

Rajasthani Painting and Folk Art

Painting

Rajasthan has had a very rich tradition of painting. Here, various schools of painting flourished. Diverse surfaces were used for paintings – papers, clothes, walls of temples and havelis.

The drawings of the primitive man found in rock shelters at Alnia, Dara (Kota), Bairath (Jaipur) and Dar Barahna (Bharatpur) represent the earliest tradition of painting in Rajasthan. Moreover, V.S Vakankar in 1953 discovered rock shelters in the Chambal Valley and Darra in Kota, Kalisindh valley in Jhalawar- and at Mount Abu and Idar in the Aravalli ranges. On the other hand, the earliest available example of illustrated text is Audh Nirukti Vritti and Das Vaikalika Sutra Choorni, composed in 1060 A.D., now conserved in the Jaisalmer archive.

We may accept circa 1500 A.D. to be the time of the origin of Rajasthani painting. Medpat (Mewar) is the birthplace of Rajasthani painting, which is influenced by the Ajanta School of Painting. In the beginning, Rajasthani painting exhibits influences of the Jain, Gujarat and Apabhramsa styles, but later on, it came to be influenced more and more by the Mughal style.

The first scientific classification of Rajasthani painting was presented by Anand Kumar Swami in his book Rajput Paintings in 1916. Along with Kumar Swami, O.C. Ganguli and Havell have named it Rajput Painting. W.H Brown in his work Indian Paintings has termed the painting of this region as Rajput Art. Raikrishna Das refuted this nomenclature and renamed it 'Rajasthani Painting'.

Many scholars have written on the various schools of Rajasthani painting. Some of the more important scholars who published their work on the various schools of Rajasthani painting are: Dr Motichand, Sridhar Andhare, Dr. R. K. Vashishta on Mewar School; Erik Dickinson and Dr. Faiyyaz Ali on Kishangarh School and

Pramod Chand, W. G. Archer and Maharaja Brijendra Singh of Kota on Kota-Bundi School.

Main Features of Rajasthani Painting

1. Deep connection with folk-life, emotionalism, diversity of subject matter, combination of colours, natural environment, conformity with space and time gives unique identity to Rajasthani painting.
2. In the paintings of the religious and cultural places, we find a rich depiction of folk life, vivid portrayal of both bhakti and shringar in vibrant and bright colours.
3. Rajasthani painting is publicly visible on the walls of palaces, forts, temples and havelis.
4. The amatory (sringarik) depiction of seasons and their impact on human life.
5. Vivid depiction of the natural as well as the feminine beauty gives Rajasthani painting a distinct identity.
6. Rajasthani painting flourished mainly under the patronage of rulers, princes, and feudal lords.

Schools of Rajasthani Painting

Various styles of Rajasthani Painting have been classified under four sub-categories on geographical and cultural basis :

1. **Mewar School** : Chavand style, Udaipur style, Nathdwara style, Deogarh sub style, Savar sub style, Shahpura substyle and art of thikanas like Banera, Bagore, Begun and Kelwa.
2. **Marwar School** : Jodhpur style, Bikaner style, Kishangarh style, Ajmer style, Nagore style, Sirohi style, Jaisalmer style and thikana styles of Ghanerao, Riyan, Bhinay and Juniyan.
3. **Hadoti School** : Bundi style, Kota style, Jhalawar sub style.
4. **Dhundhar School** : Amer style, Jaipur style, Shekhawati style, Alwar style, Uniara sub-style and thikana art of Jhilai, Isarda, Shahpura, Samod.

1. Mewar School

Early and indigenous style of Rajasthani painting can be seen in the Mewar school. Early on, it found expression in the form of illustrations to accompany the Pothi texts. The illustrated text of Shrivakpratikramansutrachoorani of 1260 A.D is the earliest example of this school of painting, which was prepared during the reign of Tej Singh.



Rajasthani Painting

We find depiction of this school of painting in the book *Supasnah Chariyam*, which was written in Delwara in 1423. Douglas Barrett and Basil Gay consider Mewar as the place of origin of the Chourpanchashika style.

The period of Maharana Kumbha is considered to be the golden era from the point of view of the evolution of various arts. Among the paintings of the period of Udai Singh (1535-1572), *Parijat avtaran* of *Bhagwat Purana* is the work of Mewar painter Nanaram. During the time of Maharana Pratap, painting evolved at his capital Chavand located in the hills of fifty six (*Chhappan ki pahadiyan*). The famous creation of this period is 'Dhola Maru' (1592), which is conserved in the National Archives, New Delhi.

Udaipur School

The Chavand style of painting flourished especially during the reign of

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Maharana Amar Singh I. Ragmala is an important text of the Mewar style prepared in the reign of Maharana Amar Singh (1605). These paintings are attributed to painter Nisardin. The period of Rana Jagat Singh I can be called the golden era of miniature paintings. During this period miniature paintings were made on the themes of Rasikpriya, Geetgovind, Bhagwat Puran and Ramayana. The important painters of the reign of Rana Jagat Singh are Sahabdin and Manohar. Maharana Jagat Singh established a picture gallery in the palace with the name 'chiteron ki ovari' which was called Tasviran ro Karkhano.

During the reign of Rana Jai Singh, miniature paintings became the main form of painting. The important paintings during the reign of Maharana Sangram Singh II are the paintings based on the themes of Geet Govind, Bihari Satsai, Sunder Sringar, Mulla Do Pyaja Ke Latife and Kalila-Damana.

The male figures of the Mewar School- are sturdy, mustachioed and round faced with big eyes, open lips, short neck and short in height- wearing Udaipuri turban and long headdress and women figures are painted simple looking, fish-eyed, long sharp nose, double chin, diminutive, wearing lugri-ghaghara (stole-skirt) and kanchuki and adorned with typical Rajasthani ornaments.

Nathdwara School

The second important phase of Mewar school, can be seen in the Nathdwara style of painting. The famous Pitha (shrine) of the Pushti Marg sect in Nathdwara is the main center of the devotees of Srinathji and adds a new chapter in the tradition of painting of Mewar. This style is a fusion of Udaipur and the Braj Schools. A major and an original contribution of Nathdwara style includes pichhvai paintings done on a large piece of cloth, which was hung behind the idol of Srinath ji for the purpose of decoration. In these paintings of 18th century we find depiction of the legend of Krishna, which includes depiction of all the characters related to the legend – Yashoda, Nand, childhood friends, Gopis and the saints of Vallabh Sect. Colours green and yellow have been profusely used in these paintings. Other features include the image of Shrinathji at the center, cows moving around, depiction of deities looking down from heaven, dense vegetation in the background and predominance of the banana trees.

The prominent painters of Nathdwara style are Baba Ramchandra, Narayan, Chaturbhuj, Ramlinga, Champalal, Ghasiram, Tulsiram etc. Kamala and Ilaichi are the foremost women painters of this school.

Deogarh School

Deogarh Thikana was founded by Dwarikadas Chundawat in 1680 A.D during the reign of Maharana Jai Singh. Thereafter, Deograh style developed here. The

feudals of Deogarh were called Solvain Umrao. This style exhibits a fusion of Marwar, Jaipur and Mewar styles. Deogarh style was first brought to light by Dr Sridhar Andhare. Bagta, Kanwala, Kanwla II, Harchand Nanga, Chokha and Baijnaath are prominent painters of this style. Natural surroundings, hunting scenes, harem (antahpur), royal procession are the main subjects of this style of painting. The wall paintings of this style adorn 'Ajara Ki Auvri', 'Moti Mahal', etc.

2. Marwar School

The splendour of the Marwar painting reflects in the courtly style of paintings of Jodhpur. The impact of this style can be seen in Jaisalmer, Nagaur and Ajmer too.

Tibetan historian Lama Taranathhas mentions a painter Shringdhar in Maru Desh in the 7th century who founded Yaksha Style in Western India. The earliest remains of this style are found in Audh Niriyukti Vritti of the Pratihara period. For the most part, paintings portray the stories of romance from the Marwari literature.

Jodhpur School

The credit of providing new environs to art and culture in Marwar goes to Maldeo. The examples of the representative style of this period can be found in the Chokhelav Mahal and the illustrated Uttaradhyayan Sutra. The Bhagwat written and illustrated in 1610 combines many features of both Mewar and Marwar styles.

In 1623, artist Veerji painted Ragmala chitravali for the hero of Pali, Vitthaldas Champawat. The miniatures painted on small sized slim cards are in pure Rajasthani style.

A turning point in the Jodhpur style came during the reign of Maharaja Jaswant Singh. The richness of the legend of Krishna and the impact of the Mughal style can be seen in the paintings of this period. Probably the paintings of the time of Maharaja Ajit Singh appear more beautiful and livelier. These paintings are the realistic depiction of feudal culture of the period. Artist Dal Chand earned acclaim during the time of Maharaja Abhay Singh. His paintings 'Maharaja Abhay Singh watching a dance performance' (1725AD) are conserved in the Mehrangarh Museum Jodhpur and Kunwar Sangram Singh Museum, Jaipur.

Maharaja Man Singh took Marwar's painting to its zenith. The Maharaja, who was the patron of the Nath sect- commissioned innumerable paintings of the Naths. The prominent painters of this period are Amar Das Bhati, Dana Bhati, Shankar Das, Madho Das, Ram Singh Bhati -and Shiv Das. The culmination of the Marwar style of painting reached in the works of Dana Bhati.

Romance forms the central theme of the Marwar (Jodhpur) style. Among these, the romance of Dhola-Maru, Mumal-Mahendra, Rupamati-Baj Bahadur are the most

popular. Men portrayed in the Jodhpur paintings are tall with strong body built and long curled whiskers, high turban, ornaments and attire displaying royal splendour and the females are mainly depicted in Rajasthani lehenga, odhani with red tassels. Almond shaped eyes and big lofty turban is an exclusive contribution of the Jodhpur style. In the Marwar school, red and yellow colours predominate, which is its regional characteristic. Depiction of nature is the true reflection of the environmental surroundings in Marwar.

Bikaner School

Bikaner school originated towards the end of the 16th century. The earliest paintings of this style are found in the illustrated volume of Bhagwat Purana, painted during the reign of Rao Rai Singh. Bikaner ruler Rai Singh was so impressed by the work of the Mughal artists that he brought a few of them to Bikaner. Prominent among them were Ustad Ali Raza and Ustad Hamid Ruknuddin. The works of these artists gave rise to Bikaner School.

In the evolution of the Bikaner style of painting, contribution and influence of two families was substantial – Matheran and Usta family. Members of the Matheran family were the masters in the traditional Jain style mixed with the Rajasthani style of painting. Usta family were the masters in Mughal style of painting. This family developed the Usta Style by painting on the camel pelt in gold. Even Akbar held them in high esteem. He gave the Usta artists honourable position in his court.

The pure form of Bikaner style can be seen in the paintings produced during the reign of Anup Singh. Ram Lal, Ali Raja and Hasan were the foremost painters of this period. The Usta artists did hundreds of paintings depicting Hindu themes- and illustrating Sanskrit, Hindi and Rajasthani texts. During this period this school of painting reached its zenith.

As a result of the fusion of Mughal elements in the indigenous Bikaner elements, a mature Bikaner style evolved. Slim and delicate female figures painted in blue, green, red, purple, violet and grey colours; male figures painted wearing high turbans of the Shahjahan and Aurangzeb style and high Marwari style turbans; local flora and fauna; Bikaner's way of life depicted with the stamp of the Rajput culture, all these elements go into making the Bikaner style of painting. Picturesque images of crane-couple (saras-mithun) under the raining clouds are the unique feature of this school of painting. In this style, the impact of the Deccan style is also clearly evident in the court scenes, fountains etc.

Kishangarh School

In 1609 AD Kishan Singh founded the State of Kishangarh. Like many other States, Kishangarh developed its own school of painting. The royal family was a

devout follower of the Vallabh sect of Bhakti tradition. Therefore, under their patronage, the lilas of Krishna-Radha became the main theme of paintings of the Kishangarh School.

The reign of Raja Sawant Singh (1748-1764) is said to be the golden period of Kishangarh art. Sawant Singh was popular by the sobriquet Nagaridas. His love for poetry and music, his beloved Bani-Thani's devotion to music and the paintings of Moradhvaj Nihal Chand took Kishangarh art to great heights. In fact, Nihal Chand gave expressions to the imagination of his master Sawant Singh (Nagaridas). The painting of Bani-Thani, which was conceived as representation of Radha, is a special attraction of the Kishangarh School. Eric Dickinson has acclaimed it as the 'Mona Lisa of India'.

Two features distinguish this school— individualistic facial type and religious intensity. Paintings of this school can easily be identified by sharp and elongated facial features of the men and women. They are drawn with pointed noses, chins deeply curved, half-closed eyes, and serpentine locks of hair. Their action is frequently shown to occur in large panoramic landscapes. Vast expanses of lakes, frolicking swans, ducks, storks, boats floating around, banana groves, woodlets, amorous dalliances of Radha-Krishna in the moonlight, vermillion clouds of morning and evening are some other features of the Kishangarh art. Predominant colours used are white, pink, grey and vermillion.

The prominent painters of the school are : Nanakram, Sitaram, Surdhwaj, Mulraj, Mordwaj Nihal Chand, Badan Singh, Ramnath, Sawairam and Laladi Das.

Ajmer School

Due to continuous political upheavals and religious influences from the outside, the culture of Ajmer city was courtlier and more feudal. Whereas in the rural Ajmer, the folk-culture was dominant, in the Thikanas, the Rajput culture predominated.

The thikanas of Bhinaya, Sawar, Masuda, Junia played an important role in the development of the Ajmer School of painting. Chand from Junia, Tayyab from Sawar, Ram Singh Bhati of Naand, Jalji and Narayan Bhati from Kharwa, Madhoji and Ram from Masuda and Allabaksa and Usna and Sahiba (female painters) from Ajmer are the prominent painters of the Ajmer School. The portrait of Raja Pabuji by painter Chand in 1698 AD is a fine example of the Ajmer art.

Nagaur style, a subgenre, was influenced by the Marwar style. The Marwar influence is quite evident on the Nagaur paintings on wooden doors and the frescos on the walls of the fort. Paintings depicting the 'old age' are special. Transparent attire is idiosyncratic to this style. Another subgenre developed in Jaisalmer mainly during the reigns of Maharawal Harraj, Akhai Singh and Mulraj. Mumal is the

representative painting of the Jaisalmer school. What is important about it is that it is a completely local style, uninfluenced by Mughal or Jodhpur styles.

Situated towards the south of Jodhpur, there is a Thikana called Ghanerao. Painters Narayan, Chhajju and Kriparam developed a style, which is called Ghanerao style, a subgenre of the Marwar School.

3. Hadoti School

Hadas, a branch of the Chauhan dynasty ruled over Bundi, Kota and Jhalawar region. Hence this region came to be called Hadoti, the land of the Hadas. Three separate styles evolved here– Bundi, Kota and Jhalawar, and they are subsumed under the Hadoti School.

Bundi School

The style that evolved in Bundi was influenced by the Mewar School. The artists of this school produced so much work in the form of text illustrations and miniatures that the Bundi paintings have been exhibited in the museums the world over. Its marked development took place during the reign of Rao Shatrushal (Chhatrasal). He constructed a Rangmahal, which is world-famous for its murals (Bhitti Chitra). Bhav Singh and his son Aniruddh Singh participated in the Mughal campaigns in the Deccan. Their Deccan connection facilitated the incorporation of the Deccan elements into the Bundi painting. A Chitrashala was constructed during the reign of Rao Ummed Singh. Ummed Singh hunting a wild boar (1750 AD) is a well-known painting of this school.

During the reign of Raja Ummed Singh the Bundi style took a new turn. Diversity of flora and fauna, multi-coloured clouds and lakes began to be depicted in all richness.

Female figures are tall and slender with narrow waist, wearing short choli, colourful ghaghra and translucent odhni, having facial features: pointed nose, receding chin, almond shaped eyes, reddish brown flesh tint and reddened lips. One noticeable feature of the Bundi style is the landscape in the background – hills and wild animals wandering around in the foothills, flowing rivers, thick vegetation with birds frolicking in it, dancing peacocks, somersaulting monkeys and colourful flowers. Predominant colours used are pink, red, green. Many sets of Ragamala, Baramasa, Bhagawat Purana and Rasikpriya minitures were produced. Other themes of the Bundi painting of this style were: Krishnalila, court scenes, hunting scenes, elephant fight, festivals etc.

The prominent painters of the Bundi style were Surjan, Ahmad Ali, Ramlal, Shri Kisan and Sadhuram.

Kota School

The credit of establishing the Kota style as an independent genre has been given to Maharao Ram Singh (1661-1705 AD). After him Maharao Bhim Singh gave precedence to depiction of Krishna Bhakti. Kota painting achieved its zenith during the reign of Ummed Singh. Artists of the House of Painting Studio (musavvirkhana) of Kota, painted on walls and large canvases the scenes of group-hunting. Varied hunting scenes painted in dazzling colours are the hallmark of the Kota paintings. In Kota paintings, queen and ladies have also been depicted hunting. The celebrated painters of Kota Style are Raghunath, Givindram, Dalu, Lachchhram and Nur Muhammad.

Female figures of the Kota paintings stand out for their beauty. Corpulent lips, long and pointed nose, slender waist, lustrous cheeks and long locks of hair make the females full of life. Males are broad-shouldered having raised brows, muscular bodies, moustached and bearded faces, clad in bejewelled attire with sword or a dagger hanging from the waist lend them dignity and grace. Predominant colours used by the painters are light green, yellow and blue.

Jhalawar Style

Paintings on the walls of the palaces of Jhalawar depicting Shrinath-ji, Radhakrishna lila, Ramlila, royal splendour etc. have been found, but determination of a distinct style on the basis of these paintings remains to be done.

4. Dhondhad School

Amer Style

Jaipur style emerged out of the style developed at Amber, the earlier capital of the State. The most prominent text illustrated in the early Amber style is Yashodhara Charitra (1591 AD). Around this time, an illustrated copy of the Razmnama (1588 AD) was also prepared for Akbar in the Suratkhana of Amber. It contains 169 large sized paintings and among the painters, the names of the artists of Jaipur have also been mentioned. Wall paintings have been found on the walls of the so-called Mughal Garden of Bairath and Mauzamabad. The Mughal impact is clearly visible in them.

The second phase of the Amber style began during the reign of Mirza Raja Jai Singh (1621-1667 AD). He got the illustrated volumes of Rasikpriya and Krishna Rukmani ri Veli prepared for his queen Chandrawati in 1639. In these illustrations Krishna and Gopis have been depicted in local folk genre. Mirza Raja also constructed Ganesh Pole adorned with murals.

Jaipur School

The reign of Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh was notable in many ways. He established thirty-six workshops (Chhattis Karkhanas), which included a painting workshop or studio Suratkhana. This was the place where painters worked. It was during this period that the illustrated volumes of Rasikpriya, Kavipriya, Geet Govind, Baramasa, Navras and Ragmala were prepared. Sawai Ishwari Singh shifted the Suratkhana from Amber to Jaipur. During his reign Sahibram and Lalchand produced works of high quality. Sahibram did life-sized portraits and started a new tradition. Lalchand painted many an animal fight scenes.

During the reign of Sawai Madho Singh I, painters began using pearls, lacquer and other suitable material with a binder instead of colour. This is known as Manikuttim technique. During this period, on the walls of the Temple at Galtaji, Sisodia Rani's Palace, Chandramahal, Pundrik's Haveli a large number of murals were painted. Lal Chitera, who served Sawai Ishwari Singh and Sawai Madho Singh, was the foremost painter of their reigns.

During the reign of Sawai Pratap Singh, more than fifty painters were working in the Suratkhana. Prominent among them were Ramsewak, Gopal, Hukama, Chimana, Salgram, Lakshman etc. The main themes of the painting of the period were Radha-Krishna Lilas, Naika-bhed, Ragmala, Baramasa.

For the promotion of arts Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh established Maharaja School of Arts and Crafts in 1857, which is now known as the Maharaja School of Arts.

The artists of Jaipur in their murals, illustrations, life-sized portraits and miniatures while absorbing the Mughal influences, skilfully maintained the exquisiteness and grace of the Rajput culture and folk-artistry in the use of colours.

The introduction of the tradition of life-sized portraits and murals is the distinctive contribution of the artists of Jaipur. The technique used for the murals is called ala gilla, araish and morakasi in the local dialect. In this method, first lime was ground to a fine smooth powder, then it was plastered on the wall and on this wet plaster painting was done with colour dissolved in water. The wet lime plaster absorbs the colour and the painting becomes the integral part of the wall. This method of painting was first used in Rajasthan by artists of the Jaipur school in Amber. The import of this technique into Rajasthan was the result of Kachchhawa-Mughal relations.

The Jaipur style influenced the painting that developed in the thikanas of Isarada, Siwar, Jhilaya, Uniara, Chomu, Samod and Malpura.

Alwar Style

The Alwar style came into existence in 1775 AD in the reign of Rao Raja Pratap Singh. During his reign two painters – Shivkumar and Daluram – came to Alwar from Jaipur. The murals in the Shish Mahal of Rajgarh are of their times. These are regarded as the best paintings of the early phase of the Alwar style.

The wall paintings in the Shish Mahal of Alwar, done during the Bakhtawar Singh's reign, marked the beginning of the Alwar Style. Baldev, Daluram, Salaga, and Saliagram were the prominent painters of his times. Among the hundreds of paintings made during the reign of Bakhtawar Singh, the paintings depicting Bakhtawar Singh involved in discussion with the Nathas, Jogis and Fakirs in the forests are some remarkable pieces of work.

The contribution of Vinay Singh in the promotion and development of the Alwar painting is comparable to that of Akbar's in the Mughal painting. Vinay Singh learnt painting from Baldev. Production of a calligraphed and illustrated volume of Gulistan is a unique event of his reign. Rupees one lac are said to have been spent on the production of this volume of Gulistan. All the illustrations in this volume were made by Baldev and Ghulam Ali.

During the reign of Balwant Singh, Saligram, Jamanadas, Chhotelal, Baksaram, Nandram etc. painted illustrations for the texts, miniatures and rolls of Patchtras.

During the reign of Shivdan Singh, hundreds of outstanding paintings were made depicting erotic love. The painting Naferi Vadan is an excellent example of this genre of painting. In the reign of Maharaja Mangal Singh, Mulchand and Udairam did some fine, exquisite painting on ivory plaques. In the reign of Jai Singh, Ramgopal, Ramprasad, Jagmohan, Ramsahaya Nepalia kept the torch of the Alwar School burning till the last.

In the Alwar paintings, we witness a balanced fusion of the Iranian, Mughal and Rajasthani, especially the Jaipur Style. The female figures in these paintings are short with raised braids; bodies and the parts thereof were drawn with utmost care. Figures of the prostitutes is a unique feature of this School. Beautiful floral designs painted on panels of card-board is another speciality of the Alwar Style.

Uniara School

The Naruka dynasty of the Uniara Thikana paved the way for the development of Uniara School. Painters Dheema, Mirbaksa, Kashi, Ramlakhan, Bhim and others enjoyed the patronage of Raoraja Sardar Singh. Painted by Mirbaksh, a painting depicting Ram, Sita, Lakshman And Hanuman is an excellent piece of work. Uniara School was influenced by Bundi and Jaipur Schools.

Murals of Shekhawati

The Shekhawati mural art was deeply influenced by the Jaipur School. From the middle of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, the businessmen of the region built magnificent Havelis. The artists of the region adorned the walls of these Havelis with beautiful murals. Havelis of Nawalgarh, Ramgarh, Fatehpur, Laxmangarh, Mukundgarh, Mandawa, Bisau boast of exquisite mural work. Because of these murals, the Shekhawati region is famously called Open Art Gallery.

Depiction of big elephants and horses, Chobdars and Chanwar bearers, on both sides of the windows are characteristic to these Havelis. Under the projecting or overhanging eaves (chhajjas) the Shekhawati painters painted wrestling scenes, scenes from domestic life – curd-churning, cow-milking, myths and legends, gods and demons, erotic scenes, Ragmala, saints and ascetics and folk tales. Generally, both the outer and inner sides of walls were painted. Colours predominantly used were catechu, blue and pink. Now this invaluable treasure is facing erosion and is badly in need of restoration and conservation. In this context the restoration work taken up by Nadine Le Prince, a French conservationist, is commendable.

FOLK ART

Folk art may be said to be the spontaneous expression of the local genius of a region. It is the art of people produced by the people for the people. It is produced by the artists without formal training. Context of the folk art, generally, is the local life.

Principal Folk Arts of Rajasthan

Sanjhi

Sanjhi is made during the Shraddha Paksha (fortnight) before Dussehra. Unmarried girls draw Sanjhis (Goddess) on the walls with cow-dung and embellish it with pieces of glass, beads, cowry, stone pieces, feathers, cloth, lacquer, flower petals etc. and worship her for the whole fortnight. The goddess is variously called Sanjhi, Sanjhuli, Sinjhi, Sanjh ke Hanji, Hanjya etc.

Sanjhi is worshipped as an incarnation of the goddess Parvati with a wish for a virtuous husband of a good family. From the first to the tenth day one or two symbolic images are drawn, during the last five days much larger and bigger Sanjhi is made, which is called Sanjhya kot. On the first day the Sun, moon and stars, on the second day five flowers, on third day a feather, on fourth day an elephant rider, fifth day a chaupad, sixth day a swastika, seventh day ghewar, eighth day drums (dholak or nagada), ninth day (bandanwar), tenth day date palm, during the last five days at the centre of the sanjhyakot, goddess Sanjhi and a man, animals and birds are drawn.

Mandana

There is a tradition of drawing Mandanas on auspicious as well as celebratory occasions. Mandanas are drawn to decorate walls, doorsills, doorways, platforms (chabutaras), courtyard, place of worship (puja sthal) and so on. Their purpose is not just to decorate the place, but also to ward off evil. Different kinds of mandanas are made on different occasions. On the occasion of marriage, foot-prints of Ganesh ji and Laxmi ji, Swastika, peacock-peahen, flower-pots, animals, floral motifs; on the occasion of childbirth galeecha, flowers, Swastik; on Rakashabandhan, Shrawan Kumar; on Gangaur galeecha, flowers, bageecha etc.; on somebody's return from pilgrimage Pushkar Padi and Pathwari are drawn. Various geometric forms of Mandana are in vogue – triangle, square, hexagon, octagon and circle. They are made in white and red ochre colours.

Phad

The painters of the Joshi (a sub-caste of the Chhipa caste) families of Shahpura in Bhilwara district have been the traditional artists of this folk art-form for the last two centuries. Shree Lal Joshi is a well-known present day Phad artist. These phads

are made for the Bhopas, who carry the phad rolled on a wooden staff from village to village narrating the great deeds of the deities depicted on the phad, jiving to the tunes emanating from Ravan Hattha or Jantar. Phad narration is a unique combination of folk-theatre, folk vocal and instrumental music, folk lore, folk painting



Pabuji's Phad

and folk religion. On the phads are depicted the various episodes and miracles associated with the lives of the folk deities. The central character or the deity is depicted far larger in size in comparison to the other figures. The symbolic use of colours is very effective in the depiction of qualities. For example, goddesses are painted in blue, gods in red, devils in black, sages in white or yellow. Every colour represents a quality, a character, e.g. – vermilion or red symbolises valour or bravery.

Phad is painted on a thick cloth. To prepare the cloth for painting, starch made from wheat or rice mixed with gum is applied on it. When the surface is ready, it is burnished by rubbing (ghotana). The painting is done with six or seven colours – bright orange, red, yellow, black, blue, green and brown – made from stones and

minerals. Human bodies are painted in mellow red, clothes in green and the architectural objects in red brown and only the outlines are drawn black.

Paane

On the occasion of festivals pictures/paintings on paper (paane) are installed to perform the ritual. Paanas began to replace the wall-paintings as they were more cost effective. In Rajasthan the Paanas of Ganesh ji, Lakshmi ji, Ramdev ji, Goga ji, Shrawan Kumar, Tejaji, Ram, Krishna, Shiv-Parvati, Dharmraj, Devnarayana ji, Shrinath ji, Nrisingh etc. are common. The paana of Shrinath ji is the most artistic of them all, it is painted in twenty-four ornamentations (chaubis ornamentations).

Kavad

Kavad making is the ancestral occupation of the Khairadiyas of village Bassi of Chittorgarh district. Mangilal Mistri, in order to preserve his hereditary occupation, has introduced many new innovations in the art of Kavad making. His Kavad are gracing many a museum world over. Kavad is a medium of expression of the faith and the beliefs of the people. Therefore, it receives patronage from the society.

Kavad, made of wood, serve the purpose of both a storybook and a shrine simultaneously. The storytellers carry it to their patrons in the rural area. Kavad is a kind of box having many door panels. Every panel has paintings on it. These paintings are the illustrations of the themes of Ramayana, Mahabharata, Krishna lila, etc. or the stories of the local divinities – Pabuji, Ramdevji, Harishchandra, Gopinath Bharthari etc. As the storyteller proceeds with the story, relevant panels keep coming up to the front. Kavad is painted red, then on this red base mythological stories are painted in black.

Do you Know?

Godlia

A practice to cauterise or brand the livestock with large sized artistic forms was prevalent in Rajasthan. Branding was also done to give an identification mark to the domestic animals which was helpful in identifying the stolen livestock as well. The process of branding was called aterana and the branded mark was called godliya. In some places the marks used to be the signs or symbols of some caste, at other, of the region, at some other, of belonging to some royal house. These signs included various ingredients (upadan) of nature, symbols of religious faith, human forms, various agricultural implements and articles of daily use. Hot iron rods, clay plate (dhakani), iron and brass letters (lohe aur pital ke akshar) or twig of some specific tree were used for branding. **Sanjhi Kala : Dr. Mahendra Bhanawat**

Mehndi

Tradition of Mehndi is an age-old tradition. Ladies and young girls draw intricate mehndi patterns with a thin stem on the hands. Mehndi of Sojat and Malwa is very popular in Marwar. It is applied on auspicious occasions– marriage, betrothal, child birth, while performing various rituals– by the women. Various kinds of designs, some very intricate, are drawn – on the occasion of Diwali, paan, conch, foot prints of the goddess Lakshami, sixteen earthen lamps (dipak), sudarshan chakra; on Makar Sankranti, ghewar and hand fan (bijani); on Karwa Chauth, small basket (chhabadi), svastika; on Rakshabandhan, lahriya, cheek; on marriage, toran, kairi, water chestnut (singhada), svastika, urn (kalash), flowers etc.

Tattoo (Godana)

Like mehndi, Godana (tattooing) is also prevalent as a means of adornment on the human body. A piercing needle-like tool is used to insert black pigment into the skin, which creates a permanent mark. This is called Godana. It is more prevalent among the tribal communities. Due to the lack of resources to buy ornaments, Godana is the preferred way of adorning the body. Women get their forehead tattooed with the images of moon, tilak or aad (an ornament). To make their eyes look sharp like an arrow, they have sarya tattooed under the lower eyelid. Religious symbols and idols – Ram, Lakshman, Sita, Hanuman, Swastika, urn (kalash), om and trident etc. are the preferred images for tattooing. Animals and birds are also tattooed and so are flowers, leaves, plants and trees.

Kothian

In the rural areas, Kothis are made for storage. These Kothis, made of clay, are embellished with jalis, ventilators (jharokhe), ornamental crenelle (kangoore), paintings of gods and goddesses, animals, foliage and mandanas.

Veel

In the rural areas of Western Rajasthan, Veel is a commonplace in the house. The Veel is made from wicker and clay mixed with horse-dung. It has many shelves and compartments of various sizes. To make it look beautiful, small alcoves (gavaksh), mesh (jaalis), crenelle (kangoore) are created, embellished with small pieces of mirrors. Apart from being showpiece, it is also used as a showcase.

Kathputali (Puppets)

Kathputali is an age old and one of the most popular theatres of Rajasthan. Puppets are carved out of wood and manipulated with strings. Kathputali or stringed puppetry is Rajasthan's contribution to the world of art and entertainment. Traditionally, the ballads based on the tales from Singhasan Battisi, romances like

Prithviraj-Sanyogita and heroics of Amar Singh Rathore etc. are shown by the Kathputaliwalas. In the Third International Puppet Festival, Bucharest, Romania, organised in 1965, the Kathputali artistes of the Bhartiya Lok Kala Mandal had created a stir by claiming the first prize.

Exercise

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Pichhvayi painting is associated with which school of painting ?
(a) Kishangarh (b) Bundi
(c) Kota (d) Nathdwara
2. To which school does Bani-Thani belong ?
(a) Kishangarh (b) Kota
(c) Marwar (d) Chavand
3. To which School of painting do Jamanadas, Chhotelal, Baksaram and Nandlal belong?
(a) Jhalawar (b) Alwar
(c) Bikaner (d) Marwar
4. What was the name of the Karkhana, which was the work place of the painters ?
(a) Toshakhana (b) Sutarakhana
(c) Suratkhana (d) Jawaharkhana
5. The school of painting, of which birds are an important feature :
(a) Bundi (b) Chavand
(c) Jaipur (d) Deogarh
6. Which goddess Sanjhi is an incarnation of ?
(a) Sita (b) Durga
(c) Usha (d) Parvati
7. Who were the Phad reciters?
(a) Bhope (b) Kalbelias
(c) Banjaras (d) Sargadas

8. Which art form Mangilal Mistri is associated with ?
(a) Ravan-Hattha (b) Kavad
(c) Pungi (d) Shahnai
9. Which district does, Shrilal Joshi, a Phad artist, belong to?
(a) Bhilwara (b) Sikar
(c) Jaipur (d) Churu
10. Sojat is famous for :
(a) Jaggery (b) Blankets
(c) Kavad (d) Mehndi

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. Describe Chitrashala.
2. Write any two characteristics of the Bundi School of painting.
3. Which is the oldest illustrated text available in Rajasthan?
4. Who was Nisardin?
5. What are the Pichhvais?
6. Match the following –
- | Folk Art | Material |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Paane | Wood |
| 2. Phad | Colour |
| 3. Mandana | Cloth |
| 4. Kavad | Paper |
7. When is Sanjhi worshipped?
8. What do you understand by Godalia?
9. What is sarya?
10. Write the names of the four subjects of Mandana.
11. For how many days Sanjhi is worshipped?
12. What are the Paanas?
13. In the rural areas for what purpose the 'Kothis' are made?

Short Answer Type Questions

1. Write two main characteristics of the Kishangarh School of painting.
2. Write in brief the characteristics of the Nathdwara school of painting.
3. Classify various schools of Rajasthani painting.
4. What are the main characteristics of Rajasthani painting?
5. Write a brief note on Kathputali art.

Essay Type Questions

1. Describe the main characteristics of various schools of Rajasthani painting.
2. Write a detailed note on the Marwar School of painting.
3. Describe the Phad art.
4. Discuss various aspects of Kavad.