

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Approach to the Study of Art

The philosophical approach to art is traditional. It is largely idealistic as in Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Schelling and Schopenhauer. With the advent of the historical method in the study of culture, historicism found its early exponents in the field of art, notably Vico, Herder and Taine. But the historical and comparative methods have since been largely confined to the field of law, economics and religion. An outstanding exception is Earnst Grosse who examined the evolution of art in relation to stages of economic development and associated the naturalistic art style with phase of hunting and conventionalisation with the agricultural phase. Although the treatment was too schematic, his emphasis of the economic and psychological bases of the development of art styles makes Grosse a path founder in art history. Contemporary philosophers have also dwelt upon aesthetic value and experience and on the place art occupies in the scheme of knowledge. One may only refer to a few names like those of Basanquet, Samuel Alexander, Bergson, Croce, Santayana and Dewey.

Sociological Approach to the study of Art

A fruitful but neglected approach to art is the sociological. The sociology of art brings under its pre-view the social relations of the forms and motifs of art. Art as an individual creative expression also represents and reshapes social values.

Art is woven into the scheme of values and general pattern of collective living and culture of the people. Art also remoulds the prevailing thought processes, values and ideals of society. The sociology of art is an objective study of art work. Mukerjee (1951 : 30-31) defines it in this way, "It confines itself to the social conditions of origin and operation of art work, to the background of regional, economic and social factors and forces that determine the forms of art and largely condition its motifs and themes, and also to its meaning in a given culture with all its aspirations, frustration and fulfilments."

The early exponents of sociology of aesthetics were Taine, Herbert Spencer, Guyau, Semper, Grosse and Wundt. From the comparative history of art and culture we can understand the recurrent forms and motifs of art through the epochs among different peoples and the manner in which environmental and economic conditions, religion and social ideal and stage of development influence the artistic activity. Between art and society there is a reciprocity which has no end. The unity, the rhythm and the concord which the artist achieves is his art work.

The social inspiration of art can hardly be neglected as a formative factor in art, tradition and development. Mukherjee (1951 : 32) says that "Art is a subtle, attractive and powerful tool in the hands of society for shaping and regulating human relations and life-goals."

Origin and Meaning of Art in Society

Art is a creative activity of imagination that springs from the give and take between the individual and the society, and involves at every stage personal social adjustments. In art the individual accepts the social norms as his own wish and society accepts the individuals feelings and expressions, the form, motifs and themes of art in relation to the precise social historical setting. Each artist is largely socially conditioned. Both the subject-matter and form of art are derived by the artist from selection out of the raw materials of myth and metaphysics as well as the contemporary social environment and the symbols and patterns in which the art is found.

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Art is not only based on the religion and moral foundations of the community, but also on its economic structure. The nature of the economy, agricultural, communal and mechanical, capitalistic, the distribution of surplus wealth and leisure, and the relations of the social classes to each other largely define both the form and emotional contents of art. The influence of the economic factors is, again, indirect rather than direct.

Art is closely related to human life. Since the preliminary stage of human culture, man has exhibited, a liking for imitating nature, and his cave-life may be held as a proof of this principle. The personality of human being is formed in the environment around him. He even tries to mould and modify the the surrounding environment which results in increasing the scope of his culture. Art is a reflection of human life, and it also

receives publicity and popularity. Art becomes socialised and becomes a part of the society and culture.

Thus art and human life are closely related. The researcher has tried to study the relationship, particularly from the socio-logical aspect, Kolhapur city was selected for study as it has a rich heritage of art. It has a special, typical, religious, artistic and cine tradition. It has received an important status in mythological, historical, political, social and industrial fields. Even the scope of artistic tradition of Kolhapur is vast but the researcher has limited to the study of sociological aspect of Art in general and home decoration in particular in Kolhapur city. Again as the subject 'Home decoration' has a broad scope for study, the researcher has limited the scope of investigation to the study of the decoration of drawing room. The art of home decoration is a secondary part. To study the nature of effect of artistic heritage of Kolhapur on its people, hundred families from different socio-economic groups were selected by stratified random sampling method.

Art is a means of socialization and exchange of thoughts, ideas and behaviour. Art helps to bring all different caste and creed different economical classes, different religions, different culture under one roof.

General Objectives : The general objectives of the study were to understand the knowledge and attitudes of different socio-economic background families towards aspects of art and home decoration.

The specific objectives are as follows :

- i) To study the knowledge and attitudes in connection with art and home decoration.
- ii) To study the use of various items that reflects the aesthetic sense of the people.
- iii) To study the problems faced by the families in developing artistic and aesthetic sense.
- iv) To understand the development of social relationships between families due to artistic and decoration activities.

Kolhapur city is divided into five wards as follows :

A Ward : Rankala lake, Padmaraje Garden areas, cattle market, Sakoli area, Kapiltirth area, Babujmal Darga area, Gavatachi Mandai, Varunturth area, Ubha Maruti area, Phirangai area.

B Ward : Mahalaxmi temple, Khasbag, Palace Theatre, Sathamari, Old Palace, Rajaram College area, Gujari, Subhash Chowk, Old Race Course, Subhas Nagar, Jawahar Nagar, Sambhaji Nagar, Kalamba Jail.

C Ward : Municipal Office, Shivaji Market, Bindu Chowk, Town Hall, Laxmipuri, Gujari, Akbar Mohalla, Sandhya Talkies area, Thorla Maharvada.

D Ward : Gangavesh, Shahu Udyan area, Padmaraje Vidyalyaya area, Brahmapuri area, Uttareshwar, Shukrawar Peth.

E Ward : Shahupuri, Rajarampuri, Sykes Extension, Tarabai Park area, Temblaiwadi, Jadhavwadi, Bhosalewadi, Kasba Bavada, Kadamvadi.

The respondents selected come from all the five Wards.

Religion

The respondents are also grouped according to religion. Hindus constitute 83 % consisting of Marathas, Brahmins, Sindhi, Shimpi, Sonar, Kshatriya, Cobler and other castes. Muslims constitute 15 %. The third group is of Jain religion and constitutes 9 % while 3 % of the total respondents are Christians. The respondents selected religionwise are in proportion to the strength of population of each religions group in the city.

Occupation

To know the factors affecting artistic attitudes and grades selection of respondents according to occupation was necessary. Farming constituted 10 %, Industry 29 %, Service 41 %, Profession (Engineers, Doctors etc.) 16 % and Daily Wages 0.04 %.

Family

To judge and understand the changes in the artistic attitude of the people according to the family background both nuclear

family and joint families were selected in the sample.

Income

In order to understand the difference in the influence of income and standard of living on Art and Home decoration different economic level families were selected as follows : First group consists of 5 % respondent families having monthly income below Rs.500. These families are taken from the Kadamwadi slum area and belong to economically lower group. The second group (22 %) has monthly income of Rs.501 to Rs.1500, whose area of residence is Shivaji Peth and Gangavesh area. The third group constituting 31 % families come from Mangalwar Peth and Rajarampuri areas having a monthly income between Rs.1501 and Rs.2500. The fourth group (26%) have income between Rs.2501 and Rs.3500 and reside in Pratibha Nagar. The last group of aristocrats (17 %) income is above Rs.3500 mainly from Tarabai Park, a posh area of Kolhapur. All these above economic groups have got a distinctive way of life, art and home decoration.

are these proportion to the population?

Methods and Techniques of Data Collection

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Schedule Method : A great precaution was taken while preparing the schedule. Simple, clear and unambiguous language was used. Technical terms were avoided. Words commonly spoken were used so that the people could easily understand it. As the majority of the people talk in the regional language, Marathi medium was used for the interview. Relevant questions regarding

the topic were asked. I confirmed that the questions selected were within the informational scope of the respondents. The questions were asked in a sequence. Alternative responses were provided to the respondents. Care was taken to see that all possible alternatives were included. Tabulation form was kept in mind while formulating the questionnaire. Indirect questions were also asked to get the correct reply. Questions were inter-linked and sequence was maintained.

The main problem was considered and the problem was split into various aspects and headings. Actual questions were framed and generally more than one questions were asked to get the complete information about a particular aspect. A general layout was prepared in sequence to get the replies systematically and spontaneously. The validity of the schedule was tested on a ^{How?} sample population and then finalised.

Researcher has selected a total of hundred respondent ^{what is it} families from Kolhapur city by stratified random sampling method. The main purpose of selecting hundred families is that conclusions can be drawn conveniently and classification becomes easy. Representation and results can be studied easily, for the validity of results, Classification helps for accurate guess work generations.

Observation Method : It is an important technique of data collection. To appreciate the artistic items and home decoration it is necessary to have a sense and view of appreciation as well as criticism. Being an artist, I could do it. Observation regarding cleanliness, hospitality, attitudes and behaviour of members, arrangement, hall decoration etc. were made.

Case Study : When the case studies were selected their life history and other details were also asked. Sometimes it became necessary to use words like good, beautiful and excellent. However, to standardize and understand the variations in art and home decoration, researcher has constructed grades like A, B and C on the basis of criteria like furniture, income, arrangement etc.

Grade A : The family is having sound financial position, have good educational and cultural background and have ample leisure time. They are constantly in contact with local and outside information. These people have genuine liking and culture for creation of artistic articles.

Grade B : In this group planning regarding utilisation of time and money for home decoration is done. Since they have to fight constantly with economic problems, we find more imitation among them. They always accept changing fashions or new trend when it is within their reach.

Grade C : In this group people lack in education, motivation and are unaware of the importance of home decoration. They are financially unsound. Their changing nature is slow and are contented in their own way of life and remain satisfied when their basic needs are fulfilled.

The formation of the grades of art also was difficult, but it was inevitable and useful. The experiences of interviewing hundred families were wide ranging. Typical representative families of various socio-economic backgrounds were selected for case studies.

Actually it became impossible to place the questionnaire before the respondents and to record the answers on the spot. The questions were required to be asked as per the situation. People did not like the enquiry of their religion, caste and profession. In such cases it was necessary to judge the financial position on the bases of the drawing room. Even more efforts were required to evaluate their artistic standard. The response from educated families was all right but in uneducated families, everything was left to observation and guess work. The experience were of a varied nature. Some of the researchers' experiences are as follows :

At the beginning, pre-testing of the questionnaire was done by a few sample interviews. It was observed that when questions were asked and their answers were recorded, interviewee became self-conscious and a bit confused. Hence in later interviews questions were asked orally without formally using the questionnaire on the spot. After entering into the home I tried to be friendly with the members of the family and then explained the reason which had brought me there. Educated people were convinced and responded freely but uneducated people were surprised at the study. The interviewees responded freely when I was accompanied by the husband. Some of them offered a warm welcome by offering tea. After chit-chatting informally with them researcher tried to come to the point by observing a decorative item and talking about it. Then in the course of the discussion researcher tried to get all the other required answers to her questions as listed in the schedule. It looks improper to

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write down the answer of every question before the respondents as it causes uneasiness and doubt among them.

A perfect time-schedule and activities of the respondents had to be first understood. Occasions like festivals, holidays, mornings, or evenings when working people return tired after the days work needed to be avoided. Even appropriate dress according to the financial status and professions of the respondents was needed to be worn. While visiting the people from higher strata, up-to-date dress and pre-appointment became necessary. They were generally found of praise. This tendency was suitably used as a technique for getting favourable response during the interview. ?? On the contrary financially backward people were unfamiliar with this type of study. They needed explanation and clarification time and again. Even the researcher's dress, while visiting them needed to be as simple as possible. Special efforts were necessary to make them free and feel at home. These people paid more attention to cleanliness, washing the floors than to decoration. Then really it was a difficult job to bring them to the idea of home decoration.

As referred earlier hundred families were selected as samples, but selecting the respondents by stratified random sampling method was time-consuming. In spite of continuous work it took four months to complete the data collections. Even afterwards, I occasionally went to them for taking the photographs of the hall and other artistic items. Some people responded instantly but some people did not co-operate fully and willingly.

Some doubted the researcher as a C.I.D. agent, a tax officer, or sometimes a spy. In some cases, researcher took the help of other families who knew us and explained the purpose of the study.

One case of total non-cooperation needs to be mentioned here. There is a Sindhi family in Tarabai Park. The researcher visited this family with the help of a neighbour and were allowed to enter the house and were even offered a seat in the drawing room. The Sindhi woman went inside for fifteen minutes, but did not turn up at all. The researcher came back unhappily without interviewing.

In another family the wife had a liking for art and home decoration, but the husband had no liking. A beautiful wall hanging was placed on the wall. It was evening and when the wife came to know that the researcher was observing the wall hanging with great interest she called her inside and even showed other decorative articles. The woman expressed that she couldn't develop her artistic urges due to her husband. When the researcher praised the wall hanging decorative item the informant was so much pleased that she gave it as a gift.

Thus researcher had varied experiences. But one experience was common and that was when the answers were not written, uneasiness did not take place. Educated uneducated all were fond of praise. Poor people spoke freely about their concepts of home decoration, they were pleased when they were studied and a few enquired whether they would get money for this purpose. *Confession*

Another experience is worth-recording. A daughter-in-law had no liking for tidiness and decoration. So her mother-in-law was unhappy. When the researcher paid a visit and listened to both and explained convincingly the need for home decoration, the daughter-in-law's attitude changed and she even promised to keep her home tidy ~~thenceforth~~. When the researcher visited her house again after two months, a great change was visible. This indicates that with a little inspiration information and education, the educated in the cities can be motivated instantly to change favourably. Even the atmosphere at their home was happy and cheerful. Her mother-in-law also looked pleased. When no decoration or haphazard decoration was seen, sometimes researcher tried to give a few suggestions. This helped to form friendship. Some ^{people} expressed their respect by offering tea. A few also asked for the researcher suggestions for modifications. The researcher tried to suggest the arrangement, colour-scheme and light arrangement suitable to that home according to her tastes and views. When the researcher revisited some of these homes, a few changes were seen.

The researcher tried to study the impact and effect of economic level, religion, caste, occupation, outside contact over home decoration, with reference to the selected hundred families. It was observed that financial position of the family was a major factor influencing art and home decoration.

At some places the deep influence of tradition and religion was seen. Some poor families questioned whether the home decora-

tion helps to give them bread. The rich boasted about their modern decoration. So to go methodically became very difficult and moreover the drawing of inferences and conclusions also was a bit difficult. For the present study a lot of money and time was spent for the purpose of establishing contacts with the respondents and for data collection.

First, the questions answered in majority were given code numbers and a code book was prepared. After coding the data of hundred families required, statistical tables were prepared. As it was observed that income is the one of the main factors affecting home decoration more than religion, caste, or occupation, efforts were made to study the effect of financial position on artistic creation. The case studies of different economic and social background was another important method of data and analysis. The case study includes the families having varied approaches towards their conception of art and approach to home decoration. *Refer*

Artist Jayasingrao Dalvi extended much help in the efforts to understand the artistic tradition of Kolhapur, as he is closely related to the families of the artistists, living in the regime of Chh. Shahu Maharaj. He gave a lot of valuable information. During the course of discussions with him, the socialization of the artistic tradition of Kolhapur on the people was made amply clear and further became useful material for understanding the nature, conception and approach to art and home decoration of the people of this city.