

The study of Indigenous Art & Iconography

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Abstract:

This paper intends to present Indigenous Peoples from local, regional, national, and international communities and lands share their creative inspirations, cultures, and histories through art, living objects, and cultural education. The materials and techniques shaped by the innate knowledge of culture and land are reflected in indigenous artworks. Indigenous artists and art can be found all over the world. With an increasing number of contemporary Indigenous artists, the international profile of Indigenous art keeps rising. The Gallery's collection aims to acknowledge global Indigenous artists and art that contribute to both individual and global art histories, taking into account the varied cultural and geographic makeup of Indigenous visual arts worldwide. Many Indigenous peoples continue to struggle with complicated histories of migration, forced relocation, and dispossession of ancestral lands, whether they live in urban areas or remote communities in nearly every nation. India's indigenous art includes a wide variety of folk and tribal customs that have been passed down through the ages. These regional variations in indigenous styles have their roots in mythology, folklore, and a profound respect for the natural world. They illustrate everyday life, harvests, and spiritual beliefs using unique symbolic geometries, natural dyes, and regional materials. In art, iconography is both a subject and an academic discipline. It involves looking beyond the basic style of a piece to identify the deeper meaning of specific gestures, subjects, and objects.

Keywords: History, Art, Architecture, Iconography, Indigenous etc. . . .

Objectives:

To Understand the indigenous art in History.

To comprehend iconography in history.

To analyse indigenous art.

Methodology:

This study is based on explanation and analysis methods. Indigenous art and its characters and in history iconographical study taken into consideration for analysis.

Introduction:

The study of indigenous art:

A wide variety of tribal, folk, and classical styles that have been passed down through the generations are included in indigenous Indian art forms. These customs, which use natural pigments, vivid geometries, and complex storytelling, have their roots in mythology, daily rituals, and a profound respect for nature.

For instance:

Madhubani (Mithila) Painting, Bihar: Traditionally painted by women on newly plastered mud walls, it is distinguished by elaborate geometric patterns, vivid colors, and themes of nature and mythology.

Gond Art, Madhya Pradesh: This art form, which comes from one of the biggest tribes in India, connects humans to nature by depicting folklore, flora, and fauna with rhythmic dashes and dots.

Maharashtra's Warli paintings use simple, monochromatic shapes like squares, triangles, and circles to depict rural life and agricultural rhythms.

Pattachitra, Odisha: Highly detailed, cloth-based scroll paintings that showcase intricate narratives of Hindu deities, particularly Lord Jagannath, using rich natural colors.

Sohrai and Khovar, Jharkhand: Indigenous murals created by tribal women during weddings and harvest seasons, featuring striking black-and-white earth pigments or vibrant red and yellow ochres.

Kalamkari, Andhra Pradesh: A style using organic, hand-painted or block-printed cotton textiles to illustrate epic mythological narratives with natural dyes.

Cheriyal Scroll Painting, Telangana: Vibrant, narrative scroll paintings historically used by village storytellers to depict legends, myths, and everyday life.

Beadwork, carving, stitching, and painting are just a few of the Indigenous art forms that are associated with ancestral knowledge and healing techniques that connect the mind and spirit with the natural world.

The study of iconography in History:

In art, iconography is both a subject and an academic discipline. It involves looking beyond the basic style of a piece to identify the deeper meaning of specific gestures, subjects, and objects. For instance:

Religious Art: The Holy Spirit is frequently represented by a white dove in Renaissance paintings, while Christ is represented by a lamb. Historical Context: Historians can better piece together the ideals of earlier societies by comprehending the unique iconography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs or political propaganda.

The Greek word ikon, which means image, is where the term originates. In the Orthodox Greek Church, icons were originally depictions of Christ on panels that were used as objects of devotion starting at least in the seventh century. As a result, the term "icon" has come to refer to any exceptional or uniquely meaningful object or image. An iconography is a specific range or system of image types that an artist or artists use to express specific meanings. For instance, the lamb, which stands for Christ, and the dove, which stands for the Holy Spirit, are examples of iconography found in Christian religious paintings. However, the presence of a dove in classical myth iconography would imply that any woman present would be the goddess Venus or Aphrodite, so the significance of specific images can vary depending on the context.

The term "iconography" describes a collection of particular image types that artists employ in their works to communicate deeper meanings. Reading pictures critically in light of pertinent social and cultural values is known as iconographic analysis. A common

understanding of iconography is that it is a visual language that can educate viewers about particular ancient and contemporary cultures and societies. In addition to the visual arts, other academic fields like anthropology, sociology, media studies, and cultural studies also make use of iconography.

The word 'iconography' is derived from the Greek words 'icon' and 'graph', where 'icon' means 'image' and 'graph' means 'to write'. Artists, craftsmen and makers have used icons and symbols to represent aspects of their cultures and societies for millennia. The earliest icons in visual art depicted religious or mythological figures. As early as the seventh century, images of Jesus Christ were depicted on panels displayed in Greek Orthodox churches.

Throughout art history, artists have used symbolic objects as part of their subject matter, and the study and interpretation of these symbols is what we call iconography. An artist's use of a particular image in his or her work to symbolise a particular meaning did not become part of iconographic studies until the 16th century. Emblems and symbols were collected from manuscripts and other forms of literature, and their meanings were identified or translated so that artists could use them in their works, such as still life. It was not until the 18th century that iconography became commonplace. Iconography became a tool that accompanied archaeologists during their excavations so that they could classify symbols, themes and motifs in ancient monuments and objects. Iconography later became a method to decode religious symbolism in the visual arts of the 19th century. Christian icons such as the lamb and the white dove, representing Christ and the Holy Spirit, were among the more popular icons in Western religious art. Eastern religious art, classical European art and secular art also use icons and symbolism. However, an icon will have a different meaning when read in a different iconography. The white dove, for example, is a symbol of the Holy Spirit in Christian iconography, a symbol of life in Judaism, but is associated with the Greek goddess Venus or Aphrodite in classical mythology. Joseph Beuys created his iconography in the 20th century using seemingly random objects. In order to convey his thoughts about society and life, he employed materials like felt, grease, and honey. It appears that iconography can be intricate and that a nearly infinite number of things or individuals can have meaning. However, iconography is still frequently used in modern artists' creations.

Conclusion:

Thus this study suggests that the visual and symbolic depictions of gods and philosophies found in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions are included in Indigenous art and iconography. To convey intricate spiritual stories, it uses mudras (hand gestures), asanas (postures), and particular characteristics. Iconography is the branch of art history that studies the identification, description, and interpretation of visual symbols and images. It goes beyond artistic style to decode the deeper cultural, religious, or political meanings behind specific subjects, objects, and compositions. By understanding these visual cues within their specific historical context, readers can unlock the true intended message of an artwork, whether it is a Renaissance altarpiece or a piece of modern political propaganda.

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