Chapter - IV

A Survey of Folk Art
A SURVEY OF FOLK ART

Folk art is the spontaneous aesthetic expression of a society as a whole based on the traditions, myths, symbols and fantastically rich imagery called from stories of Puranic legends spontaneously linked with the stream of man's life and endeavour to bring out the deepest human emotions and pathos. It is born in the gay, abandon with the intensity of feeling and sentiments. Folk art is the symbol of social life. It reveals the inner beauty, design and the values that lie deep in the community.¹

Folk art does not represent the time but the entire time concept is contained in the creations. It does not reflect time as such but represent time in its entirety upbringing a tradition which is rich, lucid and varied.²

No historical documents, neither inscriptions nor monuments provide a source to the origin of folk art, only it lives in the myths, legends, song and tradition and in the memory and usages of the folk and is a old as the society and mankind being handed down from generation to generation in form of tradition and conventions. It is neither the folk art of past centuries nor of the present century which can be created or identified. Folk art in its totally has an appeal and is constant in all the ages. There are interchanges, interpolations, borrowings and lending but the basic form have remained somewhat constant. The simple earthen pots created on the potter's wheels have remained almost same up to the present time since it conception.³

It is difficult to trace the origin of folk art, but it can be guessed from the prevalent traditions that folk art or rural art is the developmental phase of primitive art in general. This hypothesis is not universal because folk art is so closely relegated to the primitive that sequencetial order of this type may be misleading. The finger and palmer prints in the caves and the stampings of closed fist to create a form of foot (Lakshimi pad), use of triangular shape for the body of a man in the primitive art concept and the adoption of a triangular shape with five dots above for the foot print in folk paintings are so similar in their concepts that a clear-cut dividing line between them is not convincing.⁴
In folk art nothing is accidental, experimental and freakish. Every detail has a meaning and every symbol has significance though some of this may have been forgotten, much of it is ritualistic and religious. In the sphere of contemporary art, no doubt such forms with symbolical meaning exist but due to the want of proper communication it has not been able to reach the common mind. But as far as the form and motifs are concerned both folk and contemporary art express in a novel and striking manner. Contemporary art ignores the principles of light and shade, anatomy and perspective etc. which govern the classical paintings and sculptures and has evolved its own grammar which is highly flexible changing and advancing. Folk art is not guided by any law or principles but maintains its peculiar characteristics which are marked by a frank and direct expression of visual impression. Folk forms are elemental, simple, and bold with a fantastic display of all primary colours. There is no hide and seek, the lines and forms come out in their entire primitive symphony. There is no any attempt to make them look sophisticated or other worldly subduing the colours or twisting the forms. The primitives of today, far from the teachings of fine art and from all contacts with contemporary are have looked upon folk elements to make their art living.

Folk art is symbol of social life. It reveals the inner beauty, the designs and the values that lie deep in the community. The tradition and culture of society are perfectly mirrored through the beauty shape and colour of things used in its daily life. It is the collective aspiration and expression of people who generally live in rural areas. It is deeply rooted in the soil and closely associated with the popular customs and beliefs. It is difficult to trace the origin and development or the growth of the ageless folk art tradition.

Folk art is more an expression—an expression of the heart which needs compassionate attitude to appreciate. These are the semi pronounced words of an infant which need appreciation. With simple bold forms and elemental colours they captivate the heart of the onlooker. If one has ever marked the scribblings of a child one will be really struck at the rendering of forms with its limited stock of perception. An imagination saturated does not wait for
reasoning or logical understanding to take forms. It is not purely aimed at Art for Art's sake but caters to the daily need of the household, ceremonial occasions and religious functions.\(^7\)

Orissa occupies an important place in the Indian art history or account of her varied artistic heritage; great monuments, masterpieces of sculptures, fine paintings and a rich tradition in folk arts. They cover the period from the time of the famous king Asoka (3rd century B.C.) down to the present days.\(^8\)

The people of Orissa draw on the floors in front of their houses, throughout the years, several types of drawings with the help of stone powder and a pasted solution made out of soaked-rice. They are called as *Rangoli* and *jhoti* (P.86). Women folk welcome the village deity to their streets by drawing *Rangoli* on the village streets. On the occasion of the car-festival of the village deities, (during *Dola*) we find wide diagrams with different varieties of drawings on the roads.\(^9\)

In the forthcoming discussions an account of various cultural groups in different parts of Orissa is being discussed for an interdisciplinary approach to understand rock art. One of the important folk art is Ushakuthi painting, though found in many parts of Orissa, it is more concentrated in South Orissa, in the districts of Gajapati and Ganjam.

**Ushakuthi**

**Osa**

The Oriya word *osa* probably derives from the Sanskrit word *upavasa*, literally "to remain fasting" i.e. to abstain from worldly activities that being evil and thus to earn virtue. The Sanskrit word *upavasa* became *upasa* in Oriya and later degenerated colloquially to *osa* or *usa*.

*Osa* is observed specially by women for the welfare of their husbands and other male family members. Unmarried girls also take part in *osa* rituals, mainly to find good husbands. *Osha* are wish fulfilling rituals for the attainment of *dhana* (riches), *jana* (offspring), *gopa* (landed property) and *Lakshmi* (fortune). The *oceiti*, (female) performing of an *osa* ritual, carries out the
necessary ceremony without the aid of a Brahmin priests or even of a male family members of her household. I osakothi, however, men participate prominently. The Sanskrit term kōsthi has become Kothi/Kuthi in Oriya and denotes a square or rectangular diagram. Mandalal, a similarly common term, is used for the rounded form of such a diagram. Kothi also refers to a house, a bungalow or a palace, and is used in expressions such as rajanka kothi king's palace, or bhajana kothi, prayer hall. Kothi can also denote a granary or often in the form of Kotha, a community house. The term osakothi there fore signifies the site of osa rituals or, in a more general fashion, a place of worship. This may be a shrine or a community house where all kinds of rituals are performed. But it can also be applied in its restricted sense for the rectangular or square diagram done for osa ritual.

Period

Most of the osa rituals are performed on a specific day of the year. Osakothi is not fixed to such periodicity but it generally begins on Ashvina sukla astami, the eighth day of the bright fortnight of the month of Ashvina (September- October) and lasts until Dasahara or the tenth day of the same fortnight.

The layout of the Osakothi murals

The murals of the Osakothi shrines are meant to house tetiskoti devata (33 crores deities). At least ten to twenty images and a maximum of a hundred gods, goddesses, heroes of epics and legends are depicted along with attendants and the relatives of the divinities. The murals thus represent the macro cosmos in a reduced or condensed scale. The actual design of the mural depends to a great extent on the available space, on the skill of the painter, his tradition, and local demands. Usually, the murals is of a rectangular horizontal format, but occasionally it is square or vertically rectangular. It is split horizontally into four, five, seven or nine tiers which again are loosely divided,
thus resulting in sections of differing width. These compartments are called kothi, place or ghara, house, and represent the dwelling of the devata (deities). The larger sections become the spaces for the important goddesses usually on the top; the small ones are for the minor ones and the entourage on the bottom or sides.  

Oshakothi murals are connected with the worship of Mangala in the month of Asvina, in the district of Ganjam and Western Orissa. Paintings are done on the walls of a community house (kothaghara) or of the house of the village mukhia (chief). Paintings are also executed on the walls of a temporary shrine erected for this purpose. In a few cases long scrolls painted by the chitrakaras are brought and fixed to temporary shrines, which is a less expensive and more popular made of display to the devotee.

In Oshakothi paintings, there is an attempt at synthesis of various religious systems. Puranic themes, legends and folk tales. Stories from the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, the Chandi Purana, Tantric sources, Tapoi, Sriyachandaluni of the Lakshmi Purana, have been mixed up and given new names and forms. In spite of all these various forms, the underlying spirit is Sakta in nature. Osha is a festive ritual and kothi a house of diagram.

Seven women figures with water pitchers on their heads, known as Satabauni (seven sister), are one of the important group of figures occupying a compartment, generally on the top portion of the frame. Since the Tapoi legend is connected with this mural paintings one is led to believe and these seven sisters are the seven wives of the Sadhava brothers. But as these figures are not placed along side the Tapoi story figures, the belief is ruled out. The conception of Oshakuthi paintings is base on Sakta worship and these Saptamatrika figures have been humanised in the form of seven sisters without any classical iconographical features corresponding to the Saptamatrika figures in sculptural art of the temple.  

Others are Kali, Vimala and Durga. These paintings do not strictly conform to the iconographical features as narrated in Devi Bhagavata,
Tapoi paintings is done by the girls who observe the Osah. But in coastal areas the Chitrakaras are called into paint the figures of Managala, a boat with seven brothers, Tapoi Gharamani (the goat) on the wall. This painting is done on the occasion of Khudurukuni Osha. Like Tapoi paintings, Lakshmi Puja paintings are generally done by the village women. But in south Orissa, a tendency has grown among the rich people of the business community to paint the figure of Lakshmi on the wall of the household temple.¹⁵

In Oshakothi paintings the local village goddesses are painted. In these murals, the paintings of dhova and dhovani (washerman and his wife) carrying bundles of cloth; saura and sauruni, gauda and gauduni (milkman and milkmaid); hadi and hadiani (scavenger and his wife) also appear. These figures have close associations with Nitei Dhopani, Pitei sauruni Keteima, Patrasauruni, Sukuti Chamaruni, Gyanadevi maluni who are very often mentioned in connection with Tantricism in Orissa.

Figures from the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Bhagavta Purana are also included in these mural paintings. The Pandavas with Draupadi in their exile occupy a prominent place. Bhima appears in these paintings several times and is a major attraction. He is called Gaja-Bhima and carries a basket full of gaja (sprouting) in one hand and a katua (wooden spade) in the other. The paintings of Gaja-Bhima, Bhima’s ploughing scene and barahalila (twelve agricultural servants) are significantly associated with agricultural activities, highlighting the agricultural importance of this Osha. Like the Mahabharata figures, the scenes from the Ramayana are also very popular.

A figure of an ajagara (python) occupies a prominent place in the lower compartments. This at times is equated with Vasuki, the legendary snake who upholds the earth and at time with the ajagara mentioned in the Oriya Bhagavata. The figures of a crab, scorpion, tortoise, camel, tiger, elephant, frog and bear are also painted in these murals. Similar figures appear as vehicles of the yoginis at Hirapur. In Oshakothi painting the vahanas (mounts) of different gods and goddesses are also worshipped along with them. Apart from the
animal figures, paintings of household articles like comb and *paniki* (kitchen knife) are also painted which are meant for the deities' use.

In these murals we often find figures like *Navagunjara*, wrestlers, a hunter shooting at a tiger etc. The *Navagunjara* is a motif from the *Odiya Mahabharata* of Sarala Dasa. This fantastic creature is a surrealistic assemblage of different limbs of birds, animals and human. Two wrestlers meeting in a duel – identified as *Bhima* and *Dusa* – appear prominently on the entrances to *Oshakothi* shrines.

The paintings are done by the *chitrakaras* and also by non-chitrakaras and the painters from the client's won community who observe this *Osha*. The paintings of *chitrakaras* and non-*chitrakaras* vary in their conception, composition and style. While one shows learning towards a folk style, the other conforms to a classical pattern. Invariably Mangala occupies the central and prominent position in the paintings of non-*chitrakaras* and Siva *tandava* in the paintings of the *chitrakaras*.

The walls are first washed with lime. The painters then divides the paintings area into several compartments keeping in view the importance of the motifs. The central compartment or arched niche is reserved for either Mangala or Siva *tandava*. The next in order are Kali, Chamunda etc. The lesser figures are placed inside small compartments. In some paints these figures are placed in juxtaposition and not inside compartments. The preliminary sketch is drawn in red ochre and then the forms are filled in with colours. Finally black lines are drawn over the paintings. This technique is similar to that in other murals.

**Jhooti or Chita**

For an agricultural people, the season of harvest, of bringing home the grains from the field is a time for great joy and celebration. The month of *Margasira* which is early winter is the time for harvesting paddy. And paddy is the staple crop in Orissa. Laksmi is the goddess of wealth. She is the consort of Jagannatha and her powers and grace have been described in great detail through narration of episodes in the popular local *purana*, the *Laxmi Purana*. On every Thursday in the month of *Margasira* Laksmi is
worshipped in every rural household. A small paddy measure made of cane or bamboo is traditionally put on a wooden pedestal, filled in with the freshly-garnered paddy and decorated with colourful cloth. The place of worship is normally the innermost corner of one of the living rooms. Elegant-looking footprints of Laxmi are painted right from the outside entrance of the house to simulate the image that she has condescended to walk into the house and thus blessed it. The painting is done with rice-paste and water. The patterns of the moving feet vary depending on the artist's vision, and normally they are small, delicate feet symbolizing Shri, i.e. grace and beauty. On this occasion the mud walls of the houses are also painted with various floral designs, especially of paddy stalks, and pictures of birds (particularly peacocks) and creepers of various descriptions. In the night before the Thursday the women-folk in every house prepare the rice-paste and do these murals on the walls and the floors before retiring to bed. Laxmi is the goddess of wealth in general. Even though, more specifically, she is regarded as the goddess of grains, of paddy. Now-a-days her foot-prints are also laid on to almirahs inside the houses symbolizing her entry into these containers which should be full of money. The wall decorations are often exquisite and delineate great capacity of the rural women to innovate and change within the broad frame-work of certain conventions and traditions. These, in turn, they imbibe from their mothers, grand-mothers or may be wives of elder brothers before their marriage. There is thus an informal professionalism which is traditionally passed on from one generation to another. It is an important aspects of folk art in Orissa.  

There is growing evidence of the ancientness of this heritage of folk-painting on walls and floors. The illustrated palm leaf manuscripts found in abundance in Orissa are earliest indications of the art. Writing on palm-leaves etching and illustrating on palm-leaf with iron stylus were indeed an art. Often these etching were also painted in colours. These included birds, animals, floral designs, gods and goddesses, lovers and beloved, houses, creepers etc. Besides this the Pattachitra painters of coastal Orissa and the Ganjapa painters of Southern Orissa are also part of this great heritage of folk-painting.
The Jhoti or Chita and the Muruja are, however, less sophisticated forms of paintings and reveal more of the folk spirit. While the former is made with rice paste, the latter uses a variety of materials in powder form as the ingredients. Normally they use five colours. The white is made out of powdered rice or white chalk-stone. Black colour is obtained from the burnt and powdered coconut shells; yellow from turmeric powdered with arua rice; green from dried and powdered leaves of selected trees or creepers and varieties of red are obtained from powdered brick, or phagu. Muruja is generally painted out on the ground as per designs and using the various colours. The last five days of the sacred month of Kartika are considered most auspicious and every morning the girls and women-folk of each home draw the muruja pictures near the Tulsi Chaura and at the entrance to the house. Besides this specific occasion, Muruja paintings are also used in drawing mandalas or yantras for worship of specific gods or planets or for performing homa or the yajna. The blending of colours and the deftness with which these are sprinkled on the ground with the help of only two fingers of the right hand are really enviable.

As regards the Jhoti Chita the ingredient is mostly rice paste in water of requisite dilution. Here also the brush is the finger. The walls, which are washed with earth and cow dung and are dry, quickly absorb the moisture from the diluted paste leaving the designs in tact. The most important design is the one of paddy stalks. Sometimes a small piece of cloth or beaten up stick is used as the brush along with the work of the fingers. As in Muruja, here also white chalk stone, yellow earth, black colour from burnt coconut shell and dhau, (a kind of soft reddish stone which is rubbed on to produce the colour) are also used for decorating the major designs. During Dushera the designs are more, elaborate. There is greater emphasis on red and black, symbolizing the killing of the demon king Mahisasura by Goddess Durga unlike in the festival of the goddess of wealth where the overwhelming emphasis is on pure white. The war of Rama and Ravana, pairs of fish, Navagunjara (a mythical animal sharing features of nine different animals), peacocks, different kinds of intricate bandhas, or integrated, intermixed features, banana trees, and filled up
earthen pitchers -these are some of the motifs that occur in Jhoti Chita. It is not possible to achieve very great sophistication or finesse in such paintings using almost bare fingers and on surfaces like the walls or floors. And yet in huge panels and murals they really look exquisite and fresh. They are innovative even while retaining the basic tradition. Broadly the motifs fall into three categories -the geometric designs (lines, circles, triangles, rectangles etc.), the delineation of nature and natural objects and ornamental designs.\textsuperscript{19}

The impulse to adorn is one of the most primitive impulses of man. This is particularly so for women. It is not merely the artificial aids to beauty like cosmetics. The painted marks on the body at carefully chosen places are supposed to heighten beauty. Oriya women used a large repertoire of cosmetics and analogous preparations : sandalwood paste, collyrium, turmeric, \textit{kumkum}. Vermillion, \textit{aguru}, \textit{kasturi}, \textit{chua} and \textit{ketaki-paraga} were some of it. The ancient literary texts have ample references to these decorative practices.\textsuperscript{20}

In a traditional Hindu society the life of a human being is socially and religiously linked up with several obligations which one has to perform towards his family, to the mother earth, fire, water, tree, sun, moon, to \textit{Gramadevati} or \textit{Thakurani} (village Goddess) who guards the village; to Sitala who protects from small pox, To Mangala who bestows auspiciousness. Each of these deities is manifested in a symbol, in a piece of stone smeared with vermilion, or in an earthen pot, or in a \textit{mandala} or a \textit{Jhoti}. The spirit of the deity is contained in such a form of art. \textit{Joiti}, \textit{chita} and \textit{murja}, generally drawn on the wall or on the floor, are meant to establish a relationship between the mystical and material.\textsuperscript{21}

Throughout the year, the village women perform several rituals for the fulfillment of desires which are known as \textit{vara}, \textit{vrata} and \textit{osha}. For each \textit{vara}, \textit{vrata} and \textit{osha} there is a specific motif to be drawn on the floor or on the wall. For example, in Lakshmi puja, a heap of paddy or rice is drawn like a pyramid with receding dots giving on the wall with the help of fingers in \textit{pithau}. During Durga puja in the month of Asvina, similar dots are painted on the wall but with superimposition of vermilion on white dots. The combination of red and white
signify the worship of Siva and Shakti. Similarly in the month of Kartika several motifs such as Rai Damodara, baga baguli, sidi etc are done in coloured murujas.22

**Tattoo**

As a form of graphic art tattooing occupies a unique place. While body painting is an ephemeral art, removable and renewable, tattooing is an indelible, permanent art which cannot be removed without ugly scarring or elaborate over tattooing.23 This form of art also can not be preserved in museums like paintings and sculpture.

In 1948 the preserved tattooed body of a Scythian chief was discovered in the Pasyryk mound at Altai. This 2,000 years old tattoo was preserved by the low temperature of the soil where it was buried and reveals a complex design of animals, birds and fish. Herodotus reports that the Thracians were tattooed, "To have punctures in their skin is with them a mark of nobility; to be without them is a testimony of mean descent". According to Pliny "the Ancient Britons stained themselves with a herb and introduced the juice with punctures into the skin so as to form permanent delineations of various animals. 24

Next to painting and closely connected with it is the practice of tattooing which is most widespread all over the world both among the savages and the civilised people in prehistoric and historic times, "Not one great country" says Darwin can be named from the polar regions in the north to New Zealand in the south, in which the aborigines do not tattoo themselves." The art is of Polynesian origin, and the word "tattoo" is derived from "ta" to "strike". It suggests "the primitive method at the operation which is caused by beating into the flesh with a fine pointed bone dipped in a mixture which leaves an indelible mark behind". 25

Marco Polo in the eighteenth century wrote about the people of Gaugigu (probably Laos) having their skin marked with the needle in patterns representing lions, dragons, birds and what not. It was through Capt. James Cook's several voyages to the Pacific in the eighteenth century that tattooing was reintroduced to western world. A numbers of Cook's sailors, enamoured by
the elaborated designs displayed by the Polynesians, allowed themselves to be subjected to the operation of "pricking" as it was then called (the word tattoo was later derived from the Tahitian word 'Tattow').26 The practice of tattooing dates back to about 2,000 B.C. Archaeological studies of Egyptian Mummies have shown that at least three of the female bodies (two court dancing girls and one royal concubine) had rows of dark blue dots on the arms, legs and lower abdomen. Apart from ancient Egyptians, the Red Indians, Eskimos, Japanese and Maori practised it largely. The two high centres of the art however are Polynesia and Japan. Today, tattooing is enjoying wide-spread popularity, especially in the West.27

Generally, women in India are tattooed in their early youth either before or after their marriage ceremonies. The places selected for the designs are the exposed parts of their body, namely, the foreheads, the cheeks, the chin, occasionally the chest, abdomen, arms, legs and hands. The designs vary in different parts of India and are mostly flowers, ornaments, trees, birds, fish, wild animals, scorpions and the sacred symbols of their gods. Brahman women of India have some of the following marks in tattoo: a dot on the right cheek or a shank or a circle, a dot above the crescent of a vertical line on the forehead, dots in clusters, the lotus or the mace of Krishna, a branch of Jasmine or plantain tree on the upper arm, the figure of a parrot or a peacock, the figures of both hands and similar ones on the legs. Low caste women have fish, spider, parrot or crocodile in tattoo on their chests.28

The Tattooer

There are different traditions of tattooing. Therefore, it is important to study the life histories and the social background of the tattooer. The tattooer has a special training like painters and sculptures but the tattooer cannot experiment on the skin. Before tattooing his clients he must be perfect in his profession. Every tattooer is familiar with the traditional designs: but this is not enough. He develops personal ideas and thus creates a style of his own. This is why people prefer a particular artist to another. A tattooer has to adjust himself to the customer's wishes and must manage the limitations given in
handed the material. He has to work on any human body and apply designs in
colour on all different shades of the skin.  

Like Rajasthan in Orissa the tattooers join the village fairs with their
instruments and an album of designs. They present the album to the customers
who what to get tattooed. The customers select the designs and the artist
informs them on the remuneration he expects. After having settled the deal, the
artist starts his work on the skin with his needle. As the operation is done in
public, the customer avoids crying or expressing pains.

The instruments of tattooing consist of some tools of pricking, the colour
pigments and the healing medicines. Colour pigments are prepared from the
juice of different plants, i.e. eclipta alba hassk, asclepius rosea Rexb and
Dolches latlab lin., etc. The juice is spread on a tile and the tile head over the
flame of a castor-oil lamp.

Tattoo and Totemism

Tattooing seems to be associated with totemism, at all events, in cases
where the person assimilates himself with his totem by cicatrising or painting or
tattooing his body with figures of totems. This totem mark signified, at the
same time, that all persons having the same totem tattooed, belonged to one
clan practising exogamy.

The operations of tattooing recommended it to the superstitions, often on
the ground that it is a passport for the forgiveness of sins and admission to
heaven. It is also recommended on the ground that the tattoo marks brings
riches to those who bear them. All this is sufficient to operate upon the feelings
of the fair sex of the raiyat class and perhaps even for their sisters higher in the
social scale, who undergo the operation, that tattooing marks a married woman
predecease her lord. It is considered that the summum bonum for Hindu
woman’s existence is to be happy in her relations with her husband, and to avid
widowhood by predeceasing him. A woman, who has not got her body tattooed
with certain designs is considered as unclean and not allowed to touch corn
spread on the threshing floor or to serve at dinner.
Painting and tattooing of the body are regarded as a primitive stage of clothing and the colouration of the skin in the operation is a means of allurement. It is also believed that in primitive man, there is close connection between love of colour and sexual impulse.  

Conceptual Ideas

The practice of tattooing is still in vogue among the women folk. Tattoo marks are helpful in identifying caste and tribe of persons, because the bearers use specific symbols for tattoo marks. Now a days many people get their names, village names, spouses names, inscribed on their arms as permanent identification marks.

Tattooing serves as a permanent ornamentation of the body. On equal conditions similar tattoo marks might be put, though there exist considerable variations and individual choices for designs of tattoo marks.

The bearers of tattoo marks believe that when they will present themselves to the God after death, they will be able to give the floral designs and other symbols to the God.

Tattoo marks are also connected with magical ideas. A black dot on the forehead or chin protects a lady from the evil eye! The absence of tattoo marks is considered to arouse the displeasure or condemnation of Yama – the God of Death in India. Tattoo marks are also recommended because they are said to bring riches to those who wear them. A dot on the forehead, which is the most prevalent mark among women of all classes in India, is the symbol of Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth. There exists a great variety of tattoo marks, the meaning of which should be investigated in detail together with their context.

The tattoo marks are changing their meaning according to the bearer's belief and historical background. Culture, environment, economic condition and ecology of the area are to be taken in consideration. The changes that have been taking place are not only the result of secularization but rather due to technical improvement in rural India.
Meaning

There are so many interpretations and beliefs regarding tattooing. The motivating idea behind tattooing varies from tribe and so also does the interpretation of these ideas by the various anthropologists and philosophers.

A) Sheikh Gulab is of the opinion that tribal work hard bare-bodied in all the seasons of the year (i.e. Summer, Winter and Rainy seasons). Tattoo develops a sort of resistance power in their bodies. There injected body makes them able to bear all short of climatic hardships.

B) Russell (1916) quotes in his book, “tattooing seems to have been originally a magical means of protecting the body against real and spiritual dangers, much in the same manner as the wearing of the ornaments.

C) Adams says “where a tribe is divided into a number of totem clans the members of each group may decorate their bodies with paintings or tattooing representing or symbolising their totem.

D) In India it is believe that it is the only decoration of body ornament which remains throughout the life. After death other ornaments and other types of decoration remain here but this is the only decoration which goes with the body i.e. other ornaments can be removed but it is the only one which cannot be removed by any means.

E) Verrier Elwin (1939) narrates that it is a form of sexual expression and powerful stimulant. Further he says when a girl screams while tattooing, the old women laugh at her and say, “if you cannot bear Godan (Tattooing), how will you endure Chodan (Intercourse)?”

F) Tattoo marks on a large part of the body prove that a girl’s parents must be wealthy or must have loved their daughter very much. Golden wiser too connect in intimately with the status of the wearer.

Whatsoever may be the causes of tattooing, it is a better mode of body decoration. The permanency of decorations by this method is one of the
reasons for its wide-spread popularity. The richness of tattooing proves the aesthetic awareness of the wearer.\textsuperscript{38}

In general tattoo is very common in most of the tribes of Orissa, but some of the tribe have it compulsory\textsuperscript{39}. There are so many interpretations and belief regarding tattooing by the tribal. Some believe that it is the only decoration of body ornaments which remains throughout the life\textsuperscript{40}. Some believe that tattoo marks on a large part of the body prove that a girl's parents must be wealthy or must have loved their daughter very much\textsuperscript{41}. Certain tribes due to some superstitions beliefs, mark the symbols of their gods and \textit{Kuldevatas} (family gods)\textsuperscript{42}. Some rituals have custom that tattoo is a must for them, may be on any part of the body. It may be due to some religions or superstitions custom or due to some decorative idea\textsuperscript{43}.

Tattooing is widely practiced by both the Gond. Every Gond woman tattoos her leg so far as she allows them to be seen with indigo or gun powder blue, and the figures that are drawn constitute the whole decorative art of these people. The sorcerers are found to tattoo figure of their favourite deities on the body with a view to strengthen their power of sorcery. In case of female children a ceremonial tattooing is done by Gond, which is believed as the passport to the heaven after death.\textsuperscript{44}

The Ho women prefer to tattooing their body with the design of their own clan\textsuperscript{45}. The Kawar women are tattooed on the breast, arms and legs with miscellaneous patterns\textsuperscript{46}. The Mahali women are found of tattooing on the forehead, arms, chin (the lower protruding part of the lower jaw) and ankles.\textsuperscript{47} Tribes like Koli\textsuperscript{48}, Lodha\textsuperscript{49}, Mirdha\textsuperscript{50}, Oram\textsuperscript{51}, Paraja\textsuperscript{52} are also very fond of in tattooing in the different parts of their body.

The Santal women wear tattoo marks on their palms, arms and breasts for the fear of being tormented by insects in the next world after death.\textsuperscript{53}

The Juang women tattoo their body for personal decoration or to promote the beauty of their body. Almost all the women have three vertical lines tattooed on their foreheads just above the nose. Their arms and hands are seen with various designs of plants, flowers and birds that show their artistic
The Junag women have a belief that if some impressions of the great god remain on the body their will be no danger. They emphasis on the sun motif; because after the death of person, he takes nothing with him except the Surya sign. In fact they paint their hands, legs, chests with different types of geometric designs. The sun symbols are made on the body with a very crude process which never fade. A special kind of black is applied on the pinched portions.

Kandha used to find satisfaction of their artistic impulses in the decoration of their own bodies. The custom of adorning the skin by tattooing had survived among the Kandhas. The designs which the Kandhas used to tattoo their bodies in elicited admiration from others.

Generally a Kandha girl in the marriageable age got her face tattooed with some quaint designs. Concurrently ear-boring used to be performed. However the tattooing was done for ornamentation of the body. It was considered so graceful an ornament that no Kandha would accept a girl who had not adorned herself with such ornamentation. The face was tattooed with the fine line keeping the nose as the centre. Across both the cheeks, from temple to the lobes of the years, were drawn straight, dotted lines at right angle to one another. Then over the forehead and chin a string of small regular geometrical figures, such as triangles, circles and diamonds, were punctured. The same figures were also punctured near the lips and eyes. Sometimes the calf of the leg and the arm, hands and chest were tattooed with the figures of these, flowers, fishes, crocodiles, lizards and scorpions. Some tattoo marks were also said to have represented moustache, beard and the implements used in tilling the soil for cultivation. The punctures for the tattoo marks were made with a thick needle and were smeared with a mixture of lamp-black and the juice of the plantain, after which liquid turmeric was rubbed over the tattooed surface. Nothing acidic like tamarind was to be eaten until the punctures had been healed. The operation was performed by Kandha women. They were known to have been paid some money for tattooing.

Some times tribal play some musical instruments also or sing songs, while tattooing is in progress. Certain tribes, due to some superstitious beliefs,
make the symbol of their gods and *kul-devata* (family gods). Sometimes Badnin (Tattooer and other ladies who performs magic and witchcrafts) tattoo the forms of their gods and goddess on their breasts as a sympathetic magic to save them from the magic of their enemies.

Thus, tattoo is widely prevalent as a functional as well as decorative art among most tribal of Orissa, which also amply illustrate their love for beauty, decoration and aesthetics. Strikingly many of the symbols and motifs found in folk art have their counterparts in rock art, whether it is of animate or of inanimate motifs.

From all these it may be seen that Orissa's folk art has a range and magnitude which is perhaps unique in the country. This is largely a due to historical circumstance which has helped maintain a classical-folk-tribal continuum in this area. In these folk forms of art, there is no distinction between arts as leisured activity with a leisured class as its consumer. Art is created as people go about their daily business of living, individually and collectively. As in the field of performing arts, so also in the field of artifacts, handicrafts and plastic arts, art and utility go hand in hand. Once Marx said that the coming generation of artists would try to bridge the gap between action and dream. In folk art, almost naturally, such bridging of action and dream, utility and aesthetic considerations, is always there spontaneously. Folk paintings are intimately related with the living pattern of rural people in the villages. Folk paintings have ritualistic significance in a traditional family. Paintings play a prominent role in the life of a human being from his birth and even from the state of conception in the mothers' womb till his death. These are connected with several *samskaras* (sacraments) in life and till death and after. It has significant use in birth ceremony, thread ceremony, marriage, death rites, *sradha* and other daily domestic rituals. The painting has an elevating effect on the soul of man.

Folk art and culture started with the very existence of man. When we look to the wounded bison of the Altamira cave painting of Spain or the rock paintings of Manikmada or *Ushakothi* we get the answer. Man discovered himself amidst a wild setting of picturesque landscape and colorful animals; and
birds. Out of fear and queer acquaintance he started thinking and wanted to have the forms of animals in the rock art or engraved to master over the hunting techniques. Or it might have so happened that he would have wanted to recapitulate in the memory the pleasant incident or a by-gone day a victory over wild animals—painting started. Later magic and sorcery had their entry into this art making it more ritual. It is a strange conclusion that throughout the world the forms in prehistoric art are almost similar, which also hold equally good in case of folk and tribal art and culture.
References


2. Ibid- p. 164.

3. Ibid- p. 166

4. Ibid- p. 164

5. Ibid- p. 165


9. Ibid, p.86


11. Ibid- p. 18

12. Ibid- p.18

13. Ibid- p.25


15. Ibid- p. 26

16. Ibid- p.28

17. Mahapatra, S., Folk Art of Orissa, Rangarekha, p. 68.

18. Ibid- p. 69

19. Ibid- p. 70

20. Ibid- p. 71


31. *Ibid*, p.21
34. *Ibid*, p. 58.
36. *Ibid*, p.19
40. *Ibid-p. 105
41. *Ibid-p. 105
42. *Ibid-p. 105
43. *Ibid-p. 106


********