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## Pattachitra of West Bengal: A Silent Message in Cultural Tourism

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### ABSTRACT

Cultural tourism is one of the tourism industry's oldest segments. People have travelled to other parts of the world since ancient times to quench their need for new experiences, to soothe their eyes by viewing beautiful nature, or to obtain information and experience. It entails going on an educational journey, inventing something new while visiting places, and gathering additional information about new tourist attractions. Cultural tourism includes visiting historic sites, monuments, temples, Gurudwaras, mosques, national parks, zoos, discovering new art and crafts, participating in various societal and cultural activities such as diverse communal festivals, and developing traditional architectural demonstrations. Cultural tourism was affected by the handicraft product sector. Pattachitra is one of the most popular handicrafts in Bengal, and it serves as a catalyst for promoting cultural tourism. It is a source of pride for West Bengal that so many artisans receive international recognition for their work. Pattachitra is famous in Midnapore, Birbhum, Kolkata, Bankura, and Purulia. Through pattachitra, pattachitra artisans convey a variety of sociological, psychological, incidental, eventual, mythical, educational, economic, and environmental messages. This research examines how pattachitra messages influence cultural tourism in West Bengal, as well as the issues that arise when messages are delivered to travellers.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, Pattachitra, Messages, Artisans, Craft product, Pater gan, Paintings.

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### Introduction:

West Bengal is known for its arts tourism, for example, it includes spirit tourism, food carnivals, colorful puja opportunities, literal tourism, art gallery tourism, wildlife tourism and wood, eco-cultural tourism, religious tourism, etc. Dispatch through Pattachitra is not only represented by the flowing oil, but also accompanied by the song of the patua pater. All these elements make Pattachitra a unique feature to attract hikers to the geographical destination. It also helps change artistic, social, mythological, foresight and environmental dispatches around the world with their petroleum style to attract public and transnational hikers. The artisans not only represent their work of art for hikers, but also explain by singing pattachitra-themed songs that they compose themselves.

### Theoretical Background:

Odisha and West Bengal are mostly famous for Pattachitra. Raghurajpur, Puri, Dandasahi, Parlakhemundi, Chikiti, Digapahandi, Sonepur, Dharakote, in Odisha are famous for pattachitra. Birbhum, West Midnapur, Nayagram of Pingla block in Jhargram, Bardhaman, Murshidabad, Kalighat in Kolkata in West Bengal are famous for the scroll paintings of pattachitra and Pater Gan is depicted with the paintings of the artisans.

### Review of Literature:

According to **Sanchari Paul** (2016) artisans provide some societal messages by their paintings i.e. child sex abuse, benefits of deforestation, prevention of child labour, awareness messages about HIV. They also work on some traditional as well as some usual things like a cat hunting fish, lobsters, pictures of some cows and owls. They also sang Pater Gan which explains the messages of the paintings. According to Harekrishna Talukdar, Patuas make paintings on some traditional themes, melas, mythological events, Hindu epicism like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Manasa Mangal etc. In West Bengal Pattachitra carry some social events like after the death of a person, he or she survives among the people through the exclusive pattachitra paintings. Patuas also paint the pictures of animals, birds, some non-racial events, Harinam kirtan etc. An article named pattachitra, the almost Lost Folk

Art of Odisha and West Bengal, explain that the messages of pattachitra do not always depict the societal, moral, entertainment related events and judgmental issues. Patuas provide protesting messages against British rulers. They also create art work on the environmental consequences, family progressiveness, sustainable development of resources, educational propagation, and the biography of some great freedom fighters of India like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Khudiram Bose. They provide messages through their paintings like social and communal harmony, natural disasters, present pandemic situation, economic depression of the rural people, and also health related matters in the urban, semi-urban and rural areas in West Bengal. According to **Shiv Sahay Singh** (2020) paintings of pattachitra express the current situations of the artisans in covid-19 pandemic in West Bengal. It also provides messages against bribery on the scheduled duty which lay great messages to the society. An article- Bengal Pattachitra and the Art of Painting with song Sarmaya published in Sarmaya.in, said that Patuas make their paintings on the violation of sex, antidowry system, story of Hindu deity. These paintings provide strong societal messages to the tourists. According to **Betty Belanus** (2020) Patuas exchange their ideas like some natural disasters (e.g. tsunami, flood, cyclone), man-made disasters (e.g. 9/11 terrorist attack in world trade centre, terrorist attack in Mumbai), pandemic situation (e.g. covid-19 scenario, plague), major health awareness related issues like- HIV, antiabortion related messages, etc. According to Dr Gopal Chandra Bayen, various types of pattachitra paintings provide various messages for gaining the attention of the tourists to that said destination. Pattachitra contains various societal messages like- pulse polio vaccination, covid-19 vaccination, fighting against Dengue and Malaria, protesting against communal stress, environmental messages like- reforestation, deforestation, mythological messages like- Ramayana, Mahabharata, Manasa Mangal, Sita haran, narrating stories of Durga, Kali, Shiva, Behula Lakhindar story, story of Sabitri Satyaban, historical messages like- second world war, Netaji Aajadhind force, nuclear explosion in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ruin of Babri masjid, terrorist attack in Mumbai and World trade centre, biography of some great heroes like- Netaji, Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda etc. According to Dr Lopamudra Mitra Bajpai pattachitra expresses the messages from various mythological epicism, drama, folk lores, biography of various monks. Nuns, various ancestral events which carry strong historic values of India, various pictures of festivals, social and racial ceremonies in selected tourism sectors or geographical sectors in India as well as in West Bengal. It also demonstrates the man-made devastations like- terrorist attacks in WTO, terrorism in Mumbai (Tai Bengal). According to Sayantani Bhattacharya and Mythili Bhattacharya, pattachitra describes various ancestral events, objects with high antic values. It also focuses on religious factors like- Buddhism, Jainism, Hinduism, Islamic events. This scroll painting depicts some events in modern era like- a cruel wife got divorce from her husband due to her bad mannerism, criminal offense happened in Park Street (rape case) etc. An article presented by journal of India in their title- Pattachitra painting (2021), the facts of the pattachitra paints contains religious portions like- Buddha and his great advice for society, Leela of lord Sri Krishna, events of the Dashabatars etc.

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### Objective of the Study:

The objective of the study of this paper are-

- To focus on which types of problems to be faced by the Patuas at the time of delivering messages through their paintings and Pata song or Pater Gan.
- To focus on the problems of the communal differentiation at the pattachitra painting.
- To focus on how the uses of electronic device harm the techniques of delivering messages through pattachitra.

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### Method of the Study

We gathered data from a variety of secondary data sources, including articles, magazines, economic reports from various newspapers, project reports from banglanatok.com, the central and state governments, a project report from the West Bengal government's MSME department, and various websites that contain pattachitra information.

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### Discussion and Analysis:

Pattachitra considered as a heart of art and crafts work in Bengal. Many artisans live on it. They create their exclusive art work to attract the tourists to the destination. Patuas do their paintings and sing Pater song on the said event on which they are doing their craft work. The Pater song carry high rich value of messages to the tourists. They also express the cultural value of West Bengal through their paintings into the national and international market. Pattachitra depicts various messages silently in the cultural tourism sectors, they are-

**Social Messages:** Abolition of child sex abuse, abolition of child labour, necessity of pulse polio vaccination, covid-19 vaccination, benefits and necessity of uses of masks, sanitizers, necessity of washing hands repeatedly, protesting against communal stress, stopping pre-birth sex indication, demolishing tendency of abortion, benefits of educational growth, stopping the marriage of minor girls, planning of family size, publicity about anti-dowry system, anti-raging system, are the example of societal messages delivered by pattachitra

**Mythological Events:** Pattachitra explains various mythological events of various religious, cast, etc. This scroll painting depicts Ramayana, Mahabharata, Manasa Mangal, Dashabatars, sri Krishna Leela, many events of Buddhism, Islamism. Various districts of west Bengal are famous for their mythological paintings.

**Ancestral Messages:** Paintings of freedom fighters, protesting pictures against British ruler, econd world war, Kargil war, terrorism in Mumbai, terrorist attack in world trade centre, Ajad Hind Force and Netaji, nuclear explosion in Hiroshima & Nagashaki, ruin of Babri Masjid, destruction of Harappa and Mahenjadaro, make spell bound to the travellers.

**Biography:** By the pattachitra painting the biography of Rabindranath Tagore, Khudiram Bose, Vidyasagar, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Swami Vivekananda, Sister Nivedita, and so many famous monks, nuns, priests, artists provide great messages to the children as well as youth of the present generation to motivate themselves in their aims and objectives of life. This also attract tourists to that visiting place for such types of scroll paintings.

**Environmental Messages:** Paintings on the necessity of reforestation, deforestation, effects of global warming, effects of Tsunami, cyclone, devastating floods, effects of afforestation, pollution in urban areas, demonstrate great messages to the travellers. It also explains how sustainable development of natural resources and their conservation save world.

**Health Messages:** Paintings on child health awareness, awareness of covid-19, HIV, Dengue, Malaria, teach people visually as well as ethically.

**Other messages:** paintings on criminal case in park street, Nirvaya case in Delhi, and so many current cases which draw a deep impression in the human mind.

All the messages through pattachitra gain the attention of the tourists and the pater gan add extra benefits for the elaboration of the said events which carry high rich societal messages. Thus, pattachitra played a vital role in the expansion of cultural tourism in West Bengal. The messages of pattachitra is a pictorial presentation to attract the attention of the tourists, but the patuas sing pater song in their local languages at the time of their paintings. They narrate their stories what they drawn which make additional values of the pattachitra. Though the maximum patuas are illiterate or had low level qualification but they draw pictures on their present concept about the subject matter. While the patuas sing pater song they do not use any musical instruments to represent that. They are the narrator, lyric makers, singers, composers on their own. They sing their songs with their full of emotion. But language barriers played a vital role for the presentation of pattachitra theme.

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### Results of the study:

Pattachitra exchanges cultural messages to the travellers. But some problems appear when the artisans represent the messages, are- Language barriers: the mother language of West Bengal is Bengali. When patuas make their paintings and sing pater song in their gaelic languages, most of the non- Bengali, and foreigners could not understand what they want to say. As a result they get misappropriate messages of the pattachitra. Example- a woman patua of Naya village sang a pater song in front of a foreign tourist while she was painting on HIV. In her song she mentioned that HIV is originate from abroad and only foreigners are the carrier of the said disease. The foreigner at first could not understand the said messages but enjoyed the picture of pattachitra. When the foreigner asked someone to translate what the artisan wanted to say in her song, then by knowing the messages he was surprised. So, the language barriers is the main constraints to deliver the messages properly to the artists. Not all the national and international tourists know Bengali, so the face problems in their conversations with the patuas.

**Time Barriers:** Most of the women of the rural areas in west Bengal are the artisans of pattachitra. But they do it at their leisure time. Actual their livelihood depends mainly on the agricultural sectors. So, at the day time they engaged with their men to help them into the field. After the field activity they do paintings of pattachitra. Most of them do this in the evening. The artisans use natural colours for their paintings. Day time is the appropriate for the dryness of the paintings. But sometimes that could not possible by the artisans. All the tourists visited the said places at day time. Then most of the femaleartisans get busy in the agricultural work, or in their domestic chores. As a result, many tourists will not get familiar with the renowned female artists.

**Legal Barriers:** A few but some legal barriers hampered in presenting the messages through pattachitra. For example- in a pattachitra a king or a man drink alcohol, or smoking cigarette, or hookah, is unauthentic. It delivers harmful messages to the society. This type of paintings sometimes postponed due to their harmful messages.

**Educational Barriers:** Educational barriers is one of the major problems. Not all the patua are educated. Old artisans never went to school. They only focus on their traditional paintings of ancestral business. The present generation of the patua community do not give much concentration on their education (exceptions are also available). So, they are not efficient to convers into foreign language especially in English. They are not expert in Hindiand in other languages also. A few number of artisans able to converse in English and in Hindi. As a result, they worked as a translator of the foreign tourist. Illiteracy and low level of education make constraints in delivering the messages.

**Communal Barriers:** Most of the patuas believe that pattachitra is an origin of Hinduism. Only Hindu artisans are efficient to do patachitra paintings. They are the only inheritance of pattachitra artists. Though now a days many muslim people engage in pattachitra paintings but most of the Hindu artisans think that they are unprocurable. This community barriers make constraints in delivering the messages of pattachitra.

**Technical Barriers:** Artisans of the pattachitra deliver their valuable messages by their paintings. They also sing pater song with their paintings about the themes what they paint. They do not use any musical instruments. They only sing with their melodious voice. For this the messages by this song does not get attention and failure to create attraction to the tourists.

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### Conclusion:

Pattachitra expressed various familiar and untold stories of society. It exchanges ideas, information, cultures to the tourism industry. Rural areas of west Bengal are famous for their art work. The delivering messages of pattachitra is very eye catching, interesting, mind soothing, and have distinct societal, economic, environmental values. But, linguistic, educational, legal, time, communal, and technical constraints make this painting less valuable than what they actually deserve. So, for the development of the pattachitra, government should give much concentration on the artisan's educational standards. Govt. should arrange seminars to motivate patuas for their paintings and also should arrange some technical workshops to refresh their art work. NGOs, Bangla natok.com and similar organisations who work on the creative artistic works of patuas should take initiation to promote the messages of pattachitra. Central and state govt. should take special initiation to provide copyright on each and individual artisans' pattachitra. No community barriers should allow

among the artisans. 'Unity in Diversity' must be followed by artisans. Local govt., West Bengal Govt., and NGOs should take responsibility to teach spoken English, Hindi at free of cost by setting up coaching centres or training institutions. This free coaching helps them to understand the national and international languages as well as they also deliver the messages to them in the same way. Uses of electronic medias for demonstrate the exclusive messages of their paintings via face book, twitter, Instagram, and so many social sites make the patuas famous for their craft work. Advertisements and participation in All India Radio, make strong awareness about the pattachitra among the people. Though women patuas are doing their creative painting mostly in the evening, they require electricity. If West Bengal Govt. reduce tariff on their electric bill, it will highly motivate the patuas to continue their art work.

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### **Recommendation:**

Pattachitra is a heart throb of art and craft industry in West Bengal. It is an impetus of cultural tourism. Central Govt. and State Govt. should take initiation how to make awareness about the pattachitra among the people. The messages of pattachitra have high socio-economic values. For this, State Govt., Central Govt., local Govt., NGOs, MSME of State Govt. should make a platform to demonstrate the messages of pattachitra with patua and their pater song. Thus, each and every patua get motivation to take entrepreneurial initiation for their art work, and stay motivated to continue their paintings of pattachitra. Building a strong platform for the patuas and their pattachitra draw more concentration of the national and international tourists and also influence the cultural tourism sector of West Bengal.

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