

Exploring the Patchitra of Pingla, Medinipur as a Potential Tool of Increasing the Environmental Awareness

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Abstract

The environment has deteriorated day by day in the age of urbanization and industrialization. The adverse effects of human growth on nature are always in the headlines. Deforestation has occurred as a result of this development process. Patchitra may have played a significant part in this. Patchitra has a considerable influence on environmental attitudes and hence plays a vital role in ecological protection. With the demonstrations, the artist encouraged reflection and conversation, conveying that we must break the cycle of destruction and avoid heinous crimes against nature and people. . The paper demonstrates how art has aided in environmental awareness. The primary goal of this paper is to increase awareness of the threats confronting the world, advocate its conservation, and motivate citizens to safeguard nature.

Keywords: Urbanization, Environment, Patchitra, Conservation

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Introduction:

The adverse effects of human growth on nature are always in the headlines. Deforestation has occurred as a result of this development process. Day by day, the environment has deteriorated. Smoke from the fires resulted in significant losses of environmental territories, local species, and air quality in cities worldwide. However, we must figure out how to raise environmental awareness. Patchitra can be an effective technique in this situation. Throughout the twentieth century, artists worldwide have inspired us to reconsider our relationship with the environment. This proposal dates back to the 1960s, when some artistic movements became known as Environmental Art, and it is much more critical today. The paper demonstrates how art has aided in environmental awareness. Until then, we'll learn about the significant environmental difficulties we've faced and some of the innovative solutions that have already been implemented. With the demonstrations, the artist encouraged reflection and conversation, conveying that we must break the cycle of destruction and avoid heinous crimes against nature and people. Our contaminated air and oceans, global warming, deforestation, and the environmental repercussions of mass consumption are just a few of the topics addressed by contemporary environmental art in photography, painting, theatre, dance, and sculpture, among other mediums. The primary goal of this paper is to increase awareness of the threats confronting the world, advocate its conservation, and motivate citizens to safeguard nature.

Materials and Methods:

The researched area in this paper is Naya Gram, Pingla, Medinipur District of West Bengal, India. Naya is a village in West Midnapore's Pingla block that has been able to celebrate the success of local artists in resurrecting village

history through a blend of art and music in a rural setting. The *Patuas/ Chitrakars* of Bengal live in the villages of Naya and Chandipur (East Midnapore). At least one artist lives in almost every home here. In Naya, there are approximately 53 Patua families. Patchitra designs have been painted on their homes. Traditional anthropological procedures such as questionnaires, interviews, assessments, and casual interactions were used to gather data. The data in this paper was collected using the purposive sampling technique. At individual interviews, group talks, and in-depth discussions with the people, randomizations and purposive sampling take precedence. This inquiry focuses on environmental protection and public awareness. For the study, both primary and secondary data were used. Published articles, journals, and books were used to gather secondary data.

Results & Discussion:

Patchitra is a one-of-a-kind folk art form that combines aural and visual narratives. Patchitra, a lengthy scroll illustrating a story, has been known in Bengal for generations. Several frames are painted to describe different portions of the tale with vivid imagery, explained by a piece of catchy music. Some speculate that the word *pata* originated in a non-Aryan or Austro-Asian culture. Gautama Buddha appreciated *Charanachitra*, a primitive kind of *pata* painting, according to Buddhaghosha. Banabhatta's *Harshacharita* contains an intriguing account of the display of *jam patta*. *Patua* songs are mentioned in Patanjali's *Mahabhasya*, Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, the classic Buddhist *Aryamanjushreemulakalpa*, and many other texts. Folk painters refused to follow the traditional method of painting (*Shastriya riti*) during the Pala and Sena eras, and as a result, they were classified in the *Nabasakh* group. During Turko-Afghan's political and social expansion in Bengal, they were forced to convert to Islam by Brahminical exploitation. They are thought to have built *Gazipata* to aid in propagating Islam (Dutta, 1990). As a result, it's easy to see why and how their work incorporated Hindu and Islamic cultural styles. This sense of belonging is mirrored in their birth, marriage, and death rites. Every *patua* in Medinipur and Bengal has two names, one Hindu and the other Islamic. The *patuas* or *chitrakars*, an ancient Bengali community, are thought to have been part of the nine-caste guild but became outcastes in the 12th century (Sengupta, 1973). Separate handmade paper panels are stitched and combined with thread and pieces of old sarees to create the scrolls. The *Chitrakars* splay the handmade paper on the floor of their verandah as soon as the paint is ready. The story is sketched on paper, and ink-soaked strokes are used to fill in the gaps.

They sing songs recounting the stories on the canvas while simultaneously unfurling their work in each hamlet, creating a vibrant oral tradition augmented by visual art. The majority of their subjects were religious. They featured Hindu and Muslim narratives, the most famous of which were portions of the *Ramayana* and the lives of popular Islamic saints. Though much of a *patua's* work is influenced by regional and personal preferences, stylistic and topic matter parallels exist across the *patua* community. To begin, there are two varieties of *pats*: *jadano* or scroll *pats*, which can be painted horizontally or vertically, and *chouko* *pats*, which are single square panels with a single scene or deity shown on them (Bose).

The *Patuas* traditionally collect eco-friendly colors from leaves, fruits, flowers, plants, trees, and other natural materials and use them effectively. Saffron is extracted from *Lotkon* leaves, blue is extracted from *Aparajita* flowers, brown is extracted from *Segun* tree, yellow is extracted from turmeric, black is extracted from charcoal, green is extracted from *Seem* or *Babal* tree, white is extracted from *Ghusum Mati*, and so on. They like to employ vivid colors on the *pata* and create aggressive brush strokes to communicate their aesthetic appeal effectively. To accompany the artwork, they produced a *pater gaan*, or story song. They describe the story by unrolling the hand-painted scroll frame by frame and singing the *pater gaan*.

The *Patuas'* songs are based on Indian mythology and many social themes such as human trafficking, girls' education, rural elections, rationing, etc. Their paintings also include social messages such as tree protection, female infanticide, child trafficking, and AIDS awareness. Despite the worry of a Corona epidemic, Bengal's Patchitra is currently being used to raise awareness and deliver crucial messages to rural Bengalis. A Patchitra on the outbreak by veteran artist Swarna Chitrakar of Paschim Medinipur in West Bengal leads from the front. To represent the mayhem and misery caused by the viral epidemic, Swarna Chitrakar has painted a comprehensive

tale with individuals donning masks and PPE jackets. The virus is depicted as a giant red monster. The artist created a seven-frame scroll and a tune that included all pertinent information. This award-winning artist discusses a "global agony," from how the virus may have begun in China to the sufferings around the world. Not only that but there's more. She discusses various preventative measures and the selfless work and sacrifices made by medical personnel in her vivid and instructive artwork. They are attempting to educate the public through their son. During the research, several types of Patchitra based on environmental awareness were discovered, which are listed below:

The Jorano Pat on The Plantation of Trees has been discussed below-

“O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon

Gach lagaile pore

Manusher upokar kore

Batase se niswas dhore

Gcher o dharon

O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon

Gach thakile pukur pare

Mach kintu tin gun bare

Matike se akre dhore

Dhose na kokhon

O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon

Tal gachete upokar pai

Tal gurar michri to pai

O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon

Narkel gacher upokar pai

Narkel koto kaje lagai

Daab jol dhali Shiber mathay

Shastrer likhon

O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon

Gach theke oushodher jonom

Upokarer jibon moron

Ayurbedik oushodh dharon

Kore sorbojon

O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon

Gach nei moruvumite

Chash hoyna sei deshete

Manush na pare cholate

Ut zambahon

O jonogon

Sobai mile koro gach ropon”

The patuas are asked to conduct afforestation in this song mentioned above. In this song, the importance of trees is emphasized. The trees, according to the motif, provide us with oxygen. Fish output is increased by planting

trees near the pond. The tree clings to the earth to keep it from becoming loose. Palm and coconut trees have also been touted as having advantages. Plants are used to make Ayurvedic remedies. It will become a desert if not enough is done, and people will be unable to move. As a result, humans must rely on Camels as transportation. Thus, the Patuas of Pingla village uses Patchitra and song to encourage people to grow trees.

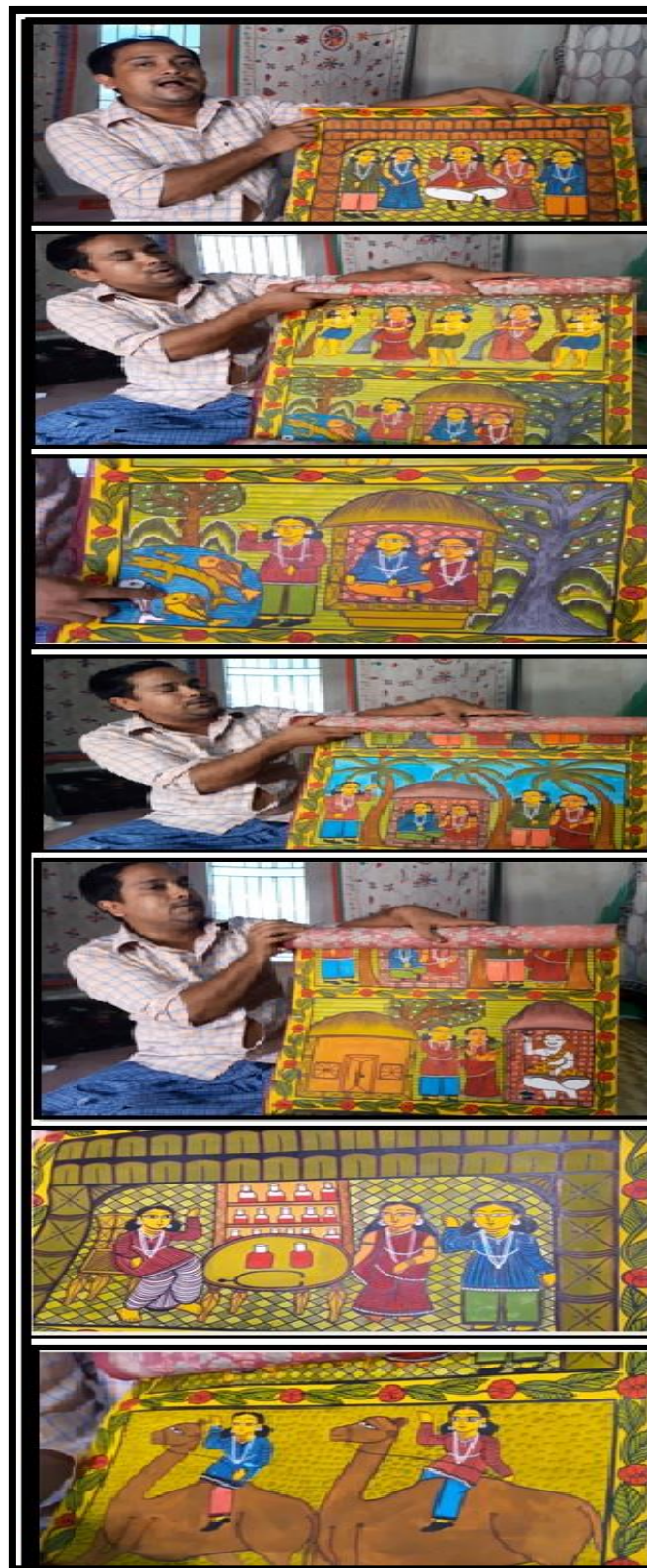


Fig.1 : Patchitra on tree plantation

This painting tells a story about environmental awareness and the need of tree preservation. The story discusses the importance of water bodies and the environment as a whole, as well as how trees provide humans with oxygen. On hot days, trees give shade and provide us with fruits and medications. Agriculture and farms play a vital role in supplying food and living. The lessons of this narrative are tree conservation and more tree planting.

Another type of Pat on the theme of afforestation has been given below-



The scenario of paddy cultivation has been portrayed through the above mentioned Pat chitra.

Conclusion:

The environment has deteriorated day by day in the age of urbanization and industrialization. Patchitra may have played a significant part in this. Patchitra has a considerable influence on environmental attitudes and hence plays a vital role in ecological protection. The patuas have asked people not to take down trees through their

representation. They write songs on current events. They bring to the attention of the public a variety of everyday concerns. Both the community and their art face many obstacles in the age of popular mass media and, more recently, after globalization. Spreading contemporary education among them should be a fundamental component of any solution. The intervention and inclusion of New Media is assistance in the process as the dying art of Patchitra, like most other folk art forms from throughout the world, faces a struggle. However, the groundwork is being laid to broaden the platform to accommodate various urban cultures from around the world, extending beyond Bengal's borders. As a result, visual representations, stories, and traditions evolve to meet a worldwide consumer need.

On the other hand, a minute should be taken to consider if the art generated should be called Patchitra. In modern society, changing socio-cultural and economic circumstances, a new shape, new format of storytelling, and new role-playing appears to have evolved into a new avatar. On the other hand, adding a nomenclature to this new existence can be described as "influenced and inspired" by the Patchitra type of folk painting and developed by stealing essences from the folk tradition would be hasty and wrong. The Patchitra has progressively regained its new voice to continue new conversation formats with society, making it ground to explore for a global audience. However, it remains to be seen how the dialogue's repertory develops through new momentum and typology, as it will serve as an essential thread of historical continuity for future generations.

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