

Role of International And National Subcontinents in Evolution of Street Art in India

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Abstract

The term “street art” refers to a kind of artistic expression that is both dynamic and evolving. It has gained significance in urban settings all over the world, providing as a forum for social commentary, cultural expression, and political activity. Over the course of the past several years, street art in India has undergone a substantial transformation, which is a reflection of both international inspirations and indigenous artistic traditions. The purpose of this research was to investigate the development of street art in India from the point of view of worldwide influences as well as the distinctive socio-cultural setting of the Indian subcontinent.

Keywords:

Street Art, Urban Setting, Socio-Cultural, Indian Subcontinent

Introduction

Over the past 3–5 years, street art and urban initiatives have become increasingly prevalent in India’s metropolitan centers, making it impossible to ignore their presence. For a long time, the cultural marking of roadways has been prevalent in both urban and semi-urban locations throughout the country. The forms of expression and displays have been exceptionally distinctive, such as hand-painted Bollywood posters, typographic signboards, truck art, slogans, images of deities painted on sidewalks or tiles attached to walls to discourage public urination, painted advertisements by small businesses (Bhasin, 2018), and throughout the Indian subcontinent. Since 2012, the emergence of social media has led to the creation of a market specifically for the appreciation and consumption of murals (Chauhan, 2018). This resulted in the establishment of what is now known as the Indian street art culture. Organizations like Delhi Street Art and Start India Foundation were founded in subsequent years, and they adopted a working approach that involved collaborating with other government organizations. Hanif Kureshi, a co-founder of Start India Foundation and an artist, explains that the intention was to produce murals in order to

enhance the aesthetic appeal of public areas while ensuring that the necessary authorizations were obtained (Sharma, 2018). However, collaborating with government entities like NDMC, DMRC, Swachh Bharat, the Ministry of Urban Development, and CPWD unintentionally compromises the artist’s freedom of speech. The resulting visuals are inoffensive and without any profound significance (Sharma, 2018).

Street art in India is the first. In India, the practice of painting in public and communal spaces is one that has been around for a centuries. One of the earliest examples of mural painting can be seen in the Buddhist cave paintings located in Ajanta, Maharashtra. According to Mitra (2004), these caverns were found by chance in the year 1819 and date back to the second century BC. The Ajanta murals continue to be a significant part of the history of art in India since they have been a source of inspiration for artists and sculptors for many centuries after their creation. As part of the local traditions, folk art can also be seen painted on the inside and exterior walls of dwellings belonging to tribal tribes. Other examples of folk art include murals and paintings. Over the past few years, India has taken

responsibility for its walls, and the team at St. Art Festival is working to ensure that cities in India such as Mumbai and Delhi are included on the map of graffiti destinations throughout the world.

2.1 Origins of Indian Street Art work

Indian street art encompasses a wide range of mediums, including but not limited to painting, sculpture, pottery, and textile arts like as woven silk. In terms of geography, it encompasses the regions that are today known as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, in addition to the remaining portions of the Indian subcontinent. It is well recognized that Indian art possesses a remarkable sense of design, which can be observed in both contemporary and traditional forms.

One may trace the roots of Indian street art all the way back to prehistoric settlements that existed in the third millennium BC. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam are just few of the religious and cultural elements that have had an impact on Indian art as it has traversed the path from ancient times to the present day. The major religious groupings have, in general, shared the prevailing creative style at any given time and place, despite the fact that there is a convoluted mix of religious traditions (Kaur, n.d.).

An exhibition of works by members of the Progressive Artists' Group, which was established in the aftermath of India's declaration of independence in 1947, is being presented by Asia Society. This show is considered to be important. An Introduction to Modern Art for a New India: The Progressive Revolution examined the ideology that was the foundation of the Progressive movement and investigates the methods in which artists from a variety of social, cultural, and religious origins came together to find a common cause at a period of significant political and social upheaval. Works in the exhibition, which include outstanding paintings from the 1940s to the 1990s, highlight the manner in which these artists gave visual embodiment to the concept of India as a secular, heterogeneous, international, and unified nation (Asia society, 2019).

2.1 Types of Street Arts

2.1.1 Public Artworks

Public artworks are characterized by their accessibility to the general public as well as their placement in a public area. These artworks include large-scale sculptures, murals, and installations. The link between public art and its creator, as well as the desire to show itself as a work of art rather than as an architectural, religious, or ornamental feature, are further factors that contribute to the definition of public art. The site-specificity of public art is another characteristic that distinguishes it from other types of art. This defining characteristic may be seen in works that are either constructed utilizing materials from the site, fused with the site, or respond to the site. A number of the first examples of public art in India may be traced back to the early experiments that were conducted by artists in the subcontinent who worked with public-facing mediums that were site-specific (Public art in India, 2023).

2.1.2. Graffiti Art

For millions of years, Graffiti has been engaging in conversation with the general populace. It is common to see examples of this art style at places such as historical landmarks, schools, colleges, classrooms, public restrooms, benches, desks, and public transportation in India. This street art has been brought to life in people's smartphones as a result of the outbreak of the COVID 19 epidemic. This article delves into the works of graffiti artist. The research provides an analysis and interpretation of the artist's paintings. The goal of this study is to gain a thorough understanding of how the discussion surrounding graffiti might assist women in asserting their right to public spaces. This study aims to examine the influence of graffiti and social media on challenging the patriarchal status quo. Semiotics is used to fully comprehend how the creation and consumption of street art and graffiti are significantly impacting Bengaluru's approach to gender. Graffiti serves as a symbolic means to address and challenge gender injustice, specifically by subverting societal biases related to class, race, and gender through the manipulation of clothing, technology, and gender roles within the artwork (Rajan, 2021).

The graffiti art scene in India has undergone adaptations to align with socio-communal needs and expectations. As part of a participatory enterprise that aims to enhance neighborhoods and educate the local population, most graffiti artists actively collaborate with the communities in which they operate. When a local community or a collective of artists desires to paint the facades of their buildings, they often initiate the process by seeking consent from the residents of that specific locality. Notable street art destinations in India include the Lodhi Art District and Shahpur Jat in New Delhi, the Sassoon Dock Art Project and Marol Arts Village in Mumbai, and the Wise Walls Project in Saur, Uttarakhand.

Graffiti artists openly express their opinions and emotions about society and their own place within it. They communicate their thoughts and emotions through a visual form, expressing their opinions and conveying a message. However, there are others who choose not to listen or simply disregard it because they find it unhelpful. The ancient graffiti inscriptions covered a diverse array of topics, encompassing everything from the joys of gastronomy to guidance on matters of love and companionship. In contrast, modern graffiti has a higher level of self-consciousness and literary quality, functioning as a medium for contemplating and commenting on present-day circumstances. Graffiti can be seen as the result of artists navigating through an urban environment and also as a form of art that is experienced in motion, contributing to the overall expression of the cityscape. Graffiti addresses issues such as an area's governance, the authority to approve public images and lettering, and the determination of a city's appearance. The concept of global graffiti landscapes pertains to urban landscapes and explores the relationship between space and mobility, offering several perspectives on how individuals can engage with a metropolis (Griffin, 2019). Graffiti plays an important role in changing landscapes. Graffiti scapes serve as a reminder of the interplay between local and global styles, highlighting both the localization of global style and the worldwide reach of local style. Graffiti creates an image of the city that encompasses not just the desirable aspects valued by the middle class, such as history, tradition, architecture, and investment, but also the unsettling narratives of subcultural conflict, class divisions,

and social unrest. Graffiti also functions as a symbol of social turmoil (Penny Cook, n.d.).

2.1.3. Warli Art

The earliest evidence of art is found in the form of prehistoric art, such as that which may be found at the Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka National Park. Warli art can trace its roots back to this ancient form of artistic expression. The rural districts of Thane and Nasik, as well as other tiny regions of Maharashtra, are some of the areas where it is most prevalent. In this monochrome painting form, rice paste is utilized in conjunction with twigs to create the artwork. On the walls of dwellings, the coloration is typically white and yellow, with red mud serving as the background. The paintings portray the common activities that the people who live in the village participate in on a daily basis, such as their religious rites, hunting techniques, and celebrations. The beginning of Jivya Soma Mashe and his son Balu Mashe's painting career in the 1970s marked a significant turning point in the development of this ceremonial art. Rather than painting for the sake of performing rituals, they painted because they were interested in art. Jivya is widely recognized as the contemporary progenitor of Warli art. Warli painting has transitioned onto paper and canvas and has been doing so since the 1970s (*Rtistiq Team*, n.d.).

2.1.4. Truck Art

Trucks in India that are adorned with extravagant paint jobs and exquisite designs have been ingrained in the collective awareness of the country's population for a very long time. Due to the fact that truck art is a significant indicator of "Indianness" and identity, it has been extensively referenced in popular culture. This is evidenced by the fact that lavishly adorned trucks have been included in Bollywood films and songs. Elements of truck art are utilized in a broad variety of ads and posters in India. Additionally, corporations employ these elements as symbols of Indian culture in order to promote their products to consumers that are predominantly of the upper class classification. The purpose of all of these acts is to strengthen the direct associations that Indians have in their minds between truck art and Indian culture. Considering the pervasive nature of the role that trucks play in India, it is not surprising that truck art is associated with Indian culture (Adnan, 2014).

2.1.5. Commercial Crossover of Street Art

There are several street artists that have achieved widespread recognition for their work and have successfully transitioned from street art to the mainstream art world. Several of these artists have even continued to create art on the streets as they have accomplished this move. When it came to street art in the 1980s, Keith Haring was one of the first painters to do so of his generation. Traditional graffiti and street art motifs have also been increasingly adopted into mainstream advertising. There have been numerous instances of artists being paid to work as graphic designers for firms. Haze, a graffiti artist, has contributed fonts and graphic designs to numerous musical artists, including the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy, among others. The street posters that Shepard Fairey had created of Barack Obama, who was running for president at the time, were redesigned by a special commission for use in the presidential campaign. There was also a variation of the artwork that was featured on the cover of Time magazine. In addition, it is not unusual for street artists to launch their own merchandise lines under their own names.

The fact that Banksy and other artists have achieved such a high profile has contributed to the artistic appreciation that street art has gained. This has resulted in street art becoming one of the "sights to see" in a number of towns across Europe. They are able to share their knowledge and explain the ideas that are behind many works, the motives for tagging, and the messages that are expressed in many graffiti works. Some artists now offer tours of local street art and are responsible for providing these excursions (Verma, 2023).

3. Modern Indian Art: Street Art

There is a possibility that part of India's contemporary art was influenced by Western art; yet, the art that was created in India was drastically different from the art that was created in the West. It was during the time that India was still a British colony that the art movement known as modernism gradually made its way into the country. There is little room for debate regarding this particular point. The fact that this is the case is made abundantly clear when we take into consideration artists like Gaganendranath, Amrita Sher-Gil, and Jamini Roy, who were considered

to be modern painters as early as the 1930s. It was the rejection of academic realism at art institutions that served as the impetus for the development of modern art in what is now known as the Western world, particularly in Europe. These contemporary artists believed that they were at the vanguard of the shift from tradition to modernity or that they were avant-garde. They felt themselves to be at the forefront of this change. As a result of the great advancements in technology that took place in the years following the Industrial Revolution, the traditional art that was utilized for the purpose of decorating palaces and churches lost its significance. There were a number of French artists who worked throughout the early modern period who felt themselves to be working outside of the primary art institutions. These artists included Edouard Manet, Paul Cezanne, and Claude Monet, amongst others. Cafes and restaurants have become key gathering places for artists, authors, filmmakers, and poets. These places provide a setting in which these individuals can engage in debates regarding the role that art plays in contemporary lifestyles (The Modern Indian Art, 2023, Web).

4. Impact of Street art on People

Forte and Paola (2019) discovered a burgeoning correlation between street art practices and shifts in socio-economic and urban dynamics. Street art has the capacity to contribute to the physical sustainability of the built environment as it reconstructs the established surroundings. Examples of observable contributions include alterations in land use, neighborhood characteristics, social organization, property valuations, economic operations, social integration, and community participation (Forte and Paola, 2019). Kwon elucidates the role of art in public spaces using three distinct paradigms. Sculptures and other outdoor art enhance and beautify metropolitan areas. Additionally, it helps to build public spaces. Lastly, art that serves the public's interests can also be classified as public art. By employing tactics such as guerrilla theater, protest actions, dances, posters, and other similar activities, it represents the manifestation of community messages, social concerns, and a position in society (Kwon's 2001). Similar to Kwon's arguments, Miles (1997) asserts that art can serve as a decorative element in the context of a reinvented urban planning framework. Street art plays a crucial role in the revitalization and

regeneration of metropolitan areas. Street art creation facilitates the development of a distinct atmosphere in communal spaces. Furthermore, it enhances the ease of use, functionality, and social interaction for users while also promoting safety, comfort, and the overall perception of the area. Additionally, it enhances the physical, social, and psychological availability of the region. The case studies universally agree that the long-term positive impacts of street art are significant. However, the study reveals that street art can have a negative impact on the physical, economic, and social aspects of a neighborhood or specific location over an extended period of time. We consider this when evaluating the adverse impacts of street art. The adverse consequences of street art may lead to the migration of individuals and local businesses affected by it away from the vicinity or region where the practice occurs. To comprehensively understand the enduring negative effects of street art on public space, it is crucial to examine the long-term transformations in residents and land utilization over lengthy durations (Kolcak et al., 2022).

4.1. Tourism and street Art

In the field of tourism, a significant amount of research focuses on attractions such as museums, heritage sites, and theme parks (Leask, 2010). Nevertheless, street artworks are largely overlooked. We can regard destinations that showcase street art as unconventional tourism locations. According to Shaw (2015), the attractions in art tourism, architecture tourism, and historical tourism all have a common trait. All three of these types of tourism are often regarded as iconic. The works of renowned artists possess the capacity to allure travelers from around the globe in the context of art tourism (Shaw, 2015). Therefore, people view the street artworks at the East Side Gallery as “attractors” (Peterson, 1994, as cited in Shaw, 2015), signifying their significance as points of interest. With the help of the Internet and other forms of mass media, a great number of tourists are already familiar with the street art site; they may consider it to be an intriguing location to see in Berlin before they leave. The complex relationships that exist between tourist locations, street art, and tourists have not yet been investigated. The goal of this study was

to investigate how travelers perceive and encounter street art when visiting a destination, using the East Side Gallery as a specific case study. The findings of this research offer significant insights into the ways in which street art can be incorporated into the process of tourism development and marketing for a particular location.

There is no doubt that these processes leave their mark on the “scenes” and “creative milieus” that are associated with “urban intervention and street art.” The connection to territorial processes, the source of creative processes and their representation systems, clearly demonstrates the importance of space and territory. The creation of innovative environments and the establishment of a reputation that links local creative communities to global trends demonstrate these characteristics, which encompass elements such as the symbolic qualities of a location and its contemporary form (Costa, 2008, 2012; Costa and Lopes, 2013).

4.2 Impact of Technology on Art

For millennia, art has been an indispensable component of human existence. It possesses the capacity to convey feelings and ideas in a manner that cannot be adequately conveyed through words alone. On the other hand, given the rapid pace at which technological improvements are occurring, it should not come as a surprise that art is also under the effect of these developments. The way in which we make and experience art is being revolutionized by technological advancements, which range from virtual reality installations to digital painting tools.

The realm of art was profoundly influenced by technological advancements. The options for artistic expression have been increased as a result of technological advancements, which have made it possible for artists to work with new mediums and equipment. Traditional forms of art have also become more accessible to a wider audience as a result of this development.

Despite the rise of digital technology, traditional forms of art are not being abandoned in any way, shapes, or

form. Works of art that may have been lost to history in the absence of technology have been able to be restored and preserved thanks to technological advancements. In addition, it has made it simpler for individuals to gain access to and appreciate these works, regardless of whether they are going to a museum or looking through an internet gallery.

The field of art has been profoundly influenced by technological advancements. Historically, in order to create works of art, artists were had to rely on their own special abilities and skills. With the development of technology, artists today have access to a wide range of tools and methods that they can utilize to create works of art that are truly remarkable.

Here are some of the ways in which technology has benefited the arts:

1. It is now much simpler for artists to develop their work because to technological advancements. Artists are now able to produce intricate designs and patterns that would have been difficult to construct by hand in the past. This is made possible by the use of computers and other different technology.
2. The ability of artists to communicate their work with the public has also been simplified by technological advancements. With the assistance of the internet, artists are able to engage with people all over the world and present their work to a more extensive audience.
3. The ability of artists to generate income from their work has also been made possible by technological advancements. By utilizing internet platforms like Etsy, artists can market and sell their artwork to a global audience, enabling them to earn a livelihood from their artistic creations.
4. Moreover, technology has played a crucial role in safeguarding artistic masterpieces for posterity. Through the utilization of digital imaging and storage, artworks can be safeguarded in its original state and handed down to future generations.

5. Contemporary art from around the world, particularly after 1989, flourishes in a swiftly evolving, neo-liberal, and global setting. The advent of internet technologies has facilitated immediate communication and seamless dissemination of information, enabling users from all corners of the world to communicate with one another. This significant upheaval has an immediate impact on the organization of art creation and consumption. Currently, there is a diminished correlation between urban areas and the creation and consumption of art (Ruopp, 2020).

5. Summary & Conclusion

Taking into consideration the impact of artists from other countries, this article provides an analysis of the evolution of street art in India. In a nutshell, the evolution of street art in India is a manifestation of the dynamic interaction that exists between the artistic traditions of the indigenous people and the inspirations that come from other countries. This interaction has led to the development of a vibrant and diverse urban art community that is simultaneously connected to the world at large and rooted in the local neighborhood. It becomes clear, as one goes through the process of performing a comparative analysis with street art movements in other countries, that India's street art scene has been shaped by a wide variety of factors. Historical legacies, sociopolitical circumstances, and technological advancements are all examples of these elements.

It is possible to trace the roots of street art in India back to indigenous art forms and resistance movements that took place throughout the time period of colonial rule. The foundation for the development of contemporary street art activities was laid by these artistic movements and modes of expression. Over the course of several decades, globalization, urbanization, and the proliferation of digital technologies have all contributed to the growth of street art in India. The ability to connect with international networks, acquire access to new forms of expression, and interact with a wide variety of audiences has been made possible as a result of this.

By drawing influence from indigenous artistic traditions, religious symbolism, and socio-political themes, street art in

India continues to preserve its distinctive cultural identity and the significance it holds for the local community. In spite of the fact that street art is influenced by cultures all around the world, this is the correct interpretation. For the sake of cultural expression, social commentary, and political activity, street artists in India use their work as a medium. In order to achieve this goal, they challenge the established narratives, encourage connection within the community, and work toward bringing about social change.

6. Future Recommendations

In order to further advance the development of street art in India, there are a number of significant recommendations that may be taken into consideration for future action. These proposals can be taken into consideration. The first item that has to be addressed is the pressing need for governments and municipal organizations to increase their funding in public art initiatives. This is the most important thing that needs to be addressed. The creation of platforms for artists to exhibit their work and the development of urban spaces could be accomplished by the allocation of funds for street art festivals, community mural projects, and public art installations. These are all examples of creative endeavors that could be undertaken. The second phase is to build support programs and mentorship initiatives in order to cultivate prospective street artists, particularly those who originate from marginalized backgrounds. Residency opportunities for artists, workshops, and other skill-building initiatives ought to be included in these programs.

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