



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ART IN INDIA: ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND BRITISH PERIOD

Anirban Ghosh

Research Scholar, Department of Education ,
University of Kalyani, Kalyani, Nadia, West Bengal.

INTRODUCTION:

European taste began to double the established canons of the 19th century and looked to Asia and Africa for fresh aesthetic experience. From that time to this most authorities on the subject, Indian and European alike, have stressed the religious and mystical aspect of Indian art. In all these phases there is a horror vacui and an intense vitality which remained as rather of this world than the next, and suggest to us the warm bustle of the Indian city and the turbulent pullulating of the Indian forest.

BACKGROUND OF THE ART IN ANCIENT, MEDIEVAL AND BRITISH PERIOD :

The tendency of Indian art is diametrically opposite to that of medieval Europe. The temple towards, through tall, are solidly based on earth. The ideal type is not abnormally tall, but rather short and stocky. Gods and demigods alive are young and handsome; there are rounded and well nourished, often by European standards rather effeminate. Occasionally they are depicted as girm or wrathful, but generally they smile, and horror is rarely portrayed. With the exception of the type of the dancing Siva the sacred icon is firmly grounded, either seated on which both feet flat on the ground.

Indian art is not so much a ceaseless quest for the absolute as a delight in the world as the artist found it, a sensual vitality and a feeling of growth and movement as regular and organic as the growth of living things upon earth.

The wonderful Maruryancolumns with finely carved capitals fall rather under the head of sculpture than of architecture, for most of those which service had not architectural purpose. Fragments of similar columns, found at Patna, supported the roof a palace, which has been reasonably identified as that of Asoka.

In the period between the Maurja and the Guptas much wealth and energy were spent on Buddhis architecture, and the older stupas were greatly enlarged and beautiful of these are specially note worthy- those at Bharhut and Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh, and at Amaravati in the

lower valley. The Bharhut Stupa perhaps in its present form dating from the middle of the 2nd Century B.C. is important chiefly its sculpture and the stupa itself has now vanished.

The stupa of Amaravati, which in its final form was completed C.A.D. 200, was larger than that of Sanchi, and it was adorned with carved panels (some of which can be in the British Museum) telling the story of the life of the Buddha. Meanwhile in Northern India stupas grew taller in proportion to their bases. They were often set on square platforms, which in Burma and Indonesia were developed into stepped pyramids, the largest of which is the enormous Stupa of Borobodur, in Java, built in the 8th century A.D. pinnacles became higher, and developed towards the spire forms of the present day temples of Burma and Siam.

The finest single example is the great chaitya hall at Karli, probably made about the beginning of the Christian era. This is cut 124 feet deep into the rock, and is of the same general pattern as that at Bhaja and many other caves of the Western Deccan, but much developed in size and splendor. The columns are no longer plain and austere, but, by a process which can be traced through earlier stages, they have become heavy and ornate.

The crowning achievement of Ellora is the great Kailasnatha Temple, excavated on the instructions of the Rashtrakuta emperor Krsna I (C.A.D. 756-773). With this the concept of the cave temple was transcended from the king was not satisfied with a mere hollow in the rock.

Most famous of Kashmir's early temples is the temple of the Sun at Martand, dating from the 8th century. There are no remains of free standing Hindu temples erected before the Gupta period, though by time they must long have been built in wood, clay and brick.

The medieval period in India was like the middle ages in Europe, an age of faith. With better techniques of stone construction new temples sprang. The great temple of Madhurai is the most famous and beautiful of these, but the largest is the Vaishnavite temple of Srirangam, which is contained in an outer wall measuring 2,475 by 2,880 feet, and has six inner walls at all with gopurams, surrounding a shrine of comparatively modest proportions.

Medieval North Indian architecture is best illustrated by three schools – those of Orissa, Bundelkhand, and Gujarat and South Rajasthan. There were other local developments, as well as the distinctive style of Kashmir.

The Orissan school flourished from the 8th to the 13th centuries, and its chief monuments lie in and around the towns of Bhubaneswar and Puri. The finest Orissan temple is the Lingaraja at Bhubaneswar, which shows the north Indian shikhara in its final form.

The most famous buildings of this school are the lovely Jaina Shrines of Mount Abu, the style of which is fundamentally not very different from that of Khajuraho. The temples built on high platforms and usually consisted of a shrine and hall only without an entrance portico.

Several cities of Rajasthan and Gujarat have finely carved gateways from the medieval period. But though secular architecture was not doubt highly developed. It is clear that India's architects and masons devoted their greatest energies to temple building working according to strict traditions, but showing much ingenuity and originally within the main standardized patterns, they erected monuments of fantastic beauty with the simplest technical equipment.

In sculpture, and often in painting also, all the gods were depicted on its walls, every aspect of divine and human existence symbolized. Like Hindu civilization itself, the temple was at once voluptuous and austere, rooted in earth, but aspiring to heaven.

CONCLUSION

Indian Art believes in realism. Eastern Ideological philosophy. Western Art believes in realism. Figurative pictures, constant pictures, that picture and to compose cartoon pictures all these were characteristics of art-work of British India.

In British India different types of European Art such as natural idea, naturalism, cubism, portrait, influenced the Indian Art. The oil painting on the basis of court of emperor on the basis of Epic care influenced by all those.

REFERENCE

1. Archer W.G. & Archer M./Paintings for British (1770-1880), Oxford-1955.
2. Appasamy. J./Abanindranath Tagore and the Arts of his Times, New Delhi-1966.
3. Archer W.G./Kalighat Paintings, London-1971.
4. AnandMulkraj/Painting of Rabindranath Tagore New Delhi-1985.
5. Aggarwal J.C./Land marks in the History of Modern Indian Education. VikashPublishing House, P.V.T., Ltd.-1996.
6. Archer W.G./India and Modern Art, London-1959.
7. Acharyya, Birendramohan/SiksharBhavdhara, Calcutta Bookshitya – 1965.
8. Aggarwal R.C./Constitutional History of India and National Movements, New Delhi – 1978.
9. Birdwood G./Industrial Art of India.
10. BasuAtul/Bangla Chitrakala O RajnitirEkshoBachhar, Kolkata-1993.
11. Basham A.L./The wonder that was in India Fountana Collins-1977.
12. Bell George & Sons/History and prospects of British Education in India, London-1891.
13. Curry J.C./The Indian police, new Delhi-1977.
14. Coomaraswamy A.K./Art and Swadeshi madras-1913.
15. Chandra Pramod/The Art Heritage of India – D.B. Taraporevala, Sons & Co. Pvt. Ltd., Bombay-1964.
16. Davis, E. Helen and Faulkner N. Roy, Teacher Enjoy the Arts, American Council of Education, Washington D.C.-1943.