

Indian Paintings

PAINTINGS

- Painting is one of the most delicate forms of art giving expression to human thoughts and feelings through the medium of line and colour.
- The rocks have been painted by the cave dwellers to satisfy their aesthetic sensitivity and creative urge.
- Paintings in India was started in the ancient period, since the pre-historic era.
- The painting history has originated from rock paintings and carried through pottery, in textiles, miniature paintings and finally with modern paintings.
- The diversity in the style of paintings in different parts of the country indicates the diversity in culture as culture and livelihood being the themes of paintings and later dominated by Religion.
- The major inspiration for paintings in India was the birth of three religions – Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.
- The major influence has been the deep-rooted history, culture and foreign races, etc..
- Paintings in India projects the Spiritual contents, high ideals and common belief of the people

IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR PAINTINGS

- Mudrarakshasa - Sanskrit play was written by Vishakhadutta – mentions many types of Paintings during the 4th century period.
- Brahmanical Literature – the reference to the art of paintings with the representation of myths
- Buddhist Literature – mentions different styles of paintings with various base and themes.
- Vinaya Pitaka – 3rd – 4th century BC – houses containing paintings

Pre-historic Paintings

- The pre-historic paintings are generally executed in rocks in the caves.
- The major themes are Animals like elephant, rhinoceros, cattle, snake, deer, etc.. and other natural elements like plants.
- The pre-historic paintings are categorised into three phases – Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Chalcolithic.
- Characteristics
- Used minerals for pigments Eg: ochre or geru. They used minerals in different colours.

- Major Themes: group hunting, grazing, riding scenes, etc..
- The colours and size of the paintings have been evolved through the ages.
- Examples: Bhimbetka caves, MP; Jogimara caves, Chattisgarh; Narsingarh, MP

WALL PAINTINGS

- The wall paintings in India has existed from the 2nd century BC to Medieval times.
- They are also referred to as **Mural paintings** as they are painted on the walls of solid structures.
- Natural caves and rock-cut chambers are the predominant places for wall paintings
- Major Themes: Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism
- Examples: Ajanta caves, Ellora Caves, Bagh cave paintings, Ravan Chhaya rock paintings, etc.

Wall Painting Places	Region	Characteristics
Ajanta	Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From 4th to 8th century AD under different rulers;• Only Buddhism;• Medium of Paintings: Mineral and vegetable dyes;• Tempera style (use of pigments)• Also Fresco Paintings
Ellora Caves	Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From 7th century AD• Paintings related to all three religions• Later paintings in Gujarati style
Bagh Caves	Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tightly modelled and stronger outline• More earthly and human• Mostly secular in nature

Ravan Chhaya	Odisha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7th century AD Fresco Paintings
Sittanavasal Cave paintings	Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Around the 9th and 10th century Not only on walls but also on pillars and ceilings Mostly paintings in Jain temples
Lepakshi	Karnataka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly in temple walls Vijayanagara period Religious and secular themes

MINIATURE PAINTINGS

- Miniature paintings are characterised with small and detailed paintings
- Human figures are mostly seen in side profile, bulging eyes, slim waist, pointed nose, etc..
- Different colours were used for different characters and the variety of base was used.
- Often painted on paper, clothes palm leaves, etc.,
- Mostly developed after the 11th century AD and mostly concentrated on eastern and western regions.
- The arrival of Muslims changed the characteristics of miniature paintings to a great extent. The major changes have been earthy tones, the absence of primary colours, detached appearances, etc.,
- The characteristics of Miniature painting was varied in different regions of the country.

REGION/PERIOD	SCHOOL	PERIOD	CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLE
EASTERN INDIA	PALA	11 th – 12 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sinuuous lines and subdued tones of colour Lonely single figures and rarely finds group figures 	Manuscript of Astasahasrika prajnaparamita (perfection of wisdom)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majorly influenced by Buddhism 	
WESTERN INDIA	WESTERN INDIAN SCHOOL	12 th – 16 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enlarged Human organs like eyes, breasts, hips. Figures are flat with eye protruding into space Majorly influenced by Jainism 	Manuscripts of Kalpasutra in Devasano Pado Bhandar at Ahmedabad
DELHI SULTANATE PERIOD		13 th – 16 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesis of Indigenous and Persian elements Illustrated Manuscripts Traditional elements 	Nimatnama during Nasir Shah period
MUGHALS		16 th – 19 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two Persian Masters – Mir Sayyed Ali and Abdul Samad Khan (Humayun Period) Synthesis of Indigenous and Safavid school of Persian Painting Naturalism with fine and delicate drawing High aesthetic merit Aristocratic and secular in nature 	<p>Tutinama;</p> <p>Hamaznama;</p> <p>Gulistan of Sadi</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under Jahangir reached its peak • Lost significance during Aurangzeb period 	
DECCAN	AHMEDNAGAR	16 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich and brilliant colours • Persian influence 	Portrait of Burhan Nizam Shah II of Ahmednagar
	BIJAPUR	16 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich colours • Presence of trees and animals • Use of gold colour (Persian influence) 	Najum-al-ulum (Stars of Science)
	GOLCONDA	16 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persian Influence • Rich and bright colours 	Lady with the Myna Bird, Dublin
	HYDERABAD	18 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment of ethnic types. Costumes, jewellery, flora, fauna, landscape and colours 	A Lady with the maid, Vilaval Ragini
	TANJORE	18 th – 19 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold painting, shading techniques • Use of pure and brilliant colours 	Coronation of Rama in wooden painting
RAJASTHANI SCHOOL (17 th – 19 th AD) (Western India)	MALWA	17 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of contrasting colours • Refinement of drawings 	Ragamala-1680 AD
	MEWAR	17 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold colours 	Aranya Kanda, Saraswati Bhandar

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colours are bright and contrasting • Text of painting is written in black on the top against yellow ground 	
	BUNDI	17 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red colour brilliant border • Overlapping and semi-naturalistic trees. • Rising sun in golden colour 	Bhairavi Ragini Painting, Allahabad Museum
	KOTA	18 th – 19 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the space is occupied by hilly Jungle • Themes of Tiger and Bear hunt are very popular 	Ragin Vasanta
	AMBER-JAIPUR	18 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly large number of portraits of Jaipur Rulers 	Jaipur Painting
	MARWAR	17 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executed in primitive and vigorous folk style • Completely uninfluenced by Mughal style 	Ragamala (collection of Kumar Sangram Singh)
	BIKANER	17 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have greater Mughal Influence • Themes of Religion and Court Scenes 	Krishna & Radha Painting
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delicate drawing 	• Bani Thani (Monalisa of

	KISHANGARH	18 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fine modelling of human figures • Use of nature to the great extent 	India) by Nihâl Chand • Radha and Krishna, Kishangarh
PAHARI SCHOOL (Himalayan States)	BASHOLI	17 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigorous and bold lines • Strong glowing colours 	Devi rides on a Chariot
	GULER	18 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft and cool colours • Inspired by the naturalistic style of Mughals 	Portrait of Raja Bishen Singh of Guler
	KANGRA	18 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are identical in style to the portraits of Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra. • In these paintings, the faces of women in profile have the nose almost in line with the forehead, the eyes are long and narrow and the chin is sharp 	
	KULU - MANDI	18 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold drawings • Use of dark and dull colours • Has distinct folk character 	The lady and the Crane
ORISSA		18 th – 19 th AD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outline drawing was rendered with a 	Gita Govind, Palm Leaf Painting

			stylus on the palm-leaf • Charcoal or ink was rubbed on the drawing	
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FOLK PAINTINGS

- The folk paintings have been existing since ancient times and the styles and patterns have the huge diversity in various regions of the country.
- Most of the folk paintings are pictorial representations and the subject varies from religion to natural things and also the day to day activities.
- Folk paintings generally use vibrant and natural colours with various natural ground substances.

FOLK PAINTING	REGION	CHARACTERISTICS
MADHUBANI	BIHAR (TERAI)	• Bright colours with contrasts or patterns • Traditionally done by women • Use of tribal motifs and bright earthly colours
WARLI	Maharashtra	• Vivid expression of daily and social life • Generally in walls of village houses
PATTACHITRA	Odisha	• Painting done on canvas • Manifested by rich colourful motifs and designs • Mostly mythological depiction
KALAMEZHUTHU	Kerala	• Ritualistic art practised in temples and sacred groves of Kerala • Representation of deities like Kali and Lord Ayyappa is made on the floor.
KALIGHAT	Eastern India (Calcutta)	• Use of watercolour on mill paper • General themes are religion, social sentiments, etc..

KALAMKARI	Andhra Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharp pointed bamboo as pen and the base is cotton fabric• Vegetable dyes as colours
MANJUSHA	Bihar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Also known as Snake painting (use of snake motifs)• Paintings executed on jute and paper
THANGKA	SIKKIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cotton canvas as the base• Influence of Buddhism• Use of different colours for different scenes