



GS FOUNDATION BATCH FOR CSE 2024

Ancient history - 05 (Indian Paintings)

INDIAN PAINTINGS

- Painting is one of the most delicate forms of art giving expression to human thoughts and feelings through the media of line and colour.
- Many thousands of years before the dawn of history, when man was only a cave dweller, he painted his rock shelters to satisfy his aesthetic sensitivity and creative urges.
- Among Indians, the love of colour and design is so deeply ingrained that they created paintings and drawings even during

the earliest periods of history for which we have no direct evidence.

Prehistoric Paintings

- Prehistory can be defined as **events that occurred before the existence of written records** in a given culture or society.
- **Painting and drawing were the oldest art forms** practised by human beings to express themselves, using the cave walls as their canvas.
- Prehistoric paintings have been found in many parts of the world.
- We do not really know if Lower Palaeolithic people ever produced any art objects.

- But by the Upper Palaeolithic times we see a proliferation of artistic activities.
- The subjects of their drawings were human and animal figures, human activities, geometric designs, and symbols.
- **In India, the earliest paintings have been reported from the Upper Palaeolithic times.**
 - Remnants of rock paintings have been found on the walls of the caves situated in several districts of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Uttarakhand, and Bihar.

Upper Palaeolithic Period Paintings

- The paintings of the Upper Palaeolithic phase are linear representations.
- The paintings are, generally, in **green and dark red**.
- **Huge animal figures**, such as bison, elephants, tigers, rhinos and boars besides **stick-like human figures** are mainly depicted in paintings.
- Mostly they are filled with geometric patterns.

Mesolithic Period

- The **largest number** of paintings belong to this period.
- During this period the themes are **diverse** but the paintings are **smaller** in size.
- **Hunting scenes** predominate in the paintings.
 - The hunting scenes depict **people hunting in groups**, armed with barbed spears, pointed sticks, arrows and bows.
- The Mesolithic artists loved to paint animals.
 - In some pictures, animals are chasing men.

- In others, they are being chased and hunted by men.
- Though the **animals** were painted in a **naturalistic** style, **humans** were depicted only in a **stylistic** manner.
- Women are painted both in the nude and clothed.
- The young and the old equally find a place in these paintings.
- Children are painted running, jumping, and playing.
- Community dances provide a common theme.

Chalcolithic Period

- The paintings of this period reveal the **association, contact, and mutual exchange** of the cave dwellers of this area with settled **agricultural communities**.
- Many a time Chalcolithic ceramics and rock paintings bear common motifs, e.g., cross-hatched squares, lattices.
- Pottery and metal tools are also shown.

Contribution of Prehistoric Man to Painting

- The paintings, though from the remote past, do not lack pictorial quality.
- Despite the various limitations such as acute working conditions, inadequate tools, materials, etc., there is a **charm of simple rendering** of scenes of the environment in which the artists lived.
- The **men** shown in them appear **adventurous and rejoicing** in their lives.

- The **animals** are shown more **youthful and majestic** than perhaps they actually were.
- Both, **proportion, and tonal effect** are realistically maintained in them.
- The primitive artists seem to possess an intrinsic passion for **storytelling**.
 - These pictures depict, in a dramatic way, both **men and animals engaged in the struggle for survival**.
- These prehistoric paintings help us to understand about early human beings, their lifestyle, their food habits, their daily

activities and, above all, they **help us understand their mind-the way they thought**.

- The prehistoric period remains a great witness to the evolution of human civilisation, through the numerous rock weapons, tools, ceramics, and bones.
- More than anything else, the rock paintings are the greatest wealth the primitive human beings of this period left behind.

Indian Painting Principles: Shadangas

- India of the 1st century BCE saw the evolution of the 'Shadanga' or the **Six Limbs** of painting, which are considered as the **prime principles** of the art even today.
- So strong were these principles, that they have found a place even in **Vatsyayana's Kamasutra**.
- These limbs were actually six elements which emphasised what all artists needed to infuse in their artworks to achieve greater effectiveness and appeal.

- **The Six Limbs are:**

- **Rupabhedam**: The knowledge of appearances.
- **Pramanam**: Correct perception, measure and structure.
- **Bhava**: Action of feelings on forms.
- **Lavanya Yojanam**: Infusion of grace and artistic representation.
- **Sadrisyam**: Similitude.
- **Varnikabhanga**: Artistic manner of using the brush and colours.

Mural Painting

What is a Mural?

- A mural is **any piece of artwork that is painted or applied directly on a wall**.
- More broadly, mural art also appears on **ceilings or any other large permanent surface**.
- Mural paintings usually have the distinguishing characteristic of having the **architectural elements** of the space they are painted on being **harmoniously incorporated into the picture**.

- There are **many techniques** used for mural painting, of which the **fresco** is just one.
 - A mural, therefore, is a general term for a wall painting, whilst a fresco is a specific term.

Types of Fresco

There are **three main types** of fresco technique:

1. **Buon fresco**, the most common fresco method, involves the use of pigments mixed with water (without a binding agent) on a thin layer of wet, fresh, lime mortar or plaster.
2. **Secco-fresco** is done on dry plaster and therefore requires a binding medium, (egg tempera, glue, or oil) to attach the pigment to the wall.
3. **Mezzo-fresco** involves painting onto almost but not quite dry so that the pigment only penetrates slightly into the plaster.

Indian Murals

- Indian Murals were made on the walls of caves and palaces.
- The earliest examples of murals are the beautiful frescoes on the walls of the **Ajanta, Ellora, Bagh and Sittanavasal** caves.
- In old manuscripts, there is much evidence of murals.
 - According to **Vinaya Pitaka**, the noted courtesan of Vaishali - **Amrapali** employed painters to paint the images of kings, traders, and merchants of that time on the walls of her palace.

Technique

- The technique and process of making Indian wall paintings has been discussed in the '**Vishnudharamotaram**', a Sanskrit text of the 5th/6th century CE.
- The **process of these paintings appears to have been the same** in all the early examples that have survived with an only **exception** in the **Rajarajeshwara temple at Tanjore** which is supposed to be done in a **true fresco method**.
- The wall was **coated with an exceedingly thin layer of lime plaster** over which paintings were drawn in water colours.

- In the true fresco method, the paintings are done when the surface wall is still wet, so that the pigments go deep inside the wall surface.
- The other method of painting which was followed in most of the cases of Indian painting is known as **tempora**.
- It is a method of painting on the lime plastered surface which has been allowed to dry first and then drenched with fresh lime water.
- On the surface, thus obtained, the artist proceeded to sketch.

- The principal colours in use were red ochre, vivid red (vermilion), yellow ochre, indigo blue, lapis lazuli, lamp black (Kajjal), chalk white, terraverde and green.
- Most of the colours were locally available.
- Brushes were made up from the hair of animals, such as goat, camel, mongoose, etc.

Mural Paintings at Different Locations

Ajanta Caves

The world-famous paintings at Ajanta fall into **two phases**.

- The **earliest** is noticed in the form of fragmentary specimens in cave nos. 9 & 10, which are datable to the **second century BCE**.
 - The headgear and other ornaments of the images in these paintings resemble the sculpture of Sanchi and Bharhut.
- The **second phase** of paintings belongs to the **5th-8th centuries CE**.

- The specimen of these exemplary paintings of Vakataka period could be noticed in cave nos. 1, 2, 16 and 17.

The main theme of the paintings is the depiction of various **Jataka stories**, different **incidents associated with the life of Buddha**, and the **contemporary events and social life** also.

- The ceiling decoration invariably consists of decorative patterns, geometrical as well as floral.

The paintings were executed after an **elaborate preparation of the rock surface**.

- The rock surface was left with **chisel marks and grooves** so that the layer applied over it can be held in an effective manner.
- The colours and shades utilised also vary from red and yellow ochre and terraverde to lime, kaolin, gypsum, lamp black and lapis lazuli.
- The chief binding material used here was **glue**.
- The paintings at Ajanta are **not true frescoes** as they are painted with the aid of a binding agent, whereas in fresco the paintings are executed while the lime wash is still wet which, thereby acts as an intrinsic binding agent.

- **Centrality** is one of the main features so that attention is at once drawn to the most important person in each scene.
 - The painters of Ajanta had realised the true glory of the Buddha, the story of whose life was employed here by them as a motif to explain the eternal pattern of human life.
- The **adaptation of line** is the chief character of all oriental paintings and one of the greatest achievements of the Ajanta artists.

- Emotion and pathos are expressed by the controlled turn and poise of the body and the eloquent gestures of the hands.
- Shaddanta Jataka along the right wall of cave No.10 belongs to the 1st century CE.
- The Dying Princess in cave No. 16 was painted in the early part of the 5th century CE.
- The painting of Bodhisattva Padmapani from cave 1 is one of the masterpieces of Ajanta Painting executed in the late 6th century CE.

- The scenes of Mahajanaka Jataka in cave No.1 are the best surviving examples of Ajanta paintings belonging to 6th-7th century CE.

Ellora Caves

- Wall-paintings at Ellora, are of great importance and sanctity.
- A number of **Hindu, Buddhist and Jain** temples were excavated **between the 8th and 10th centuries CE** from the living rocks.
- The most impressive of these is the **Kailashnath temple**.

- There are several fragments of paintings on the ceiling of the different parts of this temple and on the walls of some Jain cave temples.
- The composition of the paintings at Ellora is in **rectangular panels with thick borders**.
 - They have thus been conceived within the given limits of frames that hold the paintings.
 - The space, in the sense of Ajanta, therefore, does not exist at Ellora.

- So far as the **style** is concerned, Ellora painting is a **departure from the classical norm of Ajanta** paintings.
 - The most important characteristic features of Ellora painting are the **sharp twist of the head, painted angular bents of the arms, the concave curve of the close limbs, the sharp projected nose, and the long drawn open eyes**, which can very well be considered as the **medieval character** of Indian paintings.
 - It is perhaps a product of the transitional period.

Bagh Caves

- The paintings from Bagh caves in Madhya Pradesh **correspond to those paintings of Ajanta in cave no. 1 and 2.**
- Stylistically both belong to the same form, but Bagh figures are more tightly modelled, and are stronger in outline.
- They are **more earthly and human** than those at Ajanta.
- These were executed in **tempera**.
- These paintings are **materialistic** rather than spiritualistic.

Badami Caves

- The **earliest Brahmanical paintings** so far known are the fragments found in Badami caves, in cave no. 3 belonging to the 6th century CE.
- The Chalukyan king, **Mangalesha**, younger son of Pulakeshin I, patronised the excavation of Badami caves.
- The most remarkable pieces of Badami art are '**Siva and Parvati**' and the mural in cave no. 4, dedicated to **Adinatha Thirthankara**, depicts Jain saint relinquishing the world for the attainment of knowledge.

- Though the technique follows that of Ajanta and Bagh, the modelling is much more sensitive in texture and expression and the outline is soft and elastic.

Sittannavasal

- The paintings of Sittannavasal are intimately connected with Jain themes but enjoy the **same norm and technique as that of Ajanta**.
- The technique employed is what is known as **fresco-secco**, that is, the painting is done on dry plaster.

- The **contours** of these paintings are **firmly drawn dark on a light red background**.
- On the ceiling of the Verandah is painted a large decorative scene of great beauty, a lotus pool with birds, elephants, buffaloes, and a young man plucking flowers.

Vijayanagara Murals

- The paintings at **Tiruparakunaram**, near Trichy, done in the 14th century represent the **early phase** of the Vijayanagara style.

- In Hampi, the **Virupaksha temple** has paintings on the ceiling of its mandapa narrating events from **dynastic history** and episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.
 - Among the important panels are the ones which show **Vidyaranya**, the spiritual teacher of Bukkaraya I, being carried in a palanquin in a procession and the incarnations of Vishnu.
 - The faces of the figures are shown in profile, with large frontal eyes.
 - The figures have narrow waists.

Lepakshi Paintings

- In Lepakshi, Andhra Pradesh, there are glorious examples of **Vijayanagara** paintings.
- These are characterised by **earth tones** and the **nearly complete absence of blue-in fact primary colours in general**.
- The forms of the figure and the details of their costume are outlined in black.
- The Lepakshi temple also has the **finest specimens of mural paintings of the Vijayanagar kings**.

- The **Boar hunt** from this temple is also an example of **two-dimensional painting** which almost **becomes characteristic** of **late medieval paintings** either on wall or on palm leaf or paper.

Nayaka Paintings

- Nayaka paintings of the 17th and 18th centuries are seen in Thiruparakunram.
- **Early** paintings depict scenes from the **life of Vardhaman Mahavira**.

- The **late phase** of Nayaka paintings depict episodes from the **Mahabharata, Ramayana** and scenes from **Krishna-leela**.
- In the Sri Krishna temple at Chengam (Arcot) there are 26 panels narrating the Ramayana, which demonstrates the end phase of the Nayaka paintings.
- Nayaka paintings were **more or less an extension of Vijayanagara style** with minor regional modifications and incorporations.

- The figures are mostly set against a flat background and the male figures are shown with slim waist but with less heavy abdomen as compared to those in Vijayanagara.

Kerala Murals

- Kerala painters (during the period from the 16th to the 18th century) evolved a pictorial language and **technique of their own** while discriminately adopting certain stylistic elements from **Nayaka and Vijayanagara schools**.

- The painters evolved a style taking cues from contemporary traditions like **Kathakali** using vibrant and luminous colours, representing human figures in **three-dimension**.
- Thematically too, paintings from Kerala stand apart.
 - Most of the narrations are based on those episodes from **Hindu mythology which were popular in Kerala**.
- The important palaces where mural paintings can be found are: Dutch Palace, Kochi, Krishna Puram Palace, Kayamkulam etc.

Rangmahal of Chamba palace

- The wall paintings, belonging to the **Kangra School**, that adorn Rang Mahal of the Chamba palace in Himachal Pradesh are splendid and represent one of the most extensive hill collections.
- The paintings follow the stories of Lord Krishna.

Miniature Paintings

Miniature paintings are beautiful handmade paintings, which are quite **colourful but small** in size.

- The highlight of these paintings is the intricate and delicate brushwork, which lends them a unique identity.
- The colours are handmade, from minerals, vegetables, precious stones, indigo, conch shells, pure gold, and silver.

The different schools of the Miniature paintings of India include the **Pala, the Mughal, the Deccani, the Rajput and the Odisha**.

Pala School

The earliest examples of miniature painting in India exist in the form of illustrations to the religious texts on **Buddhism** executed under the **Palas of eastern India** and the **Jain** texts executed in **western India** during the 11th-12th centuries CE.

- The Buddhist **monasteries** (mahaviharas) of Nalanda, Odantapuri, Vikramshila and Somarupa were great centres of Buddhist learning and art.
 - Students and pilgrims from all over South-East Asia gathered there for education and religious instruction.

- A large number of **manuscripts** were written **on palm-leaf**, relating to the Buddhist themes and illustrated with the images of Buddhist deities at these centres which also had workshops for the casting of bronze images.

The Pala painting is characterised by **sinuous lines and subdued tones of colour**.

- It is a **naturalistic style** which resembles the ideal forms of contemporary bronze and stone sculpture and reflects some feeling of the classical art of Ajanta.

- The Pala art **came to a sudden end** after the destruction of the Buddhist monasteries at the hands of Muslim invaders in the **first half of the 13th century**.
- The **surviving examples** of the Pala illustrated manuscripts mostly belong to the **Vajrayana School of Buddhism**.



Mughal School

Mughal paintings are generally confined to miniatures which emerged from Persian miniature painting, with Indian Hindu, Jain and Buddhist influences, and developed largely in the court of the Mughals between the 16th to 18th centuries.

- The Mughal style is marked by supple naturalism based on close observation of nature and fine and delicate drawing.
- It is primarily aristocratic (court art) and secular.
 - The subjects treated consisted of illustrations of historical works and Persian and Indian literature, portraits of the emperor and his court, studies of natural life, and genre scenes.
- In its initial phases it showed some indebtedness to the Safavid school of Persian painting, but rapidly moved away from Persian ideals.
 - The Safavid dynasty was one of the most significant ruling dynasties of Iran, often considered the beginning of modern Iranian history.
 - The Safavids were the last sovereigns to promote a Persian national art.

- Probably the earliest example of Mughal painting is the illustrated folktale **Tuti-nameh** (Tales of a Parrot).

Humayun

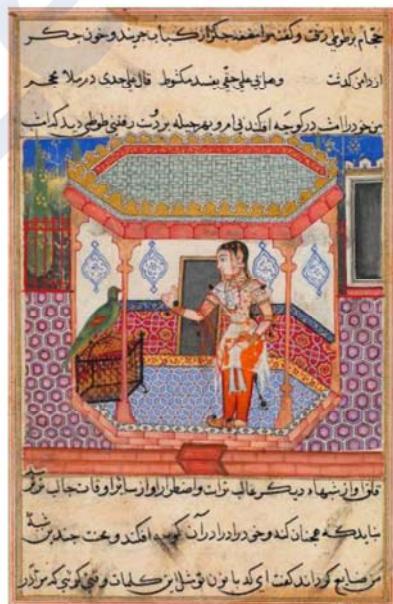
- The school had its beginnings during the reign of the emperor Humayun (1530-40 and 1555- 56).
- When Humayun returned to India, he brought two accomplished Persian artists **Abd al-Samad** and **Mir Sayyid Ali** with him.

- Mughal painting developed and flourished during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan.

Akbar (1556-1605)

- During the reign of Akbar, the imperial court, apart from being the centre of administrative authority to manage and rule the vast Mughal empire, also emerged as a centre of cultural excellence.
- Akbar inherited and **expanded his father's library and atelier of court painters**, and paid close personal attention to its output.

- He had studied painting in his youth under Abd al-Samad.
- The *Tutinama* (Tales of a Parrot), shows the stylistic components of the imperial Mughal style at a formative stage.





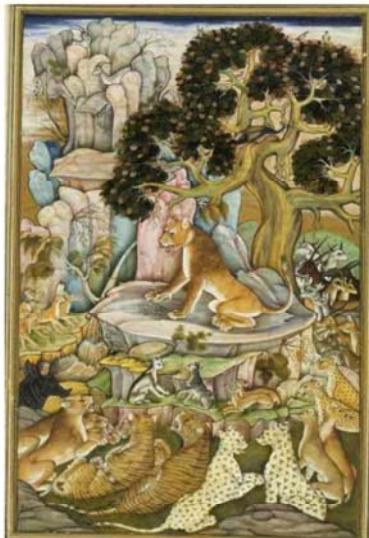
An illustrated manuscript of the Hamzanama consists of 1,400 canvas folios.

Though retaining the upright format, general setting, and flat aerial perspective of Persian painting, the Indian artists of Akbar's court exhibited an **increasing naturalism and detailed observation of the world around them**.

Empathy for animals is evident in the illustrations of the animal fables, particularly the Kalīlah wa Dimna and the Anwar-e Suhayli.

Other outstanding series are the illustrations of the **Razm-nameh** (the Persian name for the Hindu epic the Mahabharata).

- Outstanding painters of the period were **Dasvant and Basavan**.



Jahangir (1605-25)

Jahangir had an artistic inclination and during his reign Mughal painting developed further.

Brushwork became finer and the colours lighter.

Jahangir was also deeply influenced by European painting.



- During his reign he came into direct contact with the English Crown and was sent gifts of oil paintings, which included portraits of the King and Queen.
- He encouraged his royal atelier to take up the **single point perspective** favoured by European artists, unlike the flattened.

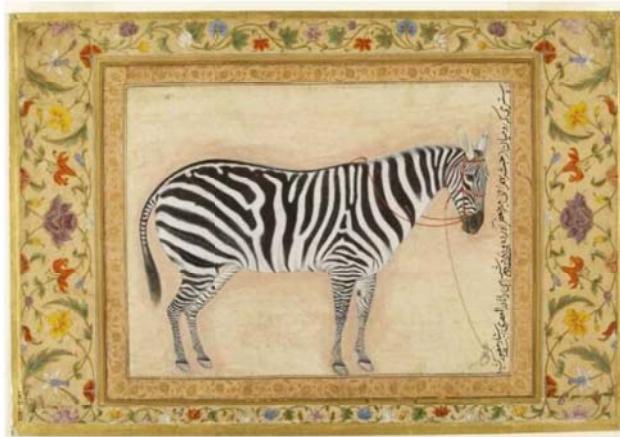


- multi-layered style used in traditional miniatures.

He particularly encouraged **paintings depicting events of his own life, individual portraits, and studies of birds, flowers, and animals.**

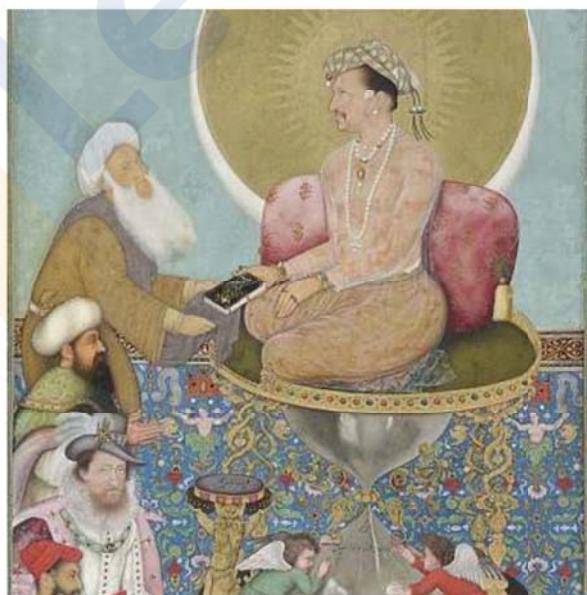
The **Jahangirnama**, written during his lifetime, which is an autobiographical account of Jahangir's reign, has several paintings, including some unusual subjects such as the union of a saint with a tigress, and fights between spiders.

Noted painters of the period were **Abu al- Hasan**, called the "Wonder of the Age": **Bishandās**, praised for his portraiture, and **Ustad Mansur**, who excelled in animal studies.

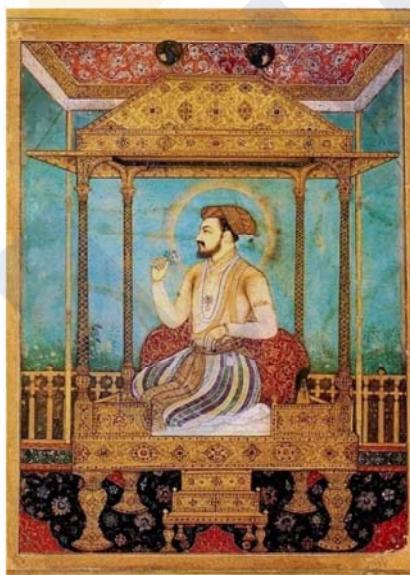


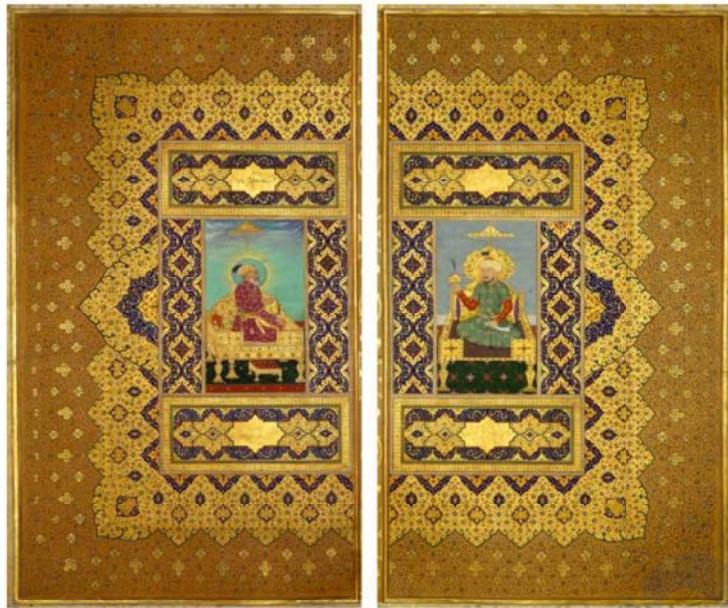
Shah Jahan (1628-59)

The elegance and richness of the Jahangir period style continued during the reign of Shah Jahan (1628-58) but with an **increasing tendency to become cold and rigid.**



Themes including **musical parties**; **lovers**, sometimes in intimate positions, on terraces and gardens; and **ascetics** gathered around a fire, abound in the Mughal paintings of this period.





Later Stage

Aurangzeb (1658-1707) did not actively encourage Mughal paintings, but as this art form had gathered momentum and had a number of patrons, **Mughal paintings continued to survive, but the decline had set in.**

There was a **brief revival during the reign of Muhammad Shah 'Rangeela'** (1719-48), but by the time of Shah Alam II (1759-1806), the art of Mughal painting had lost its glory.

By that time, **other schools** of Indian painting had developed, including, in the royal courts of the Rajput kingdoms of Rajputana.

Deccani School

Deccan painting style is **contemporary of the Mughal paintings**, and can safely be presumed as a **sophisticated** school of painting.

Early centres of painting in the Deccan, during the 16th and 17th centuries were **Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda**.

In the Deccan, painting continued to develop **independently of the Mughal style in the beginning**.

- However, later in the 17th and 18th centuries, it was increasingly influenced by the Mughal style.

Ahmednagar

The earliest examples of the Ahmednagar painting are contained in poems written in praise of Hussain Nizam Shah I of Ahmednagar and his queen.

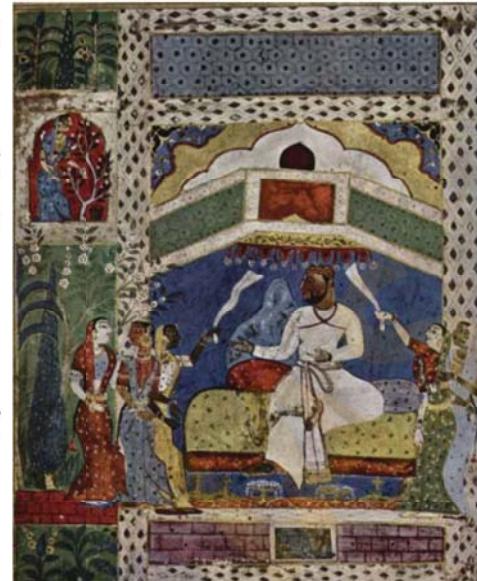
- This manuscript is known as the **Tarif-i-Hussain Shahi** and assigned to a period 1565- 69.

Women in the **Choli** (bodice) and **long pigtails braided and ending in a tassel** are the **northern costume**.

But the long scarf passing round the body is in the southern fashion.

The colours used in the painting being rich and brilliant are different from those used in the northern paintings.

Another fine example of the Ahmednagar painting is the "**Hindola Raga**".



Bijapur

In Bijapur, painting was patronised by **Ali Adil Shah I** (1558-80 CE.) and his successor **Ibrahim II** (1580-1627 CE.).

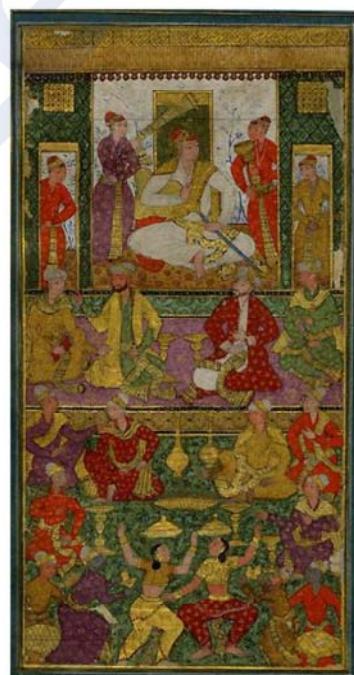
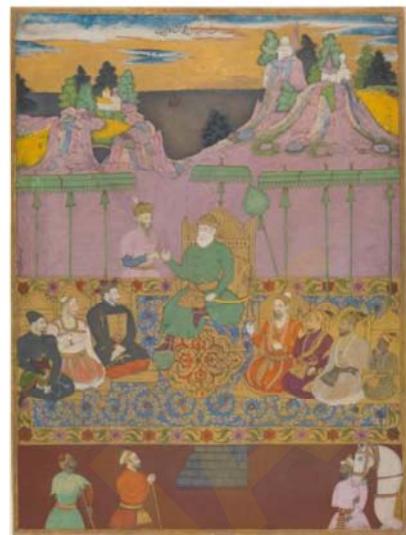
Features of painting were:

The ladies appearing in the illustrations are tall and slender and are wearing the **South Indian dress**.



The rich colour scheme, the palm trees, animals and men and women all belong to the **Deccani tradition**.

The profuse use of gold colour, some flowering plants and arabesque on the top of the throne are derived from the **Persian tradition**.



Golconda

The earliest paintings identified as Golconda work are a group of five charming paintings painted during the reign of **Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah** (1580-1611).

They show dancing girls entertaining the company.

One of the miniatures illustrated shows the king in his court watching a dance performance.

He wears the white muslin coat with embroidered vertical band, a typical costume associated with the Golconda court.

Gold colour has been lavishly used in painting the architecture, costume, jewellery, vessels etc.

Central Indian & Rajput School

Unlike Mughal painting which is primarily secular, the art of painting in Central India, Rajasthan, Pahari region, etc, is **deeply rooted in the Indian traditions**, taking inspiration from the Indian epics, religious texts like the Puranas, love poems in Sanskrit and other Indian languages, Indian folk-lore and works on musical themes.

The cults of **Vaishnavism, Saivism and Sakti** exercised tremendous influence on the pictorial art of these places.

- Among these the cult of Krishna was the most popular one which inspired the patrons and artists.
- The themes from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata, the Siva Purana, the Gita Govinda of Jayadeva, and the Ragamala etc., provided a very rich field to the painter who with his artistic skill and devotion made a significant contribution to the development of Indian painting.

In the 16th century there already existed in Central India and Rajasthan the primitive art traditions in the form of the '**Chaurapanchasika**' style which served as a base for the origin and growth of various schools of painting during the 17th century.

Chaurapanchasika Style

- The Chaurapanchasika (Fifty stanzas of the Thief) by the Kashmir poet **Bilhana** (late 11th or early 12th century), was a favourite theme of Rajput painters.

- Chaurapanchasika styles are adopted in many other illustrated manuscripts with slight variation in its usage.
- The best examples of the above mentioned are **Bhagavat Purana and Gita Govinda**.
- The same style can also be seen in the earliest **Ragamala series made in Chawand by Nasiruddin**.



Ragamala Paintings

- These are a series of illustrative paintings from medieval India based on Ragamala or the "Garland of Ragas" depicting various Indian musical modes called Ragas.
- They stand as a classic example of the **amalgamation of art, poetry, and classical music** in medieval India.
- Ragamala paintings were created in most schools of Indian painting, starting in the 16th and 17th centuries, and are today named accordingly as **Pahari Ragamala, Rajasthan or Rajput Ragamala, Deccan Ragamala, and Mughal Ragamala**.

- In these paintings, **each raga is personified by a colour, mood and a verse describing a story of a hero and heroine (nayaka and nayika)**.
- It also elucidates the **season and the time of day and night** in which a Particular raga is to be sung.
- And finally most paintings also **demarcate the specific Hindu deities attached with the raga**, like Bhairava or Bhairavi to Shiva, Sri to Devi etc.

Rajput Paintings

- Rajput painting, the art of the independent Hindu feudal states in India, was different from the court art of the Mughal emperors.
- Whereas Mughal painting was contemporary in style, Rajput was **traditional and romantic**.
- It developed in the **16th and early 17th centuries**.
- Rajput painting is further divided into **Rajasthani painting**, or the schools of Rajasthan and central India, and **Pahari painting**, or the art of the Himalayan kingdoms.

Schools of Rajasthani Painting

- Rajasthani painting evolved and flourished in the royal courts of Rajputana in India.
- Each Rajputana kingdom evolved a distinct style, but with certain common features.
- In the late 16th Century, Rajput art schools began to develop distinctive styles, **combining indigenous as well as foreign influences such as Persian, Mughal, Chinese and European**.
- The economic prosperity of the commercial community and the revival of "**Vaishnavism**" and the growth of Bhakti Cult were the

major factors that contributed greatly to the development of Rajasthani paintings.

- In the beginning this style was greatly influenced by religious followers like Ramanuja, Meerabai, Tulsidas, Sri Chaitanya, Kabir and Ramanand.

Amber School

- These paintings show a **strong influence of Mughal art**.
- However, at the same time, the **bold compositions** and use of **abstractions** reflected regional characteristics.
- The 18th and early 19th century saw Rajput paintings illustrating episodes from the life of Krishna.
- The other popular themes of the 19th century were Ragamala and devotional subjects.

Bundi School

- Originated in Bundi around the late 16th century and **reflects a huge Mughal impact**.
- **Wall paintings**, dating back to the reign of **Rao Ratan Singh** (1607-1631), are good examples of Bundi style of paintings.
- The time of **Rao Chattar Sal** (1631-1658) and **Bhao Singh** (1658-1681) saw great emphasis on **court scenes** as themes.
- Other themes include those based on the **lives of nobles, lovers and ladies**.

Kota School

- Kota paintings look very **natural** in their appearance and are **calligraphic** in their execution.
- The reign of Jagat Singh (1658-1684) saw **vivacious colours and bold lines being used in portraits**.
- With the arrival of Arjun Singh (1720-1723), the painting started depicting **males with a long hooked nose**.
- 18th century was also the time for **hunting scenes, Ragamalas, and portraits** as the themes.

- Ram Singh II (1827-1866) ordered the depiction of **worship, hunting, darbar and processions** in paintings.

Kishangarh School

- It is basically a **fusion of Mughal and regional style**.
- The most common theme of this style consisted of the **depiction of the love between Krishna and Radha**.
- Other popular themes included the **poetry of Sawant Singh, Shahnama and court scenes**, etc.
- Kishangarh School is best known for its **Bani Thani** paintings.



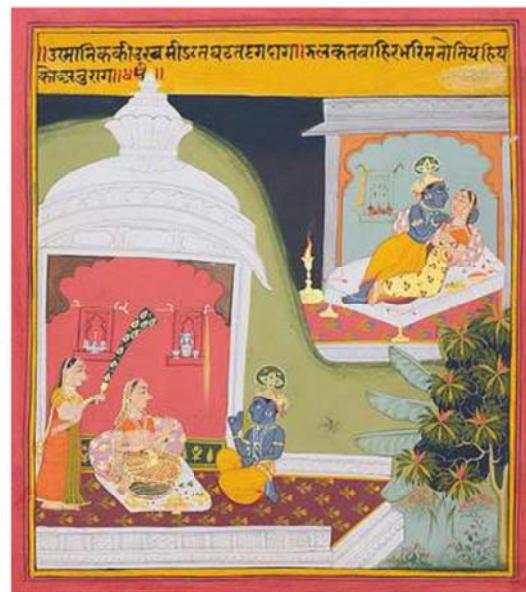
Malwa School

- One of the most conservative Rajput Painting Schools of the 17th century, Malwa was highly influenced by Chaurpanchhasika style.
- The emphasis was laid on strong colours and bold lines.
- At times, one can also observe a remote deccani influence on these paintings.



Mewar School

- Concentrated on its conservative style, trying to avoid the dominance of the Mughals.
- Characterised by simple, bright colour and direct emotional appeal.
- The earliest-dated examples come from a ragamala (musical



modes) series painted in 1605 at Chawand, an early capital of the state.

- One can observe heavy **similarity with the Chaurapanchasika style, especially the flatness, the bright colours, and even common motifs.**
- Towards the end of the 17th century and the early 18th century, Mewar style saw a revival.

Pahari Paintings

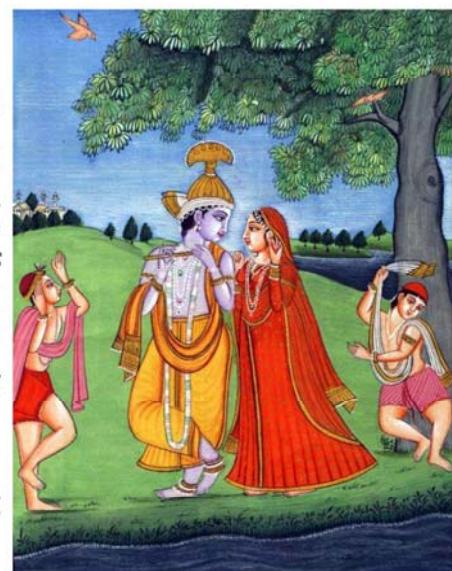
- The Pahari region comprises the present State of Himachal Pradesh, some adjoining areas of the Punjab, the area of Jammu in the Jammu and Kashmir State and Garhwal in Uttarakhand.
- The whole of this area was divided into small States ruled by the Rajput princes and were often engaged in warfare.
- These States were centres of great artistic activity from the latter half of the 17th to nearly the middle of the 19th century.

Basohli School

- The earliest centre of painting in the Pahari region was **Basohli** where under the patronage of **Raja Kripal Pal**, an artist named **Devidasa** executed miniatures in the form of the **Rasamanjari** illustrations in 1694 CE.
- The Basohli style of painting is characterised by **vigorous and bold line**.
- **Strong glowing colours** are used in the paintings.
 - The Basohli style spread to the various neighbouring states and continued till the middle of the 18th century.

Guler School

- The last phase of the Basohli style was closely followed by the Jammu group of paintings mainly consisting of portraits of **Raja Balwant Singh of Jasrota** (a small place near Jammu) by **Nainsukh**, an artist who originally belonged to Guler.
- He worked both at Jasrota and at Guler.



- The colours used are soft and cool.
- The style appears to have been inspired by the naturalistic style of the Mughal painting marking a departure from Basohli art.
- The finest group of miniatures in the Pahari region also include the famous series of the Bhagavad Gita, the Gita Govinda, the Bihari Satsai, the Baramasa and the Ragamala.
- The females in these paintings are delicate with well-modelled faces, small and slightly upturned nose and the hair done minutely.

Kangra School

- The Kangra style developed out of the Guler style.
- The name Kangra style is given as they are identical in style to the portraits of Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra.
 - It possesses the main characteristics of the



Guler style, like the delicacy of drawing and quality of naturalism.

- 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.**
- There is, however, **no modelling of figures and hair is treated as a flat mass.**
- Paintings of the Kangra style are attributed mainly to the **Nainsukh family.**

Kullu-Mandi School

- It flourished as a **folk style** in the Kullu-Mandi area, mainly inspired by the **local tradition.**
- The style is marked by **bold drawing and the use of dark and dull colours.**
- A large number of portraits of the Kulu and Mandi rulers and miniature son other themes are available in this style.

Traditional Paintings

- Every region in India has its own style and pattern of art, which is known as **folk art**.
- Other than folk art, there is yet another form of traditional art practised by several tribes or rural population, which is classified as **tribal art**.
- **Folk art is the art form created by the rural people** for the rural people, which are centred around different kinds of ritual, traditions, and festivals.

- The rural folk paintings of India bear distinctive colourful designs, which are treated with religious and mystical motifs.
- Some of the most famous folk paintings of India are the **Madhubani** paintings of Bihar, **Patachitra** paintings from the state of Odisha, the **Nirmal** paintings of Andhra Pradesh, and other such folk-art forms.
- **Tribal art generally reflects the creative energy found in tribal areas** that acts as an undercurrent to the craftsmanship of the tribal people.

- The treatment of each type of painting vastly **differs** in the different parts of India. So do the colours and combinations used and even the general approach to the art itself.
- For instance, **Warli** art used **clever stick figures** to depict **everyday life** in rural Maharashtra.
- **Madhubani** paintings, on the other hand, mostly depicted **mythological figures**, the different **seasons**, and major **events** such as marriages and so on.

Paintings with Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

- Thanjavur Paintings (Tamil Nadu)
- Madhubani Paintings (Bihar)
- Pattachitra (Odisha)
- Kalamkari (Andhra Pradesh)
- Cheriyal Paintings (Telengana)
- Kangra Paintings (Himachal Pradesh)
- Warli Paintings (Maharashtra)

Patachitra

- The most impressive of the living traditions of painting are the **narrative scroll painting** or patachitra.
- This special painting on cloth is a special art form of **Odisha**.
- Patachitra can be dated back to the **5th century BCE**.
- 'Pata' indicates clothing, and 'chitra' means painting.

Technique:

- To make the **canvas**, the painters use fine gauze-like cloth, which they fortify with tamarind paste, chalk powder and gum.
- After drying the canvas, the patachitra painters **draw** the most intricate designs on it and colour it with natural dyes.

Themes:

- The patachitra paintings adorn the stories of the epic **Ramayana and the Mahabharata**, and those of the local deity **Lord Jagannath**.

- It is developed by the locals of Raghurajpur, Puri, Sonepur, etc.
- It became widespread with the construction of the great temples of Puri, Konark and Bhubaneswar.

Madhubani paintings

- Madhubani/Mithila painting originated in small villages in Bihar.
- Initially, **village women** painted their **home walls**, illustrating their thoughts, hopes and dreams.

- Gradually paintings **became part of occasions of celebration**, like marriage.
- And finally, art is now famous globally.
- The **traditional base of freshly plastered mud wall** of huts has now been **replaced by cloth, handmade paper, and canvas**.
- Themes revolve around **Hindu deities** like Krishna, Rama, Lakshmi, Shiva, Durga, and Saraswati.

Themes:

- The **natural themes** that are used include the Sun, the Moon and the religious plants like tulsi.
- One can also find paintings based on scenes from the **royal courts and social events**, like weddings.

Making:

- **Brush** of cotton, wrapped around a bamboo stick is used.

- **Black** colour is produced from soot, plus cow dung; **yellow** from mixing turmeric with the banyan leaves milk; **blue** from indigo; **green** from the leaves of the wood apple tree; **white** from rice powder and **orange** from palasha flowers.
- There is **no shading** in the application of colours.
- A **double line** is drawn for outlines and the gap is filled with either cross or straight tiny lines.

Alpana

- Alpana, the **form of Rangoli practiced in Bengal**, is a natural representation of the artistic sensibility of the people.
- Practised usually by the **women** of the state, the art form represents an amalgamation of the past experience as well as the contemporary designs.
- The **changing moods of the seasons** are also very much reflected in the Alpana designs of India.
- The patterns are made with the help of a **small piece of cloth drenched in a blend of powdered rice**.

- All the ritualistic and traditional folk arts of Bengal, including Alpana, are believed to have been used by the agricultural communities of the region **for driving out evil spirits**.
- The art form of Alpana has been used since ages for religious and ceremonial purposes and is usually **done on the floor**.

Kolam

- **Kolam Rangoli** is the name given to the art of Rangoli in southern parts of the country, mainly the states of **Kerala and Tamil Nadu**.

- The Hindus residing in these parts make use of this art form on a large scale.
- The **female** members of the house usually draw Kolam designs in front of their homes, with the help of **rice powder**.
- **Limestone and red brick powder** are also used on special occasions.
- Kolam is regarded as a **sort of painted prayer** in South India.
- The design usually comprises a **symmetric line drawing**, which comprises curved loops, drawn around a crisscross pattern of dots.

Gond

- Characterised by a **sense of belonging with nature**, the Gondi tribe in Madhya Pradesh created these **bold, vibrantly coloured paintings**, depicting mainly flora and fauna.
- The **colours** come from charcoal, cow dung, leaves, and coloured soil.
- If you look closely, it is **made up of dots and lines**.
- **Today**, these styles are imitated, but with **acrylic paints**.

Cheriyal Scrolls

- Originating in present-day **Telangana**, this dying art form is practised by the **Nakashi family only**, where it has been passed down for many generations.
- The **tradition of long scrolls and Kalamkari art influenced the Cheriyal scrolls**, a much more stylised version of Nakashi art.
- Depicting **puranas and epics**, these **40-45 feet scrolls** were an essential visual accompaniment as saints wandered around singing or narrating the epics.

- They **resemble modern-day comic panels**, with about 50 scenes on each scroll.
- They **use primary colours** and a vivid imagination, a stark contrast from the traditional rigour of Tanjore or Mysore paintings.

Warli Painting

- Originated by the **Warli tribes** from the **Western Ghats** of India, in **2500 BCE**, this is one of the oldest art forms of India.

- There is mainly the use of **circles, triangles, and squares** to form numerous shapes and depict daily life activities like fishing, hunting, festivals, dance and more.
- What sets it apart is the **human shape**; a **circle and two triangles**.
- All the paintings are done on a **red ochre or dark background**, while the **shapes** are **white** in colour.

Kalamkari

- It literally means, Kalam-pen & kari - work, i.e., **art work done using a pen**.
- The **outlines and main features** are made by **hand carved blocks**.
- The **finer details** are later done using the pen.
- **Vegetable dyes** are used to colour the designs applied on cloth.
- This style of Kalamkari flourished at **Srikalahasti** and at **Masulipatnam** in Andhra Pradesh.

- In **Masulipatnam**, the weavers were involved in the **block printing art** owing to **Muslim rule** in Golconda.
 - Here, Kalamkari was influenced by **Persian motifs**, widely adapted to suit their taste.
- While at **Srikalahasti**, the **Balojas** (a caste involved in making bangles) took to this art.
 - The Srikalahasti tradition which developed in the **temple region**, mostly concentrated on themes from **Hindu mythology**, epics (Ramayana, Mahabharatha) and images of Gods and heroes.

Tanjore Painting

- It is an art form that flourished in Tanjore.
- This school was an **offshoot of the Vijayanagar School** and is known for vibrant colours, opulent surface and immense use of gold foils.
- The patrons of this art were the **Nayakas of Tanjore**.
- These paintings are created on **wooden plank**, so also known as **palagaipadam** (palagai- wooden plank, padam-picture) in local parlance.

- The paintings are made with **semi-precious stones, glass and gold**.
- The characters of these paintings are mainly gods and goddesses with **large round faces and embellished designs**.

Kalighat Painting

- Kalighat Paintings refer to the class of paintings and drawings produced by a group of artists called '**Patuas**' in the neighbourhood of the famous Kali temple at Kalighat in Bengal in between **19th and early 20th Century**.

- The patuas would travel from village to village, unrolling the scroll, a section at a time and singing the stories to their audiences.
- Selling these paintings as cheap religious souvenirs to the temple visitors, helped in popularising the art.
- The charm of the Kalighat paintings lies in the fact that they **captured the essence of daily life**.

Paitkar Painting

- The Paitkar paintings of Jharkhand are scroll paintings.
- It is one of the most ancient schools of painting in India, and it is practised by the tribal people of the state.
- Paitkar painting may be considered as the variable of Pata painting.
- The cultural heritage of this painting has associations with goddesses in the Bengali household, Maa Mansa.
- The Paitkar paintings of Jharkhand have links with the socio-religious custom of holding yajnas and giving alms.

- Scroll painting also mirrors the Bengali and Jharkhandi daily life.
- The paintings have a common subject-what happens to human life post death.
- Unfortunately, the art form is in decline.

Kohvar and Sohrai paintings

- The Kohvar and Sohrai paintings from Jharkhand are delicate and beautiful, but the art form faces the threat of extinction.

- These paintings **may be religious or secular** but are **relevant to a woman's world**.
- This painting is practised **exclusively by married women**, during **weddings and at harvest time**.
- The traditional skill is passed on to younger females of the clan.
- Comb-cut or finger-painted, **Kohvar art celebrates marriage**.
- The wall-painted **Sohrai celebrates bumper crops**.
- Elaborate design motifs, animal and plant forms, and fertility motifs are abundant and often reflect the ancient cave art found in the region.

- The colours used are all natural neutral earth shades, red oxide from stone, red ochre, kaolin white, manganese black earth etc.
- Blue and green colours are not prominent.

Thangka Paintings

- The typical paintings of **Sikkim (as well as Tibet)** are the thangkas, originally a medium of reverence through which the highest ideals of Buddhism were evoked.

- Thangkas are created on **cotton canvas** and often framed with **silk**.
- They depict **images of different deities and philosophies related to Buddhism**.
- Thangkas were **traditionally made by Buddhist priests and monks** and specific ethnic groups, the skills being passed from generation to generation.
- Now this art form has **spread among a larger group of people** and has assumed a **commercial aspect as well**.
- There are **three types** of thangkas:

- One **depicts the life of Buddha**, his birth, his disillusionment with life, his search for enlightenment and his understanding of life.
- The second is more abstract, representing Buddhist beliefs about life and death; one example could be the Wheel of Life, which symbolises the Buddhist belief of trans-migratory existence.
- The third type consists of paintings that are often used as a tool for meditation or as offerings to the deities.
- These paintings are usually done against a white background.

- The **colours** used in thangkas have **special significance**.
- **White** stands for serenity, **gold** for the birth or life, enlightenment and parinirvana, **red** for the intensity of passion-both love and hatred, **black** for anger, **yellow** for compassion and green for consciousness.
- The colours used in making a thangka are all vegetable or mineral dyes extracted from nature.

Phad Painting

- Originating in Rajasthan, Phad is mainly a **religious form of scroll painting** depicting **folk deities Pabuji or Devnarayan**.
- The **30 or 15 feet long canvas or cloth** that it is painted is called **phad**.
- **Vegetable colours** and a **running narrative of the lives and heroic deeds of deities** characterise these paintings.
- Influence of the scenes of **Ramayana, Mahabharata, Purana, Gita - govinda and daily life** of human beings can be seen.
- They also depict **birds and animal figures** in their paintings.

- Village artisans use **organic or natural colours** which are easily available in the village.
- Lamp soot, leaves of different trees, flower, etc., are the natural sources of colours.
- **Tamarind seeds and fruits are used for the purpose of binding the colours.**
- **Line** remains the basic elements of these paintings.
- They use the **finger as a brush**.

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