

Bastar Art and Craft: The Integration of Indigenous Craftsmanship in Architecture

Yukta Sinha

Graduate student

Department of Architecture

NIT Raipur, India

Abstract — This research looks at possibilities for incorporating indigenous craft into building to create fresh narratives about identity and culture. The paper questions whether architecture can be a way to revive traditional craftsmanship, not only to help artisans but also to give the country's various regional flavors a distinctive character. By displaying the beauty and diversity of their skills, it seeks to reclaim an area that belonged to artisans ages ago. According to the paper, fusing the aesthetics of craft and building creates a fresh creative space for coming up with design concepts that can be used for projects of all sizes, from modest abodes to massive installations. Craft blending into architecture not only supports artisans' livelihoods but also revitalizes the region's cultural heritage, making it a valuable addition to modern design practice.

Keywords: Craft, Bastar, Art, Tribal, Artist, Handicrafts, Tradition, Architecture

I. INTRODUCTION

Bastar, in the heart of Chhattisgarh, is known for its exquisite arts and crafts. Bastar's national and international renown stems from its distinct craft traditions, which include bronze metal craft, wrought iron art, terracotta art, bamboo art, tribal jewelry art, and wood carving. These crafts reflect the region's rich cultural heritage and are a testament to the skills of local artisans. Bastar is a land of breathtaking natural beauty as well as cultural riches, making it a tourist's paradise. The incorporation of these crafts into architecture not only supports artisans' livelihoods but also revitalizes the region's cultural heritage, making it a valuable contribution to contemporary design practice.

II. BASTAR ART AND CRAFT

A. Bell- Metal craft (Dhokra):

It is a method of casting non-ferrous metals that is used to produce intricate and peculiar works of art. In the Dhokra craft method, a wax figure is used to make a mould. After applying clay, the wax figure is allowed to dry. A mould is left behind after the wax is melted using hot hardened clay. The mould is then filled with molten bell metal and left to settle. The detailed bell metal casting is then exposed after the clay mould has been removed. Given that no contemporary machinery is used, the Bell metal Dhokra craft is a unique method of metal casting. The tools, the mould, and the furnace are all basic, hand-made tools used in the procedure. This makes the craft very environmentally responsible and sustainable. Small figurines to large pots, lamps, and other home furnishings are all included in the completed Dhokra crafts. Due to the fact that each item is handmade and expertly finished, they are all distinct. The motifs used in the art pay homage to the local environment and tribal history. The

intricate patterns, which include geometric patterns, birds, and animals, are all symbolic and have cultural importance.

B. Wrought Iron Craft:

The art of creating wrought iron craft has been passed down from generation to generation, and it stays a significant part of the region's cultural legacy. The method used to make cast iron Bastar craft entails heating iron into a high temperature and then shaping it into different objects using hammers and anvils. The talented craftspeople of Bastar produce a wide variety of wrought iron items, including furniture, ornaments, and even statues.

C. Bamboo Craft:

Bamboo has been used for ages by the skilled craftsmen of Bastar to make a wide variety of attractive and useful items. Bamboo is a strong and adaptable resource that is used to make a wide range of goods, including furniture, baskets, mats, and decorative items. Bastar's craftspeople use a variety of methods, including weaving, plaiting, and carving, to produce intricate designs and motifs on bamboo. The bamboo craft of Bastar is not just confined to practical items but also includes decorative items like masks, ornaments, and sculptures. The use of organic dyes produced from local materials is one of the most distinctive aspects of Bastar bamboo craft. These dyes give the bamboo goods an organic, vibrant look that also increases their eco-friendliness.

D. Clay pottery and Terracotta Art:

It involves using clay that is readily accessible locally to create intricate sculptures, statues, and other decorative items. The art form is renowned for its distinctive aesthetic, which is distinguished by the use of earthy tones, finely textured materials, and complex patterns. Bastar's artisans are adept at moulding clay into a variety of shapes, and the finished goods are frequently decorated with elaborate designs and motifs. Generation after generation has handed down the craft, which is still thriving in the area.

E. Wood Crafting:

Bastar's wooden craft is a traditional art form that entails using locally found materials to produce exquisite wooden objects. Bastar's artisans create a wide range of goods, including furniture, toys, masks, and ornamental items, using a variety of woods, including teak, shisham, sal, kikar, and dhundi. tribal wall decorations, wooden masks, and deity figures rendered in clay. Each of them is unique and exhibits top-notch craftsmanship. It is simple to obtain timbers due to the abundance of forest foliage. Here, a variety of furniture is made. Additionally, Chhattisgarh is well known for its painted and lacquered hardwood crafts.

The craft is distinguished by its intricate carvings, detailed patterns, and use of vivid colours. The timber is

carved by hand with basic tools, and brass and iron fittings are frequently used to adorn the finished pieces.

Generation after generation has gone, and the wooden craft of Bastar has grown to be a significant source of income for the artisans. The craft has received national and international recognition as a representation of the region's rich cultural heritage.

III. EXPLORING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN BASTAR ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The intricate and distinctive art and craft practises of Bastar are well-known. There are several groups in the area, such as the Gonds, Murias, and Maria, who have been producing art and crafts for many years. The distinctive motifs, vivid colour palettes, and detailed patterns that make up Bastar art and craft stand out from other styles.

The art and science of designing and constructing buildings and other physical constructions is referred to as architecture, on the other hand. It is a field that has been around for a long time and has been affected by many different artistic and cultural traditions. Architecture entails the use of a variety of materials, including wood, stone, brick, and concrete, to create structures that are both practical and visually pleasing.

There are several similarities between Bastar art, craft, and building despite their apparent differences. The links between them and how they have changed over time will be discussed in this paper.

The use of comparable motifs and designs is one of the links between Bastar art, craft, and building that is most obvious. The intricate and striking designs of Bastar art and craft, which frequently incorporate flora, fauna, and human forms, are well known. Wood, metal, and clay are just a few of the materials used to make these designs. Similarly, architecture often integrates decorative motifs and designs into building facades, interiors, and furnishings. These patterns can be anything from straightforward geometric patterns to intricate ornamental motifs, and they frequently represent the local artistic and cultural customs.

In the instance of Bastar, the art and craft of the area have had a variety of influences on the local architecture. For instance, the Gonds, one of Bastar's most well-known clans, are renowned for their intricate mural paintings, many of which feature gods and other natural elements. The architecture of the area has been affected by these paintings, and many structures have murals on their walls that enhance their aesthetic appeal. The design of furniture and ornamental components in buildings, like doors and windows, has also been inspired by Bastar art and craft.

The use of regional resources and methods is another way that Bastar art and craft have impacted architecture. For millennia, the tribes of Bastar have created art and crafts using local materials like clay, metal, and wood. Buildings in the area are also constructed using these elements. For instance, the Gonds' traditional homes are made of mud, wood, and bamboo and have elaborate carvings and patterns. Similarly, the metalwork of the area has impacted the design of architectural elements such as gates, railings, and brackets.

Building design and sustainability have both been impacted by the use of local resources and methods. For

instance, the Gonds' traditional homes are built with locally accessible natural materials to minimise their impact on the ecosystem. Modern architects are increasingly using this method of design as they try to construct eco-friendly, sustainable structures that have little negative impact on the environment.

The use of colour in architecture has also been inspired by Bastar art and craft. The area is known for its bold use of colour, which is frequently employed to create intricate patterns and designs in its art and craft. These hues have also influenced the local architecture, as seen in the abundance of structures with vibrantly coloured exteriors and interiors. This use of colour gives the buildings more visual attraction and fosters a lively and vibrant atmosphere. The architecture of the area reflects how Bastar art and craft have impacted the region's cultural identity. The regional traditions of art and craft are a vital component of the Bastar tribes' sense of cultural identification. The architecture of the area also reflects this ethnic identity.

IV. FROM RAW MATERIALS TO GLOBAL MARKETS

Bastar's handicraft industry has a long past that has been passed down through the generations, making it a significant component of the region's cultural heritage. The production of goods starts with suppliers of raw materials, continues with production, and ends with delivery to domestic and foreign markets in Bastar. The gathering of raw materials is the first stage in the value chain. Wood, metal, stone, and bamboo are some of the raw elements used to make Bastar handicrafts. The raw materials are mostly obtained locally from the forests of Bastar. The government also runs a programme to give artists discounted access to raw materials.

The production of the handicrafts is the following stage in the value chain. Bastar handicraft production is a labor-intensive process that calls for a high degree of skills and experience. The majority of the handicraft production in Bastar is manual and employs traditional methods. The artisans mould the raw materials into a variety of shapes using instruments like hammers, chisels, and drills. After being made, the handicrafts are brought to the neighbourhood markets for selling. The local markets in Bastar are renowned for their vibrancy and are an important part of the local economy. The neighbourhood markets give artisans a chance to display their creations and engage with customers. Additionally, a lot of visitors visit these kinds of markets to buy Bastar handicrafts as gifts.

The government has also been actively supporting Bastar's handicraft sector in recent years. Several handicraft training and support facilities have been created by the government in the area for the artisans. For the purpose of promoting Bastar handicrafts on the domestic and foreign markets, the government has also put together a number of exhibitions and fairs.

Delivering the handicrafts to domestic and foreign markets completes the value chain. The handicrafts are shipped from Bastar to numerous locations within the nation and overseas. Additionally, a lot of exporters travel to Bastar to buy handicrafts straight from the makers. The Bastar artisan value chain offers a number of advantages. First of all, it offers numerous residents of the area employment

possibilities. Second, it supports the region's cultural legacy and aids in the preservation of traditional handicraft methods. Third, it contributes to the local business by bringing in money. Finally, it gives the artisans a chance to exhibit their goods in domestic and foreign marketplaces.

V. METHODOLOGY

This research paper is focused on exploratory research. Several secondary sources were used to gather the data used in this research paper.

VI. CONCLUSION

There is an urgent need in today's rapidly evolving society to create circumstances and opportunities to link society and local craftsmen, not only from the point of view of enhancing the value of crafts, but also of initiating an immersive tourist experience with the place and context. Due to the unique craft traditions of bronze metal craft, wrought iron art, terracotta art, bamboo art, tribal jewelry art, and wood carving, the exquisite arts and crafts of Bastar have received national and international recognition. These crafts are a reflection of the region's rich cultural heritage and the abilities of local artisans. Bastar is a tourist haven because of its fame for natural attractiveness. A significant addition to modern design practice, the incorporation of these crafts into architecture not only helps to sustain the livelihoods of the artisans involved but also revives the cultural heritage of the area. The interplay between Bastar art and architecture is significant, as architecture is influenced by artistic and cultural traditions. Although the connections between the two have evolved over time, there is no denying their parallels. Traditional craft and modern design have been successfully merged through the use of regional materials in building and decorative elements in architecture, including bamboo, wood, clay, and metal. In conclusion, Bastar's art and craft traditions are a priceless addition to India's cultural heritage, and their use in architecture has aided in promoting and preserving the area's rich cultural past while generating income for local artisans. These crafts have received recognition on a national and international level for their beauty and skill, and as long as people value and support them, they will surely continue to flourish.

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