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## "Chronicles Of Tradition And Transformation: Navigating The Diverse Realms Of Indian Arts And Culture"

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### Abstract:

The research study delves into the enduring significance of Indian folk arts amidst modernization and evolving cultural dynamics. Dr. Utpal K. Benerjee emphasizes the integral connection between folk arts, traditions, customs, and community consciousness, and their role in representing the diverse aspects of life. The study examines how folk arts adapt to changing societal structures, technological advancements, and commercial influences. While some transformation is inevitable, the essence of these arts lies in preserving their core values. The challenge lies in maintaining authenticity and protecting them from undue commercialization. The study underscores the role of social media in preserving and propagating folk arts, while cautioning against the loss of cultural roots. In essence, the research highlights the intricate interplay between tradition, change, and preservation in the realm of Indian folk arts.

**Index Terms** - Folk Arts, Cultural Heritage, Tradition and Modernization, Community Consciousness, Commercialization of Art

### Introduction:

In the midst of contemporary progress and the expansion of modernity, the rich and diverse tapestry of Indian folk arts remains an invaluable repository of cultural heritage. This study delves into the intricate interplay between tradition and evolution, highlighting the resilience of folk arts in adapting to changing times while safeguarding their intrinsic essence. Dr. Utpal K. Benerjee's insights underscore the deep-rooted connection between folk arts, communal consciousness, and the broader spectrum of life. Examining the impact of factors like social transformation, technological advancements, and commercialization, the study illuminates the challenge of preserving the authenticity of these arts in the face of modern influences. This investigation also sheds light on the role of social media in both preserving and potentially commodifying folk arts, underscoring the delicate balance between cultural preservation and adaptation in a rapidly changing world.

### Exploration and Analysis:

In spite of modern development, diversity of beliefs and expansion our Indian culture is immersed with vast and beautiful treasure of folk arts. For accomplishment of this wealth, it remains in constant proximity with many popular traditions, customs, rituals, popular literature, arts and oral traditions, all of them together create our cultural heritage.

*The tradition is an unbroken one, only its manifestations are changed. The joy is that of an aesthete who finds the total experience so enriching. (Banerjee, Utpal K)*

The human aesthetic sensibility is as magnificent as the creation. He assumed the form of sharing the whole creation with Vasudeva. He accepts the whole creation as "Vasana Vasudevasya". Therefore, the desire of the creator "Eko Aham Bahusyam" has been expressed in the creation. It is only as the result of the creation of beauty in all the creatures, living or non-living beings, that literature, music, architecture, sculpture, and painting

were produced and evolved. All these arts are different forms and levels of human culture. This ardor for beauty and its transformation into art are the hallmarks of the man's personality. These art forms are also means of expression of beauty.

Folk spirit and community consciousness have also been important factors in the emergence and development of art. Folk collectiveness and the spirit of community is clearly visible in both the creation and use of art. Folk arts belong to the whole community; any particular family or group does not possess them. Only the aesthetic and vision of life of the people find expression in them. Any member of the community with parallel skills usually creates art works thus contributes in the continuation of traditions. Everyone in the group is aware of the various art forms and can participate in their production. Changes in popular concepts of arts also began to appear with the change in social structure. Signs of this have also surfaced in folk arts. This massive change at the social level brought many challenges to the folk arts.

Folk arts reveal the various aspects of life. They treasure the whole quantum of life with all its colours. The relationship between art and folk life is intertwined. They still imbibe this quality with minor changes. The folk artist never tries to view art separated and segregated from life. For him their relationship is inextricable and close. Social changes and changing dimensions of life pose challenge for him. The question of the protector of its original form comes forward, but the practical aspect of the folk arts is still not completely ended it is still dense and rooted with beliefs.

The arts have the potential for sustainable development, some aspects of them show relatively slight changes although in some, according to the changing social scenario, the transformation can be seen more and more clearly. With the variation in social environment, human sensibilities of the society also change. Due to these impressions folk artist make changes in their arts. The question arises that if the external form of folk art deviates under certain influences then do their internal patterns and concepts also undergo transformation of some sort. The issue of changing external appearance of folk arts is not of as much importance, rather than the change of its core values is significant. One of the challenges before the folk arts is also to defend its primitive values.

The collective consciousness of folk art was also affected by the industrial revolution and fascinating influence of the media. The neglect of the villages, the desolateness of the villages, the intensity of urbanization and the establishment of new industries reshaped the social life. The primacy of logic created the questions and the urge to examine the things anew. New values emerged in the society. People accepted the new vision of life. People with these new values and visions started being called enlightened and were considered as higher. Thus, the superior elite class was born in the society. The distance between the common man and the elite class kept increasing. As a result, the sophistication and development of folk arts took place. Revival of traditional and rural arts, handlooms, and handicrafts was pursued in the form of Art Festivals and Art Institutes for preservation of cultural heritage. Some new arts were also born with the influence of the modern environment.

In this situation, the challenge arose that although specialization was achieved in various forms of arts coming from folk arts or popular traditions, the effect of individuality started increasing in place group spirit, along with the partial and sometimes complete commercialization of Folk arts. However, increasing partial and sometimes complete commercialization of folk arts began with full verve. In this process on one hand, the distinctive impression of the style of the traditions is visible and on the other hand, folk artists tried new experiments. Folk arts also got the new twist, which led to the thought of threat for the that the fundamental nature of folk arts, but if only partial and the favourable changes occur in folk arts, then it would be appropriate to consider it as changeable trend so that it would be appropriate to consider folk arts as social products. With the change in society, changes in art are natural and expected.

When we talk about values whether it is of life or of art then we stand in for their favour and naturally defending them, just as our external life styles and clothes may have changed but our living and values of life are fundamental to our country. So the minor changes can be considered appropriate. Thus, the external environment of folk arts, the colour of the paintings of the artists or the inclusion of the partially new words in the language is not a matter of concern; the concern is when the basic concept of the dance or the rhythm is changed. Ignoring the true tunes of the folk songs, songs based on songs from film are considered as folk songs and people started painting inappropriate pictures of tribal people or their culture in the name of folk art. This poses a big challenge for arts. The spread of the media and the urge of the modernity gave birth to new forms of entertainment. Due to these facts, also the basic and fundamental forms of folk arts started changing. Inspired by the commercialization of performance of folk arts the traditional values of folk arts were disturbed. The trend of earning big prices was

a new occurrence with challenge. Efforts to acquire wealth or display of being art lover became prominent. With paying attention to the original form and values of the folk concepts of popular arts there has been a competitive tendency to get the opportunity to reach the stage through art. Therefore, this toxic intention of using art for one's profit becomes the matter of concern.

Industrialization and economic development of society also created a new challenge for folk arts. These arts do not face threat of extinction under their influence, but they had to face a new art culture. In order to protect their existence folk arts have to deal with this new art culture. In addition, they have to keep pace with it. This process of contamination could become a challenge to the existence of Folk Arts, but the strength of the folk arts of remaining connected to their original source, their primitive vitality and the tendency to preserve their unique form by adaption of the new retained them safe, protected them alive and continuous. It is certain that in the long period, some folk art forms were lost in their journey of change but some popular art forms are still living traditions, although with some minor variations. To what extant folk arts can preserve, their wholesomeness in the context of changing times and life values is an important question.

When the concept of individual property, personal house and person centered spirit was born the community spirit was destroyed which was fundamental to the arts. The name of the folk musician was nowhere sung, signature of the folk artist were nowhere flaunted on folk art works. In modern times this community spirit no longer continues. In cities or towns when folk arts are performed at the stadium, the performer becomes an individual artist, he or she no longer remains a part of the community, and the audience too enjoy the performance individually.

In 20<sup>th</sup> Century, man recognized arts as a state of happiness and comfort. On the contrary, in popular culture the contribution of comfort to the rural system was not so important. For those artists the greatest pleasure was the performance of art. Although in modern time comforts generated by science and technological development were created due to which the achievement of material things and the happiness obtained from them became a separate form of pleasure. Man attained special pleasure by means of information technology, then on the other hand the possibility of getting pleasure from folk arts started being neglected on some occasions, folk arts remained a mere object of performance, where as those folk arts were part of life. They were means of the expression of the aesthetic sense of the people. They were the site of rectification of the situation in its happiness and sorrow.

*Dr. Benerjee observes....The rising variety of income, education, attainment and age would lead to a very wide spectrum of self-actualization and aesthetic needs of the populace. A vast heterogeneous base of audience and participants today makes a demand on listeners and spectators and performers all alike far more than homogeneous, limited mass of yesterday.....The problem therefore is not merely one of preservation in the face of exogenous variety from the North. But also one of creating sufficient variety in the native soil itself so that a rich proliferation takes place catering to the new expectancy of the common man.* In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, one more change occurred that the social patronage of the artists ended. Earlier the abdominal fulfilment of the artists were done collectively at the village level itself, now the situation changed, with the development, the city markets and the metro cities emerged. The crops of the village immediately started reaching the town. The urbanization of the economy and the desire to buy goods for material pleasure left the folk artist starving. Earlier these artists also had the share in the grain of the village. The end of this interrelationship also brought a challenge of sustenance for folk artist and folk arts. Folk art is always in narrow relationship to the region and land where it is born and flourished. *Malawi, Nimadi, Rajasthani, Gujrati, all are adjacent regions. Their arts and performances may look alike but they can be differentiated, the tradition of the region, the way of life, and the natural environment together shape the form of folk art. Their colours are definitely infused in their folk arts.* Due to development of means of transport and development of civilization a person of one area or region moves freely to another area or region and may choose to settle down at the place of his choice. This also proves fatal for the folk art because in the interval of time that person gets separated from his art and culture, the subsequent generation becomes completely ignorant of the art forms of their area and the source of the particular form of the folk art sometimes dries with the migration of the folk artist.

Today the electronic media, popular social media plays a crucially important role for preserving the cultural entity in all its colorful panoramic forms and for creating the new variety to meet the enhanced mass expectancy. Art heritage can be brought to many of the aware, unaware, or interested audience to help the heritage grow manifold. This can include training and education in the arts, further developments of the arts through innovation and experimentation, production and propagation of the arts, awareness creation and sensitization of the audience

in arts. The social media is performing an extensive support in these areas. Vast scale production of art ware is possible, the increase in popularity, reach to audience in online markets, and expounding sale are obvious rewards. Only concern here is the culture have been turned into sellable commodity and the thread of connection to its origin is missing.

To understand the cultural values of the country, it becomes necessary to know the history and nature of the folk arts, the traditional source of the stream of relatively developed form of modern society is folk art and folk literature. Entire art traditions are the mirror of our culture, and in these art forms, our ethics, happiness of people, sorrows, past and present are preserved. Like nature, it is the ease of folk art to make the colour of changes clear.

However, due to the transformation of villages into towns and towns into cities sensitivity has ended in rural life also, the infiltration of system, utility and intellectual cleverness has progressed. The attachment to nature and regional materials has diminished. Today popular life has evolved and have different values, in new contexts folk consciousness has become complex. On the other hand, its real and natural tendency towards folk art is also decreasing. This challenge have to be faced by folk arts, yet if insistence of the value of this folk art is left in life, then people's art will remain intact even after coming out of the modern horror.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the journey through the diverse landscape of art and culture unveils a rich tapestry of tradition, innovation, and societal evolution. The traditional performing arts of Uttar Pradesh, as explored by Sinha, echo the resilience of heritage in the face of modernity. Vatsyayan's exploration of traditional Indian theatre emphasizes the confluence of multiple streams, enriching the artistic narrative. From the vivid canvas of Indian performing arts painted by Banerjee to Parihar's insights into Lok Kala's contemporary challenges, each perspective reinforces the intricate interplay between culture and time. Archer's work highlights the importance of preserving popular painting as a testament to India's historical ethos. The collective efforts, as showcased by Bhanavat, signify the value of preserving cultural roots.

In the present era, Agrawal, Anand, Mandal, and Dar chronicle the impact of technology on the Indian art scene. As technology redefines artistic boundaries and expands accessibility, traditional arts and disappearing heritage are illuminated by contemporary media. The amalgamation of aesthetics and emerging technology, as pondered by Dar, heralds a transformative path forward.

As we reflect on this diverse compendium, it is evident that art not only reflects the past but also shapes the future. The synthesis of tradition and modernity, as observed in these sources, symbolizes the dynamic essence of culture. This journey reaffirms the vitality of safeguarding heritage while embracing the opportunities that technology brings. In a world where change is constant, the voices of these scholars collectively resonate, guiding us to appreciate and perpetuate the ever-evolving mosaic of art and culture.

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