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Technical and Analytical Aspect of Traditional and Contemporary Pingla Patachitro

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Abstract

The Pingla patachitra was the oldest culture for Audio-Visual medium for enlightenment of the people about the versatile mythological and contemporaneous features/events. The chitrakar/painter use to adobe this culture as the choice of profession for the purpose of earning bread and butter by virtue of delivering Audio-Visual features before the public for enlighten the mythological and contemporaneous features. The sangrahasala/museum had been established only in Naya Pingla village where huge collection of old and modern patachitao and other artistic features. The usual ingredients for the preparation of typical patachitros are the herbal colours especially used in only old/ traditional scroll painting where as in modern scroll painting and others artistic technique enamel, fabric, and old herbal colour are used.

The significant achievement of the multiple pingla chitarakors (old and modern) are the center of attraction of the people home and abroad for the purpose of gathering experiences in the horizon of unique art culture at large.

Keywords: *Historical back-ground of Pingla, Patachitro Sangrahashalla, bahadur chitratakor, Technique of colour processing, traditional and modern scroll painting.*

1. Introduction:

The Midnapore District is the second largest district of West Bengal. The city Midnapore is also one of the oldest city of the State of West Bengal. It is learnt from the "পুরকীতি সমীক্ষা: মেদিনীপুর" (Fast edition 26. 01. 1987.), composed by Sri Tarapad Santra that one Medal Molla Roy dominated the vast area on the verge of the river Kansain for a long interval, and subsequently it is denominated as Midnapore but it has no historical authenticity at large. Pingla is one of the small villages of this

second largest district (Midnapore). This significant village Pingla is renowned for characteristics features of Art Culture, Potochitra and Scroll painting. The researcher visited various spots like 'Shyamsundar Chitrakar House', 'Bahadur Chitrakar Museum', 'Swarno Chitrakar House', 'Chandan Chitrakar House' etc and It was very much attractive for the viewers with their versatile achievement in the field of scroll painting.

The researcher met with Sri Shyamsundar Chitrakar (aged 83) and Sri Bahadur Chitrakar and

others by virtue of threadbare discussion on the issue he was experienced with the various aspect of traditional and contemporary feature of Scroll painting.

In the course of multiple research for the cultivation of Scroll painting within the ambit of Pingla, the researcher was surprised with traditional aspects of scroll painting and subsequent development and technical and analytical aspect in the direction.

Art literature Architecture are the expression of human creativity which are influenced by time place and personality. Art has its versatile expression which can never be restricted with in boundary.

During the phase of mid-18th century, a lot of Artists had been scattered in different localities of West Bengal like Chandannagar, Calcutta Kalighat, Birbhum, Burdwan, Bankura, Purulia, Murshidabad, Hooghly, 24 Parganas, Howrah etc. to survive their profession as the Artist. After that the Artist also take their shelter in Midnapore District at Pingla, Naya village which was renowned as ‘Patua’ (Chitrakar). The Chitrakar used to cultivate the culture of mythological and contemporaneous socio-economic aspects. The so-called Bengali painters used to develop the traditional Scroll painting in to manifold useful art like fabric design, enamel design and traditional herbal and natural mechanism. But the old generation use to preserve the creativity on the aspect of traditional mechanism till to date.

2. History of Pingla Patachita

In West Bengal there are many villages of Patachitra. Among them, a famous village Pingla the Patachitra of this place is a hidden gem of West Bengal. It is the bearer of own unique artistic and crafts tradition of centuries. Pingla is such a village

that brings out it’s grace and creativity and has earned good reputation as a centre of Chitrashilpa. People of West Bengal knows that small village Pingla as one of the potochitra villages but foreigners know it as one of the Indian traditional villages.

When did the ‘History of Patachitra’ of Bengal begin? And its classification:

The Patachitra of Bengal is a kind of Lockhart which is drawn on Pata or Canvas. It is one of the cultural traditions of ancient Bengal. When once there was no existence of usual art, then this Patachitra was also the bearer of artistic tradition. The person who draws Patachitrais called Patua.

Patua society is divided into five classes:

- 1) **Mistri Patua:** These persons make doll and image.
- 2) **Chitrakar Patua:** These persons draw pata and compose songs.
- 3) **Bede Patua:** These persons live on showing snake game.
- 4) **Bandure Patua:** These persons cause monkeys to dance.
- 5) **Viloky Patua:** These persons cause bears to dance.

Indeed, nomadic patuas in different districts took their profession according to their own will and in that way they were divided in various classes through different work. Originally, they all were known as chitrakar. At present the circumference of Patuas profession is increased.

On which the main aspect is:

Chitrakar Patua:

Really this community draws on the pata this word comes from Sanskrit word ‘patta’ that means cloth. The patua not only draws but also sings song telling a tale about the related drawings when he opens his scrolled painting to the visitors.

This pata-song which is called ‘Pitar song’ is one of the ingredients of entertainment to the people of Bengal in various religions and social rituals. Though in ancient time pata-songs were wholly broken out in the western part of Bengal, now it is heard in Nayagram of Pingla block has held this ancient tradition firmly. In the area there is a lot of families attached to pata-art and Patua-songs. Patua-songs are of three kinds, Lila episode, Panchakalyani and the songs related to keeping or

feeding of cows. Some important potsong singers are Dukhu Shyam, Rani Chitrakar, Gouri Chitrakar, Pulin Chitrakar.

Eventually the potuas live in different sector of West Bengal. The researcher collected various bio-data of this potuas from different journals, Reports and directed conversation with the individuals which are specified as follows:

Birbhum	: Shalpasla, Shibgram, Tarachi, Madialbegdhola, Malanchi, Danraka, Dadpur, Nalhati, Kusumgram, Pakurhas, Kusumyatra, Intagoria, Chandpara etc.
Burdwan	: Ketugram, Baranpur etc.
Bankura	: Bharatpur, Kalipahari, Beliatore, Khatra etc.
Purulia	: Gordi, Bonbahal, Gaturi, Neturia, Raghunath pore etc.
Murshidabad	: Kantarhat, Gokarna, Kandi, Amlot, Belpur, Kalapara, Jhilli, Sonabudhi, Gonkar, Mirjapore etc.
Hooghly	: Talchinan, Gopinathpore, Jalghata, Tribeni, Puinanetc.
24 Parganas	: Malancha, Joynagar, Diamondharbour, Fatepore, Bakultala, Gobindpore, Pathar-pratima, Kanchanbera etc.
Midnapore	: Naya, Barakumardah, Thenkuachalk, Kumirmara, Nankachalk, Saligram, Kulyachandanpore, Joykrishnapore, Baghagere, Marumia, Kanmdda, Habichalk, Kashijora, Keshabbara, Takapore, Karkta, Siurigram, Narajole (Near King’s Palace), Chetua, Nibbhaipore, Keshiari etc.
Howrah	: Andul, Litua, Kuchi etc.



3. Patachitra of Pingla, Midnapore

During the phase of multiple investigation the researcher visited the particular museum namely “PATACHITRO SANGRAHASHALA” situated at Naya, Pingla West Midnapore, owned by Sri Bahadur Chitrakar son of Sri Mohammed Chitrakar alias Montu and mother Smt Baharjan Chitrakar and experienced with versatile features of traditional patachitra of more than 100 year old. On the other hand he visited various contemporary features of scroll painting on tee-shirt, Saree, and aluminum, wood etc. imbibed with folk arts.

Patachitra is the impeccable creation of Jangalmahal. This Pingla area of west Midnapore has picked up much praise through making their Patachitras. The Patachitranmuseum of that Pingla area now draws the attention to the visitors of the whole world. Now Chitrakar Bahadur established a museum with lost elephants, horses of Pata, different foreign currencies, postal and various pot related books.

People from different countries gather here to watch and enjoy this museum:

Naya Pingla-gram is very famous for its Patachitras. Everybody will be pleased to come here. People come here to solve their different objects. Some appear to make their documentary, Again some come here for their research works (Photo 1, Annexure I).

Thereafter researcher also met with another veteran Chitrakar of 82 years old namely Sir Shyamsundar Chitrakar son of late Sri Abdul Chitrakar. He narrated that Village Pingla was founded by himself in collaboration with other colleagues. (Photo 2, 3, 4, 5. Annexure I)

4. Technical and Analytical Study and Process of Colours Making

Analytical study of different aspect of Pingla Patachitra and Technical study different Layers of Patachitra.

- Many scroll paintings were observed minutely at Naya Pingla village. The small village Naya Pingla is composed of 130 families most of which are engaged in versatile cultural activities. The researcher met with multiple chitrakars and observed verity of art cultural features of traditional and contemporary scroll printing and others.

Glue from wood apple:

The chitrakars used to prepare colour from various things. Then glue of ripe wood apple which is attached to its seeds was collected and mixed it with coloured water to strain through a sieve or mosquito net. Next it was stored in clean bottles. These bottles were kept in sunshine day after day to dry. In this way this glue of wood apple was made through heat.

Process of Glue making:

Glue of ballik was gotten from the stem of ballik plant. It is white in colour but as like as ginger to look. After washing them in water its skin was peeled off. Next it was rubbed with water on strainer to get pulp. This pulp was stored in a pot. After two or three hours the heavy particles were collected downhill of the pot. Clean water of the surface of the pot was thrown out. Then heat was applied on it with water (Ratio Ballik : water :: 1:10). At the time of heating when the mixture would become thick then the glue of ballik was made. A little copper sulphate was also added to it so that the insects were unable to destroy the scroll painting (Photo 6, Annexure I).

Tools:

- **Painting brush:** In that period the Chitrakars themselves made brushes with long hair which was cut from the neck and tail of the goat. Then these were tied to small branch of a

bamboo (The cut piece would be 10'' to 12'' long) with the help of thread. In case of fat brush more hair was used, for medium brush short quantity of hair was used, again for eye drawing long hair was used (Photo 7, Annexure I).

- **Glip:** These Chitrakars always used bag to carry their scroll paintings.
- **What condition of the picture:** The age of the picture (scroll painting) is about hundred years. For this, it is not in good condition. In one time this scroll painting was taken to villagers to show their picture with their singing songs. In this way the scroll painting was, opened and closed again and again. So it is sorely wounded.
 - (i) Problem of identity: In course of time the colour of the scroll painting has become light in many places. Especially the yellow colour is very very light.
 - (ii) The Scroll painting is just 14⁷/₇ long and 21¹/₃ suta wide. Because of such length the upper part of it has become badly wounded.
 - (iii) This scroll painting was divided in to 11 parts centered the story of Ramayana. Among them the wound of 1st, 2nd and 3rd parts has become more.
 - (iv) Among these Kahinichitras 6 & 7 parts have gone off here and there.
 - (v) The 11th picture (the last part) is large enough and its wounded part is very few.
 - (vi) The colour of the picture in the last part is still bright.

5. Case Study Old Scroll Printing:

Title : Ramayan is the main subject of these scroll paintings. (Photo 8, Annexure I)

After the marriage ceremony of Ram-Sita. Ram went to forest to reside for 14 years. While their residing in the forest Laxmana cut the nose of Supanakha, Rabana's Sister. To take revenge of

that action Rabana stole Sita and carried her to Lanka.

Material: These scroll paintings are made through much thinking, materials and technical aspect.

Paper: Thin handwriting paper and Thin art paper were used for this purpose. Total measurement of this scroll painting is:

Length 14⁷/₇ and width 21¹/₃ Suta. In that time it was impossible for the chitrakars to buy so long paper. So they joined many pieces of papers and art papers by stitching with needle and thread. In this way they could increase its length and width as their own will. That is to say, the chitrakars could make scroll painting of different sizes as they wanted. At the beginning such kind of scroll paintings were stitched with 1. 5'' each, later 2''-3'' each.

Cloth: When painting was completed on paper, after stitching pieces of papers, Then clothes were not used behind the scroll paintings. After using scroll for many years when those thin papers became in serious condition, that is about to tear, stitches became loose, then in order to save it for long period, pieces of old dhuti or sharee were glued behind the scroll painting.

Colour:

❖ **Green Colour:** From bean leaves, Halencha leaves, Mint leaves etc.

❖ **Red Colour:**

(i) From fruit seeds of Burmese grape.

(ii) Quick lime mixing with black cutch.

❖ **Yellow Colour:** From Turmeric, Raw Turmeric, Yellow coloured marigold etc.

❖ **Blue Colour:** From Clitoria ternatea.

❖ **White Colour:** From sunned rice, Ghusum soil etc.

❖ **Black Colour:** From charcoal, kerosene oil lamp or mustard oil lamp etc.

(Photo 9, Annexure I)

New Scroll Painting:

Title : Flood

❖ **Artist: Name:** Shyam Sundar Chitrakar.

❖ **Time Period:** This time (2022-24) AD.

❖ **Size:** 34" X 8" 5 suta

Collection: Shyam Sundar Chitrakar House.

In the year 2024 on 11th April the researcher met with Shyam Sundar Babu at his home and observed variety of modern/contemporary patachitro. The typical scroll painting had been prepared on linen cloth using old process of traditional colours small size sold at the affordable price of Rs 500 to 1000. (Photo 10, Annexure I)

- At present there is hardly any king's long and broad palace found anywhere. So, pictures (scroll) are not made any more for the Babu Shahib of the king's palace. Now most of the scroll paintings are made for all sections of men in society so that they can purchase these easily at minimum cost (such as Rs 500 or Rs 1000)

Subject :

Once when about all the houses of Midnapore district sank under water during flood, that time chief minister, Jyoti Basu of West Bengal with Prime Minister, Morarjee Deshai of India visited many flood affected areas and distributed relief among the victims, Shyam Sundar Babu lifted many different scenes of that time through his scroll paintings.

Material: Pursuit thinking and Technical aspect of making this new scroll painting.

Surface:

Cloth: This new scroll painting was not drawn on paper. It was wholly drawn on cloth.

- (i) This cloth which is naturally used in making shirts and trousers is pure cotton.
- (ii) To buy this cloth he has to order before.
- (iii) It's size is only 34" X 8. 5"
- (iv) Colour is done directly on cloth.
- (v) Colour is made after mixing leaves, flowers, terracotta, glue of wood apple etc.

- (vi) This scroll painting is made by drawing on a single full cloth without any stitch anywhere.

Conclusion:

The tiny village of Pingla famous for its versatile traditional and contemporary featured of scroll painting thought the world the Chitrakar of this typical scroll painting are utilized for earning bread and butter but at present this Art culture promoted the social development. These Chitrakar encouraged the various aspects of the scroll painting culture in home and abroad.

In the conclusion, it is said about Pingla Patachitra that the work which was once started in small size and with which work the Chitrakars could not maintain their family successfully, at present it has been possible to improve their works from all sides. Students from different countries now come here to increase their knowledge of Patachitras. The Chitrakars are getting chance to show and sell their works in different stalls of different cities with the help of the State Government. As a result they have been prodded economically and artistically. Their next generation are getting confidence to take this profession. It is hopeful to the country.

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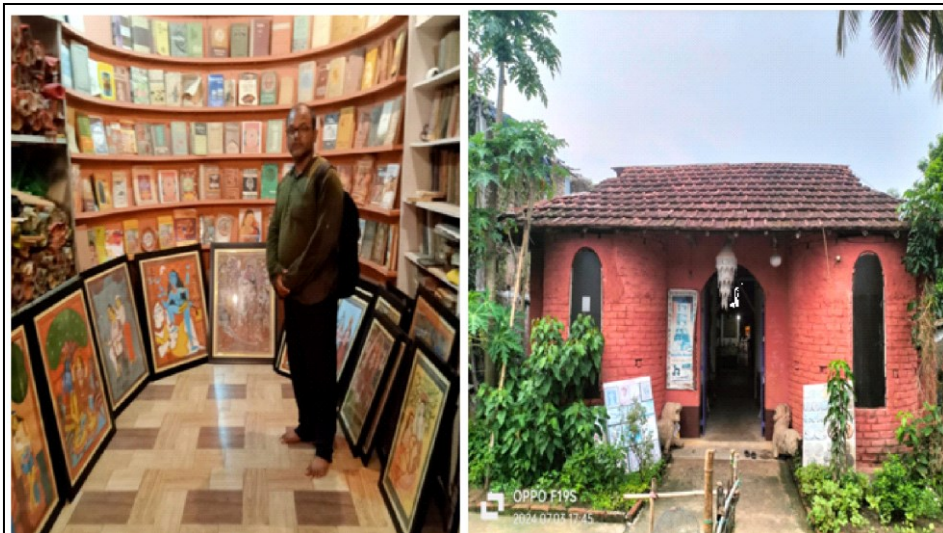
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Annexure I



1 No. : (Inside) A Small museum in Chitrakar Bahadur's House (Outside)
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur)



2 No. : Variety Potachitra
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur)



3 No. : 'T' Shirt, Bed Cover & Saree Painting
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur)



4 No. : Wood Electric Hariken
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur
Swarna Chitrakar House)



5 No. : Wooden Tray
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur
Bahadur Chitrakar House)



6 No. : Glue for woodapple
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur
Shyamsundar Chitrakar House)



7 No. : Old Painting Brush
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur
Shyamsundar Chitrakar House)



8 No. : Old Scroll Painting
(Collection of a small museum in
Chitrakar Bahadur's House in Medinipur)



9 No. : Natural Colour
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur
Shyamsundar Chitrakar House)



10 No. : New Scroll Painting
(Collection of Pingla Village in Medinipur
Shyamsundar Chitrakar House)