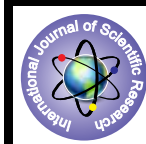


Image Making Art Tradition in Cuttack: The Silver City



ARTS

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**DR. CHAKRADHAR
BEHERA**

READER IN PAINTING, UTKAL UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE, BHUBANESWAR

ABSTRACT

Image-making is not restricted to one discipline, this art extends itself to the extent of the human feelings which have to be reflected - in images - therefore this is beyond a calculation also. In other words, any human feelings can be exhibited in an image by the artist in this industry. What is more attractive and soul touching in this industry is that the artist takes one's feelings as his own and then only his mind-set starts working towards reflecting the feelings. Is this not a great thing happening in this industry! This is an unforgettable phenomenon in this art. Image making is an outward expression of the artistic ideas as also something which creates aesthetic norms within the mass. People considering the importance of such arts of which image-making is also one of them - an industry famous in Cuttack famous as the silver city of Odisha.

Odisha can unfold the panorama of cultural traditions, which runs through the centuries and centuries. A homeland of some major ethnic groups, a promotional place of great religious ideas a meeting point of numerous peoples of cults a land of spiritual inspiration for the rest of India, a centre of attraction either for wisdom or for wealth from ancient till modern age.

Such a panorama was multicoloured and multifaceted. Because of its making the splendour, every part of Odisha offered its gifts. It is indeed a conglomeration and a synthesis of wave after wave of dais and activities and of currents and cross currents of mental and material processes, seen through centuries. On the other hand it is a land of colourful fairs and festivals. Every season in Odisha in general and Cuttack in particular has a variety of occasions to celebrate. This festivals, ceremonies and fairs unfold a vista of age old traditions and customs, rites and rituals, dances and delicacies.

Odisha is well known for its rich cultural heritage and extraordinary political status. Its green lands, hills, forests, fountain and faunas have given the colourful ways to the folk and tribes for the survival of their aesthetic sensibilities. Due to the rich socio-religious and cultural norms, Odisha is always considered as a state of artistry. As a state in culmination with individual artistic styles, powerful traditionally in art forms, the cultural development in Cuttack district has to be recognised as a place of cultural movement for innovation out of the other districts of Odisha.

Cuttack, one of the oldest and populated cities of Odisha is situated at the bifurcation of the river Mahanadi and its branch river Kathajodi on an area of about fifty square kilometres. Historically, Cuttack was the capital city of Utkala, the then Odisha with the names it was popularised as of Kataka, Baranasi Kataka, Abhinaba Baranasi Kataka, or Bidanasi Kataka during the reign of imperial Ganga kings¹. History records that Ananga Bhima Deva III (1211-1238 AD) established his royal capital Kataka in a new name called Abhinaba Baranasi Kataka. Kataka the word etymologically means army, cantonment and the capital city. The word anglicised form of the Sanskrit word Kataka that assumes seven different meanings out of which the two, namely firstly, the military camp and secondly, the fort of the capital or the seat of the Government protected by the army find applicable in this context Above all the political history of Cuttack highlights the colourful cultural horizons of its own, remembering the activities of Marathas. Though Cuttack district is waving somehow the rural and village cultures, but specifically the peoples of Cuttack city follow their semi-urbanised lives.

So far as the traditional art practice is concerned, Cuttack has the powerful cultural history since the centuries and centuries.

Cuttack is basically important for image making, filigree work, painting, textile and other artistic phenomenon. But due to the lack of exploration, Cuttack has undergone to loss its cultural glory. Although the traditional Karigaras are less in numbers, but due to their artistic work, they are in great demand. From the artistic point of view of the Karigaras would be our preliminary endeavour to explore the hidden structure of the importance of the image making and painting of the Karigaras and the people of Cuttack.

The image making is an important tradition which focuses the creative identity of the Indian people and its artists. It is a media through which people expand their creativity and expressions. Such creativity is a vehicle to touch upon the cultural aspects of the society, their emotional life style, which is a direction of their creative thoughts accordingly acceptable to the belief and myth of the region.

Art is not merely constant feeling. It always rests on the life style procession of the life activities, exploring the unusual shrines of reality along with its path of pilgrimage to a future which is as different from the past as the tree from the seeds. All traditional structures have sufficient degree of elasticity to allow it to respond to varied impulses of life that only reveals the endless freedom of expulsion of artistic creativities. In the social manifestations art has played a vital role in the mode of living and entertainments. It may not be classified into different categories. But it could be identified in rural and urban too. It could also be said that, the art of image making is an immediate outcome of the religious beliefs and ritualistic practices. This may be expressive, suggestive or symbolic in character. The expressions of the human came to their art, speaking the modes of happiness a sorrow, emotion and demotion etc.etc. We have the surplus records of this representation in paintings, sculptures, wood carvings and other art forms of the country. Image making is an aspect of village folk an tradition, where people are dependent to create their ideas. Truly, the idea of image in visual form can be accepted as an inseparable substance of human life and nature

Odisha is well known for its folk arts. The economic condition of rural people depended on agriculture. People have sufficient time to expose their creativities after harvesting of crops. Their arts have the sources to manifest in the occasions of different festivals and ceremonies. Though the villages have several communities of people, but there are specific artisan groups that occupy their special involvement in the village lives. Those people like Karigaras, masons, carpenters, potter, darjis are the farmers, who have depended on agriculture for their survivals

Odisha has a great tradition of image making and painting, which can be recorded form the prehistoric survival cites and

other artefacts of rural Odisha. The Rajas and the Jamindars were the great patrons and promoters of such art in the past. Though Odisha was enriched with the cultural phenomenon by the patrons and Jamindars, Rajas the cultural system of the villages were predominantly rural. In spite of the acceptance of the urban and western fashions in every and each urban one can find the rural cultural, tradition still smell in the view of wood carving, image making, dancing, music and other art forms. So we have chosen Cuttack a district of Odisha and also a city for our study. It may be another authentic reason that we belong to hat area, where we took birth; we have been culturing our lives. The area has such potential where the image makers have been tremendously surviving till today. To make us artists, the varied forms of those artists had a closer influence on our childhood and present artistic growths. The occasional ritualistic sculptures or images are the temporary structures. They are not to be compared with the sculptures of the temples, the Odd and the Goddesses reside. The temporary images are called Pitulas or Murtis. The puja mandapas are meant for Pitulas where they are installed for worship. Usually a four covered and front open structure with walls or collapsible or portable pandals structures are used. This happens when the village expend constituted through 'chanda' for the cultural and ritualistic images inside the puja mandapas. Though, the villagers worship the thakurani at their village corner, beneath a neem or a tamarind or a banyan tree all the year round, but in occasional rituals the village Karigaras are in great demand by the villagers. It is observed that the worship of the temporary pandal shrines are still prepared and organized by the members of the under privileged castes.

In the pandal the Pitulas like Lord Shiva, Lord Ganesha, Lord Kartikeya, Lord Rama, Lord Krushna and the demons like Mahishasura, Jalandhara, Mahakala etc. and Goddesses like Basantidurga, Mahishamardini Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Gajalakshmi, Chamunda, Chhinnamasta, Jogini, Kali etc, may be worshipped. Generally the Pitulas form Shakta and Shaiva cults are made by the Karigaras who have a tremendous artistic dignity and skills in trends of image making. That's why the pandal shrines and their Karigaras have been acquired grand prominence in the focus of the cultural history of Cuttack. The graceful clay images of Kataka Karigaras have their legendary reputations in the cultural stream of Odisha; Simultaneously the Katakari Karigaras have their remarkable skills in paintings along with the decorative crafts.

It will be helping for the classification is used in the different images made by the chitrakaras/ Karigaras, along with the identification of styles, which works of different areas of Cuttack. The

styles hardly conformed to modern provincial boundaries; the cultural areas have a local centre and peripheral regions where the local artistic characteristics are less distinct. We know, art and culture ignore political divisions and conditioned rather be geographic situations and ethnic characteristics. Virtually, the preference of subject matter, the treatment of details like costume and decoration characteristic each variation. Prominently image making in clay has been speeded over in Cuttack and other parts of Odisha.

The folk and urbanized quality of the katiki images is the primary virtue. Even though the actual craftsman ship is often amateur we find that they have a certain vitality and directness of expression. They represent the collective feelings of the people towards subjects which inspired devotion. We also like to search out the religious images and the changes of secular images along with perspective, measurements, anatomical prominence and in indication space and time. The colour distribution, design and modelling importance will be summarized. There is of course a certain range both of technical ability and expression could be doing documented. It will be reasonable discussion in the study to identify the craftsmanship of the individual and group Karigaras of different areas.

Most of the festivals are associated with the shrines and family traditions. The local people have tremendous faith on the Gods and the Goddesses enshrined earthly than celestial in as much as they share the joys and sorrows of their worshippers. They have their own festivals when the deities and the shrines are colourfully decorated according to the prescribed traditions and the community congregate to enjoy. Though the prescribed festivals are being celebrated in the houses following old traditions, but sometimes some of the festivals are celebrated in public places with plums and pleasure.

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