

Demystified Concepts of Mystical Geometry: Interpretations of Triangles in Art

Aparajita Bisht¹, Dr. Rina Singh²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Drawing and Painting, D.S.B. Campus, Kumaun University, Nainital

²Associate Professor, Department of Drawing and Painting, D.S.B. Campus, Kumaun University, Nainital

Abstract: *The paper explains that the underpinning of the work of arts is primarily based on geometric principles. The important element in the patterns is the simplicity which is consistent with the subjective spirit of the art. This paper specifically focuses on explaining the spiritual inclination enhancing the connotation of triangles used in Art. Geometric shapes have significant meanings and are strong, powerful conformations representing the mystical elements of the universe. The structural idea, the geometrical plan is integrated to achieve aesthetic effects by the artists which expresses the spatial relationship. All the shapes can be seen as an embodiment of energy vibrations and can bring about and energetic shifts holding frequencies of deeper spiritual messages influencing our various subconscious interconnections with our physical reality. A triangle has spiritual and esoteric significance and is considered to align the consciousness to the infinite and the eternal.*

Keywords: Esoteric, Energetic Shifts, Spatial Relationships, Vibrations.

1. Introduction

India is a country of spirituality and traditions and exemplifies a society that is multicultural and multi-ideological. The art and crafts speak loudly of its fascinating heritage and the artworks casts the glimpse of beliefs, sentiments and rituals. The basic origin of any artwork is the innovative use of shapes to create aesthetic masterpieces, thus can be defined as a harmony of colours, surrounded by the inquisitive assembly of shapes such as squares, triangles and rectangles. It is an investigation of specific sacred geometric patterns, whose structural idea is based on triangles.

Triangles have emerged throughout the history in various customs and beliefs in form of spiritual communication through art and architecture. Yantra is a pure geometric arrangement in Indian art which is a tool to direct energies for the spiritual progression. It originates from a Sanskrit word 'Yam' meaning support and 'tra' meaning instrument. These geometric designs are used for worshipping and for meditation having a similar purpose to mantras but are visual powerful representations. Shatkona is a sacred Yantra in Indian art, a hexagram which is identical to the Jewish Star of David. Both the symbols are a six-pointed star. This paper is a comprehensive study of these two mystical shapes and highlights the interpretations of triangles as used in Art. A triangle is made up of two diagonal lines that are anchored on a horizontal line, the triangular composition appears coherent and dynamic. According to Robert Lawlor, "The human body contains in its proportions all the important geometric geodesic measures and function the proportions of ideal man are at the centre of a circle of invariant cosmic relationships"¹ It is considered to be one of the most powerful geometric form which represents spiritual hierarchy. In alchemy, the triangles are associated with the three realms of our existence, our mind, body and soul representing the foundations of life and the core of human existence.

"The study of geometric proportions has its roots in the study of nature and matter."² The orientation of a triangle signifies its meaning, an upright triangle represents strength, balance

and ascension towards spirituality, whereas a point down triangle transmits imbalance. A triangle with the point at the top is a representation of air and the with point at bottom symbolizes the earth. Another significant aspect that makes it so powerful is that the triangle has three points, the three angles and spiritually number three is regarded as most significant number. Number three exhibits the awakening of wisdom and reveals the mystery of the magical elements to optimize the energies in our soul. In architecture, the largest forms of triangles are the Pyramids in Egypt, the architecture depends on practical reasons however the shapes do have symbolic meanings. Pyramids are upright triangles where the tip of structure is facing the sky and the base is connected to the ground representing the new beginning of the spirit, also these structures are considered to have healing properties and can bring energetic shifts. Not only it holds significance spiritually but its prevalence and power can also be seen in science, in physics the capital version of the Greek letter Delta is written as a triangle (an equilateral triangle) which is highly interesting as it also expresses change. Equilateral triangle is where all the three sides of a triangle are balanced, this creates conditions which are necessary for the evolution to take place. Artistically the triangle speaks of creative output and symbolically it represents power, the amalgamation of the creativity and power reveals spiritual essence and the metaphysical forces that many ancient traditions and customs subsumed in their practices.

2. Methodology

The study includes qualitative methods along with a textual analysis of secondary data. It incorporates a discourse analysis along with a descriptive study of geometric arrangements. A detailed study of 'Shatkona' symbol was carried out to be cognizant of its meaning and significance along with a comparative analysis of a similar geometric structure called the 'Star of David' to understand the inherent power of its form and the interpretations of a triangle.

Shatkona Yantra

Symbolism plays a vital role in Hindu beliefs and culture and use the art of symbolism efficaciously. Shatkona is an ancient Hindu symbol, a hexagram (six-pointed star) representing spiritual interconnectedness of the male and female energies. Geometrically the structure is of two triangles superimposed on each other and is one of the oldest universal symbol representing the exchange of the energetic shifts between the feminine and masculine spirits, it is a sign of raised consciousness and the source of all creation.

Shatkona is a symbol of Hindu deity Sanat Kumara also known as Skanda, Murugan, Murukan, Subramaniam, Skanda Kumara and Shanmuka. The Shatkona Yantra or the six-cornered mystical diagram is two interlocking triangles, the upper stands for Shiva and lower for Shakti, whose union gives birth to Sanat Kumar whose sacred number is six. The diagram is composed of two intersecting equilateral triangles (Trikona in Sanskrit) exemplifying father principle and mother principle in a balanced unification. The upward pointing triangle (Shiva) impersonates the masculine side of the Parashiva, purusha and fire while the downward pointing triangle (Shakti) resonates of the feminine side of God and Parashakti. It specifically is a representation of the Purusha or the supreme being, and Prakriti which is the mother nature where the masculine side represents the 'Purusha' and the feminine side 'Prakrati'. This symbol is also visible in the twelve petalled 'Anahata Chakra' a Sanskrit term also known as the Heart chakra meaning unstruck. It is considered to be the seat of Jivatman and Parashakti and is associated to the element of air and sense of touch. Having the same geometric structure as of Shatkona this chakra symbolizes how the three lower chakras and upper three chakras merge at a common point, marking that 'Anahata' has six qualities in one meaning there are a lot of possibilities in one place which comes from the intersecting of the upward moving triangle and the downward facing triangle in a proper alignment forming a six-pointed figure with a central point. This symbol is too highly powerful and meditating on this chakra is said to bring out mystical powers, and it is said to be located near the heart.

Shatkona Yantra is not only a talisman, but speaks of the union of the Supreme consciousness and the energy of the God. It can be regarded as an instrument or a seat of occult, perception and greater knowledge and as a medium to attain spiritual, physical and intellectual balance. The geometric structure speaks of the union of the energies, the Purusha being a personification of the eternity and the Prakriti being the core, being the means of activating the energy resulting in the formation of life.

Star of David

The Jewish Star of David also known as the shield of David has been associated with Jewish mysticism, it also appears in the oldest complete copy of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Leningrad Codex. This geometric structure symbolizes that the almighty God is the ruler and the preserver of the universe. The six points in the symbol represents the God protecting from all the sides, North, South, East, West, up and down. It represents the relationship and interconnectedness between the God and his people. The overlaid equilateral triangles having seven partitions also speaks of the seven virtues which are kindness, foundation, splendour, severity, harmony,

perseverance and royalty. The hexagram appeared in the ancient Jewish history as a decorative motif, its origin is very unclear however it became known in a popular legend "Shield of David". It is said that symbol comes from the shield of an ancient army led by king David, also known as Magan David. Though no explicit descriptions of a hexagram appear on the shield, later on this star symbol was connected to a ring used by king Solomon to control evil spirits also earning its name as 'Seal of Solomon'. The two interlocking triangles represents the reciprocal relationship between God and man where the triangle pointing up to God determines the good deeds which is reciprocated by God, which is a flow of goodness back down to the world, symbolized by the triangle pointing down.

The Star of David is a prominent symbol where the two triangles represent the dichotomies of a human being the spiritual and the physical (good vs evil). It is a formidable emblem that acts like a shield and wards off the negative energies thus can be seen as a decorative motif used in jewelry which is worn to stay protected representing health and vitality. It is a symbol with powerful cosmic connections.

Hexagram

The geometric shape 'hexagram' a six-pointed star is considered as the most powerful and ancient spiritual symbol as it is a composition of two equilateral triangles superimposed over each other, it is related to transformation, evolution, protection, harmony, illumination and enlightenment which is also the base structure of a powerful ancient Hindu Yantra Shatkona and a sacred Jewish symbol the Star of David. These scared geometric shapes tend to be a powerhouse of energies and are instruments for meditation. It is said that they tend to align the human energy with the cosmic energy of the universe. Depending on the positioning of the triangle they have various meanings and the six-pointed star is considered as one of the high-powered symbol or a well-designed geometric tool generated by using great scientific phenomena as well. This auspicious structure both in Indian and Western world speaks of the universal knowledge and is an abode of cosmic powers. In the western world the triangles are considered to represent the four elements the air, earth, fire and water. An upward triangle talks of the element 'Air' and the downward is a representation of the 'Earth'. A plain triangle directed up is Fire and conversely water is shown by a triangle directed downwards. Triangle is an important symbol and can be found everywhere, it can be classified based on their internal angles or the lengths of their sides. A hexagram has two equilateral triangles interconnected with each other, an equilateral triangle is one where all the sides of the triangle are equal and so are its internal angles measuring sixty degrees and is considered perfect, representing manifestation and enlightenment symbolizing the creation, preservation and ultimately destruction, referring to the beginning, middle and end. It is said that whenever the triangles are multiplied or interconnected with each other their vitality is amplified channelising the power of each triangle activating the mystical power and divine providence.

Scientifically, gravity is the force of attraction between two masses, however gravity merely doesn't exist only between two particles. The attraction exists in between all the objects,

everywhere in the universe. A triangle is an arrangement of three lines and in alchemy it represents the mind, body and soul which are connected through 'Shakti', the power which is channelised by these spiritually dominant tools attracts and keeps the mind, soul and the body connected. It speaks of the perception beyond human sight and is a path to enlightenment.

3. Conclusion

Art is a highly imaginative intellectual domain and Geometry is an underlying fabric of nature, it is a visual representation of mathematical patterns found everywhere, geometric proportions can be seen imbedded in man, nature and the universe. It constitutes of a graphic description or the blueprint of the universe and an analysis of these significant geometric shapes helps understand the causes and the reality of the nature and the cosmic significance of geometric forms. Geometry is a sacred art form because of its fundamental interrelation with creation, it explores the patterns that unify and reveal the structure of the creation. Art and Geometry have a synergic and dynamic connection as any work of art has geometric forms as its foundation and the amalgamation of the two, to form sacred patterns gives an insight to the precise way the energy of creation organizes itself. These geometric forms acts as a bridge between the science and spirituality, the patterns are a blend of simplicity and profound connotation.

A triangle is created by joining three straight lines forming three vertices, scientifically any pointed end works like a condenser for the cumulation of energy and to release the stored energy under significant conditions, thus the vertices of a triangle can be seen as the repository of energy making the geometric arrangement of a triangle the most powerful form.

The overlaid equilateral triangles forming a hexagram is a scientific tool and powerful geometrical figure, fully energized with cosmic energies. The interlocking of the triangles symbolizes the opposite principles complementing each other, and the general balance and symmetry of the entire figure represent the unity of God. Inverted triangles (facing downward) are a symbolism of womanhood and the moon and contrasts directly with upright triangles (facing upwards) which represent the sun and masculine energy. The formation of geometric patterns specifically using triangles are efficient and powerful representations of the concepts on the divine nature and can be defined as visual tools for contemplating the underlying mystery of the universe. Triangles radiate immense power and the dynamic intersection is believed to birth an energy field and represents the beginning of the creation

References

- [1] Lawlor, Robert *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice* Thames and Hudson, New York (1989) p. 3,48,82,92
- [2] Stephen Skinner *Sacred Geometry: Deciphering the Code* Sterling, New York (2009) P. 7,91,107
- [3] Chatterjee, Gautam and Chatterjee, Sanjoy. "Sacred Hindu Symbols." Abhinav Publications New Delhi. 1996.
- [4] Wang, Celina. What is the Star of David? The Spiritual Meaning of This Six-Pointed Star. Aug' 2023.
- [5] Dutta, Sourodee. Gupta, Vanshana. Scientific Investigation of Hindu Temples as Cradle of Ancient Indian Knowledge: A Synthesis of Vastushastra, Sacred Geometry and Mathematical Proportion. National Youth Conference on Indian Knowledge Systems (NYCIKS) – 2023
- [6] Titus Burckhardt Sacred Art in East and West: Its Principles and Methods Perennial Books, Indiana, USA (1986) p. 101
- [7] Agam, Suvas. 'Significance of Ohm, Swastika and Shatkona Symbols in Hindu culture' 2018 https://www.academia.edu/38142610/Term_Paper_Significance_of_Ohm_Swastika_and_Shatkona_Symbols_in_Hindu_culture_Suvas_Chandra_Kandel_docx
- [8] Exploring the Shatkona. <https://narayanaoracle.com/?p=505> Narayana Oracle. April 7, 2015
- [9] "What is the Symbol of Hinduism, Symbols of Hinduism, Hindu Iconography." Talks of India – TOI India News, Indian History, Hinduism & Entertainment, <http://www.talksofindia.com/symbols-hinduism-hindu-iconography/>