding an item 
with the names and images of Hindu deities. They bring the premium image of a 
God and his virtues and associate them to their product, thus exploiting the mass 
recognition of well-established imagery of the God to boost product branding. 
The beauty of this strategy lies in the fact that the companies using God's 
images do not have to be concerned about any kind of intellectual property 
issues like copyright, thus enjoying an immense credibility just by virtue of having 
connected their name to a venerated name. This kind of branding shows the 
popularity of God/Goddess images in India and the corporate/legal freedom of 
their use. Manufacturers use images and names of Hindu Gods on product 
labels and promotion materials to attract buyer's attention. Even in America, 
some of the phone card companies like MCI, which target Indian consumers, 
print Hindu God's images on its international phone cards and sometimes even 
the phone card itself is named after a Hindu God. In India, the largest group of 
advertisers is the food marketers, followed by marketers of drugs and cosmetics, 
soaps, automobiles, tobacco, appliances, and oil products. All of these 
companies somehow associate their products' virtues with the virtues of a God 
and try to sell it to the consumer, who can very well relate to the image 
presented. For instance, Indian jewelers extensively use the image and name of 
Goddess Laxmi, who is considered the ruler of all material wealth.

The commercialization has caused serious harm to this art. The women and men 
are learning this art from the markets in towns and metropolitan cities. The 
trainers themselves do not know the essence and aesthetic beauty of this folk art 
and they teach their students in utter ignorance. Some of them do not know the
colour combination, obtaining the colour from the nature, preparing the background, relationship between rhythm, colour, songs, rituals, dance and the art of painting. The themes and designs of the paintings are, now, in most of the cases decided by the buyers. The buyer-centric approach has caused serious threat to the originality of colour, design, motif, and sensitivity of this great art form. In the name of the tantric painting, we see the women have painted something very different from the tradition of Mithila. Commercialization of this art has created the interest of several males in it. They have been now also painting without knowing the significance of women in it. For them it is an industry that can easily provide a job opportunity for them. They are willing to paint anything as per the requirement of the buyers in the name of Mithila painting.

In the last twenty years, in order to get job opportunities, a very huge population of Mithila has migrated to the cities and mega-cities of India and abroad. This is a continuous trend. Many of them have settled in those cities. They are emotionally attached with their ritual and tradition. Marriages are solemnized in these cities in the banquets and hotels. And no traditional marriage can take place without kohbara painting. These paper and cloth paintings therefore solve their purpose. Now they decorate the banquets, hotels or any other venues with the Mithila paintings and feel very much rooted in their tradition. Such development has given a new and potential group of buyers to the painters. In the villages of Jitwarpur and Ranti the Mithila paintings have emerged as a commercial activity where children can be seen engaged in arranging the hand crafted paper or fetching the colours. In my recent visit to Jitwarpur, I saw Jamuna Devi teaching her more than 15 students ranging from the Brahmans to the Harijan girls. On my enquiry she said, “I teach them as their mother. They feel they are at their home. I do not charge any money from the trainees. If I charge, my art will be polluted. The best reward that I get is when a Brahman girl after successful completion of her training touches my feet to get my blessings. I then bless her from the innermost core of my hearts and also issue a perfection certificate” (Dr.Kailash K Mishra, 2003). If the Bharat Natyam, Manipuri,
Kuchipuri, Odessy and the Satria dance forms can be retained in their originality (not of course in the water tight compartment) and get popularized day by day, why cannot this great folk painting be also retained in its originality in harmony with the nature, people and the tradition! The recent trends of consumerism, market and selling attitude have made this art a maidservant of the moneyed people. Selling art objects is not a bad practice but surrendering the entire traditional creativity and values before buyers at the cost or originality is something that disturbs a commoner or an insider where such art is done. A serious thought is urgently needed in order to retain the original favour and smells of the Mithila paintings. Researchers, NGO professionals, folk artists, and people concerned all should come together to adopt the appropriate measures to retain this art in its originality (Dr. Kailash K Mishra, 2003).

"The songs, dance-forms, literary activities and works of art produced in the 20th century have found new expressions and have gone to prove that this century has not only been the greatest in human history but has also been a period of new discoveries and radical renewals. While all the art forms have exhibited significant achievements, several entirely new ones have been invented and popularized such as cinema, pop music, and television documentary" (Singh B. P. 2003).

The motifs of the designs include conventionalized flora and fauna, circles in series, spiral or curvilinear devices, series of short lines, foot-points of fragmentary (imaginative) pictures illustrating legends and stories; giving glimpses of environmental and natural life. While the religious paintings include various Gods and Goddesses, the secular and decorative paintings contain various symbols of prosperity and fertility such as elephant, horse, fish, lion, parrot, turtle, bamboo, lotus flower, Puraina leaves, Pana (Water weeds), creepers etc. Besides, in these paintings, we also come across aspects of agricultural animal life, which plays an important role in the rural economy of Mithila. The animal, in fact, is a duplicate representation of energy and character of God. Thus, the subject matter generally falls into two groups: (1) A series of
heavenly forms. (2) A series of strictly selected vegetables and animal forms. For
different occasions, they have different forms and symbols attached to these
paintings. Madhubani painting has lately received much attention and popularity.
There are quite a few websites devoted to Madhubani painting. I would like to
add that to a large extent the credit for bringing recent and massive popularity to
this art form goes to Lalit Narayan Mishra, former Minister for Indian Railways.
During his tenure, reproductions of these paintings adorned the coaches of many
fast and super-fast trains (Source, 3). Copies of the paintings became a hot-
selling item for both native and foreign travelers. The reproductions can be found
with the hawkers in the bustling street side market along the Janapath in New
Delhi, India - a must for every foreign tourist! Credit is due also to Mr. Bhaskar
Kulkarni, erstwhile member of the Indian Handicrafts Federation. He was the first
to organize an exhibition of the Madhubani school of paintings at New Delhi in
1967 (Source, 4). These received immediate international recognition to this art
form. Folk in a sense carry the connotation of anonymity, collective wisdom,
spontaneity and simplicity. With the development of Sociology and Anthropology,
a new awareness has come into understanding the primitive and folk traditions.
Anthropology has proved that localism in art is not against globalism. Local art,
in the present society, is getting global importance. Here lies the Local-Global
continuum.