

The Intrigue of Tourists Towards Thangka In Boudhanath Area

A Thesis

**In Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology**

By

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Ranjit Godar Thapa has prepared this thesis entitled “**The Intrigue of Tourists Towards Thangka In Boudhanath Area**” under my guidance, direction and supervision for his partial fulfillment of a Master’s Degree in Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Tribhuvan University. He has worked in accordance with my suggestions and guidance. I am satisfied with his work. I, therefore, would like to recommend the thesis for evaluation and examination.

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis prepared and submitted by **Mr. Ranjit Godar Thapa** entitled “**The Intrigue of Tourists Towards Thangka In Boudhanath Area**” has been accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master's Degree of Arts in Nepalese History, Culture and Archaeology.

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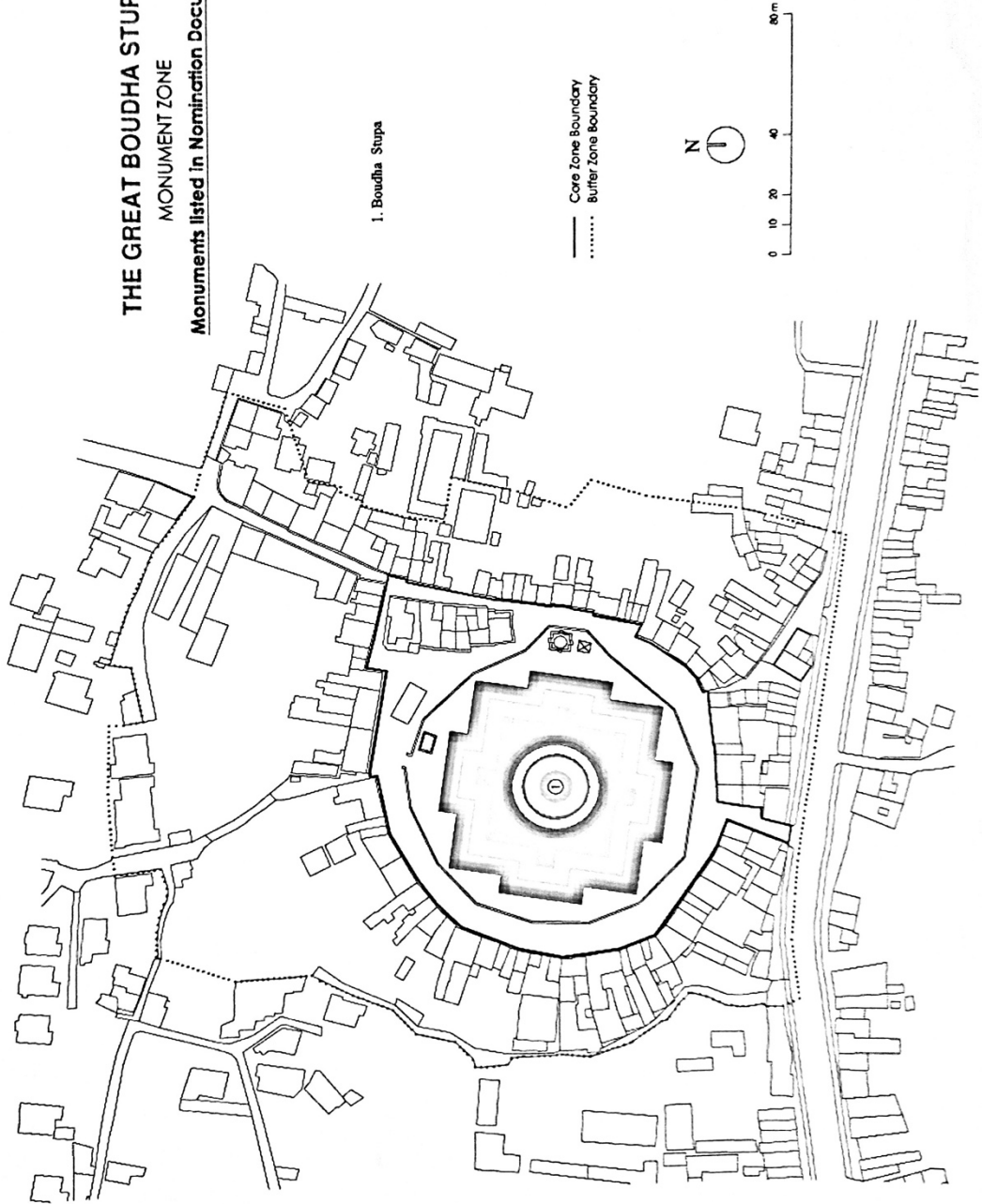
List of Acronyms

AD	Anno Domini
Etc	Eecetra
n.a.	not available
NeHCA	Nepalese History Culture and Archaeology
Rs.	Rupees
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
TU	Tribhuvan University

THE GREAT BOUDHA STUPA
MONUMENT ZONE

Monuments listed in Nomination Document

1. Boudha Stupa



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

This research is focused on the intrigue of tourists towards Thangka. It has also explored the importance of Thangka for the people living around the Boudhanath Area.

According to the 2021 census conducted by the National Statistics Office, 81.2% of the total population in Nepal is Hindu and 8.2% is Buddhist (National Statistic Office, 2023). Hinduism and Buddhism have coexisted peacefully for hundreds of years in this beautiful land. The harmony between these two religions in Nepal is immense. Devotees of both religions have high respect for each other.

Buddhism is one of the most popular religions in the world. The non-violent practices of the Buddha's teachings are some of the aspects that are well-known even among the world's non-Buddhist communities. Many tourists go to take advantage of spiritual practice in a Buddhism practicing country like Nepal.

The research is conducted in the Boudhanath area where there is a dense settlement of Buddhist communities. It is located in the northeastern part of Kathmandu. The place is named after a Buddhist stupa, Boudhanath. It is famous not only for Nepalese but also for tourists from all over the world who come to visit Nepal.

A large number of tourists come to Nepal every year. Many of them want to experience spiritual practices for which they learn meditation. Thangka is famous among tourists as a means of meditation. Meditation helps people to purify their minds. It helps to remove negative and vague thoughts. It contributes to generating a positive vision to observe the self and the external world. It helps to control expectations and reduce them. This is why Buddhist-practicing meditation is popular among non-Buddhist communities as well. However, Buddhists practice meditation to gain their religious benefits and move closer to nirvana, the enlightened state. For

non-Buddhists, the purpose of meditation is other than religious aspects. They often practice this for their mind, thoughts, and spiritual benefit.

Thangka has a long-glorified history in Buddhism. The Thangka painting is symbolism and allusion that generally depict the life and forms of Buddha, various other deities, bodhisattvas (enlightened being), the wheel of life, etc (Rai, 2020, p.43). Thangka painting is taken as important equipment to learn and teach Buddhism. It is also used for meditation purposes. In Thangka there are paintings of gods and goddesses of Buddhism. Examples; Panch Dhyani Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Abaloketiswor, Maitreya Budhha, Majushree, Bajrapani, Tara, etc. (Loh, 2001, p.3). Thangkas of Rinpoche and some other tutelary deities are also painted in some shrines or domestic altars (Shakya, 2067, p.2).

Thangka has diverse significance in Buddhism. These paintings are used by Lamas and Dharma Gurus (religious teachers) for teaching Buddhism. People believe that hanging Thangka painting on the wall brings blessing to the household and serves as a constant reminder of Buddha's teaching of compassion, kindness and wisdom (Rani, 2017, p. 165). There are different sizes of Thangka that can be found in monasteries and markets.

Thangka, nowadays, can be found painted by various cast groups. In the 1970s/80s, there were only a few numbers of people in Nepal, mainly from the Tamang, who were involved in Thangka painting. Now a large number of people from other castes are also involved in making Thangka (Interview: Nima Dorje Lama).

After China occupied Tibet in 1959 AD, thousands of Tibetans were exiled from their holy land and started living refugee life in neighboring countries. During that period, many Tibetans came to Nepal as well (Avedon, 1984, n.a.). They had economic challenges to sustain their life (Shahi, 2018, p.75). so, They started engaging in various employment and entrepreneurship including tourism-related businesses. They are also involved in Thangka-related fields. (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Exiled Tibetan lived around different parts of Nepal including the Boudhanath stupa and Swoyambu area in Kathmandu, which are not only religious places but also the highlight of Tourist attractions. So, it gave them excess to link their business with the tourism market. Painting and selling Thangka with the tourism market (Schempp, 1987, p.71), helped to raise their economic status and standard of living. It has not only uplifted the standard of living of entrepreneurs but also provided employment to many people (Bentor, 1993, p. 108).

As Thangka paintings became popular in Nepal's tourism market, the types of Thangkas bought by tourists started to be produced relatively more. Other Thangkas, which have sacred value but are not in demand in the tourism market, are being produced less according to the demand of local customers. Thangkas, nowadays, are bought as Nepalese handmade souvenirs and used for decorative purposes, gifts, and meditation by tourists and people living in the Boudhnath region. The research has highlighted the interest of tourists to buy thangka and the importance of thangka for people living in the Boudhanath area.

1.2. Statement of problem

There are numerous research on Thangka conducted by multiple scholars around the globe. Normally, most of the research works are focused on religious aspects. They have explored the religious significance of it for the Buddhist community. There exists a lack of studies on the tourist perspectives in Boudha. And also there seems lack of research on the importance of Thangka for the people living around the Boudhanath area.

- a)** Research on the importance of Thagnka for the people around Boudhanath is lacking which is the greatest problem
- b)** The study on tourist intrigue towards Thangka is completely missing which is the greatest problem.

1.3. Research Questions

The research is conducted by taking two research questions given below;

- a) What is the importance of Thangka for the people living around Boudhanath?
- b) Why are the tourist intrigued by Thangka?

1.4. Objectives of Study

There are quite a few objectives of this research that aim to fulfill which are listed below pointwise;

- a) To find the importance of Thangka for people living around the Boudhanath area.
- b) To bring to light what intrigues tourists towards Thangka Painting.

1.5. Literature reviews

Amullya Rai (2020) in his research article "*Thangka Painting in the Eyes of a Thangka Painter: a case study*" says viewers can experience a calm temperament by seeing the detail in Thangka which is well made. It helps out to build concentration capacity. There is a natural relationship with Thangka and a peaceful mind. This article is based on research done among two Thangka painters from Darjeeling, India who experienced painting the Thangka for more than 30 years. The finding of this research is painters, when they started painting Thangka seriously and more affectionately with religious devotion, started being calm and peaceful. One of the participants of the research stated that after painting Thangka for 4 decades, the big achievement that he found is peace of mind and patience. The other participant also expressed the same kind of experience. He said the job of painting Thangka made him relaxed and it has a calming effect on him. The research can resonate purpose of Thangka however this has no relation to the purpose of foreign tourists buying Thangka in Boudha. Neither, it has information about the importance of Thangka for the people living around the Boudha. The knowledge gap is fulfilled in this research.

Jacinta Boon Nee Loh (2001) in his article "*Decision From Indecision: Conservation of Thangka Significance, Perspectives, and Approaches*" published in the Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies says :

Art may be entwined with religion, encompassing a spiritual message beyond artistic form and design. The Thangka is one such sacred art in this world. Each Thangka is created for a special purpose and will always be different from other ones. It is that real and other values that are conserved for the present and the future. (p.1).

Loh has put light on the significance of Thangka. The artists make Thangka taking commissions that can be used for spiritual benefits. These types of Thangks are dedicated to the sick person for their well-being and to remove spiritual and physical obstacles in their life. Some of the Thangkas are also made to dedicate the dead person with the wish for a happier rebirth. This article helps to understand the significance of Thangka which will be fruitful in this research to find the purpose of why people buy Thangka paintings. But, it has nothing to do with the Bouddhanath area. The gap is fulfilled by this research.

Neelam Agrawal Srivastava (2018) in her article "*Buddha and Buddhism as the subject matter in Thangka Painting: A Study to Understand the Development of Thangka Painting in Northern Himalayan*" includes information about the purposes of Thangka. She writes, "Thangka is such painting which summarizes the birth of Buddha and to make people understand the process of Nirvana." Shrivastava says that the purpose of Thangka is to teach or help people be enlightened. This research article includes key information about the Thangka painting and how it spread in the Northern Himalayan region. Although this article is not related to tourism, it highlights the purpose of the Thangka. So it will be helpful in this research. However, it does not deal with Thangka relating to people of the Bouddhanath area, this research has fulfilled that gap.

Yael Bendor(1993) in his article "*Tibetan Tourist Thangkas in Kathmandu Valley*" stresses the historical and cultural background of the commercialization of Thangka painting in Kathmandu valley. It gives information about the circumstances in which the Thangka painting market was developed. Yael writes, "a visitor to the

main monuments of the Nepalese heritage is likely to find in adjoining tourist shops not Nepalese paintings but rather a variety of paintings called Tibetan Thangka." It shows how important Thangka painting is in the tourism market of Kathmandu Valley. This article focused on painters and buyers of Thangka. But it does not give clear information about why tourists are interested in buying the Thangka. So this gap is fulfilled by this research.

David Jackson (1996) in his book "*A History of Tibetan Painting*" provides information about the historical background of Thangka. This book includes information about the previous research done by the western researcher. It also includes information about an earlier account of the great painters, three different sources describing the Thangka painting, and information about works of modern art. It also describes various styles in painting Thangka. It has presented important traditional sources that reveal the greatest painters of Tibet, their schools, and their styles. The book includes numerous facts about Thangka but it lacks the perspective of Thangka buyers in the tourism market of Boudha. This gap is covered in this research.

Pradipaditya Pal (1978) in his book "*Art of Nepal Part II*" has given information about Paubha. The book has elaborately given information about the Paubha painting describing the iconographic features and materials that have been used in it. The book is useful to get details about the historical background of the painting in Nepal. Also to collect ideas about other traditional painting that has been practiced in Nepal. The writer has dropped the knowledge about art in this book with pictorial examples. However, this book lacks information about the tourist interest in Thangka paintings and the importance of Thangka paintings for the people living Boudhanath area. The gap is fulfilled by this research.

1.6. Research Methodology

Various rules and methods of conducting research are called research methodology. Generally accepted methods are used during the research. Data is collected from multiple sources depending on the nature of the research.

Qualitative research methodology is used. It is supported by both primary and secondary data. The research design is discussed in detail below:

1.6.1. Nature and Source of the Data

The sample chosen is at one's convenience and is purposive in nature. Both the primary and secondary data information source are used while conducting this research. Multiple tools are used for collecting data from primary and secondary sources.

To collect primary data various people are interviewed and their work and practices are observed. Similarly, various published articles, unpublished research Thesis, books, the internet, journals, and newspapers are used for secondary data collection.

1.6.2. Technique of Data Collection

The research is conducted among the visiting tourists who were purchasing the Thangka in the store in the Boudhanath area. The research has been done by taking an interview with those purchasers, vendors, key informants, and ordinary people who live in around Boudhanath area. Simultaneously, it involves field visits and observation. Thus, the researcher investigates the topic in detail and interpreted it.

The research follows:

1.6.2.1. Primary Data

The researcher visited the field by himself. His thesis supervisor also visited the field to supervise the researcher multiple times. Researchers observed the Thangka making (Fig 15), selling (Fig 14), and buying (Fig 12), and Buddhism practitioners hanging the Thangka for diverse use in their houses and workplaces. And after observation (Fig 11 & 13) by self, the data is collected and interpreted.

Using the one-on-one interview method the interviews (Fig 16) were taken with numerous people. A couple of key informants who have knowledge about the traditional art of Nepal and Thangka were chosen for an interview. In addition, the Thangka vendors, domestic and international buyers, and Buddhism practitioners were also interviewed.

1.6.2.2.Secondary Data

Throughout this research, various sources are used for the collection of secondary data. The subject-related books, published articles, journals, newspapers, and research papers are studied and taken references in need. In addition, unpublished thesis and dissertations which are informative for this thesis are studied. Some pieces of information are taken through the means of the internet and they are studied and used to take references.

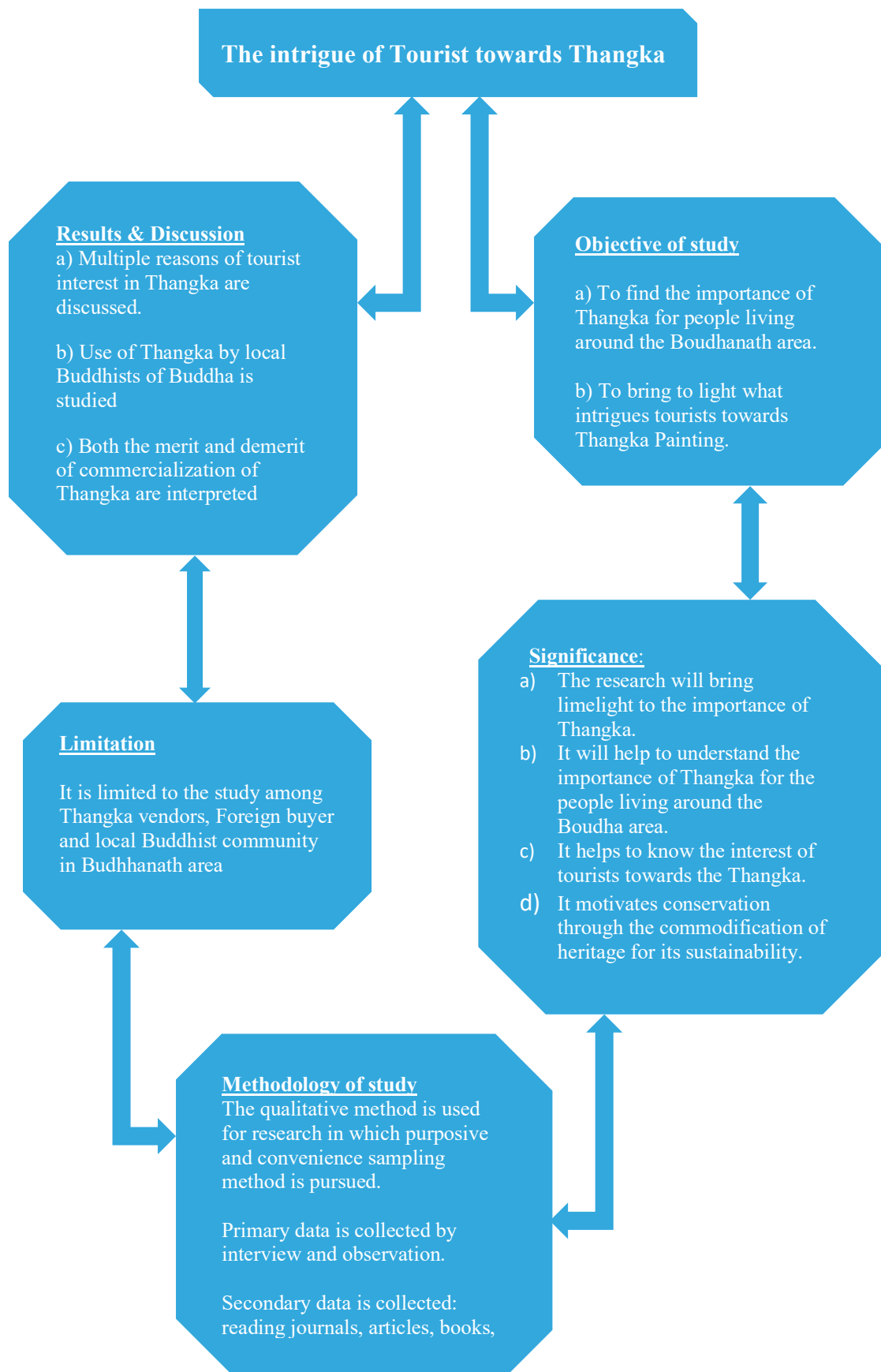
1.6.3. Research Design

Research design is an overall plan for the activities to be undertaken during the course of a research study. The research design serves as a framework for the study, guiding the collection and analysis of the data, the research instruments to be utilized, and the sampling plan to be followed (Pant, 2016, p. 109).

A qualitative research approach has been used to conduct this research. Quantitative research is thus an approach to gathering and analyzing information using both informal and formal techniques. This approach to research involves the exploration and interpretation of perceptions, opinions, aspirations, behavior, concern, motivation, culture, or lifestyles of small samples of individuals (Pant, 2016, p. 143).

Hence, the research is about the importance of Thangka for the people living in Boudha and the intrigue of tourist towards it, the quantitative technique of numerical data, tables, and charts have not been used. The research has a focused approach. It is focused on the Buddhist people living in the Boudhanath area. Simultaneously it is focused on the tourists who visited the Boudhanath stupa.

In the below diagram, the theoretical framework of the research is mentioned.



Daigram 1 The theoretical framework of the research

1.7. Significance of the study

This research has highlighted a new approach to viewing about intrigues of tourists towards buying Thangka in the Bouddhanath area. Also, explore the information on the importance of Thangka for the people living around the Boudhanath area.

- The research will bring limelight to the importance of Thangka.
- It will help to understand the importance of Thangka for the people living around the Boudhanath area.
- It helps to know the interest of tourists towards the Thangka.
- It motivates conservation through the commodification of heritage for its sustainability.

1.8. Delimitation of the study

This research encompassed the study of the Thangka sellers and foreign buyers in Boudhanath premises. And also the people living around the Boudhanath area are chosen for the survey.

1.9. Limitations of the study

This research will not include the entire area of Boudhanath. It will be limited within the core area of Stupa.

1.10. Organizations: Chapter Divisions

This thesis is divided into the following five chapters which are briefly described below:

- Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter has discussed the subject matter of the thesis, the research problem, and the objective of the research. And for the achievement of those objectives, the research method that is used in the research is described.

- Chapter Two: Traditional Nepali Painting
In this chapter, there are descriptions of traditional Nepali painting with its division, and some explanations with few examples are presented.
- Chapter Three: The Importance of Thangka Painting for the People Living in Boudhanath
The third chapter is focused on the meaning and historicity of Thangka, the purpose of making Thangka, the process of making Thangka, a short note on different subjects and types of Thangka, and the importance of Thangka for the people living in the Boudhanath Area.
- Chapter Four: The Intrigue of tourist towards Thangka Painting
The fourth chapter deals with the history of tourism in Nepal, Thangka in the tourism market of Nepal, multiple factors affecting tourist intrigue towards Thangka, and the merit and demerit of commercialization of Thangka.
- Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation
The last chapter has presented the summary, conclusion, and findings of the research. In accordance with these findings, some recommendations are presented.

CHAPTER TWO

TRADITIONAL NEPALI PAINTING

2.1. Introduction

Traditional paintings in Nepal are mostly religious in nature. This part of the planet has been always dominated by Hinduism and Buddhism. That is why those paintings are related to either of these religions. Characters of myths, legends, and stories of Hinduism and Buddhism have been portrayed in visual form (Sharma, 2021. P.85). There are numerous paintings painted in the form of manuscripts illumination, Paubha, Patachitra (narrative scroll), and murals. They represent varieties of traditional Nepali paintings. They were created for religio-cultural ritual purposes. Basically, the subject matters of these paintings are meditation, enlightenment, and stories from religious texts (Manandhar, 2010, p. 17).

In the ancient history of Nepal, the rulers and elites of the society always encouraged artists to improve their skills so that art and architecture could flourish (Mainali, 2001, p. 41). A detailed study of Lichhavi's inscriptions provides us with much valuable information about the art of painting and drawing. The engraving of several deities, animals, and other religious symbols like conch, dish, fish, lotus, bull, Shivalingas, Kalasha, and Dharmachakra with or without pair of deer can be regarded as the first evidence of the practice of painting or drawing (Regmi, 2026 BS as cited in Mainali, 2001 AD).

Art reached the peak of beauty in Nepal during the Malla period. The painting presented in various forms is rich in its aesthetic aspect which was painted at that time (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

The traditional arts of Nepal have a social message to tell the people. It basically encourages people to go after righteous deeds and abandon evil deeds. These kinds of art show what reward a person can achieve if the right behavior is admired and what punishment will be achieved by embracing immoral behavior. In both religions; Hinduism and Buddhism, there is the concept of afterbirth. It is believed

that the reward and punishment are given in their afterbirth period according to the deeds that they favor in the present life (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

There are numerous religious paintings in Nepal that have succeeded in attracting the attention of millions of tourists from different parts of the globe. For example; the Wheel of Life Mandala is a mostly admired painting subject which is painted on the wall of every monastery and also on cotton canvas. The Wheel of Life consists teaching of Buddha. It aware people what can happen in their next life if they form negative thoughts and practice negative actions in their present life. It is believed that these kinds of paintings are painted since the life of Buddha in the Indian sub-continent (P. Subba, Interview, June 7, 2023).

2.2.Types of traditional Nepali painting

2.2.1. Manuscript painting

The earliest example of Nepali painting consists of Manuscript illumination (Pal, 1978, p.36). The Palm leaves were in use to write the early manuscripts of Nepal and the cover of it were made of wood. The covers of the manuscript are found decorated with various paintings. The wooden cover protects the manuscript as it lasts longer, and doesn't rot easily (Manandhar, 2010, p.18).

Both Buddhist and Hindu manuscripts mostly are illuminated with hieratic images of gods and goddesses (Pal, 1978, p.36). Examples of Buddhist manuscripts are Prajnaparamita, Dharanisamgraha, Gandavyuha, Kaarandavyuha, Pancaraksa, and Paramartha. And examples of Hindu manuscripts are Visnudharma, Shivadharm, Devimahatmya, Bhagvata Mahapurana and Ramayana (Manandhar, 2010, p.18).

Ajanta cave paintings and eastern Indian manuscript illuminations were the influencing factors for the early Nepali manuscript (Manandhar, 2010, p. 22). Nepali manuscript illuminations painted after the seventeenth century were influenced by Mughal-Rajput styles (Havell, 1980, p.212-213).

The oldest illuminated manuscript found till the date belongs to 10/11th century. No manuscripts have been found earlier than the eleventh century. There is manuscript painted with Dasha Avatara of Lord Bhisnu of that time period is now

kept in Patan Museum. Dasha Avatara of Bhisnu are Matsya, Kurma, Bahara, Narasingha, Bamana, Purshuram, Ram, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki. The painting is very artistic and attractive (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

The 11th-century manuscript Prajnaparamita contains scenes from the Buddha's life and depictions of Bodhisattvas, the five Buddhas, and the goddess Prajnaparamita. This manuscript includes the birth of the Buddha, the meditation under the tree, the miracle of the snake, the temptation and the attack of the devil, the monkey offering honey to the Buddha, the slaying of the mad elephant, the visit of the Buddha to his mother, and the Mahaparinirvana. On the other side of the Prajnaparamita, there is an image of Buddha flanked by three Bodhisattvas on each side (Manandhar, 2010, p. 22).

The twelfth-century Vesantara Jataka manuscript visually depicts the narrative scene of Prince Vesantara. A thirteenth-century manuscript of Pancharaksha is illuminated with images of the Buddha and various deities (Manandhar, 2010, p. 23-24).

The eleventh-century Vishnudharma, a Hindu manuscript, visually depicts the ten incarnations of Vishnu. An eleventh-century Shivism manuscript illumination depicts the image of a Shivalinga. Thirteenth-century Shivadharmas depict Lord Shiva holding his wife Parvati in his lap. A fifteenth-century Ramayana manuscript depicts the epic hero Rama, his brother Lakshmana, his wife Sita, devotees such as Hanuman and Sugriva, and monkey companions (Manandhar, 2010, p. 24).

2.2.2. Wall painting

Besides these, wall painting is also in practice in Nepal so long ago. The wall paintings can be seen in palaces, temples, and monasteries.

There was the tradition of making wall painting in the Lichchhavi period as well. There are numerous inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period that tells about wall paintings. But unfortunately, we don't have those structures of the Lichchhavi period where we could see wall paintings. The painting of Bhairav in the Jayabageswori

temple is believed as a continuity of the Lichchhavi period. There is an inscription from the 7th century which has not mentioned the paintings but we can predict the painting of Bhairav belongs to that period of time (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

An inscription of Chabahil, which is predicted to be of the Lichchhavi period, mentions a painting of Kinnari Jataka and describes the Chabahil Chaitya had been decorated by various paintings (Bajracharya, 2053 B.S., p. 2).

In the 55 windows durbar and Teleju temple in Bhaktapur Dubar premises, there are numerous wall paintings. 60 to 70 percent of medieval-period palaces in Kathmandu Valley have wall paintings (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023). A picture related to Sati Devi is shown in the wall painting of the palace of Bhupatindra Malla in Bhaktapur. The battle between *Bhairava* and demons *Sumbha* and *Nisumbha* has been depicted on the wall of Taleju Temple in Bhaktapur (Manandhar, 2010, p.32). In the Mithila Chhetra in the Terai region of Nepal, Mithila art is painted on the wall depicting the myth of the Hindu religion, sceneries, and life stories of people (Self Observation).

The Kumari Ghar in Kathmandu built by Jayaprakash Malla has a well-preserved wall painting till date. The painting depicts various gods and goddesses, portrayed of Jaya Prakash Malla and his life story. There is a wall painting in the Bramayani Temple of Panauti (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

Normally in Buddhist Bihar Chatur Maharajs are painted. Chatur Maharajs are Birupakshya, Birudhaka, Baisabana and Dhritarastra. In four entrances of Bihar, these Chatur Maharajs are portrayed according to the direction that they represent. These Chatur Maharajs are painted in entrances with the belief that they provide security (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

The Wheel of Life is also portrayed on the wall in every monastery. It includes Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist teachings. In the central part, there are three animals; a pig, a dog, and a snake symbolizing ignorance, desire, and anger. These three things; ignorance, desire, and anger are the basic elements of suffering. The one, who can give up ignorance, desire, and anger, can be liberated from life. That person

will not be reborn, the state of Nirvana will be attained (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

2.2.3. Paubha or Thangka

Paubha is a religious painting. The artist is bound by certain immutable iconographic rules and aesthetic canons that were established by theological assumptions and long-standing traditions (Pal, 1978, p. 65).

Paubhas : The Prabhamandalas (painted scrolls) for the devotees are hung on the wall of a private chapel or room. The painted scrolls add to the religious environment of the place and they substitute for frescoes (Regmi, 1966, p. 985).

Bangdel, 1982 (as cited in Manandhar, 2010, p.29) says the Nepali Paubha has a simple design, a "smooth gradation of color tones", a rhythmic flow of lines, aspects of "life and nature", and a "poetic charm". Thangkas have no modeling of color and appear strictly two-dimensional (Ray, 1973 as cited in Manandhar, 2010, p.29). Thus, although Paubha and Thangka are similar in terms of subject matter, technique, and medium, there are some differences.

However, Paubha is considered to be the origin of the Thangka. The first traces of Paubha date back to the 7th century during the reign of Amshuvarma. (Shrivastava, 2018,n.a.). In the same century, the Nepali princess Bhrikuti married the Tibetan king Stong Sen Gampo. As a dowry, the princess carried sculptures and religious texts of Buddhism to Tibet. Hence, the princess is credited with introducing Buddhism to Tibet. In later history, the Paubha painting may have traveled from Nepal to Tibet, exchanging cultural practices between these two nations. Tibetan Buddhism has undergone modifications over time as different sects have formed, and so has the Thangka (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

Paubha is dyed into cloth. Generally, images of gods and goddesses are painted and used for worship. In the center, the main deity is depicted and the subsidiary deities are depicted around the central figures. Mandalas are also found painted in Paubha (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

The oldest Nepalese Paubha that has come to light is the Mandala of Goddess Vasundhara which was consecrated in 1367 AD in the city of Patan (Pal, 1978, p. 66).

Paubha can be categorized into two types; Patachitra and Mandala (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

2.2.3.1. Patachitra

Patachitra was also famous in the medieval period of Nepal. A large horizontal band or sometimes a picture divided into several sections was used to depict narrative pictures. The motifs of the early Nepalese Patas appear rounded and modeled, while those of the post-mid-eighteenth-century patas are two-dimensional (Manandhar, 2010, p. 30).

The majority of Patachitra depict the narrative of gods and goddesses. For example; If Krishna is painted in the center, the event related to him is painted in the surroundings (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

Patachitra has the scope to express the creative experience of artists. Pata is simple in design which is understood by ordinary people as well (Manandhar, 2010, p.30).

The eighteenth-century Krishnalila Pata represents various scenes from the Mahabharata. The composition shows Krishna subduing the serpent King Kalinga who does not recognize the divine power of Lord Krishna (Manadhar, 2010, p. 30-31).

2.2.3.2. Mandala

Mandala is always a paradigm of geometric consistency and coherence. The Mandala is a visual attempt to recreate a world of order and symmetry. The artist has handled his subject skilfully. Every detail is made with meticulous care. Despite the richness of the design, the painting is a fine example of formal elegance and clarity of expression. (Pal, 1978, p. 88).

The majority of Mandalas depict the full story related to any particular topic. For example; the process, from beginning to end, step by step, of the Janko ritual can be shown in Mandala. In some Mandalas, information about the universe is also presented in visual form (N. Pokharel, Interview, July 29, 2023).

Vishnu Mandala of 1420 AD, Lord Vishnu is seated in a Yoga posture with Goddess Lakshmi, and the central divinities are surrounded by other figures of Vishnu and Lakshmi (Manandhar, 2010, p. 25).

Paubha paintings also depict various temples, stupas, and shrines. The fifteenth-century Lakshacaitya Paubha represents the Laksa Stupa. It is associated with the Laksacaitya ritual in which one lakh stupas were donated. Various small stupas are created an interesting visual pattern (Manandhar, 2010, p. 28).

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPORTANCE OF THANGKA FOR THE PEOPLE LIVING IN BOUDHANATH

3.1. Meaning of Thangka

Artist Hom Bahadur Lama, who has experienced painting Thangka since 1976, believes that any art has two aspects; the art of living and the art of dying. Thangka also carries both of these aspects. Thangka means laws of nature to him. Thangka refers to knowing the reason for performing any action according to the laws of nature (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Thangka consists of a combination of three things; Science, Dharma, and Darsan. Everything that can be seen in a Thangka has a deep meaning. They have science. They have the rules of Dharma. They have Darsan. These teach humans to live a righteous life. If these three things are absent, it can not be termed Thangka (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Thangka is the Tibetan word where “Thang” means flat and “Ka” stands for painting. It is also known as *thang-kha* or *than-suk* or *sku-thang* in Tibetan vernacular. Thangka is painted on cotton or silk canvas with natural colors (Shakya, 2067. p. 9). The Thangka can be easily scrolled and unscrolled and it can be carried while traveling from one place to another (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023)

The Thangka is symbolism and allusion that generally depict the life and forms of Buddha, various other deities, bodhisattvas (enlightened being), the wheel of life, etc (Rai, 2020, p.43). Thangka is taken as important equipment to learn and teach Buddhism. It is also used for meditation purposes. In Thangka there are paintings of gods and goddesses of Buddhism. Examples; Panch Dhyani Buddha, bodhisattvas, Abaloketiswor, Maitreya Budhha, Majushree, Bajrapani, Tara, etc. (Loh, 2001, p.3). Thangkas of Rinpoche and some other tutelary deities are also painted on some shrines or domestic altars (Shakya, 2067, p.2).

The deities of the Thangka should be replicated in exact proportions. There is a strong belief that if the deities are depicted in correct proportions with all the iconographic features then the deities will dwell in the Thangka. In Buddhism and Hinduism after some special rituals, they believe the deity would come to life in sculpture or painting. After the completion of the making of Thangka the word *U aa hun* is written in Tibetan script on the backside of the canvas, to bring the life of the deity that has been depicted on the Thangka. (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Theravada sect of Buddhism also has Thangka. But they do have very few. Thangka of the Wheel of Life, 16 Arhat, and Sakyamuni Buddha are some of them. In the Mahayana sect of Buddhism, the painting of Amitava, Avaloketoshwor, Karuna Bhupati, etc. are found in Thangka (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

3.2. Historicity of Thangka

The Thangka has traveled a long journey since it was invented. The exact origin is unknown but there are some predictions that throw deem light on its origin.

The painting of Shakyamuni Buddha is believed to have started during his lifetime. Shakyamuni allowed painters to see his reflections in the water, allowing them to paint. Hence it is regarded as the beginning of painting in Buddhism (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Since ancient times, there have been many travelers who traveled from one country to another country. Similarly, travelers from Nepal used to go to Tibet. Travelers from Tibet used to come to Nepal. Indian travelers also visited these lands multiple times. We can't forget Nepal was the trade route between India and Tibet. Nepal also had trade relations with both of these countries. Not only for trade, but also for political objectives, pilgrims, and research purposes, travelers used to go to different places. Knowingly or unknowingly, some of those travelers contributed to introducing different cultural components to different communities. So any of those travelers or many of them might have contributed to bringing back Paubha in the form of Thangka with Tibetan iconographical influence in Nepal. (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

The culture of painting Thangka was started by Theravadi. They would have very few Thangka varieties. They would paint the Thangka of the Wheel of Life, 16 Arhart, Shakyamuni Buddha. When it comes to Mahayana the painting had expanded in its content. They started painting different Bodhisattva like Amitava, Abaloketeswor, Karuna Bhupati, etc. (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

The first trace of the painting called Paubha from the 7th century was found in Nepal (Shrivastava, n.a.). It was the time period of the Lichchavi dynasty in Nepal. Lichchhavi dynasty ruled the country from the 1st Century to the 8th Century. This time period is taken as the golden era in Nepalese history as the foundation of Nepalese art and artifacts belongs to this time period (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

To extend the political relation with Nepal, Songtsen Gampo wanted to marry Princess Bhrikuti, the daughter of Nepalese king Amshuvarma (Powers, 1997). Amshuvarma was the King in the 7th Century (Shrivastava, n.a.) during the Lichchhavi period in Nepal. Sontsen Gampo sent emissaries to Nepal to request a proposal of marriage with Bhrikuti. The king Amshuvarma agreed. When Princess Bhrikuti traveled to Tibet, she carried an image of Akshobhya Buddha (Powers, 1997). That's how Buddhism traveled from Nepal to the Himalayan kingdom of Tibet for the first time (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

After Buddhism was introduced in Tibet, the demand for religious icons and Buddhist manuscripts increased. In 999 AD numerous Buddhist manuscripts were copied in Patan for the Sashakya monastery in Tibet. The earlier traces of Thangka in Tibet are in murals form (Srivastava, 2018, n.a.).

A thangka is a portable sacred artifact. Thangkas were used by lamas, monks and other Buddhists as portable monasteries. While traveling they would carry the thangkas and keep them in their bags. They unrolled those thangkas during the time of praying. They also used Thangka painting to spread Buddhism during their travel (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

3.3. Process of making Thangka

Thangkas are always either made on cotton or silk canvas. These days cotton canvas are famous, but back in history there were made in silk as well. The process of making Thangka is lengthy and sedulous. There are a series of works that are serially accomplished one by one while making Thangka (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

First, the natural minerals are collected from the mountains. The colors that are used in Thangka are made from natural minerals. Sometimes within an hour or two, the required minerals are found and sometimes takes a day or more. Some of the mountains are slippery, so one needs to be very careful during this duty (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

The collected minerals are mixed with water and start grinding into small pigments stirring them in the small pot. The pigment powder will be seen at the bottom under the water. Then these are dried in the sun's heat. The whole water should be dried until the pigment powder remains unwet (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

After completing the arrangement of all colors the work on canvas started. Before touching the canvas some artists purify their bodies. They take a bath. Some of them just wash their hands. It is their devotion to the deities (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

The cotton is stretched and stitched in a wooden frame using thread to make a canvas. The glue and the white clay are mixed with water and stirred for some minutes and coated on cotton. It makes the surface smooth. Then it is dried in the sun's heat. Now the canvas is ready to be painted (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

When painting, the works are divided among many artists, from ordinary to master-level painters. Most of the Thangkas are painted by more than one painter. There are very few thangkas in which all the painting works are done by a single painter (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Nima Dorje Lama is a painter having experience of 35 years. He had started painting Thangka in Bhaktapur, but later he was shifted to work in the Boudhanath area. Even though he is experiencing it for more than 3 decades he says he doesn't dare to complete a whole Thangka by himself. He expressed that from the outer layer of paint, the work is divided into many artists up to the inner layer of paint. The most difficult and expert part is drawing the eyes of deities in the inner part of Thangka (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

If the work is divided among many people and they are given the same work regularly, the efficiency increases. The work can be completed in a shorter time. The final result can be excellent. It is possible that many junior artists and senior artists contributed to the same painting (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Different types of materials are used to make Thangka. The materials used are as follows;

i) Cotton Cloth or Silk

To make the canvas to paint Thangka either of these; cotton or silk cloth are used. These days cotton is more common.

ii) Thread

Threads are used for fastening the cotton or silk to the wooden frame.

iii) Mineral colors :

Five colors are used while dyeing Thangka. Different types of minerals collected from the mountains are used to make those colors.

Carbon Black (Tibetan: *nagtsa*) : Black

Cinnabar (Tibetan : *chog lama*) : Vermillion color

Lapis Lazuli: Blue

Lac Red (Tibetan: *Gyatso*)

Malachite Green (Tibetan: *pangma*): Green color

Minimum Orange (Tibetan: *litri*): Orange color

Orpiment Yellow (Tibetan: *ba la*): Yellow color

Yellow and Red Ochre (Tibetan: *ngang pa and tsag*)

Gold (Tibetan: *ser*): Powdered gold, stored as drops

Silver (Tibetan: *ngul dul*) : Powdered silver, also stored as drops

iv) Leather Glue

To make the cotton hard enough for painting leather glue is pasted.

v) Distemper Powder

With the leather glue distemper powder is mixed and pasted in cotton

vi) Silk Brocade cloth

Silk Brocade cloth is used for mounting the final painting.

Also, there are certain rules that thangka painters must follow strictly at each stage. So it requires complete dedication, concentration and devotion. After collecting the various materials, the painter starts painting the Thangka by following the steps given below.:

i) The right fabric should be selected which can be used for religious conduct.

ii) The study of the measurement graphing the images of deities and figures.

iii) The next step is sketch development.

iv) Applying the color of identification to the foreground.

v) Then follows the outlining of figures.

vi) The last step is its mounting onto the silk or brocade (Srivastav, 2018, n.a.)

3.4. Types (subject) of Thangka

There are basically two types of Thangka; the first type of Thangka has paintings of general deities. The second type of Thangka is an explanation of the Mandala (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

3.4.1. Painting of Deities on Thangka

Many deities are depicted on the thangka. All of them have their own characteristics and importance in Buddhism. Shakyamuni Buddha, Padmasambhava, Green Tara, White Tara, Medicine Buddha, etc are some of them popularly found painted on Thangka and sold in the market (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

(i) Shakyamuni Buddha

Shakyamuni Buddha is a common theme that are found in many Thangkas. He is usually presented in Dhyana Mudra, Meditation posture. Often, the Buddha is represented on a throne supported by two lions. The lion is regarded as the animal king, just as the Buddha is regarded as the divine king (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 1)

(ii) Padmasambhava

In the Padmasambhava Thangka, his different eight forms are presented surrounded by Dakas and Dakinis dancing and feasting. Eight forms of Padmasambhava are Shakya Sengue, Pema Gyalpo, Padmasambhava, Dorje Drolo, Nyima Oser, Padmakara, Sengue Dradrok, Loden Tchokse. In some Thangkas, he is presented with King Trisong Detsen (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023). (Fig 2)

(iii) Green Tara

Green Tara is also known as Arya Tara or Vasya Tara. Tara Thangka is kept in the house for prosperity. It is believed that Tara is always willing and ready to help those in need who pray to her. Also, to remove fear, these types of Thangkas are kept at home. If the mantra *Om Tare Tu Tare Ture* is spelled, the Tara comes to help the needy who are in trouble (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 3)

(iv) White Tara

White Tara is regarded as the mother of all Buddhas. She herself is known as the Female Buddha. She appears for the welfare of every living being. Gifting a White Tara Thangka to a newly born child is believed to bring good luck and long life (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 4)

(v) Medicine Buddha

Medicine Buddha is popularly known as Bhaisayaguru. He is considered the Buddha of Healing and Medicine. Buddhist monks and followers pray to the Medicine Buddha for the purpose of comfort for their sickness and suffering (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 5)

3.4.2. Painting of Mandala in Thangka

Apart from deities various Mandalas are also depicted on Thangka. Different types of Manadala Thangkas are given below;

(i) Kalachakra Mandala

Kalachakra means the wheel of time. The Kalachakra Mandala is an exploration of time derived from the Kalachakra Tantra. Kalachakra Tantra is regarded as the highest Yoga Tantra which provides an ontological understanding of existence. People believe that one can attain enlightenment by performing penance (Tapasya) using the Kalachakramandal Thangka (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).(Fig 6)

(ii) Cosmic Mandala

Cosmic mandalas are two-dimensional with many circular bands that depict the rotational motions of the planets; The Sun, the Moon, and the entire universe around Mount Meru. The holy mountain Meru is considered the axis of the geocentric universe. This mandala represents the infinite connection between body and mind (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 7)

(iii) Mantra Mandala

The Mantra Mandala Thangka is composed of Tibetan Buddhist chants; Om Mani Padme Hum in circular form. Chanting this Mantra is believed to help in making progress, getting new ideas, and leading to goals and success (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 8)

(iv) Bodhisattwo Mandala

Bodhisattva Mandala Thangka appears with many bodhisattvas; Avalokitesvara, Manjushri, Samantabhadra, Ksitigarbha, Maitreya, Vajrapani, etc. are around many Buddhas. Bodhisattvas want equality, freedom, and happiness for all living beings (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 9)

(v) Spiritual Mandala

A spiritual mandala brings you a sense of vision and the ability to find light in the darkness in life. It helps generate positivity and unlocks inner wisdom (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). (Fig 10)

Besides these, Rinpoche and some other tutelary deities are also depicted in Thangkas (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

3.5. Purpose of Making Thangka

Thangka is religious art popularly used in Buddhism. There are various types of Thangka used for diverse purposes. Most of them are used by the Buddhist community during their festivity. These kinds of Thangka have a portrait of Buddhist deities. Mandalas are used for meditation purposes. Also, Mandalas are kept at home for physical and mental well-being. People believe that keeping Thangka in the house spreads positive energy which helps in strengthening the willpower of the person.

Thangkas have many uses for people living in Boudha, all of which are linked to religious significance. Sometimes the purpose may vary depending on the occasion and situation. In the Buddhist community, they do have many rituals that vary from birth to death. On those special occasions, they use the Thangka as an instrument to worship the deities and perform rituals.

In Tibetan Buddhism, there are twelve animal years. So with regard to the birth year, people worship certain deities taking advice from the senior Lamas. They made artists paint Thangka of their particular deities and use that Painting for their religious purpose. Thangka is painted in the name of died member of the family as well. With regard to the date of death, the senior Lama is consulted for which deities should be painted on Thangka. Following the suggestion of the senior Lama the Thangka is painted and hung on the wall of the house and worship in accordance (M.B. Lama, Interview, June 7, 2023).

Every single Thangka has a composition of three important aspects; science, Dharma and Darsan. Thangka has deep meaning in it which help people to drive in a righteous way. They possess the science in it. They do possess rules of Dharma. Simultaneously they do possess Darsan on it. These three aspects make Thangka unique from other paintings. All paintings may contain meaning that is sometimes profound, but few of them can be a combination of all these aspects; Science, Dharma and Darsan (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

3.6. Importance of Thangka for the people living in Boudha

Thangka is sacred art famous among the Buddhist community in Boudha. After completion of the Thangka, it is taken to *Lama* to add life (*Prana*). There is a belief in Buddhism and Hinduism that life should be added to sculpture and painting of god before using them for religious purposes. It is called *Pranapratisthan* in the Nepali language. In Buddhism *Om aan hun*, is the Tibetan word written for the *Pranapratisthan* (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

After *Pranapratisthan* the Thangka does not remain the ordinary painting. It becomes a form of god to the devotee. They use it for their regular worship, rituals on special days, festivals, etc. They are very much concerned about the place they hung it or put it. They don't put it anywhere randomly (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

They offer pure water to it. In Buddhism, they use 7 small bowls to offer water. Water is filled equally in every bowl. It symbolizes equality. According to Buddhism philosophy, everyone is equal in this universe. There is no cast or class hierarchy. Every living creature are equal (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Everyone has personal *istadev*, personal deities in Buddhism. Those deities are painted in Thangka and used to worship for personal religious benefits (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

If a member of the family dies, the Thangka is mandatory for the death rites of the Tamang caste in the Buddhist community. The deities in Thangka are painted according to the animal year in which the person has died. *Lama*, the priest, is consulted to ask which deities should be painted in Thangka. The artist is given instruction according to the advice taken from *Lama*. With regard to that the artist paints a Thangka which would be used in death rituals (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

The Thangka varies from low cost to high cost. Expensive Thangkas are bought by people who have a keen interest in Buddhism. In comparison to the foreign buyer, local people buy the high-cost Thangka. Some of the buyers frequently buy Thangka if they found the new Thangkas in the market are more attractive than that of their old

purchase. It shows that some of the buyers have a passion to collect the Thangka (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Thangka of Tara is kept in-house for prosperity. In Hinduism, the goddess Laxmi is worshiped for prosperity. In Buddhism, Tara is worshiped for the same purpose. Also, to remove fear, these types of Thangkas are kept at home. It is believed that if the Mantra *Om tare tu tare ture* is spelled, the Tara will come to help the needy who are in a problem (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

The most important use of Thangka is for meditation. For concentration, the deities which has been portrayed in Thangka are visualized and focused on it while doing meditation (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Thangka Painting helps in spreading positive energy. It gives optimistic vibes. Everyone wants long and healthy life. There are some rituals that can be performed for a long and healthy life. Success is a common desire of humans. To achieve success one needs to defeat obstacles. To achieve success, to increase the willpower, to struggle for the success, to boost the strength, to defeat the obstacles, there are some rituals in Buddhism. To perform these rituals Thangka can be used (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Thangka are also used as portable monasteries. People either carry sculptures of deities or Thangka of particular deities while they travel from one place to another place. These days people, going abroad, carries Thangka painting to use for praying or performing their religious activities (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023). The universe is made up of 5 elements. In Thangka also 5 colors are used indicating those 5 cosmic elements. Every color has its own symbolic meaning (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

The Wheel of Life Mandala is common to all sects of Buddhism. The wheel of life is drawn not only on the wall but also on the Thangka. It includes Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist teachings. In the central part, there are three animals; a pig, a rooster and a snake. The pig symbolizes ignorance, the rooster symbolizes desire and snake symbolizes anger. These three things; ignorance, desire and anger are the basic elements of suffering (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

According to human behavior in their present life, related to these three elements, they will be born in different realms which are divided into six sections; God Realm, Demigod Realm, Human Realm, Animal Realm, Hungry Ghost Realm, and Hell (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

The God Realm, Demigod Realm and Human Realm are considered divine alternatives that can be attained by reducing ignorance, desire and anger. In the present life, human nature is dominated by these three components namely; ignorance, desire and anger. They will be reborn in the animal world, in the hungry ghost realm and in hell because of these three components. If they can give up ignorance, desire and anger, they are liberated from life. They will not be reborn. They will attain the state of Nirvana (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRIGUE OF TOURISTS TOWARDS THANGKA

4.1. History of Tourism in Nepal

The present-day Indian territory had different republics and principalities in ancient times. While they faced attacks from emperors and expansionist rulers during the time of 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th centuries BC, its citizen entered Nepal from Utter Pradesh and Bihar state of present India (Dahal et al, 2019, p. 19). Cross-border visits had been started with India and Nepal before the Christ era. It has been a destination of travelers. Nepal has had a tradition of pilgrimage and trade dating back to long before the Indian Emperor Ashoka's famed 250 BC journey to Kathmandu and Valley and the birth of Buddha in southwest Nepal (Landon, 1928; as cited in Stevens, 1988).

There are some shreds of evidence of visiting Nepal by Chinese travelers in ancient times. Seng Tsai visited Nepal between 350-375 AD, Fa Shien visited Nepal at the beginning of the 5th century, and Yuan Chwang visited Nepal in the 7th century. Apart from these some other Chinese also visited Nepal during the Lichchhavi period (Bidari, 2019, p. 26-28).

Nepal was tightly restricted till 1950. After the political change in 1951, the scenario slowly started to change. Till the late 1950s, the number of tourists passing through Kathmandu was quite small (Smith 1981, as cited in Stevens, 1988). In 1955, White Russian was able to convince the King of Nepal to issue tourist visas and to allow the opening of the first hotel (Bernstein, 1970, as cited in Stevens, 1988). In 1962 the figure for tourist arrival started to count for the first time. During that year the number was 6,179 (Smith 1981, as cited in Stevens, 1988).

During the beginning of 1960s the tourism, except for government-authorized mountaineering expeditions, was solely a Kathmandu phenomenon (Smith 1981, as cited in Stevens, 1988). In the 1960s decade, the number of tourists started to increase rapidly. Tourism activities were limited in Kathmandu and some other government-authorized places. The decision of the government in 1964 to allow tourism in selected mountain regions of the country-particularly Khumbu-Mount Everest and Pokhara-Annapurna- had helped in blooming Nepal as an adventure travel destination

for tourists of the world (Steven, 1988, p. 70).

Tourism had caught the government's attention as it has become a noticeable income source. King Mahendra in 1969 announced the formation of a high-powered tourism development committee. Tourism was already being proclaimed in some government circles as the leading growth industry of Nepal (Tuladhar, 1970, as cited in Steven, 1988).

During the 1970s, tourism continued to grow rapidly in Nepal. The number of tourists grew from 46,000 to 156,000 by 1978. Trekking also grew considerably. In 1977 there were seventy-two trekking agencies in business in Kathmandu, and worldwide, more than 1000 travel agencies advertised treks that were booked through these Kathmandu-registered agencies (Rowell, 1980, as cited in Steven, 1988).

4.2.Thangka in the tourism market of Nepal

After the political change in 1951, Nepal was open to the outer world for tourism activities. By the decade of 1970s, the number of tourists started to boost the tourism industry of Nepal (Stevens, 1988). The exiled life of Dalai Lama and the books written by him helped to spread information about Buddhism in the world in recent history. The Western world which was progressing in science and technology, started accepting the importance of spiritual wellbeings. This book increased the number of people generating interest in Buddhism. So these Western people who started to generate their interest in Buddhism searched the Buddhist-practicing countries and found Nepal as their best choice (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

In the 1960/70s decade, Freek Street of Basantapur in Kathmandu was a popular touristic destination. The tourists mostly Hippiie were large in numbers in that area. Cannabis was legal in Nepal. The hippie used to come to Nepal to visit those places to smoke cannabis. It helped to advertise tourism in the world (L.B. Tamang, Interview, June 7, 2023).

During that period near Taleju Bhawani Temple in Kathmandu Darbar Square premises there were rented rooms for commercial purposes owned by the Nepal government. Some of them were occupied by Thangka shops. Tourists who were

preparing to go or returned from trekking and touring used to go to observe and buy those Thangka paintings. These were the initial time of commercialization of Thangka in the tourism market in Nepal (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Chhonamgel Lama, aged 50 years, Thangka seller in Boudha, started to paint Thangka in 2040 B.S. Senior artists he knew of that time were Guru Lama, Maila Lama, Keshar Lama etcetra. Those artists used to earn good amount of money. The artists had already earned 2/4 Lakh rupees in short period of time when the house in Thamel used to cost only 40 thousand or around (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

The artists whose names were taken above were from Buddhist background. The art they used to do were of well proportionated with all iconographic features in original positions as mentioned in Buddhist literature (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

When Thangka painting got a good market other ordinary artists also started to paint Thangka for commercial purposes. The arts they used to do were very basic level. The iconographical features were also not properly included. They were all mess. Tourists were not that conscious of the iconographic features. So those kinds of art also got good market value (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Before that, his brother-in-law used to make Thangka in Baneshwor where he used to live and used to sell in the market of Makhan. When he got a good purchase of Thangka painting in the market of Makhan, he generated the idea to initiate his own business. So he collaborated with Chhonenmgel Lama and opened the shop in Thamel in 1984 (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Chhonemgel started the Thangka business by collaborating with three others. The name of the shop was Lama Thangka Center. It was located in Thamel. Later they shifted it to Boudha (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Nima Dorje Lama, a 50-year-old man, has 35 years of experience in painting Thangka. He is working for Sara Enterprises till the date. The Sara Enterprise was in Bhaktapur at the beginning and later it was shifted to Boudha. At the beginning the Sara Enterprises used to make simple kinds of Thangka. Gradually it upgraded in its

varieties (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

When Nima Dorje Lama was 6/7 years old child in the decade of 1970s, his grandfather from the maternal side visited Kathmandu and saw Thangka painting hanging in some shops. His grandfather, who used to paint Thangka in his daily life for religious purposes, thought he can sell it in the market as well. So he started to paint a few more thangka and sold it in the market in Kathmandu. He started selling with good amount of money getting Rs. 20/30 per Thangka. It motivated him. He taught painting Thangka to some other artists as well. In the daytime, the learner used to do their daily household work and in the morning and night time, they would learn to paint Thangka. It helped the grandfather of Nima to produce more Thangka to sell in the market (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

In the decade 1980/90s the high numbers of tourists who bought Thangka were Japanese. After that noticeable tourists buying Thangkas were German and the rest of European. Now tourist from all over the country buys Thangka (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Nepal is a religious country. Tourists can see the religious and cultural diversity. While going trekking in the Mountain area, while visiting Kathmandu or any other places they can visit religious places like monasteries and temples. In monasteries, they observed the traditional painting called Thangka which is hanging on the wall. They might have liked it and thought to carry a similar kind of painting with them while going back to their country which made them buy Thangka (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

4.3. The factors affecting tourist interest towards Thangka

Although Thangka is a sacred art, most tourists buy it as a painting without any religious devotion. But few are devoted to Buddhism and want Thangka as an aid to worship Buddhist deities. (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

While visiting the Bouddha Stupa complex, the decorative art catches everyone's eye. This makes the visitors curious about the art called Thangka and compelled to enter the shop to know about it. After getting information about its various aspects; aesthetics, religion, and the process of making, people buy them as

souvenirs as a reminder of their visit to such a beautiful artistic place (D. Brooker, Interview, April 23, 2023).

Most shops in Thangka have separate sections for painting, where live paintings are shown to tourists. Painters paint incredible art with their hands in front of tourists using natural colors, real gold, and many precious materials. These are the aspects that tourists are influenced to buy Thangka (P. Subba, Interview, June 7, 2023).

4.3.1. Religious purpose

Numerous Westerners are seen converting to the Buddhist religion. The philosophy of Buddha is the central attraction of this conversion.

The Western world is concerned about the importance of spiritual well-being in the present age. The numerous books written by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the spread of news about his life in exile have played a role in spreading information about Buddhism and spiritual practice. After reading those books and learning about His Holiness the Dalai Lama's views on Buddhist teachings and peaceful living, some Westerners have converted to Buddhism (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Apart from this, tourists who come to visit countries like Nepal which follow Buddhism, also start loving Buddhism. The peaceful practice of this religion attracts many foreigners to convert to this religion. The teachings of Buddha for suffering-free life attract people to be converted to Buddhism (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

Buddhism is a religion of non-violence. It does not accept animal sacrifice in the name of God. It teaches the peaceful existence of all living beings in the universe. So these aspects attract tourists to Buddhism. They use thangka as a means of worshiping the deities (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Western Buddhist tourists buy Thangka as an aid for prayer and ritual. But there are very few in numbers who buy Thangka for a religious purpose. Local monks and ordinary Buddhists buy Thangka comparatively more for religious purposes than foreign Buddhists (D.K. Tamang, Interview, June 6, 2023).

4.3.2. Meditation

Meditation helps to eliminate negative and ambiguous thoughts. It contributes to generating a positive vision to observe the self and the external world. It helps to control expectations and reduce them. This is why meditation is so popular in the Western world these days.

Meditation is being famous in the Western world since a few decades ago. To practice meditation they use the singing bowl and Thangka. The singing bowl has a healing sound whereas Thangka is used for visualizing the deities that have been portrayed on it or to concentrate on the Mandala. Thangkas are seen as a therapeutic tool for the meditation practitioner (L. Crollet, Interview, June 10, 2023).

Thangka is valued for their aesthetic beauty as well as they are used as aids for Meditational practices. Mahayana Buddhists of the Western world hang Thangka on walls having the Buddhist deities' portraits and practice meditation sitting in front of it (H.B. Tamang, Interview, March 22, 2023).

One of the famous Thangka among Western tourists which is used in meditation is The Wheel of Life Mandala (C. Lama, Interview, March 22, 2023). The Wheel of Life is the common property of all sects of Buddhism; Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana. It covers the importance teaching of Buddhism. It represents the punishment and grants that humans can get in rebirth in accordance with their deeds in the present life. It also suggests how to achieve salvation (P. Subba, Interview, June 7, 2023).

In the center part of The Wheel of Life, there are three animals; Pig, Rooster, and a snake. The pig represents ignorance and stupidity. The snake represents hatred and anger. The rooster represents desire and greed. These three things; ignorance, hatred, and desire are major causes of suffering. These are the negative sense in human beings that poisons human life (P. Subba, Interview, June 7, 2023).

4.3.3. Souvenir

(i) Souvenir as memory

People want to buy valuable things that remind them of their travels. There are

many such handicrafts that tourists buy as souvenirs to commemorate their visit to this beautiful piece of land. Pashmina products, Himalayan tea, coffee, singing bowls, wooden crafts, and metal crafts are some of the handicrafts that tourists buy as souvenirs on their way back from visiting Nepal (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Similarly, Thangkas are also items bought by tourists, especially as souvenirs of their visits to Buddhist shrines in Nepal. Thangkas are one of the most chosen souvenirs by tourists as a memento of their visit to this beautiful country (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

(ii) Souvenir as gift

Tourists want to buy locally famous products as gifts for their family and friends. In the Nepalese tourism market, Thangkas are the most sold products, which tourists buy as gifts for their belongings (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Chinese tourist Xun Zhenzhen bought a Thangka to give as a gift to her friends. Every time she goes abroad, she has a habit of buying local goods and taking them as gifts. So do her friends as well. This time in Nepal she bought Thangka, Himalayan tea, singing bowls, a prayer flag, and Pashmina Swal (X. ZhenZhen, Interview, June 10, 2023).

Rita Jerath, of Indian origin, currently living in the United States of America with her whole family members, brought two Thangkas. She wanted to give one Thangka to her senior colleague and keep the other for herself. She brought the Thangka for her boss because she wanted to give him something not just only of high monetary value but also of deep meaning (R. Jerath, Interview, July 11, 2023).

(iii) Souvenirs as evidence

Margarita Morales and her husband David Garcia collect souvenirs as physical evidence that they were in. In every country they go to, they buy something very local, which represents the country's identity. In Nepal, they have bought a couple of local products including the Thangka (M. Morales, Interview, July 11, 2023).

When relatives come home, these pictures, posters, and paintings on the walls

give an interesting topic to talk about. This becomes physical proof that they have traveled to many countries. This is a kind of pride for Margarita and her husband. Also, Margarita and her husband are planning that in their old age, when their children will have babies and Margarita and her husband will become grandparents, these kinds of souvenirs as physical evidence of their visit to different countries, they will show to their grandchildren and tell them the story behind (M. Morales, Interview, July 11, 2023).

4.3.4. To appreciate and motivate the artist

Tourists buy Thangka for various purposes and take it home. The first impression for tourists is its aesthetic beauty. Tourists, in general, are amazed to see artists painting so well, spending hours at work, depicting every detail in perfect proportion. Tourists not only praise their work by word of mouth, they motivate the artist by buying their artwork. Some tourists have the feeling that if they buy a Thangka, artists will get a good amount of remuneration and this motivates artists to increase their efficiency. They can create more amazing artwork (L. Crollet, Interview, June 10, 2023).

4.3.5. Decoration

Many tourists buy Thangka for decoration purposes (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023). It is hung on the wall of the room in the house which enhances the beauty of the room (L. Crollet, Interview, June 10, 2023). Thangkas are really beautiful things to decorate a home (D. Brooker, Interview, April 23, 2023).

David Brooker, a tourist from the United States of America, visited more than 30 countries. He has a passion to buy paintings from different parts of the world. He said he found Thangka very unique among all. The color combination, the art, the iconographic feature, the materials, and the hard work which he saw live with his own eyes, all these aspects are reasons he wanted Thangka to be taken to his home and decorate the room (D. Brooker, Interview, April 23, 2023).

Andreas Bart, a Belgium tourist, bought Thangka for decoration purposes. He is planning to set up his office after going back to the country. He thought of an idea to decorate his office room with this incredible piece of art. Besides his profession, he has an interest in observing different artworks. He feels that art helps to calm his mind. Observation of art brings him to a peaceful state (A. Bart, Interview, July 11, 2023).

4.3.6. Commercial Purpose

Kristin Joris, a tourist from Belgium bought Thangka to sell it in her country. Although many of her customers are ignorant of religious values, the artistic aspect of this painting becomes a medium of attraction for hundreds of people. It can be sold at a high price in the European market (K. Joris, Interview, July 11, 2023).

People who practice meditation are willing to buy Thangka. Emma from the United States bought some Thangkas from the Buddha with the intention of selling them to meditators in her country. When she was preparing to go to Nepal, many of her co-meditator asked her to bring Thangkas. She thought of a way to make a profit from it and cover the travel expenses (E. Watson, Interview, July 11, 2023).

Lots of Chinese tourists are seen in Bouddha doing advertisements of Thangka through different mobile applications. They stay online and show different pieces of Thangka to their followers who are joining them in the live stream (self-observation). Chu Yi, a Chinese tourist, advertises Thangka through WeChat, Douyin, and some other mobile applications. He has millions of followers on his social media who are interested in buying Thangka (C. Yi, Interview, July 11, 2023).

4.3.7. To help the community

Some tourists buy Thangkas and help the people involved in making it. They consider Nepal a poor country. Many families in Nepal are struggling financially. There is a crisis of employment among most of the youth. Even those who work have not been able to earn much. Therefore, tourists buy Thangka with the understanding that painters and other people directly or indirectly involved in Thangka construction can be benefited. It will be useful to fulfill their basic needs in daily life. Most importantly, they may be able to feed their family members (K.B. Adhikari, Interview,

June 6, 2023)

Thangka is presented as a Tibetan art form. Tourists believe that Tibetans are involved in making Thangka. They buy Thangkas to help exiled Tibetan community sustain economically and preserve their aesthetic and cultural values (J. Spivey, Interview, July 11, 2023).

Andreas Bart shared his feeling about the people of Nepal that they are the sweetest and dearest. They always have a smile on their face even if they don't have enough money in their bank for a quality life. They are honest and humble. These are the most adorable things which compel anyone to help them. Andreas bought Thangka to help people economically (A. Bart, Interview, July 11, 2023).

4.4. Merit and demerit of commercialization of Thangka in the tourism market

Commercialization of Thangka has both positive and negative aspects. To some extent, it has contributed to the preservation of cultural heritage in the Buddhist community, but on the other hand, due to commercialization, its authenticity has come under threat.

The most commendable thing is that it has created employment for hundreds of people. Thangka is the most sold item in Nepal's tourism market. It has contributed well to the revenue generation of the country.

4.4.1. The merit of commercialization of Thangka

The commercialization of Thangka in the tourism market has increased employment opportunities. The employment crisis has become a major problem in Nepal, due to which many young people are forced to go abroad or remain jobless at home. In this situation, the Thangka market has given employment to hundreds of people. Jobs are not enough for all, but at least some families have benefited from this (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

A few decades ago, laborers working in the Thangka field had a good attraction towards this work. Many young people who go to Kathmandu after passing SLC level

used to work in this field. The salary was not very attractive but enough to sustain a normal life. They were paid on time which helps them to run their daily life smoothly (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Thangka painter Nima Dorje Lama expressed that compared to other jobs, working in thangka poses no health risks. It has no chance of a physical accident. A house painter can fall down and get injured while doing their job. A driver can get into an accident while driving on the road. Sometimes death can also occur. But working as a Thangka painter has no such risk (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

There is no time constraint for the painter. If you want to paint during the day and continue working at night, you are allowed. You can take the canvas and necessary tools to your home and work at your own convenient time. It depends on you how long you want to work on it. No need to work in the hot sun, no need to work underwater. There is no tension in such things (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Thangka, coming into the tourism market has played a good role to advertise Nepal (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023). Tourists take these arts to their country and give them to their friends and families as gifts. It helps in advertising the beautiful cultural component of Nepal (L. Crollet, Interview, June 10, 2023).

4.4.2. The demerit of commercialization of Thangka

Painting a thangka is not an easy task that you can complete within an hour. It is a difficult and long task. If you successfully paint all the features correctly but make a mistake in one part, the whole Thangka will be useless. No one buys that. Many people's efforts, spending many several times in making that thangka, will be wasted (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

The unhygienic competition started to increase in the Thangka market. Prices are not standardized. The sellers are selling Thangka at a cheap price, which has, directly and indirectly, caused financial loss to the people involved in the Thangka business. Because of this, painters are also in trouble. If the Thangka is sold cheaply, the painter's salary will also be low. It never climbs to a higher range to meet market inflation. So it is difficult these days to make a living as a full-time thangka painter. New artists are dwindling and veteran painters are also forced to divert their careers to

other fields (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Due to these unhygienic competitions, not only painters, but all the people who are financially dependent on this business are in trouble. The unsatisfactory side of working in the Thangka field is the financial part, which is unsecured (N.D. Lama, Interview, June 6, 2023).

Printed posters of the deities are being sold in the market. They are using digital machines to print the postures which are similar to Thangka. Those kinds of posters are much cheaper in price compared to Thangkas dyed with natural colors. So printed posters are a threat to authentic Thangka. This may reduce and eventually collapse the demand for Thangka (Lal Bahadur Tamang, Interview, June 7, 2023).

It has been found that some people print posters with digital machines and overlap the print by adding color. This is cheating. It cannot be called the original form of Thangka art. The final output looks the same. A ordinary customer may not recognize but a regular customer and a person deeply interested in the art can (S. Shrestha, Interview, June 7, 2023).

With the increasing popularity of Thangka in Nepal's tourism market, the subject varieties of Thangka, that tourists buy, started to be produced relatively more. Other Thangka subjects, which have a sacred value but are not in demand in the tourism market, are being produced less. Such subjects are truly endangered (S. Tamang, Interview, June 7, 2023).

Some countries are imitating this art without proper knowledge of its diverse features. They have changed the original features. Not even the iconographical parts are concerned. This can play a role in lowering the value of Thangka (K.B. Adhikari, Interview, June 6, 2023).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

Thangka is a sacred art. The word Thangka comes from the Tibetan language where 'thang' means flat and 'ka' means painting. Thang-kha or thang-suk or sku-thang in Tibetan are some other words that serve as alternatives to Thangka. It is portable. It can be rolled and easily carried.

There are shreds of evidence of painting in both Hinduism and Buddhism. However, Thangka seems to be more popular among the Buddhist community. The Thangka generally depict the life and forms of Buddha. Besides these, Thangka depicts other deities, bodhisattvas, various mandalas, and Guru or Rinpoche.

There are multiple painting which has been carried out continuously since the ancient and medieval history of Nepal. They are categorized in wall paintings, manuscript paintings, and Paubha paintings. Paubha can be divided into two sections; Patachitra and Mandala.

Paubha and Thangka are similar in terms of content, technique, and medium, and Paubha is considered the origin of Thangka, but there are some differences. Nepali pouva has simple designs, a simplicity of color tones, and a rhythmic flow of lines. Thangka has a complicated design.

The deities of the Thangka should be replicated in exact proportions. There is a strong belief that if the deities are depicted in correct proportions with all the iconographic features, then the deities will dwell in the Thangka. The Tibetan word *Om aan hun* is written on the back side of Thangka to give it life. This holy work of giving life is done by the Senior Monk.

Artist and Buddhism practitioner Hom Bahadur Lama believes that Thangka consists of a combination of three things; Science, Dharma, and Darsan. Everything that can be seen in a Thangka has a deep meaning. They have science. They have the rules of Dharma. They have Darsan. These teach humans to live a righteous life.

There are multiple use of Thangkas for the people living in Boudha which all are tied to religious significance. The purpose sometimes may differ depending on the occasion and circumstances. In the Buddhist community, they do have various rituals from birth to death. With regard to these particular occasions, they use Thangka to perform rituals and worship deities.

Thangka is one of the most sold handicrafts in Nepal's tourism market. Tourists buy Thangka for various purposes and take it home. The first impression for tourists is its aesthetic beauty. Tourists, in general, are amazed to see artists painting so well, spending hours at work, depicting every detail in perfect proportion. Tourists not only praise the work by word of mouth, they also motivate the artist by buying their tremendous artwork.

5.2. Findings

- Thangka has great value in the religious life of Buddhist people
- The iconographical features are presented in the right proportion in Thangka with the belief that the deities dwell in the Thangka
- After completion of the making of the Thangka *om aan hun* is written on the backside of the Thangka to give it life (*pranapratishtana*). The sacred work is normally done by the senior Lama.
- Thangka consists of a combination of three things; science, dharma, and darshan.
- The process of making Thangka is lengthy and sedulous. It requires hard work and continuous dedication of multiple people.
- While painting Thangka, the work is divided from ordinary painters to master painters
- The subject matters of Thangka can be divided into two sections; painting of deities and Mandalas.
- Painting of deities consists, of Shakyamuni Buddha, Padmasambhava, Green Tara, White Tara, Medicine Buddha, etc.

- Kalachakra Mandala, Cosmic Mandala, Mantra Mandala, Spiritual Mandala, etc, come under the Mandala sections.
- In different rituals while performing various traditional practices Thangkas are used among the Buddhist community.
- From birth to death, Buddhist people do different rituals. Thangkas are painted to welcome a newborn and for the peaceful departure of a deceased person.
- The senior Lama is consulted to determine which deities should be followed and painted on Thangka to perform the different rituals.
- Everyone has personal deities (Istadevata) in Buddhism. Thangka of that deities is made and kept in the house for personal benefits.
- Thangka is kept in the house for peace, prosperity, good health and to spread positive energy.
- Thangka is taken as portable monastery. In the present era while people go abroad for travel, work, and study they carry Thangka to perform regular worship and rituals.
- Mandala contains the most profound meaning of existence and it inspires us to walk the path of enlightenment.
- During the 1960/70 decade, Thangka started to get market in Tourism.
- In the beginning, when Thangka started getting a market in tourism, other ordinary artists also started painting Thangka. But they did not know the iconographic features of the subject, and they tried to replicate the work, but they made many mistakes.
- There are both Buddhist and non-Buddhist buyers of Thangka
- There are multiple purposes for buying Thangka
- Buddhist tourists buy Thangka for religious purposes
- Meditation is gradually becoming famous in Western society. Thangka is used

as a tool for meditation.

- Some of the tourists buy Thangka as a souvenir to memorize their visit, some buy it to gift to their family members and friends and also some of them buy as evidence of their visit to Boudha or Nepal.
- Aesthetic beauty is one of the vital aspects that attract to Thangka. Some of them take it to decorate their workplace and home.
- Some people also buy Thangka for business purposes. They buy Thangka from Nepal and sell it to other part of the world.
- Tourists buy Thangka to help artist and the local community economically.
- Art lover tourists want to motivate an artist to enhance their efficiency for they buy Thangka.
- Commercialization of Thangka has both advantages and disadvantages.
- In comparison to other works, the painter of Thangka has no health insecurity.
- Thangka has helped to advertise Nepal to the rest of the world.
- Painting a Thangka is lengthy and requires numerous people involved in it continuously.
- Unhygienic competition in the market has been observed in this field which is being reason to decrease the commercial value of Thangka and reduce to income of entrepreneurs and workers.
- Digital printed Thangka are being sold which looks similar to the original Thangka. It decreases the importance of authentic Thangka.
- Some countries are imitating artwork without proper knowledge of its diverse features.

5.3. Recommendation

When certain cultural practices are bought into the commercial market there is always the danger of killing many of its authentic aspects. Similarly, in the Thangka field, other ordinary artists made many mistakes when they started to paint Thangka painting. They are ignorant of the basic iconographic features that Thangka includes. They did not know that it could hurt the local community because Thangka is a sacred art, and religious belief is a sensitive thing. But later this part was gradually corrected. Now most Thangkas are seen with proper iconographic features.

Right these days, there is seen another danger in the market. Some of the Thangka vendors started selling printed posters. This may attack the market of authentic Thangka art. Thangka art is special because it is hand-painted with natural colors. Digital printed art cannot be termed Thangka.

Two types of vendors are selling posters. First, sell it by telling the truth that it is printed posters. The cost is also reduced as it does not require the hard work of many people and does not require expensive natural materials.

The second is selling posters to tourists claiming to be original hand-painted Thangka art. Some of them are printed and sold directly the posters. Some of them overlap by color after printing. Both of these looks so real that no ordinary buyer can identify them. This kind of cheating should be discouraged.

Both the print and colored after-print posters should not be given market. This not just cheats the buyers, but also can gradually kill the authenticity of Thangka Art.

An important objective of bringing the cultural aspect into the commercial market is to help communities and their cultural practices to survive. Protection and preservation are the main objectives. So for these purposes, the market should operate saving its authenticity for the long term.

In addition, the countries, who are emitting the work of making Thangka with no concern about its basic features, should be discouraged. They should first learn properly the values and then only start acting. Thangka is paint that has diverse features. The home processed materials are used that has been brought from nature.

The cotton is used to make canvas with some traditional concepts. The pictures are drawn with proper iconographic features. So all the aspects of Thangkas should taken in concern to emit the work. And most importantly, it should not be printed by a machine. It kills the basic ethics of Thangka.

This research is limited in a specific small geographical area. Further research should be done expanding the geographical area, collecting more evidence and facts.

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APPENDIX A
LIST OF INTERVIEW

SN	Name of Person	Age	Country	Date of Interview
1	Nima Dorje Lama	50	Nepal	June 6, 2023
2	Dilip Kumar Tamang	35	Nepal	June 6, 2023
3	Krishna Bahadur Adhikari	35	Nepal	June 6, 2023
4	Leen Crollet	55	Belgium	June 10, 2023
5	Hom Bahadur Tamang	58	Nepal	March 22, 2023
6	Chhonamgel Lama	45	Nepal	March 22, 2023
7	Dr. Nirjala Pokharel	50	Nepal	June 29, 2023
8	Emma Watson	32	USA	June 11, 2023
9	David Brooker	45	USA	April 23, 2023
10	Lal Bahadur Tamang	58	Nepal	June 7, 2023
11	Pabitra Subba	40	Nepal	June 7, 2023

12	Min Bahadur Lama	50	Nepal	June 7, 2023
13	Xun Zhenzhen	45	China	June 10, 2023
14	Andreas Bart	56	Belgium	June 11, 2023
15	Rita Jerath	57	India	June 11, 2023
16	Chu Yi	50	China	June 11, 2023
17	Margarita Morales	40	Mexico	June 11, 2023
18	Saroj Tamang	25	Nepal	June 7, 2023
19	Shyam Shrestha	35	Nepal	June 7, 2023
20	Kristin Joris	42	Belgium	June 11, 2023

APPENDIX B
QUESTION FORMAT

Name:

Age:

Address:

Date:

-
-
1. What do you know about the traditional arts of Nepal?
 2. What do you understand by Thangka?
 3. What is the importance of Thangka in Buddhism?
 4. Do you know about the historicity of Thangka?
 5. What are the major types (subjects) of Thangka?
 6. Can artist add their perspective or concept while painting the Thangka?
 7. What is the benefit of having Thangka?
 8. How did Thangka come into the tourism market of Nepal?
 9. What factor influenced tourists to buy Thangka?
 10. What is the merit of the commercialization of Thangka in the Tourism Market?
 11. What is the demerit of the commercialization of Thangka in the Tourism Market?

APPENDIX C
IMAGES AND FIGURES



Fig 1 Shakyamuni Buddha

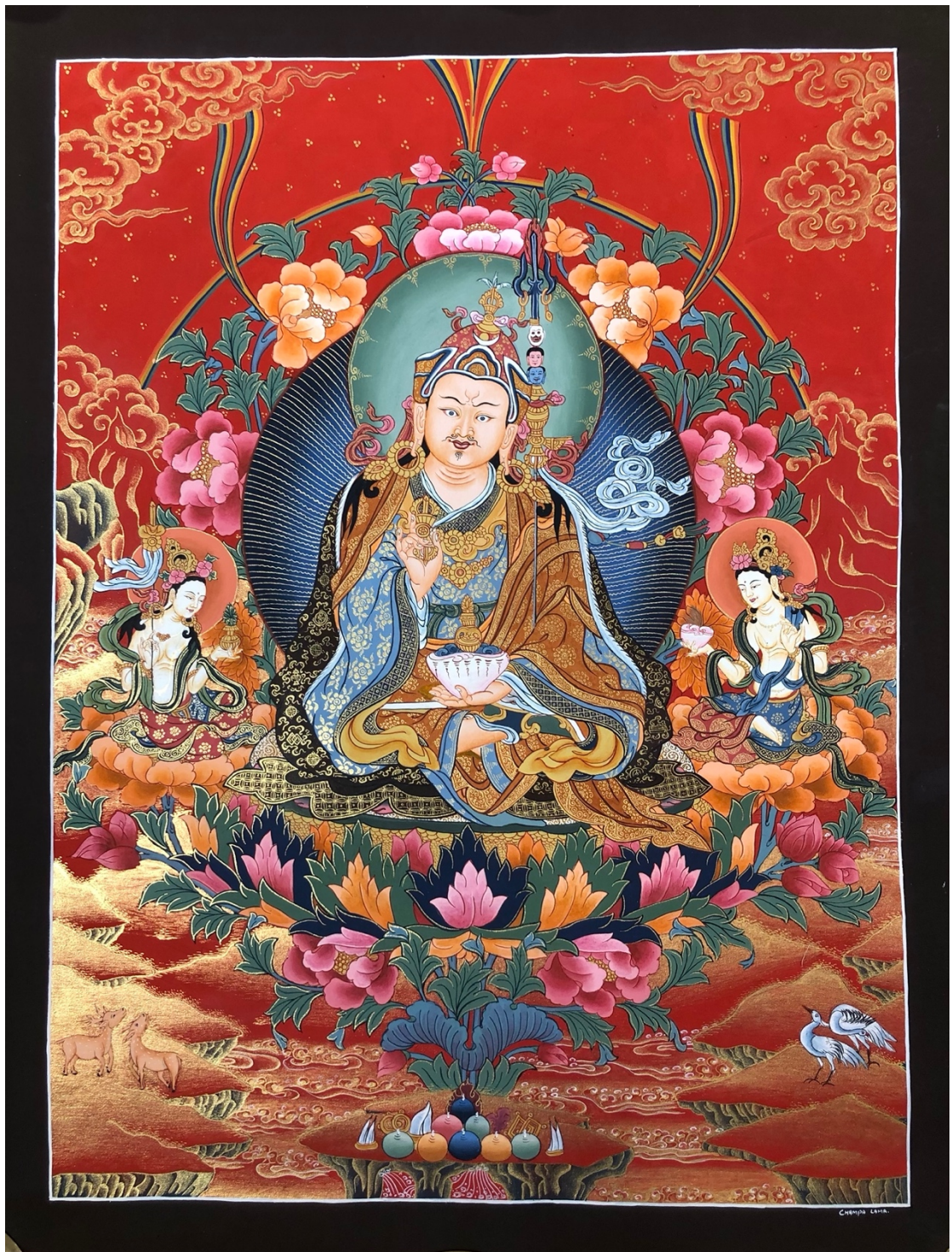


Fig 2 Padmasambhava



Fig 3 Green Tara



Fig 4 White Tara



Fig 5 Medicine Buddha



Fig 6 Kalachaka Mandala

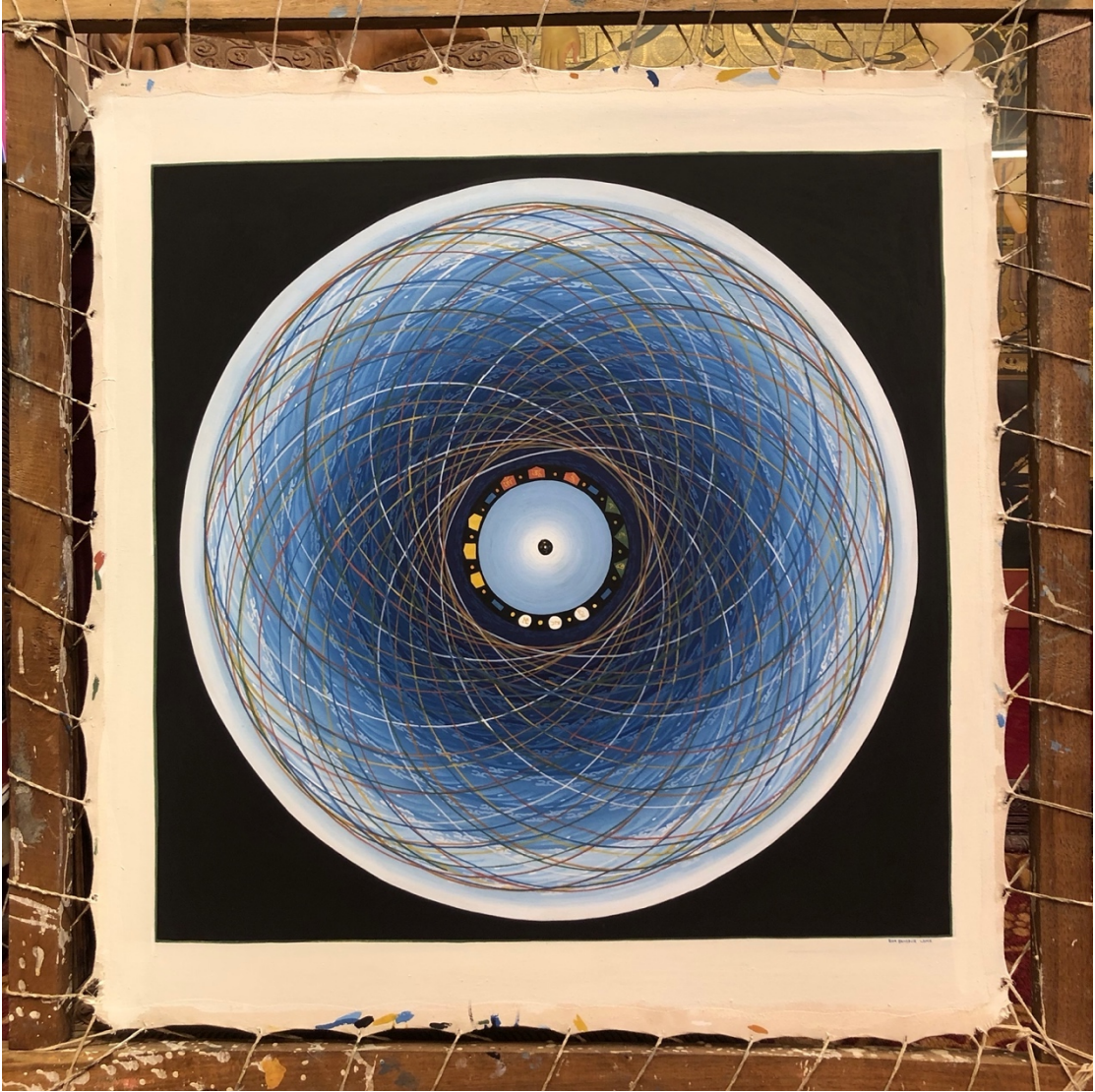


Fig 7 Cosmic Mandala



Fig 8 Mantra Mandala



Fig 9 Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara Mandala



Fig 10 Spiritual Mandala



Figure 11 Observing Tourists taking information about Thangka



Fig 12 Tourist buying Thangka



Figure 13 Observing Vendors showing different Mandalas to tourist



Fig 14 Vender selling Thangka



Figure 15 Observation of making of Thangka



Fig 16 Taking interviews with multiple people