

Folk and Minor Art in India
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Lecture - 24
Patachitra of Bengal and Odisha

We were talking about artistic freedom of choosing the composition, line, form, tone, texture, and color, and being as free as possible. And also choosing to be away from royal patronage, but also brings restrictions and positions as a compulsory package. The folk painters also adhere to some rules that were of their own.

So, when we look at the art works of Raghu Rajpur and also joining disgrace like danda shai or puri. We see in their art works both in the palm leaf and gratings those lines and linear art works. As well as in the Patachitra we see that they using that certain restriction operates the rules that are fixed by most the traditional Shilpa Guru's who are the master minds of all those compositions. And they provide the artists in the community with some restrictions that as more like a building block or I must put it this way so that is the skeleton structure of the composition, so that helps them to keep up with the strong identity

At the same time they can alter and change it according to their wish. So, when we see all those skeleton structures that are found and when we also match them with the creation that is happening now we see that it was not so stringently associated with that, it was not so strictly followed throughout. It is very important to realize that. So, we will see some of the pictures to remind ourselves of the style of Raghu Rajpur's Patachitra, and after that we will also see how the space divisions were restricted, what it was suppose to be.

So, I am following a manual that was printed under the patronage of the ministry of the handicraft Government of India and I am just going by the norms that were set up there. And work was also taken up by Shilpa Guru Anantha Maharana. In most of the art work we see that he has manual written and made diagrams to show the basics space division that is traditionally there just to remind people of the rule that existed. At the same time

there have been no restrictions or licensing for that. That is perhaps the reason why it gives it particular regimentation divide of anything that is a very super imposed now. So, let us realize that with examples.

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So, this is one Ramayana where we feel that the entire composition is a single trend composition. So, all the episodes that we have been discussing so far that we like it is different from the Patachitra's that we have seen in the previous lecture that belong to the districts of West Bengal in Belpur, Midnapore and Mosahdabad, like it is a very different way of depicting things in a single frame. So, it is not a scroll that has to be rolled up and unrolled to unfold the stories to all, but here it has a linear formation but with some restricted guide lines.

So, what we see there are circular and rectangular frames like with the very strong border, also the space division has symmetry in it. So, lots of asymmetry can intricate images are arranged through the basic symmetry that is there but that is a maintaining the strength of the composition. It is organizing and arranging things right at place and it makes the task of the viewer much easier in that way. It gives us a very interesting and harmonious experience to go through the image and try to see it for it is iconic also the symbiotic aspects, appreciated from those points of view as well as understand the

happening that is in the form of a story and what was happening to the story. So, it gives the indication of the theme of it. I will you show another image which is slightly different in the color scheme, but it has the strong identity.

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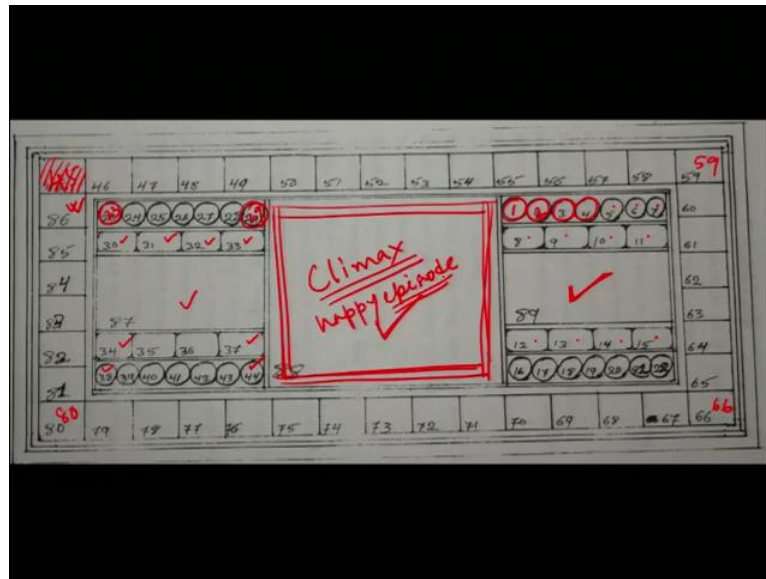
So, it has its individual identity, but it is different from the previous one. This one is also colorful, but the colors are restricted to secondary colors. So, the shade is slightly different from the previous one, but space division almost remains the same. Though in this picture we do not see any episode that is taking place in a rectangular frame, but the overall division of the frames has a rectangular emphasis into it with lots of different other shapes which are mostly circular with some angularities into it. And it is the same episode of the Ramayana that is shown in the picture.

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Now, this is another picture where we see a temple structure into it. So, the temple is holding the main idol of Ganesha, and all over in the border what we see there is a circular frame that has Ganesha dancing in different poses. And it was found out from the interview that when the Maharana families of painters they are exploring the Ganesha's the dancing Ganesha form they taking the reference from the classical temples of Odisha. They go there and study the different classical dancing gestures of the Ganesha and they are incorporating all those mudras and gestures and their arts works which is changing every day. There also happy with the innovation that is taking place in their art work.

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So, let us also see the skeleton structure of it in its basic form. What we are getting to see in place particular diagram that I mentioned was created by Shilpa Guru Annatha Maharana, and it was created under the supervision of the documentation; it is a documentation report of Patachitra the traditional painting of Odisha that is based in dandashahi puri. Odisha sponsored by the office of the development commissioner handicrafts Government of India, ministry of textiles in Delhi.

So, the numbers are visible and now I am going to read out the text which are correspondent to all those numbers. In this frame this is trend number 1 we start with that then we see trend number 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 then it comes to 12 13 14 15 16 to 22 23 to 27 then 30 31 32 33 34 to 37 38 to 44 then it comes to the fourth trend that is 45 then it goes till 59 comes down to 66 again goes to the left till 80 then 81 82 83 84 85 86 and then rich this in the circular order. After 86 we see 87 88 and 89.

The frame that is right at the center that is actually the 88th frame. So, it is not the end of the story not the ending episode, but the last episode is happening somewhere here, but this is right before that. This is almost like a climax. They usually prefer to have some happy episodes here. So, it is either the climax or happy episode or the both. That is how

the general rule is. Now I am going to explain you the instructions that is correspondent to the number of the frames.

So, frame 1 was a stranger was brought by the prostitutes, 2 was a stranger conducted yajna, 3 King Dasharatha gave chalu to the queen. Rama, Lakshman, Bharath, Kshthrugan took birth in frame 4 - Rama, Lakshman were named, frame 5 - Rama Lakshman played with mother, frame 6 - Dasharath gave advice to Rama and Lakshmana, frame 7 and 8 - Rama and Lakshmana were educated on operation of bow and arrow, 9 - discussion between Dasharath and Valmiki, 10 - the killing of Tarka, 11 - while guru was conducting yajna to guard him, 12 - Rama, Lakshmana nursing their teacher, 13 - to recoup Ahalya, 14 - baking of shiva dhanu the bow, 15 - marriage ceremony of Rama and Sita, 16 - Rama met Parashurama, 17 - Rama, Lakshmana, Sita, Valmiki returned Ayodhya, 18 - talking between Rama and Sita they are in conversation, 19 - discussion of King Dasharatha to declared Ram as a King. Manthra persuade Kaikeye. Kaikeye pulled out her ornaments and slept with the irritation. Kaikeye palced Ramachandra.

23 - King Dasharatha ordered Rama, 24 - Rama Lakshmana Sita when to the forest. 25 Rama, Laksmana to blessings of Valmiki. 26, Rama, Lakshman, Sita crossed a river with the boat. 27 - death of King, 28 - Bharath and Ksharthrugan beet Mantra, 29 - went to the Chitrakuta mountain to bring back Rama with his soldiers. 30, Bharath made Rama. 31, the sandal of Rama was worshipped putting them on the throne of Ayodhya. 32, shardha ceremony to Dasharath, 33 - Bharath gave protection to Rama and Sita. 34, Lakshman cut of the nose off Surpanaka. 35, Surpanaka informed Ravana. 36, magic deer roamed near the cottage of the Rama. 37, Ram ran after the magic deer. 38, Lakshman went after Ram after cutting three straight lines that is the Lakshman rekha. 39, Ravana abducted Sita. 40, Ravan killed Jatayu.

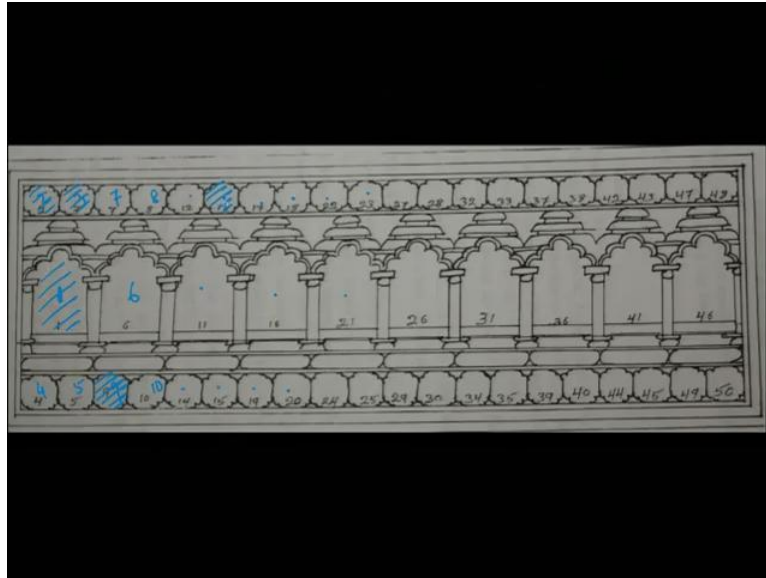
41, Sita remains in the Ashokha forest. 42, the killing of (Refer Time: 15:26). 43 - funeral of Jatayu. 44, Rama Laskhmana met with the Shabari. 45, Rama Lakshman met Hanuman who was in disguise of (Refer Time: 15:46). 46 - the friendship with sugriva. 47, fight between Vali and Sugriva. 48 - the killing of Vali, 49 - to see the Lanka sitting in the property of the asta shambu. 50, to locate Sita Rama gave his ring Hanuman. 51,

Hanuman jumped Mahendra hill in the sea in the Mahendra Parvatha. 52, Hanuman met Lanka Devi. 53, Lanka Devi blessed Hanuman. 54, Hanuman met Sita in the Ashoka forest. 55, Hanuman fought with demons in the Ashoka forest. 56, the killing of the Akshaya Kumar, 57 - Hanuman was bought to King Ravana. 58, the tail of Hanuman was (Refer Time: 17:00) with fire. 59, Hanuman put fire in the city of Lanka. 60, Hanuman gave Maha Mani the head jewel to Rama.

61, the monkeys constructed two dam, 62 - the inauguration of the setu bandha. 63, Ravan beat vibhishan and raven away from the house. 64, vibhishan surrender before Rama. 65, Indrajith lifted the foot of angadha. 66, queen Mandodhari requested Ravana to feel Sita. 67, Ravan put Ram and Lakshman in naga pasha or the snake attack. 68, the fight of Indrajith with Lakshman, 69 - Shakthi Veda of Lakshman, 70 - Bharath attacked Hanuman in his bow. 71, Kumbakarna wake up from the sleep, 72, Kumbakarna was killed. 73, the yajna of Indrajith was spoiled. 74, Indrajith was killed. 75, Mahiravana conspired to sacrifice Rama and Lakshmana, 76 - Ravan show magic cade to Sita to fear or scare her. 77, Ravan arranged yajna to please (Refer Time: 18:55). 78, Ravan donated 108 lotuses to please Goddess Durga. 79, the army of Ravana fled. 80, the Gods presented Ram the divine chariot.

81 - the fight between Rama and Ravana, 82 - the 10 heads of Ravana was cut off by Rama, 83 - the killing of Ravana. 84 - the examination of Sita through fire, 85 - the incarnation of Rama as King. 86, the return of Rama, Lakshmana, Sita to Ayodhya by Pushpak. And 87, 88 these two frames are kept for some happy episodes. So, it is either the marriage to be highlighted in those pictures which is part of previous episode but it has be compulsorily brought back at the end of it to make it the center focus of the whole composition.

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So, I will explain the space division for this particular frame which is based on Dashaavatar subject. So, these are the paintings that are based on the Dashaavatara theme the dash-avata; dash is 10 and avata means incarnations. So the 10 incarnations of Vishnu and the stories and the resource are all related to this 10 incarnations. It has a very interesting space division. I will highlight the order of the space division.

I will highlight the space division which is formed anybody interesting order. So, I am just highlighting it for your viewing. This is the frame 1 then 2 3 4 5 then comes 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 and so on. I will describe the themes that are there in each frame. Like depth in the earliest life. So, the episodes starts with frame 1, the construction of the temple starts from the order of King Narasimha Dev. 2, the Lord Narada instructed King Narasimha Dev to invite Lord Bramha to inaugurate the temple. Frame 3 while King Galu Madhav was roaming it is horse was obstructed by the blue well or Neela Chakra of the temple. The King Galu Madhav instructed laborers to dig out the temple, 4.

The King Galu Madhav and Narasimha Dev asking to color to certain who is the creator of temple, 6; the King and the queen worshiped before wishing that is a yajna, 7. Jalasandhar took Vidya Pathi to the temple in blind folded state, 8. Jalasagar and Vidya

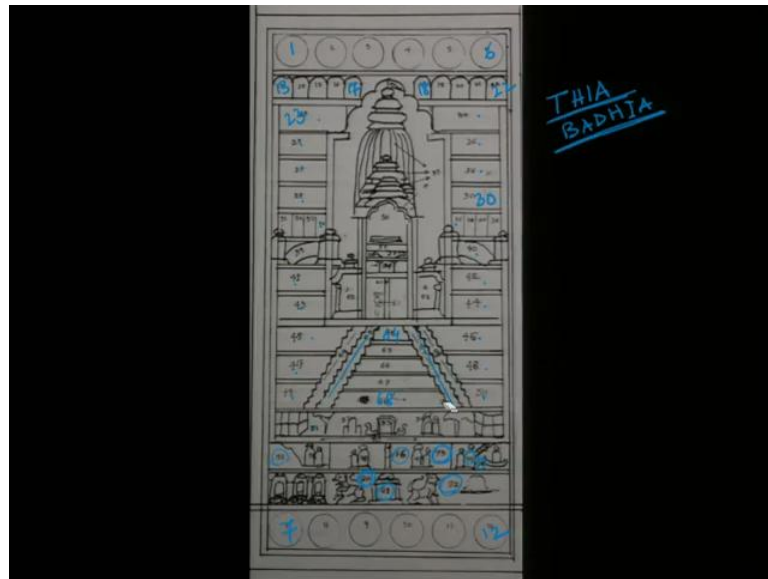
Pathi had looked to the shrine, 9. The King Narasimha Dev and Vidya Pathi ordered the old carpenter to prepare the statutes of the (Refer Time: 23:32) within 21 days and that becomes the 9th frame which is also quite important for the story, but it comes somewhere here. So, it has a very slow movement and that makes it very rich, because their many frames telling many stories which are the part of the single story.

So, in the 9 frame we see that they decide to create the temple in 21 days. Since, the carpenter was old he remained in starvation for 9 days, the King opened the door to know whether the carpenter is dead or alive. When she opened the door she could see the statutes are incomplete and carpenter was not there. In fact, the carpenter was Lord Vishwa Karma. 11, the King ordered to open the door of the temple. 12, the King and the queen worshipping the (Refer Time: 24:44). In the frame 13 we see Matsya, 14-Kashyapa, 15-Baraha, 16-Rishinga, 17-vaamana, 18-Parashurama, 19-Rama, 20-Balarama, 21-Buddha, 22-Kalki the 10 incarnations, 23-we see the Kanchi of Vijana journey to Kanchi, 24-Ravana chatra bhanga, 24-Anatha Shayan of Vishnu, 26-the Barabali Hanuman, 27-Rasalila, 28-Rasalila continued, 29-the (Refer Time: 25:48) in the temple; the deti's are Ganesha, Narayana, Krishna.

30-the (Refer Time: 25:57) in the temple they are Kali, Bhairavi, Mathangi and Astamala, 31-Bakasura, 32-Largasura, 33-Sangasura, 34-Sakatasura, 35-Thronasura, 36-(Refer Time: 26:28), 37-(Refer Time: 26:32) throna, 38-Putana, 39-Ghooda dwara that is the utara dwara the horse store the north door, 40-(Refer Time: 26:47) dwara, the dakshian dwara elephant door the south door, 41-Vimala temple, 42-Lakshmi temple, 43-the (Refer Time: 26:59) in the temple of Noshingha, Harachandi and Bhairavi, 44-the (Refer Time: 27:08) in the and the temple Narayani bayravi, Barghavi, marriage of Lord Shiva in 45, 46- Rama abhisheka, 47- Mayamrega; the magic deer, 46-the abduction of Sita or the Sita chori, 47-(Refer Time: 27:32) means the kitchen room, 48-Benkisala, 49-the Amar mat, 50-(Refer Time: 27:47).

So, that is the description of all this frames that are very well framed by the master minds of the painting. And the community painter they follow this norms.

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We also see similar space division in to another tradition named Thia Badhia. That gives the structure of the temple and other episodes takes place in all most in the same order. And this is very common in this tradition. So, in Thia Badhia that is quite or well known frame or com positional arrangement there I will just give you the indication of the arrangement of different slides. So, this is 1 to 6 and then 7 to 12 then comes 13 to 17 then 18 to 22, 23 to 29. In this order 23 24 25 26 27 28 20 and 30, then 31 to 38 that is 31 to 34 here, 35 to 38, then comes 39 40 41 42.

So, it gives it a mirror image; 43 44 45 46 47 48 50. Then 51 to around 59 somewhere here then we again go back and there are flexibilities there are panels to 60 61 62 63 and then comes 64 to 68 here and then gain it goes back till the other 71 was there, so 71 72 76, so 73 is somewhere here. So, we see the 76 and from here linear formation gets slightly pattered and we see that it is according to the importance that he you see the number 80 frame here 81 comes here. This is 82, but this is 75 76 so on and so forth.

So, this is how the space division and I again telling you the full story and you follow the frames and try to understand it.

So, the construction of the temple then the Lord Narada instructed the King Narasimha Dev to build up something whether the King Valu Madhava was roaming blue well or nilachakra of the temple got obstructed King Valu Madhav instructed the labors to dig out the temple, the King Valu Madhav and Narasimha were asking kala to a certain who is the real creator of the temple it starts that way and it comes till frame 6 where the King and queen worshiped before Narasimha. So, this is the frame where they performed the yagna of Rushi Mahadev.

And then the Jalasagar took Vidya Pathi to the temple in they cannot blind folded state that is the 7th frame for this Thia Badhia structure. Then Jarasabhar and Vidya Pathi had looked in to the shrine, the King Narasimha Dev and Vidya Pathi ordered the old carpenters to prepare the statues or the (Refer Time: 32:23) within 21 days. King felt that the carpenter is a little too old to survive so long like even starvation for 9 days. So, she opened the door to check whether he is still alive and at that time she sees that the open door the status were in incomplete state and the carpenter disappear. And then they realized that the carpenter was actually Lord Vishvakarma their disguise of the carpenter.

And then in the 11th frame King ordered to open the door in the temple in that condition whether the idols were incomplete. And the 12 frame the King and the queen worshiping the (Refer Time: 33:16) So, there comes our roll number 12 and from then onwards we have the other 10 frames starting from 13 to 22, but is 13 to 22; 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 with the 10 incarnations of Vishnu.

So, this is Matsya then Kashyapa, Baraha, (Refer Time: 33:51), Vamana, Parashurama, Rama, Balarama, Buddha and Kalaki who is yet come. However, after it is it moves to frame number 23 and then we see the Kanchi Avijana the journey to Kanchi. Ravan chatra banga, Anantha (Refer Time: 34:23). Then (Refer Time: 34:25), Hanuman, Rasalila, one more Rasalila. And then the way I was reading in the last one also in part that the (Refer Time: 34:38) of the temple were Ganesh, Narayana and Krishna comes to the 29th frame, whereas in 30th frame we see Kali, Bhairavi, Mathangi and Astamala. 31-Bakasura, 32-Argasura, 33-Sangasura, 34-Sakatheshawara, 35-Thronasura, 36-(Refer Time: 35:08), 37-jJmala Throna, 38-Putana, 39-the Ghooda dwara that is the north door with the horse that is the utara dwara and the frame the 40th frame has the Hati dwara

that is a dakshina dwara the elephant door in the south door. 41 is the Vimala temple, then 42-Lakshmi temple, 43 the (Refer Time: 35:36) of the temple of marshin. And Harachandi and Harvi, 44 the (Refer Time: 35:446) on the temple Narayani and Barghavi. 45-marriage of Lord Shiva that is also another very interesting frame to start with which comes somewhere here that is the 45th frame.

And then these are the two things that is 45 46 47 48 to 50, I will describe. Then the Ramabishekha in 46, 47 is Mayamrega the magic deer, 46 is the Sita chori or the abduction of Sita. Then Vasu Shala or kitchen room, 48-Venkisala, 49 is Amara mut, 40 the Vadachate mut. So, that ends here.

Then in the steps what we see is the musical procession of the devotees and the people tree that is frame number 51. And the people tree 42 practicing the yoga by the monks. 43-Boga (Refer Time: 36:59) the stand, 44 the temple, 46 the (Refer Time: 37:05) dress of the Lord Jagannath, Balarama, Balarudhra or Subhadra, 57-pooja and arathi, 58 Shankar Navi, 59 the name of the three Hamsapathi, Anantha, Vasudeva, Bagavati, Narayani. 60-Garuda kamba or the pillar, 61 Lord Bramha and Maheshwar, 62 gate keeper yoga and the yoga, 63-22 steps, 64-Mukthi mandap stands of salvation, 65-Mahari dance, 66 musical procession of Lord Chaitanya, 67-Anandha bazaar, 68-(Refer Time: 38:09) or Lord Jagannath procession with Lord, 69 the panda's entering the temple with Mahaprasad, 70-Meghandh kacheri or the boundary of the temple.

71-Gajadharana, 72-Shudha Mahaveer, 73-Chandana yatra in Narendra pond, 74-Patara nala, 75 the statue of Lord Ganesha, 76 the devotees in the front of the temple, 77 (Refer Time: 38:59), 78-Chaturbhuja Narayan, 79-Car festival that is Ratiyatra, 80 the lion door, 81 the Lord Pathitha Paavan inside the lion door, 82 the King is proceeding to the car for ritual sweeping.

So, with this we have a general overview of how the space divisions are operated by the master minds or the painters who innovate and create the set of the rules. As we discussed in the beginning we must also realize that there are stylistic varieties in spite of having lots of regimentation, the rules, and norms of the community. And one has to go deeper into the study and gather information only to realize that it is a parallel stream

that took place for the very long time. We will realize that in our next module with many more case studies and examples, and still it is almost like a bucket of water from the ocean so it is not sufficient for a course to complete the entire thing, but with that we will also understand the kind of academic orientation that the folk artist that they enjoy in their own field and how they are almost parallel and with the same dignity with the main stream academic practice in our coming lectures.

But most importantly we are trying to understand the contemporary phase of it and also will focus on the sustainability factor of all those things whether we should continue with the set of norms or we should just preserve them as knowledge and go farther with a new creation and innovations with that knowledge. So, the knowledge should be there preserved to guide us and that will work as a guiding force to continue the tradition and keep it alive forever.