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# Sohrai Puja And Aripa Of Hazaribagh

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**ABSTRACT-**Tribal people and their maximum involvement with nature and respect for their cattle have been seen in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand. I had spent a few days during this festival at tribal villages to prepare this research paper. Women of the villages create Aripa for Sohrai puja on the non - concrete floor on an auspicious day just after Diwali (Kali or Lakshmi puja in Hindus) in respect of their Ancestors, Cattle, lord Pashupati and Lakshmi. Also, prepare mud wall and made new sohrai painting and decoration. They celebrate this festival with nature, animals, many rituals, and traditional beliefs. Women sing different songs on these days of the festival. They prepare material for Aripa by rice dust and use of rice dust as pure for worship, use as white color on the floor, and made food on the day of the festival. Also, prepare another food by mixing of multi-seed for their cattle and people also eat as a Prasad (divine food). There have some stories behind this cattle worship. The main source of income is agriculture and cattle are the only which bring wealth for them, that's why traditionally villagers worship and respect the animal.

**Keywords:**Jharkhand, Rangoli, Aripa, Sohrai, Art, Pashupati, Cattle, cowshed

**INTRODUCTION-**Jharkhand is a land of forest and hills and the entire civilian is involved with nature. It is in the eastern part of India, full of natural resources. Here most of the time there is heavy rainfall and a cool climate. Tribal villagers are directly contacted by natural forests. Their daily activities, rituals are related to humans, nature, and animals. Some researchers believe that Jharkhand's tribal language is similar language like Harappans. They have many rock shelters and there are full of primitive paintings, it is assumed that the period is Paleolithic. People of urban cities feel very tired with their daily activities, technology, industrial and artificial development. I have spent many days due to my research works. And also it has become a tourist place for curious people who want to breathe in a beautiful natural place. Sohrai painting is too pure and natural which create at the time of sohrai puja due to auspicious and offering respect to cattle, and it became another attractive portion for viewers. Art and Cultures are traditionally influenced by their ancestor and unbroken parts of life in tribal people of Jharkhand. Nature always influences to Art and Artists. Art is the very oldest activity in the world. India is known for its different cultures and language. Every state has its own

tribal or folk art form and rituals. Every ritual has its own rules and that is related to nature and human overall development. Human beings prepare Rangoli on the floor and practice it with their developed brain generation wise. Every state uses it as auspicious in most of the rituals. It is an art form; requires huge practice and experience to create. It has been continuing from earlier. I have seen villagers using natural materials to create, as well as urban people also created with the help of technologies and artificial colors. Children have been learning from their childhood, mainly it has done by a woman in a Hindu home. In modern times young generation is going to forget due to the influence of urban culture and the use of electric music systems except for natural instruments. But it is good fortune that they have understood the importance of the traditional value of Sohrai and Kohbar and get a source of income from it.

This magnificent pattern of Aripanis generally seen in the entrance and worship place to make it auspicious. The behind of this puja has many stories related to animals, humans, and lord Pashupati. Traditional Rangoli making postures are a type of exercise for women who are home workers to flex their spines. It is a kind of auspicious and welcoming Lakshmi to bring happiness wealth and positivity to the home. The Design is influenced directly by nature and geometric shapes. Sohrai festival built relation bonding, respect, happiness, medicinal value, rules, and restriction.

India is called for "Unity in Diversity", that's why here we can see visible multi-languages, cultures, and their festivals. Every state has a different name and its different Rangoli and folk art. Rangoli name of Jharkhand and its neighbor states like- 'Chowk Purana' in Uttar Pradesh, 'Alpana' in West Bengal, 'Murja/Jhoti' in Odisha, 'Chowk' in Chhattisgarh, 'Aripan' in Bihar and Jharkhand.

Aripan (Fig.1) is a unique style because it is different from other Rangolis. It is generally created in a circular or square formation in a particular place or ground. Aripan starts from the outside door (from where cattle will enter) and ends at the cattle shed. Two triangle shapes (chowk) are visible at the starting and ending portion of Aripan and in the other portion, the design looks like Churchura grass (it is important for sohrai puja) (Fig.2), and all the shapes are connected by three lines. It looks like a Creeping plant on the floor after completed. Make the cow dung hard on the bottom of all then put flowers over it. After that attach Dubba and Churchura grass (this grass looks strong and the top is always hanging towards the bottom). There have been some myths about Churchura grass, by it, wealth will be stuck and lord Lakshmi hangs in their house. It has to be found in the forest, without it Lakshmi puja will be incomplete.

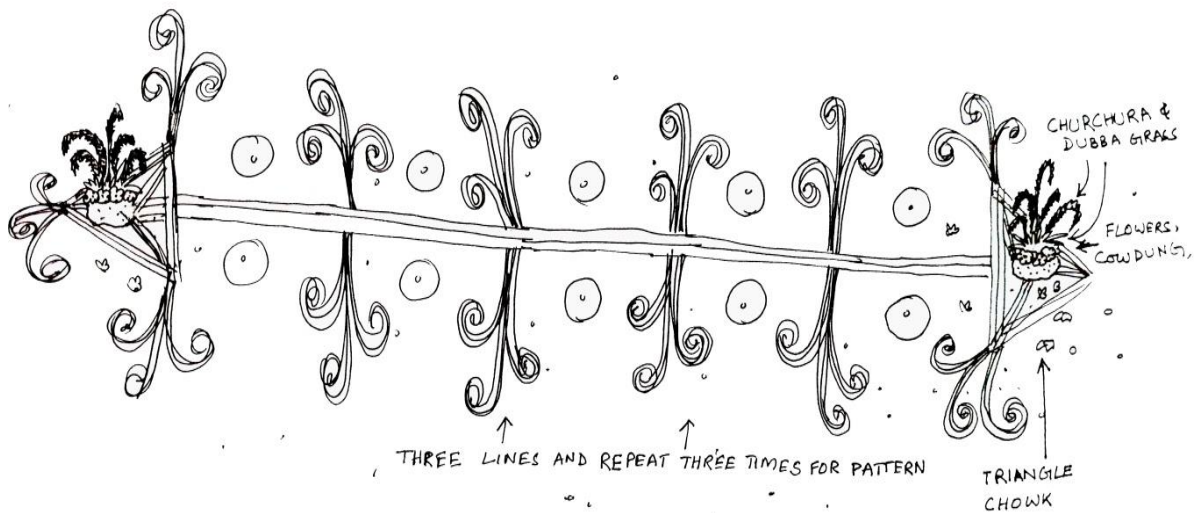


Fig. 1: Aripa(Rangoli of Sohrai) liner drawing from original work of Sajo Devi.

**METHOD AND MATERIALS:** Male members are busy with farming and women-only maintain the entire portion of the home. After the rainy season over all the walls of the house needs to repair with clay which gets from agricultural land and outside of the village. On the floor remove the entire broken particle and clean the area then apply cow dung. Like this way, the floor becomes hardened, Germs free and clean. On the auspicious day of Sohrai, create rice dust with the help of traditional Dekhi(Traditional Grinder) (Fig.3), this dust will use for food and the rest portion have to be liquid and apply on the mud floor to make Aripa (Rangoli). Rice dust liquid looks like natural white color and with this liquid, they have to create Aripa on the floor. At first, the palm has to dip in the liquid and apply with three fingers on the floor with the help of drops of the liquid mixture to create the drawing of Aripa(Fig.2). Overall activities were done with three lines and repeat three times to create one single form. There have many forms that started from the outside door to the cattle shed.

On the same day, they prepare multi-grain Prasad(a divine food)(Fig.3) (Fig. 4) by boiling, and before this day they already completed painting for Sohrai puja (Fig.3).



Fig. 2: Churchuragrass(LEFT SIDE), making Aripa (RIGHT SIDE),





Fig. 3: Dekhi(LEFT SIDE), Sohrai painting (CENTRE), making Prasad (RIGHT SIDE)

**SOHRAI PUJA:**It is a harvest festival before winter and the most important festival of Tribal people in Jharkhand. It is generally celebrated at harvest time that is the beginning of winter when the paddy has prepared. Time is the new moon day of the Bengali month of Kartik (Diwali or Kali puja) in English October-November. Some Santhal regions celebrate in January (around the end of the Bengali month of Poush).

They give thanks to their gods, their ancestors, and cattle for their crops, which is helpful for agriculture and wealth. The name of Sohrai came traditionally from a Palaeolithic word -soro (to drive with a stick) and respect to cattle.

The sohrai puja conducted for five days or nine days of the festival is accompanied by a variety of rituals, time will differ in all the villages. The leader or an older person of the village will decide the date. These festival days, people's consumption of handia(Liquor) is in huge quantities, dancing, and different singing in all the days.

The villagers take the animals to pasture in the forest and fields in the morning to offer fresh green grass, clean their body by the water of any river or water dam and when they return home in the evening, use oil of Kujri( it is a medicinal plant of the forest) to their horns and also all body to avoid skin disease. That process will continue till Diwali( kali puja ), in the evening lighting the lamp of earthen every corner of the house special big size earthen lamp in cattle shed, Tulsi Mancha, kitchen room. They sing many songs during this festival at home to dedicate to God for wealth and food by mother for family and husband, sister for her brother –

'Ke Chumae Dhon, Dhaan Lakshmi Ho  
Ke Chumae Dhanu Gaay Ho  
Maayo Chumae Dhon, Dhaan Lakshmi Ho  
Baheen Chumae Dhanu Gaay Ho'

A group of young men visited all the houses one by one at night for dancing, singing, and entertaining the villagers as a ritual purpose of Sohrai, which is called Jagran, and they begged to get some money, rice, food, etc. It will happen from night to early morning (the next day of Diwali). The next day morning is the final day, family members bring some rice strands from their fields, which they will use in worship. Then after worship is done, animals' horns will be tied with the same rice plants and decorate the cattle, and also their horns were uplifted with oil and vermilion. Necklace made by strewing rice strands is tied across their foreheads then all the villagers bring their cattle to an open area (the name is Gaay Gaat) where tie their cow with a stick to play games with the sound of musical instruments like Madol, Dhol, etc (Fig. 5). There will be Lakshmi puja and villagers sacrifice a Hen. On the other hand, women already prepared the mud wall with the painting by natural color and the mud floor with cow dung and finished their Aripan on the floor. They completed Lakshmi puja in the cowshed and prepared food by boiling multigrain for cattle and it will be prasad ( a divine food ) for all humans (Fig. 4). Aripan prepared from the outside door to the end of the cowshed and now cows are entering through the path of Aripan to the cowshed. Now they complete their Lakshmi puja and distribute the Prasad to all the family members and neighbors. They conclude the festival by joining in a mela which organized by villagers.



Fig. 4: food for animal



Fig. 5: Gaay Gaat( where villagers play with cattle )

**CONCLUSION-**In this paper I had examined that festival increase the brotherhood, moral and life values, visible respect to their ancestor as well as animal. This study is based on village-Jorakath, Hazaribagh, Jharkhand. Maximum data collection from is the primary source, interview, and audio-video documentary, that's why my feelings and practical experiences share through this writing. Tribal people are directly involved in Nature. Village women are truly traditional artists and pure in the creation of Aripa and Sohrai Painting. Some Artists are- Malo Devi, Suja Devi, etc, and their caste is Kurmi Mahato. We have to encourage these tribal people to continue their artistic talent and the next generation should be influenced. Rice is important for daily life to survive and also rice dust is used as auspicious. Sohrai paintings are created for worship purposes, but at present women get wealth and exposure for their artistic skills. Traditional tribal song and painting fields can be more researched further.

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