

## Nepali Painting: Traditional Motifs in Modern Art

**Jyoti Prakash B.K.**

Assembly Member  
Nepal Academy of Fine Arts  
prakash.govinda12@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

*Art is mirror of society. Human Civilization developed through art. Philosopher Langinus said that the power of the art is to create sublime to viewers. There is lot of philosophy in art history but still no any conclusion or scientific answer about the art but art is more contemporary due to the globalization and individual expression. In the case of Nepali art, before the "Kirat" and "Lichhabi" period had also some paintings and sculpture. Because of the weak surface we didn't have any paintings but can know from the petrography of Lichhabi period. In the world the ancient time had been found to be developing from religious and cultural development. It is absolutely relevant to be saying that the Nepali paintings were also the cause of the religious development. The history of the Nepali painting had been developed on religious base from the history to contemporary situation. So the main objective of the research is to find the core relation between traditional and modern painting.*

**KEY WORDS:** traditional painting, modern art, Nepal, history, artist.

### INTRODUCTION

Our Country Nepal's own identity and feature have been different due to her arts and culture since the beginning of the history. About 1500 B.C. a group of people were started migrating to Nepal from south Asia, later on, they were called the Aryans. With the development of time, before the Aryans were settled in India, the Mongols from the south East Asia had already crossed China, Manmar, Assam and Bangal.

The History of Medieval age of Nepal Valley Having critically gone through the history of Nepal, the Kirats were the first ethnic people of Nepal. They lived in Nepal 3500 years ago. The ancient records, history and proofs have showed that the Kirats were the dwellers of Nepal before the Lichhibi rein. Particularly, the history of Nepal had come into existence in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The Changu Narayan Temple is a great icon of history which is still indicating the development of arts and culture of the then time clearly.

It is said that the country's development is to be observed according to the level of art and culture and it's development. In the world, the ancient time had been found to be developing from religious and cultural development. It is absolutely relevant to be saying that the Nepali painting's development was also the cause of religious development. Ancient pictures and painting were less to be publicized as their purpose was to develop devotion to the Gods and the Goddesses in the

sprit of the viewers. Furthermore, they were viewed through spiritual and philosophical eyes rather than external and material eyes.

### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The history of Nepali painting has been developed on religious base from the history to contemporary situation. Both the paintings traditional and modern have their own features and their relationship has been formed as nail and flesh. Although they are supposed to be the two edges of the same river and they are not accepting their existing each other together.

With the change of the time, Nepali painting and art have been running applying with different philosophy and isms. Postmodern society has also extended freely where arts and paintings are created in different perspectives. Arts and crafts are developed as equal to social changes and political changes so research is to be developed in to new trend with new social responsibility. The problem of the statement is whether the modern paintings have totally avoided the traditional technique of arts and painting. The main objective of the research study is to find out the relationship between ancient and modern painting and their consequent relationship.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Is painting going to be changed with the change of time and politics?
- 2) What is the relationship between ancient and modern painting?
- 3) What is the main challenge of contemporary paintings to adopt the traditional paintings?
- 4) What is the different between modern and ancient paintings?
- 5) In what level does politics influence the painting?

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the study is to empower the iconography of the traditional painting and how can the modern painters be able to apply the traditional mode of paintings into modern paintings. The researcher tries to show the significant relationship between traditional and contemporary painting.

### METHODOLOGY

The research paper was based on explanatory and descriptive research design. The study generated both primary and secondary data resource. Secondary source of data was generated through extensive literature review. For generating the primary data, interview was conducted with legend, painters, prominent painters and young artists.

### Numbers of the artists and using traditional motifs

Traditional Artists	Period	Modern Artists	Using traditional subject
2	1900	20	17
7	1950	41	38
200	2000	397	390

950	2016	1003	1000
-----	------	------	------

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research work applied modernism, traditionalism, postmodernism as a tool and significantly try to show the relationship between ancient and modern painting in an analytical way.

The history of painting and picture is shorter than the history of sculpture due to the weak surface of picture, we can't have been able to get the painting and pictures of Lichhibi and Malla time period's art and painting. During the time of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century religious matters and Tantriks were occupied in picture and painting. Specially, 1015 B.S. was very significant in the history of painting and picture since the manuscripts painting Pragya Paramita were found as if they were the oldest painting of Nepal.

Furthermore, 'Niwastra' named manuscript painting were also found as an example in 1117 B.S. likewise, Amitav, the Pauva painting in 1368 B.S. and Bishnu Mandal in 1420 were also supposed to be the strong pillars of Nepali painting and picture in the history of Nepal.

An outline of history and development of painting and picture shows the development of manuscript in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century and Pauva painting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Likewise Pata painting (Scrolling) and wall paintings were developed in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

As the time had been passing on, the influence of western culture seemed to be fallen in the Nepali painting as the influence of globalization as a result the realism was born in the field of art and culture specially Rana Prime Minister Junga Bahadur Rana and after his journey to Britain. After the political change in Nepal the art and painting have also been very close to the isms and philosophy of world's famous painters. On the basis of that, the culture of Nepali arts and painting are being created today.

Similarly, Rana Prime Minister Junga Bahadur Rana had brought the then famous painter Bhajuman to Britain so that he could follow the western style of painting in Nepali arts and culture. Rajman and Dirghaman were considered to be the pioneers of modern arts and painting to established the modernism in arts.

As the political scenario of Nepal has been changing, the lamp of Nepali painting is going to be brightly lit. Before the rise of democracy, the Rana had appointed a group of painters called chitrakar. After the establishment of democracy, ordinary people were also able to join the arts and painting that caused the Nepali painting to be more modern and relevant.

Likewise with the development of democratic exercise, the painters were started being organized under the umbrella of different organizations. As a result Nepal Art Society was born in 2009

B.S. Similarly Nepal Art Council was born in 2015 B.S. Likewise, in 2022 B.S. Nepal Lalitkala Association was established.

The history of Nepali painting is found to have been started from the religious perspective. Although the technique of composing arts was influenced by western trend but the ethics, form and story were same to be connected in composing the painting. For example: Uttam Nepali, Lain Singh Bangdel, Shashi Bikram Shah, Batsya Gopal Baidhya are the name of painter whose paintings were connected to the modern composition of arts. For example: Shashi Shah's 'Surya', 'Kalki Avatar' and Batsya Gopal Baidhya's 'Ganesh' etc.

### CONCLUSION:

It is said that the country's development is to be observed according to the level of art and culture and its development. In our country Nepal we have own art history. Specially traditional "Paubha" painting is our own invention in the art world. The history of Nepali painting is found to have been started from religious perspective. After the political change in Nepal the art and painting have also been very close to the isms and philosophy of world art. On the basis of that the culture of Nepali paintings are being created today.

As the political scenario of Nepal has been changing the lamp of the Nepali painting is going to be brightly lit. With the establishment of the democracy, ordinary people were also able to join the painting that caused the Nepali painting to be more contemporary and relevant now a days. Because of the democratic exercise painters were started being organized and started to work in group. After the globalization, artists are more influence by global art and try to express their feelings using western techniques and philosophy. Some Nepali painters depicts fully on the western isms like abstract, cubism etc. More painters they are near to the western philosophy but using the Nepali traditional subject, symbols myth etc. in their art works like Shashi Shah, Lain Singh Bangdel, Uttam Nepali. So, the Nepali contemporary art is mainly base in the Traditional painting and subject matter.

### REFERENCES

1. Nepali Chitrakala - Joshi Satymohan, 2019
2. Modern Art - Amatya Gehendraman, 2061
3. Uttar Adhunik Nepali Kalako Abhilekh- Malla Mukesh, 2066
4. Nepal ko Kala ra Bastu Kala - Dahal Pesal, 2060
5. Biswa Kala ko Itihas - Misra Manoj babu, 2050
6. Kala Jagaran - Niraula Tirtha, 2060
7. Art, Andrew graham - Dixon, 2004
8. Nepali Painting: Critical analysis - Sharma, Dr. Yam P., 2014