Systematic Review On Graphic Art With Special Reference To Historical Aspects

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Abstract

Popular prints made available to the general public are the main focus of the conversation. It aims to uncover a muted, subtle, and closely tied modernist ancestry to society's everyday cultural activities, while also presenting a comprehensive and thorough history of Bengali graphic art—a task that prominent historians have already accomplished with great success. Modernism is an artistic attempt to reestablish aesthetic interaction with the general population rather than the aversion culture, which achieves its independence and purity by severing all ties between art and life. By understanding modernism in the context of colonialism and looking at how artists used modern graphic art brought to Bengal in the eighteenth century as a potent means of self-expression while retaining its communicative potential, one can better appreciate the expansive and flexible definition of modernism. In this article, systematic review on graphic art with special reference to historical aspects has been discussed.

Keywords: Graphic Art, History, Modernism.

1. INTRODUCTION:

In contrast to the notion that modernism is a culture of aversion that achieves formal purity and artistic autonomy by severing all ties between art and the social world or life, Berman defines modernism as a constructive and communicative program, a creative attempt to revive aesthetic communication with the people. Berman's broad and comprehensive definition of modernism in colonial India's history allows us to understand its introduction through colonial conquest and its use as a potent form of artistic self-expression, all while preserving its communicative potential. Ivins discussed the works of famous graphic artists such as Durer and Rembrandt, but he regarded them as innovators or practitioners of certain graphic techniques that they employed to overcome technical issues or create novel pictorial effects. Elizabeth Eisenstein, who wrote the influential book Printing Press as an agent of change, is another example of a technologist who appreciates impersonal media as a creative agency, as mentioned by Carl Goldstein in his book about

Abraham Bosse. While Eisenstein explores the impact of the printing press on the French Cultural Revolution during the early modern era in her writing, she fails to acknowledge the creative contributions of authors and painters. By pointing out this flaw and her overemphasis on the impersonal media as a change agent, Goldstein charges Eisenstein with dehumanizing history. According to Goldstein, Abraham Bosse—rather than the intaglio printing press or the effectiveness of the instruments or methods—was the true agent of change. However, he only downplays the significance of tools and techniques & shifting attention from the medium to the role that artists play in creating images. It was Goldstein, not Ivins, who chose this path. Instead of only examining the history of graphic art from a technological perspective, it also attempted to place itself within the cross-cultural framework of colonialism and explore how artists' relationships with the market and new commercial graphic art mediums changed over time.

2. SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Dutta, A. (2018). Through a critical reading of an autobiography by a twentieth-century Bengali artist, this study attempts to demonstrate how commercial art and the consumption mentality mirrored by that work represented a typical bhadralok symbol. Upon closer inspection, this insignia demonstrates how the colonial capitalist structure, through Bengal's distinct regional context, mediated the dynamics of contemporary liberal values, creating a new cosmopolitan space that reframes cultural practices within a larger global history of interrogation, reason, change, and emancipation. This essay looks at primary sources within a historical framework. The Bengal School of Art, led by Bhadralok, produced early postcolonial Bengali commercial art. The study only covers the Bengal region. This work adds to the body of knowledge in one of the important but little-explored areas of Indian corporate history.

Nercam, N. (2016). This looks at some aspects of the exchanges between Chinese and Indian artists that took place in the early 20th-century creative circles of Shantiniketan, Bengal, and Calcutta. Okakura Kakuzo's Pan-Asian viewpoints shaped the Bengali elite's opinion of Chinese art from the 20th century onwards. The first direct correspondence between Chinese and Indian artists started in the 1940s and continued under the direction of Rabindranath Tagore. The early Chinese woodcut movement inspired the Bengali avant-garde as they sought a new aesthetic in response to social and political oppression.

Cohen, J. (2012). A broad inquiry into the nationalist themes in the paintings of "the Bengal School" evolved into research that traced the nationalist movement in Bengal, roughly between

1895 and 1920. In my discussion of this scholarship, I explore the connection between Abanindranath, his paintings, and nationalism. The primary focus of this dissertation is the literature on painter Abanindranath Tagore, whose name frequently appears in discussions about nationalism and Bengali painting. I then discuss Rabindranath Tagore and his role in the Swadeshi movement during the first ten years of the 1900s, as well as his own path of patriotic discourse that developed after Abanindranath's creative movement became less intense. In conclusion, I offer a thorough analysis of the "nationalisms" of Rabindranath and Abanindranath.

Sinha, A. (2008). Partha Mitter's criticism of the Western modernist canon as a universalized idea makes me think of another Indian, Sri Sayed Ahmed Khan, who resisted nineteenth- century British imperialism.

Mitter, P. (2008). Because of the disintegration of earlier assumptions, art historians have spent the last 20 years carefully evaluating their objectives for the field's future. In two theoretical papers, one titled The End of the History of Art? Hans Belting clearly conveys this. In the other paper, he sadly embraces the overarching Hegelian narrative of art history's decline. He calls attention to the growing gap between knowledge of the wide variety of art forms and activities and the scope of canonical art histories. However, it's plausible that his concerns about the diminishing strength of the canon may not be entirely valid. Consider the 2004 publication of Art since 1900, a magazine that focuses on avant-garde. We need to discuss the important questions raised by the book. The four writers demonstrate a high degree of intellectual sophistication, pains taking attention to detail, and a command of the broader Western avant-garde art environment of the twentieth century. I think we should recognize this work's achievements since it questions the triumphalist rhetoric of early twentieth-century modernism. It should be remembered that a literature this extensive, written for a wide readership, is not able to include everything.

Until the publication of Bharatchandra Roy's Annadamangal in 1816 by ambitious publisher Gangakishore Bhattacharya, Bengali literature lacked drawings. The book included two full-page engravings and four unsigned woodcuts by Ramchand Roy. Over the following 20 years, the number of Bengali books—mostly religious texts and traditional stories with ornate engravings—grew dramatically. In 1818, Rammadhab Sen published Sangeet Taranga, a collection of Indian ragas, along with six engravings by Ramchand Roy that mimicked the small size of Ragmala paintings. There have been several reprints of this book released. Madhab Chandra Sen drew the pictures in the 1849 edition and made minor adjustments to the engravings by Ramchand Roy. When we compare their

renderings of Raga Hindol, we can see that Madhab Chandra Sen, without altering the composition, transitioned from a clear, linear representation of the forms to one that is slightly congested with decorative elements, disrupting the surface. One or more artists frequently illustrated books and usually signed their works. In 1828, Bharatchandra published a second edition of Annadamangal with pictures by Ramdhan Swarnakar, Birchandra Dutta, Roopchand Roy, and Ramsagar Chakrabarty. Their engravings, like Ramchand Roy's, showed a high degree of expertise in working with the new graphic medium, although the 1816 edition did not seek to replicate his engravings. Each of their pieces was unique from the others and varied composition and handling originality. Ramdhan Swarnakar gained fame among these painters through the engravings in Hariharmangal Sangeet, published in 1830 under the patronage of Pranchandra Kapur, a well-known dewan of the Maharaja of Burdwan.

The book, with its 71 full-page engravings by Ramdhan Swarnakar, was more of a valuable object, akin to a Muraqqa, than a typical book. It was likely the Bengali book from the early nineteenth century that had the most ornate artwork. The increasing acceptance of illustrated books in many socioeconomic groups resulted in the widespread usage of engraving, even though it was more expensive than woodcut.

Almost nothing is known about the early engravers, except for their names. Unlike the woodcut artists who came after them, they did not etch their place of employment or residence next to their name. The native artists, who had learned the new medium of copper engraving from the society's members, had achieved notable development in this area, according to the second annual report. European specialists first taught engraving techniques to certain local indigenous craftsmen, similar to punch-cutting and type-making, and then passed on this knowledge to other craftsmen.

Many of the first engravers were blacksmiths or goldsmiths who left their customary caste- based vocations to pursue engraving as a side gig or career. The metalworkers, who were especially skilled with burin and graver, adapted their traditional techniques and knowledge to the new engraving media. Copperplate engraving and the process of engraving a design on a brass object were essentially the same. Kamal Kumar Majumder asserts that the neatness and elegance of the engraved lines in the early engravings found in Bengali books would have impressed any competent Western or Japanese artist. This was an expression of the polished, inherited metalworking abilities of the native engravers. The engravers heavily modified and altered the other engravings in the book, including those of Hindol and Deepak, to demonstrate the blending of different components and styles. Nonetheless,

there are certain stylistic and compositional parallels between the miniature painting and Raga Bhairav's engraving. However, his engravings faithfully recreate the image from the conventional text.

The vivid imagery in the poetry and the artwork differ in a few ways. The picture depicts the hill woodland as a modern European garden, complete with a checkerboard walkway and an iron gate. Nonetheless, the picture largely corresponds with the text. The young man portrayed as Deepak is seen riding an elephant alongside maidens, and his excited demeanor is visible. Perhaps the best illustration of Ramchand's innovation is how he used several stipples, or dots, that extended from the backgrounds of the youth and maidens to the tree on the far right of the image to successfully symbolize the forest fire caused by the music instead of actually employing flames. The dark clouds behind the tree most likely depicted the smoke from the fire. Kamal Kumar asserts that Ramchand did not adhere to the written description, mistaking the dot pattern for fire. Rather, he might have expected a more grounded fire. It is evident from Ramdhan Swarnakar's numerous engravings in Hariharmangal Sangeet that he favored the corporate paintings as well as the prevalent local painting styles and iconographies. His use of two-part compositions as a tool for visual storytelling, along with the rigid forms and gestures of the figures, showed how astutely he assembled his images using a variety of elements drawn from Bengal's varied visual traditions, such as painted murals, folk paintings, temple terracotta, and so on. Unlike the noncanonical representations of Ganga in Gangabhakti Tarangini (1824), his engravings of the goddess Kali in Annadamangal (1828) and many other divine iconographies in Hariharmangal Sangeet mirrored the local religious imagery. Panjikas, early Bengali almanacs, and a plethora of other works, including woodcuts, made Ramdhan's compositional patterns and figurations widely known. These woodcuts, of course, altered his original design. Ramdhan's strong local influence likely played a role in his selection for the prestigious Hariharmangal Sangeet artwork project. Like other engravers of the era, Ramdhan assembled unrelated, often incongruous visual elements from various sources to create his works, but Ramchand's approach, treatment, and style were inconsistent. It would never have been feasible for us to identify Ramchand's creations without his distinct hallmark.

Despite being rooted in traditional art, the craftsmen-printmakers collaborated with traditional artists, retailers, and anonymous readers within the market network. Colonial influence swiftly altered public tastes, compelling traditional painters to satisfy the varied demands of the people instead of producing images that matched the community's expectations. Colonial influence frequently provided reference photos and guidelines on how to tell stories in a novel and engaging way.

Academics have observed that nature emerged from the artists' negotiation of market demands as well as their philosophical inputs. Erwin Panofsky argues that the unpredictable character of the market and the public's indecisive requests are helpful aspects because it is the market, not tradition, that now informs craftsmen and printers about current trends and desires. Their works became more inventive, daring, and self-aware due to the worries arising from their interactions. The market interacted with them in a reciprocal manner, rather than merely reflecting the prevalent beliefs and aspirations. People often choose to ignore it; however, a more thorough analysis of the vast array of well-known woodcuts produced by skilled printers of the nineteenth century would offer a more profound comprehension of Panofsky's contention than would a superficial analysis of the fleeting engravings.

In Bengal, engraving's heyday was coming to an end as woodcut took its place. The explanation was both financial and technological. It was said that the cost of having a design executed on a copperplate, which had to be imported from England because it was unavailable locally, was one gold Muhar, or the equivalent of three milch cows or two bullocks. As the demand for illustrated books increased across all social groups, publishers realized more and more how costly this medium was as a business. However, they thought woodcut was inexpensive and practical. When printing text, the publisher could place the woodblock into the type matrix, whereas copperplate engraving, similar to lithography, required a separate printing press and was more expensive. With Woodcut, the publisher could select any image he felt fit for the text and had complete control over the printing process. Moreover, copperplates required the publisher to handle text and art as independent components, either as insert plates or as frontispieces on the title page. The transition from engraving to woodcut was more difficult than it first appeared. The inherited expertise in metalworking did not assist the printmakers or artisans in addressing the unique image creation challenges associated with woodcutting. When we juxtapose the woodcuts found in early Bengali literature like Annadamangal or Gauri Bilas with the engravings created by Ramchand Roy or Ramdhan Swarnakar, we may observe that the woodcuts appear less strong and technically weaker than the engravings. However, the native artists faced more challenges in mastering the two distinct foreign media they encountered nearly simultaneously than in their artistic abilities. For an inexperienced artist, woodcut was a more challenging medium in terms of creating images than engraving. In woodcut, the artist carved the design into the woodblock, keeping the printing part level with the surface and removing the non-printing parts with a knife or gauge. As previously discussed, the engraving process directly etched the

image onto the plate. The early craftsmen-printmakers were familiar with the technique, and it had to be adapted to a new purpose. If the design was straightforward, the task did not seem to be extremely difficult; nevertheless, this was not the case if the design was a sophisticated story image. It took a while for the printmakers, who lacked formal education, to adjust to the benefits and drawbacks of the indirect medium. Years of trial and error produced the astonishing polish that we see in the later indigenous woodcuts.

The discussion also restricted to the Bengali almanacs, also known as Panjikas, which represent the largest and most dependable collection of indigenous woodcuts from the nineteenth century, considering the popularity of these woodcuts and the numerous studies conducted on this topic. According to James Long's descriptive catalogue, Panjika was the most well-liked and extensively distributed magazine, with one lakh copies printed and distributed each year. It was present even in the most isolated Bengali communities, where no other Bengali literature had ever made it. When it came to practically every social and household event, including marriage, travel, and getting a young girl's ear pierced, the Hindus consulted Panjika.

The first printed Panjika engraved the Surya Grahan, or solar eclipse. The first printed Panjika featured an astral diagram in the middle, flanked by two representations of Grahabipra, or local astrologers, who resembled two men from Europe. The upper portion depicted the sun's chariot and the severed head of Rahu, the ferocious anti-god who pursued the sun and moon to swallow them. Using visual references from European imagery, the artist created an image that bore no stylistic similarities to traditional artworks. Before the Panjika printed version, there was the Panjika manuscript, which appears to have contained only the astral diagram and no additional images.

It was not sold, the Grahabipra brought it to people's homes to read aloud to the household members, forcing them to memorize all the significant dates for the upcoming year. The introduction of printed Panjika meant that household members could now consult Panjika whenever they wanted, which significantly reduced the authority of Grahabipra. The image of Grahabipra frequently featured on the cover pages of the Panjikas as well as within them, serving as a reminder to readers of the book's original auspicious function and noble goal in Hindu religious life. The Panjikas either depicted him alone or with male and female listeners seated separately on his sides. The prevailing custom at the time always portrayed him facing the male listeners, with the female listeners and kids seated behind him. The images served as visual documentation of a long-standing custom that persisted in Bengal during the

nineteenth century. The realistic pictures of Grahabipra on the Panjika covers show that, even though academics said the native woodcuts were made up and not real because they weren't realistic, the woodcuts showed just as much social truth or fact as the naturalistic European prints that they thought were better, more scientific, and more educational.

Dinashindhu Press released the Nutan Panjika, a book featuring renowned Hariharmangal Sangeet engraver Ramdhan Swarnakar as a woodcut artist. The pages listing the timings and dates of their pujas featured primarily woodcut pictures of the main deities. The first woodcut depicting the goddess Ganga atop her elephant-headed mound, Makara, exposed the engraver's battle to become fluent in the woodcut language. When the engraver attempted to depict all the figures in thin black outlines, as he did with the figure of the Brahmin worshiping Ganga, the black and white lines and marks on the black mass frequently became muddled. This resulted in the composition losing its orderly and striking graphic nature, characteristic of a woodcut print. In contrast to this narrative print, his other famous woodcuts depicting Jagadhatri, Saraswati, Kali, or Durga in the Panjika exhibit notable advancements. Using excessive ornamentation, he not only solved the problem of the black mass but also gave the picture a festive look. Bengali popular art inspired the deities' iconographies, and Ramdhan frequently included images of male and female attendants to the icons, some of whose consumptions and figurations resembled those found in Hariharmangal Sangeet.

A full-page picture of Chadak, one of Bengal's most well-known festivities celebrated on the last day of the year, marked the end of the Panjika. Scholars have confirmed that the motif of chadak was not common in Bengali traditional art. However, it was rare to find an illustrated Panjika without an image of Chadak. Similar to how the depictions of gods and goddesses in Panjika evoked feelings of piety in readers who identified as religious, the image of Chadak evoked fond recollections of the regional celebration. The depiction of the swinging poll in Ramdhan featured four performers suspended from its center, surrounded by food merchants, drum players, and village people. To the far right of the image stood a Siva temple. Additionally, the crowds yelled the chants "De Pak, De Pak, De Pak (Swing; Swing; Swing)" around the image's edge, enthralling the swing artists. Many later Panjikas employ the Ratha Yatra images in a way that mirrors the chant phrases. The Panjika artists tried to convey both the auditory and visual elements of the events through these captioned photos.

Although it has a horizontal format similar to Ramdhan's woodcut, Krishna Chandra Karmakar's woodcut Chadak, which was published in the Nutan Panjika by Chandradoy Press in

Serampore, is more technically advanced and has a different composition. Krishna Chandra Karmakar, like his well-known father, Monohar Karmakar, was a master type cutter and was also well-known for his ability to create intricately designed gold jewelry. Monohar founded Chandradoy Press as an independent book publishing company. Every year, the Press released its own Panjika, which Krishna Chandra illustrated in excellent detail. Krishna Chandra's woodcut of Chadak depicts all the activities seen in Ramdhan's; however, to emphasize the main swing acts, he shrunk the scale of the sellers and village people and shifted them to one corner of the image. The human figures, portrayed in different actions and positions against the erect Siva temple, created an undulating rhythm in the image as they engaged in the various occupations. The later Nutan Panjika published Krishna Chandra's woodcut of Chadak, adopting a vertical format instead of a horizontal one. He had to redo the entire picture's composition as a result of the alteration.

Krishna Chandra drastically altered the appearance of Panjika. His woodcuts, in contrast to Ramdhan's, were full-page illustrations rather than text-interspersed images. His richly adorned and framed portraits of the gods allow one to remove them from the book and worship them as standalone artwork. Krishna Chandra's fresh and extremely iconic rendering of the foundational deities dominated the Panjika of Chandradoy Press, giving it a distinctive religious quality. Even though the later Panjikas featured many superb narrative woodcuts depicting various religious festivals and events, the iconic illustrations of Nrityalal Dutta Krishna Chandra, Panchanan Karmakar of Hogolkuda, and Heeralal Karmakar remained the best. The following Panjika illustrators copied many of his famous illustrations, including the one he created for Chadak. Krishna exclusively produced illustrations for the Panjika, a publication by his own company, Chandradoy Press.

Consequently, he did not typically inscribe his name and location on the illustrations, unlike other Panjika illustrators who provided illustrations upon commission; instead, they appeared in printing types beneath the photos. The Chandradoy Press established a new benchmark and style for Panjika publishing in Bengal with the mirror-title page, framed full-page pictures, and exquisite typefaces, which the subsequent publishers largely attempted to emulate.

Gods and goddesses populated the Panjika universe, and the images depicted in it represented the upcoming year as a sequence of celebrations and pujas. However, totally accurate to images in Panjikas exclusively depicted religious themes; on occasion, they also featured specific local recollections or events, which spoke to the artists' secular interests. The artists portrayed these earthly themes, whose exact meanings remain

somewhat unclear to us, not as separate images, but rather as elements of well- known celebrations like Snan Yatra or Ratha Yatra. Different painters added various local subtexts or stories to the photos, but the overall ideas stayed mostly the same.

The Chandradoy Press Nutan Panjika featured an image of Krishna Chandra's Snan Yatra, split into two equal portions. The lower portion showcased rows of closed temple doors, symbolizing the later Anasara period when the ailing gods resided within the temple, hidden from the devotees' sight. The upper half depicted Jagannatha's bathing rite. The brother of Krishna Chandra, Ramchandra Karmakar, altered the theme of the lower portion to a local scene in the Chandradoy Press's Panjika publication while preserving the composition of a few minor adjustments. The lower section depicted a sick guy resting on the ground while medical professionals monitored his heart rate. A couple of noble women from a high-class family were accompanying him, along with another noble individual who could potentially be a Zamindar. The right side of the image depicts the village women returning from the fair. We are left with little choice but to conjecture, even if readers in the present day were well aware of the ill man's tale. Was he the Brahmin who got sick after carrying many pitchers of water from the Ganga to wash the idols? Did Ramchandra paint a picture that subtly alluded to the idols' illnesses during Anasara? Was it one of the well-known Antarjali scenes from Serampore? I'm not entirely certain.

Mahesh, a village close to Serampore, was the most popular location for the Ratha Yatra and Snan Yatra festivities in Eastern India, second only to Orissa. People from all over Bengal flocked to Mahesh to witness the auspicious religious ceremonies and participate in the sizable fairs held during the festivities. Ramdhan Swarnakar and Heeralal Karmakar both adopted Krishna Chandra's two-part format in their woodcuts of the Snan Yatra, with the lower section showing two different scenes of the fair. Heeralal's woodcut depicted the fair simply, featuring a shopkeeper offering hand fans to a customer, a well-dressed couple, and children enjoying the elephant ride. In addition to the sellers, patrons, and elephant ride, Ramdhan depicted a group of armed guards and two European men who stood out among the fairgoers dressed like villagers. The realistic illustrations in the European book were recognizable to Ramdhan, who drew the illustrations for the Vernacular Literature Society's Bengali translation of Little Mermaid. Being close to the English reformers, he appears to have painted a picture of common foreigners, officials, or Christian missionaries who would visit the fair to give out religious pamphlets or share the gospel. The Panjika illustrators altered the local scenes in the lower portion of each picture while largely leaving the upper portion unchanged in order to distinguish their work from one another.

Benimadhab Dey's Panjika published a woodcut of Panchanan Karmakar of Hogolkuda's Ratha Yatra, which depicted a peculiar local event. The image depicted a throng of devotees dragging the enormous, forty-foot-tall Ratha in Mahesh, while one of them tripped under the Ratha's massive wheel. The scene depicted the Mahesh Fair. The scene depicted a middle-aged man kicking and tugging a woman's hair, while another decent man attempted to stop him. It contrasted with the conventional portrayal of the Kali Yuga, which showed a woman abusing a man. Most likely, the artists depicted the fight between Babu and the prostitute, or another lustful incident that led to the renowned Mahesh festivals. The images of the secular festivities in Panjikas revealed "local truths," or glimpses of unique regional recollections of the festivals.

A large number of the Panjika artists also created illustrations for other well-known classical texts, including Bharatchandra's Granthabali, the Mahabharata, and the Ramayana. Typically, their focus on the well-known texts prevented them from incorporating the subtexts of specific local occurrences. Occasionally, the colonial world infiltrated the legendary images, exemplified by the unsigned woodcut of Aswamedha Yajna in Kashiram Das's Mahabharata, published by Nrityalal Sil. The artist depicted the scene, paying strict attention to the textual descriptions, but added a European Band Party to the lower left of the image, next to the sacrificial horse. By the late 1800s, the band party had become a staple of any significant celebration. Gautam Bhadra draws our attention to the modern world's incorporation into the epic's mythological world, arguing that this mirrored the multiple, incorporative, and anachronistic universe of the traditional artists and their audience. Their figural, metaphorical imagination did not intrinsically contradict the existence of a colonial home for Lord Siva or a large factory in the kingdom of Birata. There was a palimpsestic link between the past and present, the legendary and the ordinary, and there was no clear temporal division between them as separate entities.

The craftsmen-printmakers drew inspiration from European art and miniature paintings, either to meet their graphic needs or to captivate their audience. However, their woodcuts' pictorial additive structure, flat decorative style, ornamentation, and narrative storytelling quality evoked strong memories of Bengali folk visual styles and traditional crafts like temple terracotta and pata painting. The creative way they transformed the numerous visual themes from various sources into linear graphic forms, simplifying and harmonizing with the image's overall style and design, continues to amaze us. The woodcuts created by the skilled printmakers were essentially traditional art, reflecting pre-existing ideals, attitudes, and dispositions. However, they were

fundamentally distinct from folk art because they were works of individual artists. But rather than the sharp individualism of the modern artists, the individualism of Heeralal or Krishna Chandra Karmakar was what art historian Emile Male would refer to as a "diffused individualism," one that kept the popular artists connected to the common visual tradition. Upon closer inspection, it is reasonable to say that the craftsman-printmakers, unlike the Kalighat painters, did not only update the vocabulary of traditional art; rather, they invented a whole new category of visuality through a creative process involving imitation, assimilation, and creation. The "Battala" woodcut refers to the new visuality of the indigenous woodcuts, which demonstrated extraordinary production and popularity, and which the newly educated reformists attempted to repress and replace with the academic naturalistic woodcuts they admired.

As the academic printmakers' naturalistic woodcuts gained popularity in the later part of the nineteenth century, the financial potential of the native woodcuts started to diminish. A small number of publishers continued to publish traditional books with native woodcuts, while the majority of publishers shifted to using academic woodcuts. These publishers' primary readership consisted of religiously inclined villagers. Several copies of the Mahabharata and Ramayana in Battala, published in the latter decades of the century, adorned themselves richly with native woodcuts. Some printmakers, like Nafar Chandra Bandopadhyay, chose new trend, while others gave temptations and influences of the realistic woodcuts. His attempt to harmonize the two disparate visual languages was evident in the stark contradiction and incongruity of his woodcuts.

Dinendrakumar Roy states in his autobiographical book Pally Chitra that the public taste in rural areas did not shift as quickly as it did in cities. For a very long time, the local residents favored the traditional woodcuts by Heeralal Karmakar—which they saw as Christian rather than modern or secular—over the naturalistic paintings seen in the primer Shishubodhok.

Since the main purpose of an elementary textbook was to instill moral lessons, the village school's local teachers preferred Shishubodhok over the School Book Society's secular textbooks, which they believed were influenced by Christianity. The native woodcuts' enduring conventional forms and canonical characteristics strengthened the religious and moral lessons included in the old scriptures.

CONCLUSION:

Once photography started to take the role of the illustrators' hand-drawn layouts, the world of commercial advertising underwent a dramatic change. The use of images and human models in product commercials has taken a new direction,

necessitating a unique approach. The famous graphic prints were made by incredibly talented painters who blended humor and seriousness in their work. The prints do not resemble the cloistered art of eternal classics or large-scale commercial art.

The new graphic art media embraced the local culture of Bengal. European painters initially trained Native Indian artists, yet their prints upheld the regional imagination and visual traditions, even as they incorporated Western influences such as photography. The phrase "colonization of the image" describes the intricate history of Western graphic colonialism. the rise of woodcut within the educational framework of art schools in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in Santiniketan; the development of its connection to changing nationalist tendencies in Bengal; and the education in art schools that led to the emergence of a new class of academic graphic artists who were distinct from the traditional craftsmen. This provides extensive information on many of the prints made by well-known artists, such as Binodbehari Mukherjee, Nandalal Bose, and Ramendranath Chakrabarty. Scholars frequently interpret the 1940s—a difficult decade characterized by hunger, violence, and partition—through the prism of left- wing political theories and works of art that highlight human misery. The area of commercial advertising saw a drastic change when photography began to take the role of artists' hand-drawn layouts and, to a lesser extent, graphic art itself. A distinct approach to art history is necessary due to the new path popular art took with the use of photographs and human models in product advertisements. Despite the occasional use of images in the past, the advent of offset and, more recently, digital media ushered in a new era in popular and commercial art, demanding a unique exploration of the creative roles of illustrators and designers. The connection between the history of modernism it aimed to map and the history of colonialism in India is a significant factor, leading me to conclude my dissertation with commercial art from the 1940s. The climate changed in independent India, and a new spirit started to encourage artists' aspirations for beauty and the arts.

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