

Prelims Master Program (2023-24) – Ancient, Medieval, Art and Culture

Handout 29: Medieval Miniature Paintings

Early Miniature Paintings

Miniature paintings possibly existed from early times but since they were done on perishable materials (e.g. clothes, wooden board etc.) they didn't survive. Definite surviving proofs of manuscript painting are only from 11th c onwards.

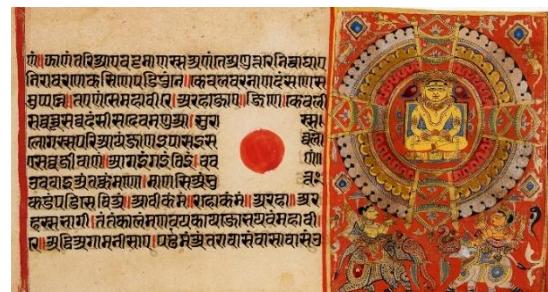
Eastern India: Pala School

- The earliest examples of miniature painting in India.
- The paintings were mostly undertaken by **Bhikkhus** of various Buddhist mahaviharas.
- **Style:** Sombre hues, firm lines, simple compositions, graceful attitude.
 - Reminiscent of Ajanta style.
- **Subject matter:** Buddhism
 - Most popular book: Prajna Paramita Sutra (sacred manuscript)
- This tradition **ended abruptly** after invaders destroyed the Buddhist monasteries in the 13th century but some of the monks/artists escaped to Nepal/Tibet/Bhutan where the style continued in some way.



Western India: Gujarat Jain Manuscripts

- **Causes of origin:**
 - Chalukya Dynasty (Solankis) ruling over Gujarat and Rajasthan followed Jaina faith.
 - An enormous number of **Jain religious manuscripts** were commissioned from 12th to 16th centuries by the princes, their **ministers** and the rich **Jain merchants** for earning religious merit.
 - **Examples:** **Kalpasutra, Kalakacharya Katha**
 - Many such manuscripts are available in the Jain libraries (**bhandaras**)
- **Style:** More focus on religious merit rather than aesthetic value.
 - Set formulae and monotonous repetition.
 - Vigorous distortion, exaggeration of physical traits.
 - However, floral motifs, animals and birds are quite fascinating.

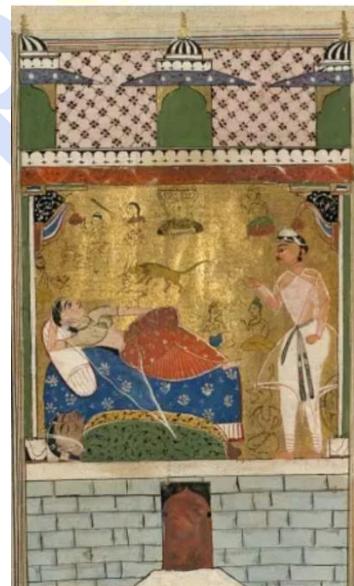


- **Later survival:**

- By the 14th century, Persian influence in faces and costumes is visible due to Muslim sultans ruling in Gujarat. This mixed Indian-Persian style later spread to Mandu and Jaunpur.

Mandu (15th c, Khalji Dynasty)

- Due to its central location, **many styles merged in Mandu**.
- Khaljis ruling over Mandu encouraged contacts with Persia, thus **Persian influence**. E.g.: **Nimat-nama** (book of delicacies, a 15th century cookbook)
 - **Persian** influence: scroll like clouds, flowering trees, Persian turbans.
 - Surrounding landscape: **Turkmen** style
 - **Indian** elements: female types, costumes, and ornaments and colours.
- A new development during Baz Bahadur: **secular and romantic themes** came in vogue.
 - E.g.: **Laur Chanda or Chandayan** (Avadhi romance by Mulla Daud). It is based on an ancient poem that recounted the romance of Laur and Chanda. Obstacles the lovers overcome to be together function as a metaphor for the sufi's quest for union with God.
 - **More examples:** Chaurpanchashika, Early Ragamala series.



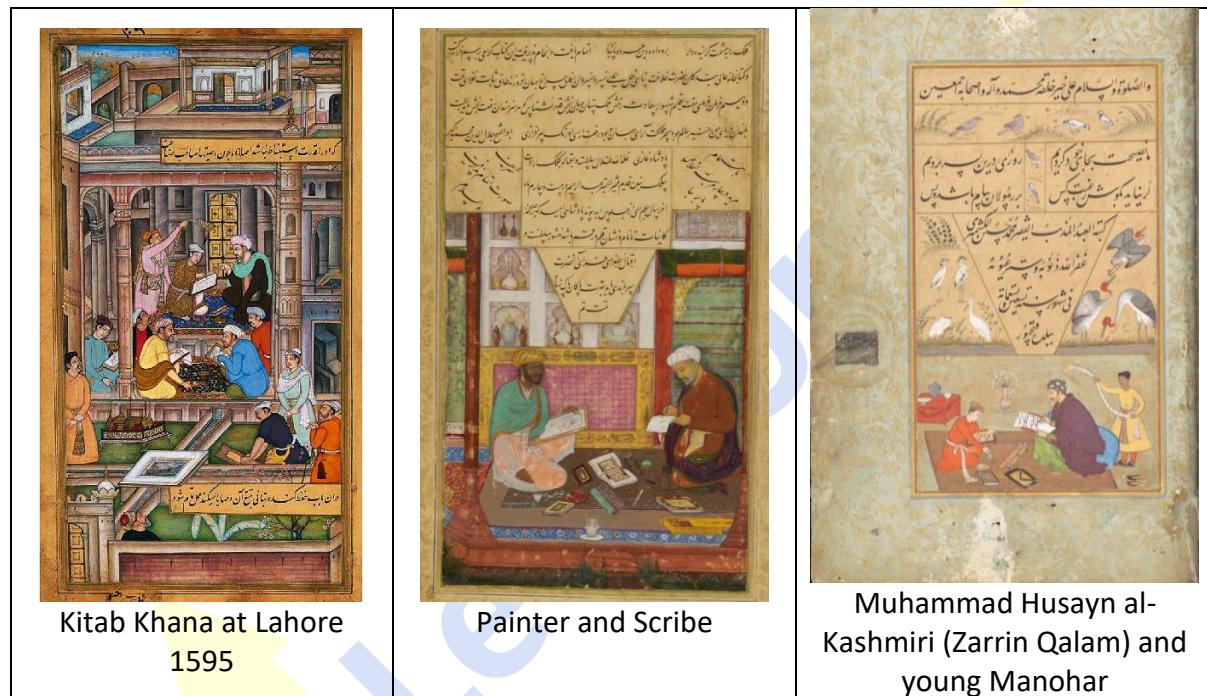
Kulhadar group of paintings (16th c)

- Identified by **caps/kulhas worn by men** in painting.
- The style of the painting here is **purely indigenous** derived from the earlier tradition of the Western Indian art and does not show any influence of either the Persian or the Mughal style of painting.
- **Examples**
 - **Chaurpanchashika:** (fifty verses of the thief): Chaurapanchashika: 11th c. Sanskrit poem by a Kashmiri named Bilhana.
 - Geeta Govinda
 - Bhagwat Purana
 - Ragmala



Mughal Paintings

- Medieval miniature paintings were a part of manuscripts and albums. They documented significant events, personalities and interests of the emperors.
 - Mughal painting was originated in Persia and continued for about three centuries in India.
- Mughal Tasvirkhana recruited calligraphers, painters, gilders and binders from across India and beyond. They worked at a hectic pace to prepare hundreds of paintings to meet the insatiable demands of emperors.



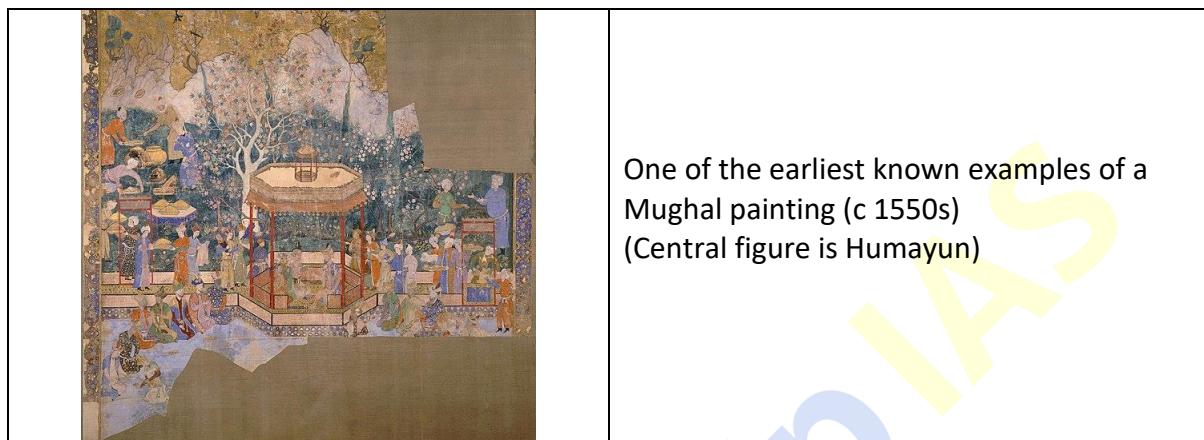
(1) Babur (1483-1530)

- He arrived in Herat. There he saw the famous painting of **Behzad Shah Musavir** and his followers.
- During four years of reign in India (1526-30) he longed for familiar artistic splendour of Herat. This **nostalgia** didn't permit him to understand and appreciate the art of India.
- At the same, his precarious political condition allowed him little time for artistic pursuits.

(2) Humayun (1530-1556)

- During his 15 years of exile in Persia:
 - Shah Tahmasp assisted Humayun to set up a small court in Kabul in 1550. Humayun invited **Mir Musavvir** to become the chief of his book illustrators.
 - At Tabriz, he met two young painters **Mir Sayyid Ali (of Tabriz)** and **Abd-al-Samad (of Shiraz)**.

- Humayun regained the kingdom in 1555 but died in a year.
 - After coming to India, both the painters joined him. They brought the Persian influence in the Mughal court, and also gave the painting lessons to Akbar. Abdal Samad served both Humayun and Akbar.
 - His only major work is commissioning of **Khamsa of Nizami** (12th c Persian romantic epic poet) with many paintings of different styles.



(3) Akbar

He was the real founder of Mughal school of painting. Along with kitabkhana and maqtabkhana, he formed Tasvirkhana too. Paintings of Akbar's era are a perfect combination of exquisite calligraphy, beautiful paintings, highly decorated/elegant borders.

Due to the Emperor's encouragement, Abu'l Fazl reported, the 'magical art' of 'representing figures' (tasvir) had gained in beauty. By order of Akbar himself, portraits (surat), have been painted of all His Majesty's servants, and a huge book (ketab) has been made.

Variety of subject matter:

Classical Persian literature (for aristocratic taste)	Hamzanama, Nizami's khamsa, Sadi's Gulistan, Hafiz's Diwan, Jami's Baharistan
Fables	Tutinama, Anwar-i-Suhaili
Translated Sanskrit Epics	Ramayana, Mahabharat
Spiritual works.	Yoga Vasishta, Nafhat-ul-Ens (prose by Jami on Sufi saints).
Historical manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarikh-e-Alfi, Timurnama, Baburnama • Akbarnama (Chester-Beatty Library, Dublin)
Realistic self-portrait	Primarily a Persian influence However, soon Indian artists rivalled their Persian counterparts. This later exerted great influence of Rajput paintings.



Tutinama (Tales of parrot)

- 52 Persian stories in 14th c inspired from Sanskrit book Shuka-saptati (70 tales of Parrot)



Hamzanama or Dastan-i-Amir Hamza

Popular romance interwoven with many legends of Abu Hamza, the Prophet Muhammad's paternal uncle.

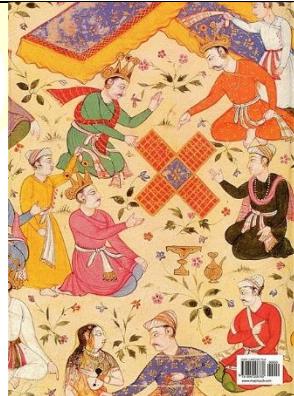
- Safavid impact: Bright polychrome tiles, rich carpets, luminous colours
- Indian impact: Details of leaves, women drawing water from well, dramatic movement



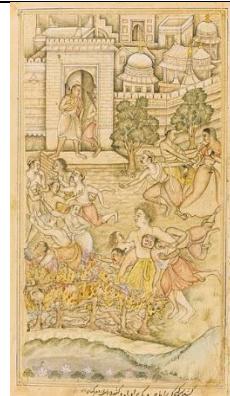
Sadi's Gulistan was one of the finest illustrated manuscripts.



Arjuna hit target
(Daswant and Keshav)

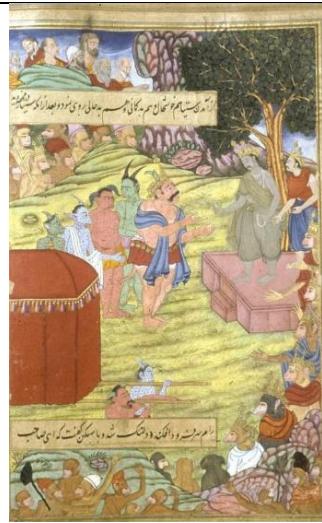


Sabha parva: Dice Game



Bhima kills Kichaka

Razmnama
(Persian Mahabharat)
(Originally 169 pages of illustration, many in Jaipur Royal Collection today).



Bibhishana joined Rama

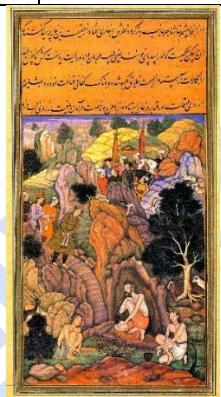
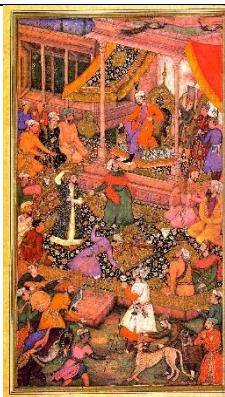


Rama-Lakshmana vs
Maricha-Subahu

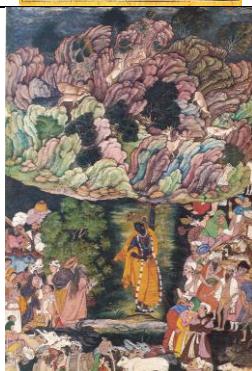


Ravanavadha

**Persian
Ramayana**



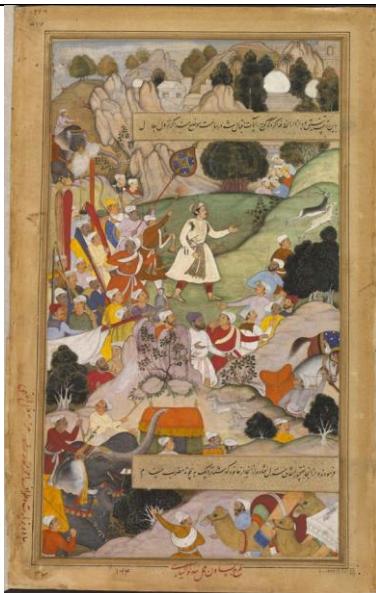
Aiyar-e-Danish:
Panchatantra
(Vishnu Sharma)
translated into
Persian by Abul
Fazl, 1588



Harivamsha Purana (Krishna Lifts Govardhan)

Akbarnama (History of Akbar) (49+ artists, today at Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Hunting Theme		
A painting depicting a hunting scene near Palam (Mukund). It shows numerous figures on horseback and on foot, engaged in the hunt. The landscape includes trees and rocky terrain.	A painting depicting a hunting scene in Lahore. It shows a group of hunters on horseback pursuing animals through a rocky, mountainous landscape.	A painting depicting Emperor Akbar hunting blackbuck. It shows a large group of people on horseback and on foot, with several animals visible in the background.
Construction Theme		
A painting depicting the demolition and new construction of the Agra fort by Miskin. It shows a large-scale engineering project with many workers, animals, and structures.	A painting depicting the construction of the city of Fatehpur Sikri. It shows a large-scale engineering project with many workers, animals, and structures.	A painting depicting Emperor Akbar inspecting the construction of a building. He is shown seated on a raised platform, surrounded by officials and workers.
Religious Paintings		



Akbar's pilgrimage to Ajmer in thanksgiving for the birth of Prince Salim (Baswan)



Akbar in Ibadat Khana (Nar Singh)

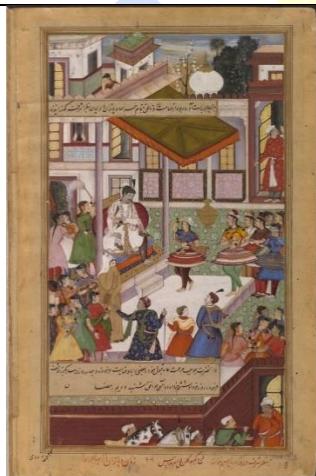


A shepherd offers flowers to a holy man, Basavan.

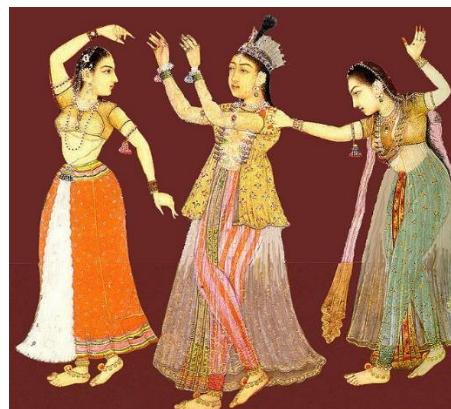


A Nath yogi as a border decoration, 1605. Reverential painting.

Dance



Kathak before Akbar



Tutinama

Prominent Painters during Akbar's reign:

- During Akbar's time, chief painters were Persian **Mir Sayyid Ali, Abd-al-Samad**. Later, many Indian artists (eg **Baswan, Miskin, Daswant**) attained great positions as court artists and Abul Fazl bestows high praise on them.
- Abul Fazl ranked Tasvir Khana artists in order of merit in the Ain.

Mishkin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A prolific painter, who avidly studied the form and technique of European paintings and engravings.
Dharamdas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He worked as a portraitist in the Chinghiz and painter in Aiyar-e-Danish.
La'l	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He was a major painter who contributed the largest number of miniatures in the Razm Nama, Ramayana, and other manuscripts.
Baswan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He was one of the most talented painters of Akbar's tasvirkhana. Abu'l Fazl has described him as a master in every part of picture making: designing, drawing, coloring, and portraiture (esp in Akbarnama)
Daswan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered to be the finest Mughal painter by both Fazl and Akbar, and became a legendary figure in his own lifetime.
Sanwala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Though Sanwala did not possess the innovation of Basawan or Mishkin, he was also a keen observer of men and nature.

(4) Jahangir

Jahangir was more interested in painting than architecture, and the art of painting was his most outstanding cultural achievement of his era. Till this point of time, there was quite a lot of Persian influence but with Jahangir, Mughal paintings came of age.

Jahangir's Patronage:

- Jahangir was a **man of discerning eye, fine sensibility and aristocratic tastes**. He collected paintings from **Europe, Persia** as well as **Deccan**.
- He revelled in the company of the artists and **appointed** them to very high posts.
 - Appointed Persian émigré **Aqa Riza** as in-charge of his painting workshop in his rebel court in Allahabad 1605.
 - He sent **Bishandas** on a diplomatic mission to Safavid Iran.

Features:

- Wide range of genres:** portraits, dynastic subjects, animals, flower, literary paintings replaced epic narrative of Akbar's reign.
 - Jahangirnama** was magnificently illustrated.
- More than book illustrations, Jahangir was interested in **Muraqqa** (decorated albums)
 - It was a collection of Portraits (tasvir) + Calligraphy (khatt) + Decorated borders.
- Decorated borders:** Originally Persian idea, decorative borders attained perfection in Jahangir's time. Arabesque and floral and animal motifs around the borders are richly interspersed with gold.

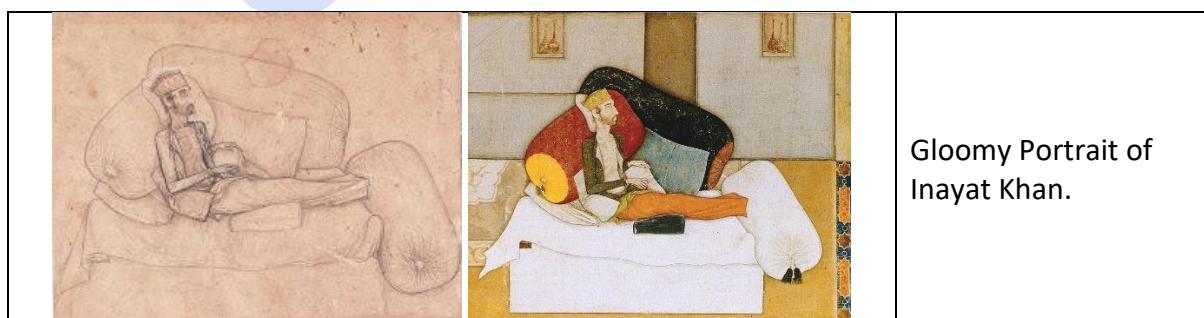
- Bishan Das, Madhu, Anant, Manohar, Govardhan, Ustad Mansur – all took Mughal painting to **zenith**. Two most important were:
 - **Ustad Mansur**: natural paintings – flora and fauna. (Title: Nadir-al-Asr)
 - **Abul Hasan**: iconographs, miniature paintings. (Title: Nadir-us-Zaman)
- **Artistic individualism** became more pronounced with the signatures of painters, sketches of painters in self-representation.
- **European influence**: Mughal art was a melting pot of various styles, yet it retained its distinct identity. The Mughal artists creatively assimilated the three styles — indigenous, Persian and European.

Five Important Themes:

- Development of **Naturalism/Mimesis** was the highest achievement of Jahangir time. They served as **objective records** of the flora and fauna.



- **Portraits**: Jahangir perfected the genre of portraits started by Akbar. Formal court scenes depict the individual more accurately.

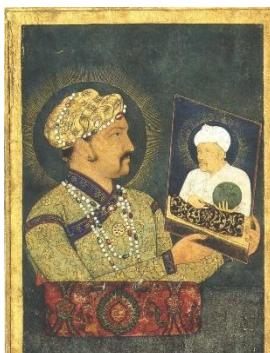


- **Complex symbolism and allegories.**

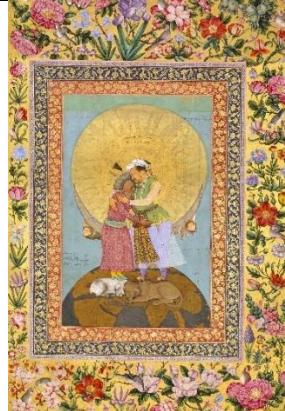
- Many different paintings with deep symbolism/allegory were painted. Their frequency increased during the last 10 years of his life.
- Some depicted fantasy of being a **world-ruler**.
 - Eg. Jahangir's imaginary encounter with contemporary monarchs has motifs such as halo, solar symbol, world map, lion-lamb juxtaposition.



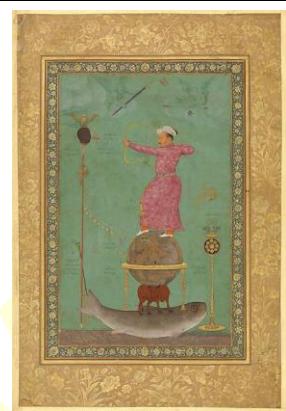
Jahangir by Abu al-Hasan



Jahangir and Akbar



Jahangir and his rival Shah Abbas.

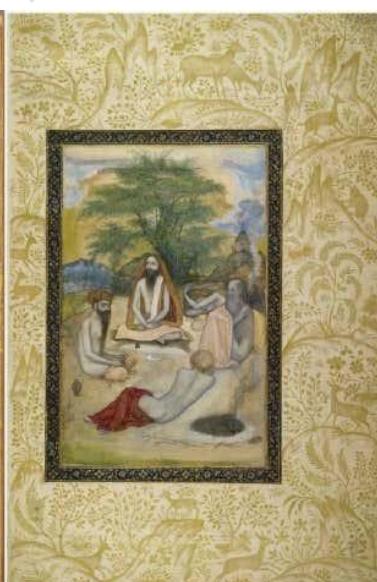
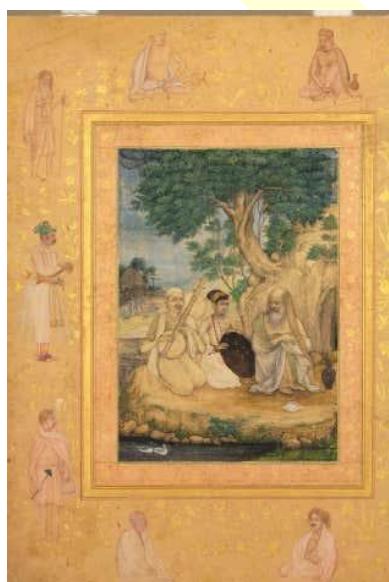


Jahangir aiming at Malik Ambar

- **Festivities and celebrations at Mughal court:**

- Majlis-i-Wazn or Tuldan (on solar and lunar birthdays)
- Jash-e-Sehat
- Ab-pash (Jahangir called it Gulab-pash)
- Jashn-i-Mahtabi (full moon)
- Jashn-e-Chiragah (Diwali)
- Navroz

- **Mysticism** attracted him, so he entertained and visited sufi holy men and ascetics. Jahangir had a specific interest in yoga and ascetic practices.



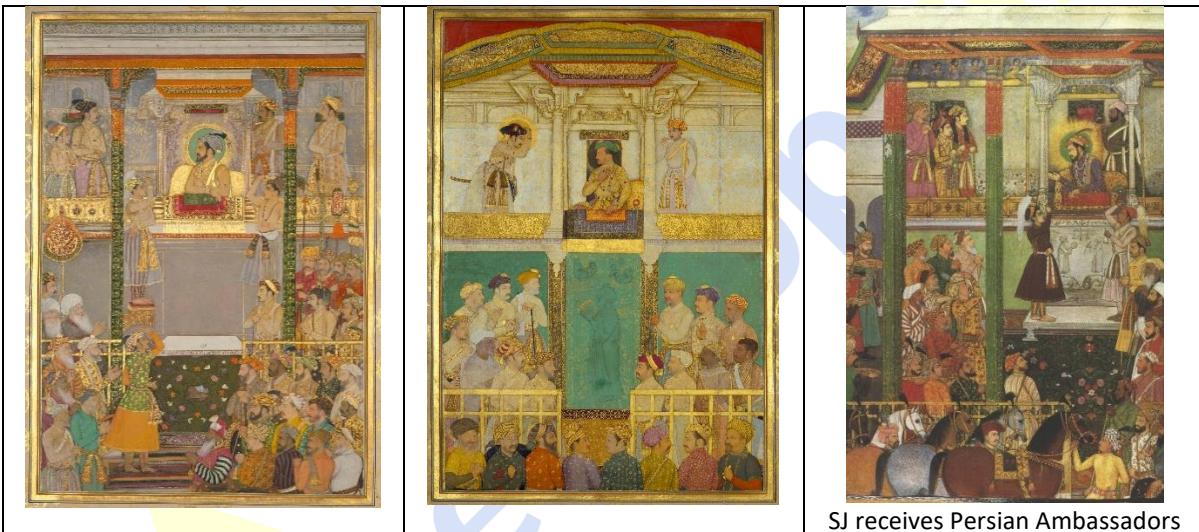
(5) Shah Jahan

Developments

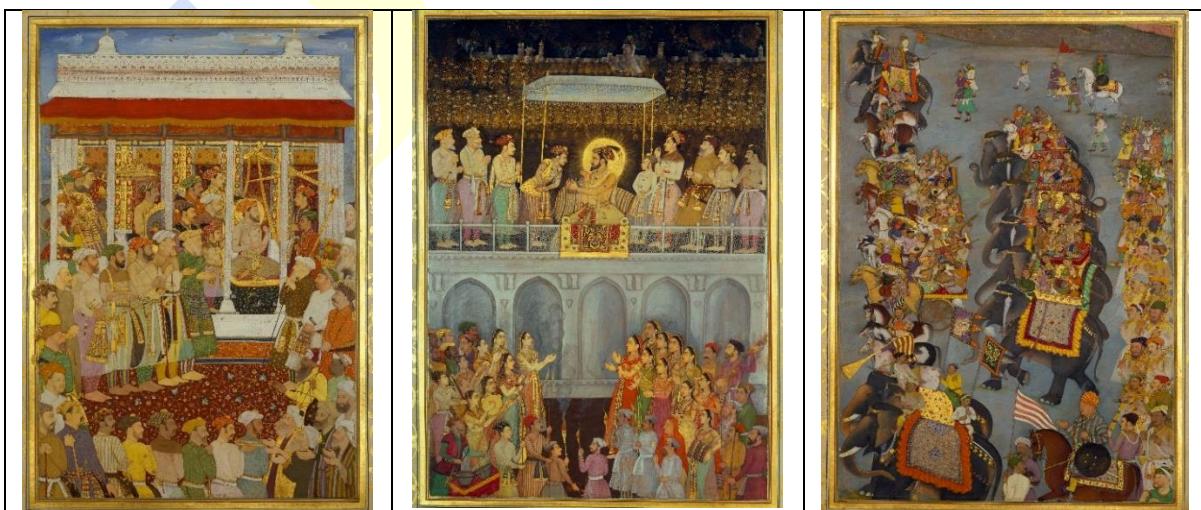
- As Shah Jahan was primarily interested in Architecture, the art of painting was not as prominent during his era, but it continued to remain important. His artists did produce great works of richness, finish and refinement.

Thematic Features

- Historical narrative (eg Padshahnama = illustrated Shahjehannama)
 - It was written by the court historian Abd al-Hamid of Lahore (pupil of Abul Fazl). During the reign of Shah Jahan, it was richly illustrated (1630-57). Nastaliq calligraphy by Muhammad Amin Mashhadi.
 - Strict formalism: the famous pictorial devise was the hallowed emperor sitting at the centre in ceremonial balcony.



- Many scenes of pomp, celebration and splendour.
 - E.g. Shah-Jahan honouring Prince Awrangzeb at his wedding (19 May 1637) – Hindu wedding tradition of Sehra-bandhi.



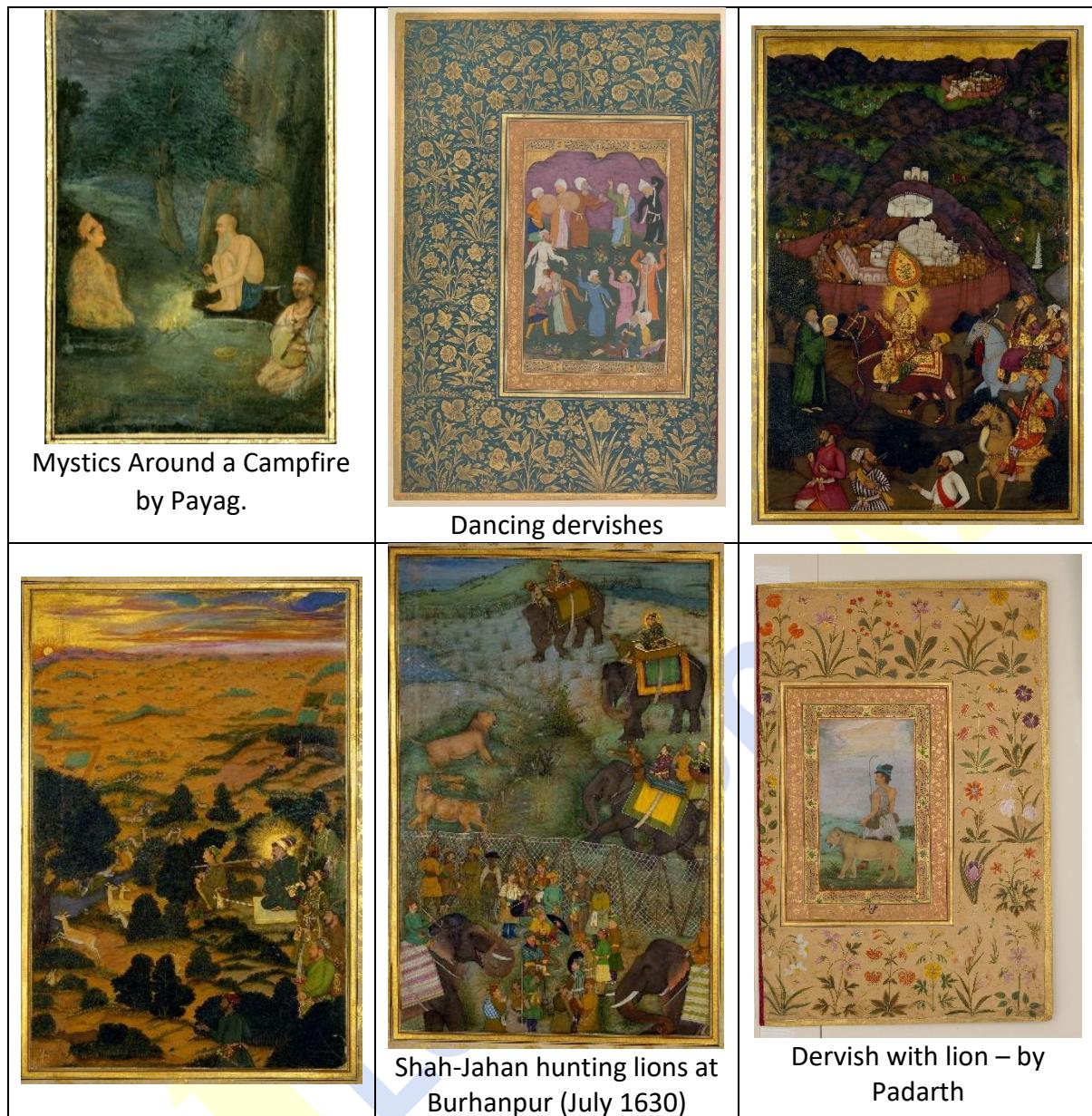
- Various wars and battle scenes are depicted with accuracy of details and portrayal of gory violence in order to impress the royal ideology.



Other Features

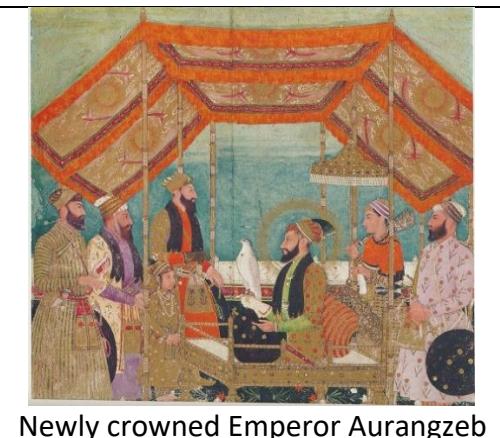
- **Siyahi Qalam:** Fine delicate line drawing tinted with washes of pale colour and gold. There was profuse use of delicate gold embroidery to indicate borders as well as costumes. Borders are generally in gold arabesque.
- Display of **lavish** jewelry, costumes, and carpet conveys a sense of elegance and sumptuousness.
- **Shamsa** (sun), **Unwan** (title page) to open Manuscripts and Muraqqas
- Though high-quality craftsmanship continued, the inner vitality of Jahangir era now started to disappear. There was rather profusion of strictly formal court-scene compositions.
- **Other prominent themes:**
 - Religion: Visit of emperor to ascetics and dervishes.
 - Many night scenes.
 - Nature: New genre of panoramic landscapes with deeper perspectives and vivid treatment of fortresses and woods.





(6) Later Mughal Tradition

Due to gradual decline of ardent patronage (Aurangzeb didn't support painting), highly skilled artists left the Mughal atelier and were welcomed by provincial Mughal elites. Although some masterworks were produced during the periods of Muhammad Shah Rangila, Shah Alam II and Bhadur Shah Zafar, these were mere last flickers. The provincial rulers, on the other hand, tried to imitate the Mughal royalties in order to recreate the glory of their dynasty and events of their court.



Deccani Style

Origin and influence: The Deccani School of Miniature Painting had its beginning in 1560 A.D. Deccani sultans, who were Persian or Afghan in origin, developed **highly sophisticated artistic cultures**. These painting styles developed and flourished in **Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda** and also in other centres of Deccan like **Hyderabad** and **Tanjore**.

- **Mughal Influence:**
 - While Mughal painting was being developing under Akbar, the art form was **evolving independently** in the Deccan.
 - When the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb threw out Mughal artists from Mughal Empire, several artists migrated to Deccan and sought patronage there. Thus, at this later stage, **Mughal influence** entered Deccan.
- **Other Influences:** Pre-Mughal styles of painting as well as Persian, Turkish and even European traditions acted as catalysts to its flowering.
 - As the **conquerors of Vijayanagara**, Deccani Sultans absorbed many pre-existing cultural traits.
 - Deccan sultans were also **better connected with the Middle East, Central Asia and Persia** than the Delhi Sultanate or Mughals ever were.
 - A **multiracial society** in Deccan, consisting of Indian Muslims, Hindus, Turks, Persians, Arabs and African shaped its pictorial idiom.
 - **Sensibilities of the ruling class:** It was patronised by a class of rulers, who had their peculiar political and cultural vision.

Stylistic and Thematic features:

- **Scenes**
 - **Historic scenes**
 - Portraits, history illustrations, royal scenes etc.
 - Shahnama of Firdausi.
 - **Dramatic intensity:** Unique sensuality and intense colours have strong affinity to regional aesthetics.
 - **Preferred dense compositions:**
 - Densely packed group of people in **war scenes**)
 - Vigorous poses and forward thrust of a moving crowd.
 - Creation of an aura of **romance**, invariably expressed itself in **nature**.
 - Battle scenes are of relatively less artistic interest, but those depicting the queen and her marriage are delightful with gorgeous colours and sensuous lines.
 - **Decorative Paintings:** Deccani paintings were mostly decorative especially Hyderabad painting like the flowerbeds, costumes, rich and brilliant colours, facial features etc.

- Brilliant colours, bold drawing and shading:** Brilliant and beautiful colours have been used in Deccani paintings. Golden colour has been used largely in the paintings where architecture is shown and also in the costumes, jewellery, utensils etc.

- Style**

- Human figures, their faces, ornaments and clothing are typically Indian and show great influence of **Lepakshi/Hampi style**.
- Background architectural style is generally influenced by **Deccani style**.
- Persian Influence:** High horizon, lavish use of golden colour, the landscape, golden sky, some flowering plants and arabesques on the top of the throne etc. all have a Persian influence on them. Also, highly artistic calligraphy shows distinct Persian influence.

(1) Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar (1490-1636)

 Battle of Talikota	<p>Tarif-e-Hussain Shahi (at BISM, Pune) It is an unfinished Persian epic-style poems celebrating the reign of Hussain Nizam Shah I.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It combines Persian elements with Indian figures (esp. women in their indigenous costumes)
 Dohad scene	<p>Mixture of various styles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The women costume and hairstyle belong to the northern tradition of pre-Mughal painting. Only a long scarf, passing round the body below the hips, is a southern fashion (Lepakshi). The palette is richer and more brilliant than Mughal's. Persian landscape: The high circular horizon and gold sky.
 Portrait of Burhan Nizam Shah II	<p>Portraiture: Mimicking the Mughal style with some European influence (like naturalism, 3D effect)</p>

(2) Bijapur

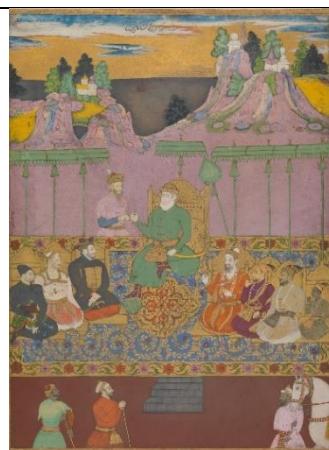
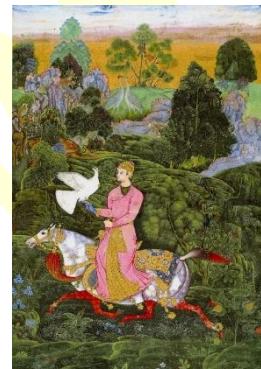
It was the most influential Deccani Sultanate. As it was a great centre of culture, trade and commerce, education and learning, it was also a melting pot of cultures. Due to many prominent cities, during its heyday of glory, there was a conflux of different communities and the people. Bijapur city itself thus became a great metropolis of Deccan. Its **cosmopolitan nature** is reflected in its intense and unique artistic activity. **Ali Adil Shah I (1558–1580), Ibrahim II (1580–1627)** were the two great patrons with liberal patronage to many scholars, poets, painters, dancers, calligraphers, musicians, Sufi saints and other men of arts.



Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II, Bijapur, c. 1590. The 3/4th profile gives a powerful impression of the sitter, despite lacking Mughal precision.

Young Ibrahim Adil Shah II hawking, c. 1590.

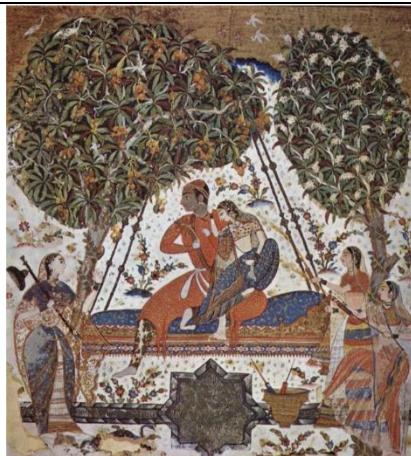
This is a painting of extraordinary energy and sensibility. Persian influence is evident in the treatment of the horse and rocks.



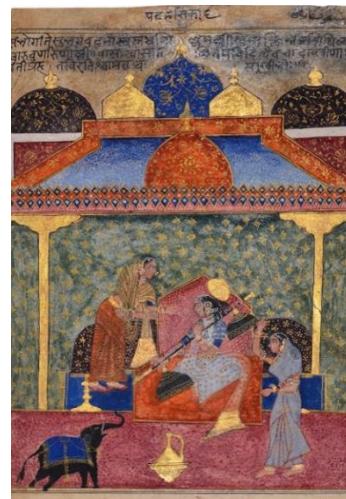
The House of Bijapur (1683) by Kamal Muhammad. This representation of the dynasty's assembly was inspired by the Mughals.



Najum-ul-ulum (starts of the sciences, 1570). It illustrated encyclopedia about ancient Indian astrology and astral magic. Here, **Throne of Prosperity.**



Raga Hindola (Vasant Ritu, onset of spring)

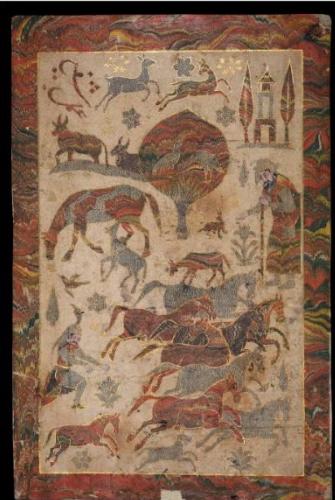


Patahansika Ragini (1590s):
Surrounded by attendants,
she plays the veena in a state of bliss after a night of
lovemaking.

Deccani Yognis: “Portraits of young women ascetics with princess-like appearance were created by Deccan painters who saw them as evolved beings” BN Goswami.



Extraordinary, **marbled painting** (Shafi).
Marbling originated either in Turkey or in Persia and then reached the Deccani courts.



Emaciated Horse and Rider (ca. 1625)
Application of marbling is typical of Deccan taste.

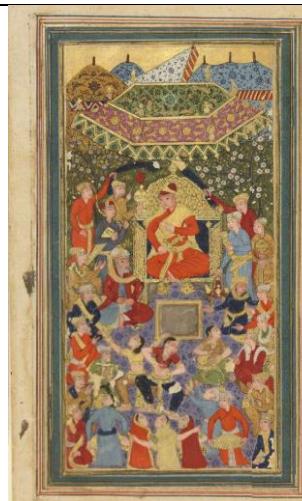
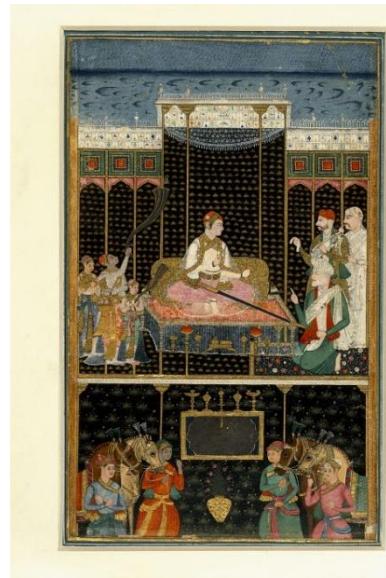


(3) Qutb Shahi of Golconda

Qutb Shahi sultans were great patrons of Persianate Shiite culture. Over time, eventually they also adopted local regional Deccani culture of Telugu region.

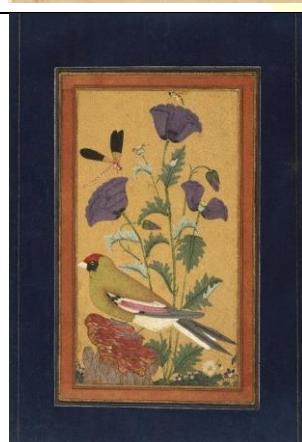
Golconda Art

- The earlier Golconda paintings, at times as large as 8 feet high, were made as wall hangings.
- Golconda** portraits owed much to **Mughal influence**.
- Attention to the **gold jewellery** worn by both women and men.
- Golconda's art became popular as **Dutch merchants** carried the portraits of sultans in the late 17th century to **Europe**.
- Contributed to the emergence of sub-schools: Hyderabad, Sholapur, Cudappah, Kurnool, Wanparty.



Dancing girls entertaining the company: Gold colour has been lavishly used in painting the architecture, costume, jewellery and vessels etc.

Composite Horse: Includes human figures intertwined in it.



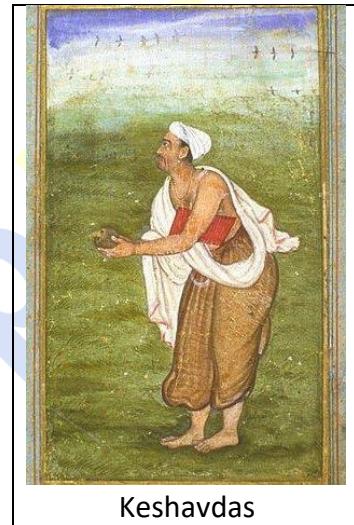
Finch, Poppies, Dragonfly, and Bee India (Golconda), 1650-1670

Poet in a garden.

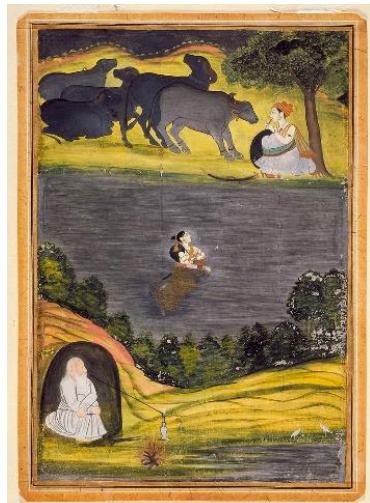


General Thematic Analysis

- **Religious (mostly Vaishnavism)**
 - Ramayana, Mahabharata
 - Geet Govind of Jayadeva (Shringara Rasa)
 - Bhagavata Purana
 - Devi Mahatmya
 - Works of Surdas – Sursagar
 - Profuse use of Radha-Krishna theme
- **Love**
 - Amaru Shataka
 - Ragamala – pictorial interpretations
 - Rasmanjiri by Bhanudutta
 - Rasikapriya by Keshavdas (Bundeli Geetgovind)
 - Kavipriya
 - Bihari Satsai
 - 700 verses composed by Bihari Lal in 1662 in the court of Mirza Raja Jaisingh.
- **Sanskrit Classics**
 - Kadambini of Banabhatta
 - Naishadhiyacharitam by Sriharsha (deals with Nala Damayanati episode)
- **Folklore, oral traditions, and ballads**
 - Dhola Maru
 - Madhavanala-Kamakandala
 - Hammira-hatha By Chandrashekhar (early modern times)
 - Sohni-Mahinwal
 - Laur Chanda
 - Mrigavat
 - Chaur Panchashika
 - Panchatantra
- **Darbar scenes, royal portraits, historic moments**
 - Inspired by Mughals
 - Custom of employing court artists like Mughals (however small) became a prestige among the feudal lords of Rajputana
 - Hunting expeditions, wars and victories; picnics, garden parties, dance and music performances; rituals, festivals and wedding processions; portraits of kings, courtiers and their families; city views



Keshavdas



Rajasthani Paintings

Rajasthani School was a continuation of old Indian tradition. Various Rajasthani painting styles flourished between 16th to early 19th c.

- **Various princely states divided by Aravallis:**

- Wes: desert states of Jodhpur, Bikaner and Jaisalmer reaching upto Indus.
- East: temperate regions stretching upto Chambal including states of Mewar, Bundi, Jaipur, Kishangarh, Kotah



- **Chronology:** In the beginning, this school had Mughal influence, but later it was established as a purely Indian art having no Mughal influence.

- Started first in **Mewar**, then spread to Bundi.
- Next phase with predominant **Mughal influence** in Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur.
- Sudden spurt of indigenous flowering in Kishangarh.
- Finally, Kotah hunting scenes bring the Rajasthani painting history to close.

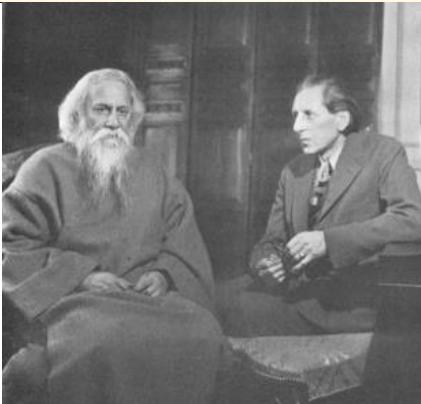
- **Three major factors:**

- Economic prosperity enjoyed by the commercial community of Rajasthan.
- Influence of Mughal court
- Growth of Vaishnavism.
- Rajasthani School did not originate as miniature, but it was primarily a mural art. That is why, in many schools, the miniature painting themes were also accompanied by palace murals.

- **Characteristics features of Rajasthani School of Miniature Painting:**

- **Subject Matter:** There is a great variety in subjects of Rajasthani Paintings, based on seasons, music, hunting scenes, religious themes like Ramayana, Mahabharata etc., love scenes, ragmala series etc. In love scenes, Krishna and Radha have been depicted.
- **Themes**
 - **Depiction of Nature:** Nature has also been depicted very beautifully.
 - Different types of trees, floral trees, mountains, water springs and lakes have been depicted in a very attractive manner.
 - Generally, local scenery is present in the background.
 - **Facial features:**
 - Faces are full of emotions and feelings according to the mood.
 - Faces are in profile, elongated and oval, the forehead is inclining downwards, long and pointed nose, swelling out lips and pointed chin.
 - **Depiction of women:** The women of Kishangarh School are very impressive.
 - **Costumes:**

- Females are wearing Lehanga and Choli with transparent Dupatta.
- Males are wearing turbans and Jhoba (a group of threads), pyjama and Patka.
- **Technical Aspects**
 - **Colour Scheme:** The main colours used are the primitive/primary colours (red, yellow & blue), green, brown and white. Quite often the coours are brilliant (e.g. golden and silver).
 - **Colour pigments** were predominantly obtained from **minerals and precious metals** like gold and silver that were mixed with glue as the binding medium. Camel and squirrel hair were used in brushes.
 - **Lines:** The lines are very fine, powerful and rhythmic. However, outlines are bold.

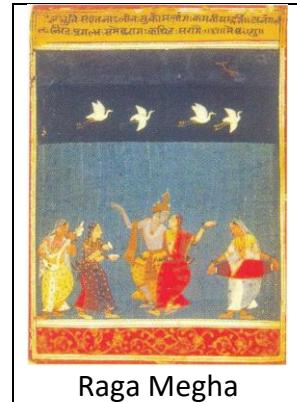
	<p>A processional scene depicting Col James Tod riding an elephant, accompanied by Captain Waugh, Dr Duncan, and Lt. Carey on horseback. By Chokha in 1817 (Udaipur)</p>
	<p>Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (pioneer scholar of Indian art history) with Rabindranath Tagore about 1930.</p>

(1) Malwa

- The Malwa School flourished between 1600-1700 CE and is most representative of the Hindu Rajput courts.
- Its two-dimensional simplistic language appears as a consummation of stylistic progression from the Jain manuscripts to the Chaurpanchashika manuscript paintings.
- Among the few early dated sets are an illustrated poetic text of Amaru Shataka dated 1652 CE and a Ragamala painting by Madho Das in 1680 CE.
- A large number of Malwa paintings discovered from the **Datia Palace** collection supports a claim for Bundelkhand as the region of painting. A **complete absence of the mention of**

- **patron kings** and also portraits in this school supports a view that these paintings were bought by the Datia rulers from travelling artists, who carried paintings on popular themes, such as the Ramayana, Bhagvata Purana, Amaru Shataka, Rasikapriya, Ragamala and Baramasa, among others.

Malwa Bhagvata Purana is a typical example of Malwa style, where the space is carefully **compartmentalized** with each section narrating different scenes of an episode.



(2) Mewar

Mewar's contribution to the history of Rajasthani paintings is of **paramount importance**. Many of the Mewar paintings are **dated**, thus allowing a **proper sequencing of the evolution** from the 16th century onward.

Early Phase:

- Long wars with the Mughals have wiped out most early examples. Surviving paintings show prosperous social conditions reflected in architecture and costumes.
- Most Important: **Ragamala series (Chawand**, earlier capital of Mewar) in 1605 by Nasiruddin/Nasirdin.



Mature Phase:

- Under reign of Jagat Singh I, artists Sahibdin and Manohar added new vitality to the style and vocabulary of Mewar paintings.
- **Features:**
 - Bright colours.
 - Lush vegetation treated decoratively.
 - Scant perspective to represent simple architectural details .
 - Definite facial type (oval face, narrow forehead, prominent noses, fish-like eyes, small mouths)
 - Horses and elephants are naturalistically painted while other animals still follow western Indian idiom.
- **Master Painters**
 - **Sahibdin** was the greatest master of the mature Mewar style. He transformed Mewar from primitive folk-style into sophisticated. He deftly combined Mughal art with Rajput style. Though Muslim, Sahibdin was fully at ease with Hindu themes. He came to prominence with Ragamala series, 1628.
 - He crafted a novel pictorial device that of oblique aerial perspective to impart credibility to the ambitious scale that war pictures encompass. Deploying various narrative techniques, he either layers several episodes into a single painting as this one, or spreads a single episode over more than one folio.
 - **Manohar** was another exceptional artist known for his work on Bal Kand of Ramayana.
 - **Jagannath** was one more gifted artist who painted Bihari Satsai in 1719.
- **Examples:** Another Ragamala series, Rasikpriya, Nayaka-Nayikabhera series, Bhagavata Purana, Yuddhakanda of Ramayana, Sukar Kshetra Mahatmya.



Malavi Ragini (Ragamala) 1628 by Sahibdin



Yuddha Kanda of Ramayana, Sahibdin.

Final Phase with decline & degeneration:

- Increasing shift from textual representation to secular scenes of **courtly activities and royal pastimes**.
- Large quantity of pictures produced during this period **lacks charming quality** of the earlier time. Thus, the glory of Mewar **lost its vigour**.



Nathdwara's Pichwai Paintings

Nathdwara emerged as a new painting nucleus near Udaipur. This style of painting evolved in the service of Vallabhacharya's Pushiti Marga sect of Vaishanivism.

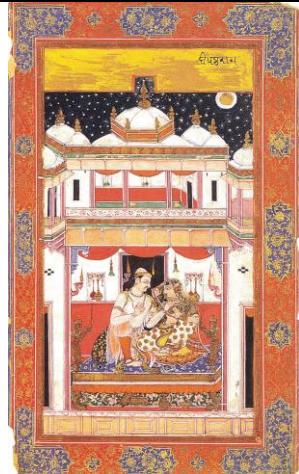
- Large backdrops called pichhwais were painted on cloth for the deity, Shrinathji (7 years old Krishna)
 - Intricate and visually stunning
 - Depict tales from Lord Krishna's life.
 - Other common subjects: Radha, gopis, cows, lotuses.
 - Festivals and celebrations
- Creating a pichwai can take several months, and requires immense skill, as the smallest details need to be painted with precision.



(3) Bundi

Evolution:

- In the early period, Bundi and Kota paintings cannot be distinguished because Bundi formed a unified state with Kota till mid-17th century.
- **During the Early Phase:** Strong Mughal influence
 - The early series of Ragamala at Bundi bears an inscription in Persian that dates back to 1591, and mentions names of its artists who introduce themselves as pupils of master artists, Mir Sayyid Ali and Khwaja Abddus Samad of the Mughal court.
 - **Mughal Elements:** in landscape, sometimes pavilions, chajjas and interiors.
- **Maturity and most accomplished phase:**
 - **Umed Singh** (1749–71): Bundi style acquired refinement in minuteness of details. It imbibed Deccani aesthetics. Deccani elements were formal gardens with floral beds and fountains, cylindrical women, love for bright and vivid colours.
 - **Animals and Nature:**
 - **Bishen Singh** (1771–1821)'s scenes of hunting wild animals frequently figure.
 - It also has a series of fine equestrian portraits. The drawing of elephants is, particularly, unsurpassed in both Bundi and Kota.
 - **Landscape:** hills, jungles, flowing rivers, lakes (lotus pond inspired from Mandu)
 - Bundi artists had their own standards of feminine beauty. Women are petite with round faces, sharp noses, full cheeks, sharp eyebrows, a 'pinched' waist.
 - **Common Themes:** Ragmala, Baramasa, Rasikapriya, Bhagavata Purana
- **Final stage: Wall Paintings**
 - Under **Ram Singh** (1821–89), Bundi palace was decorated with murals of royal processions, hunting scenes and episodes of Krishna's story.
 - It gradually declined towards the end of the 18th century, as the quality suffered though profuse production.



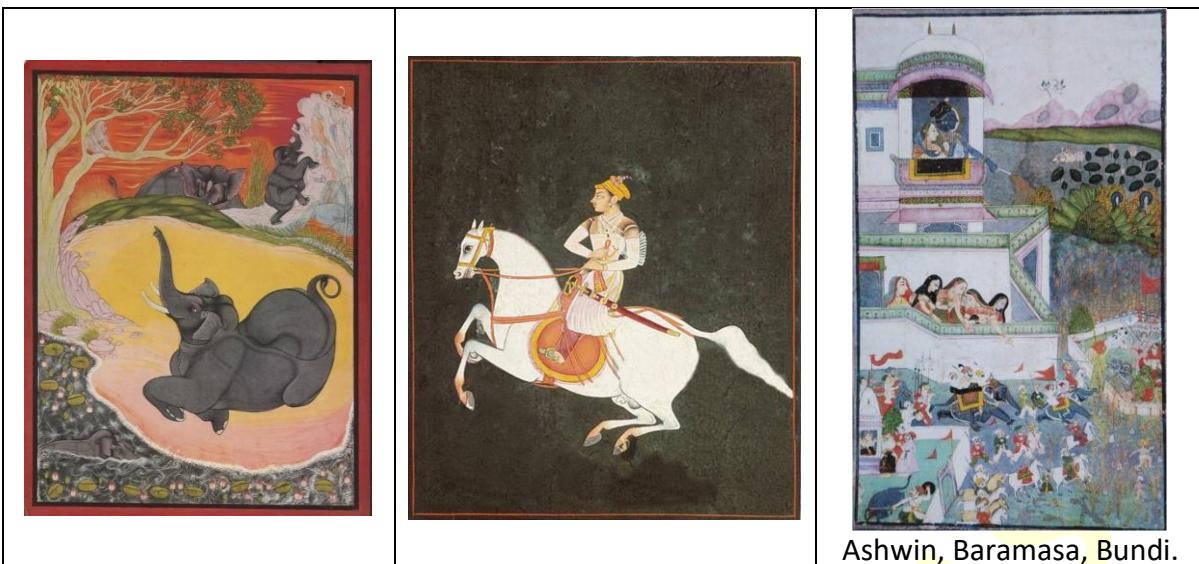
Raga Dipak

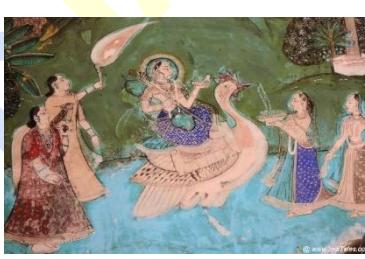


Rao Umed Singh is shown with a halo.



Raja Bishan Singh of Bundi



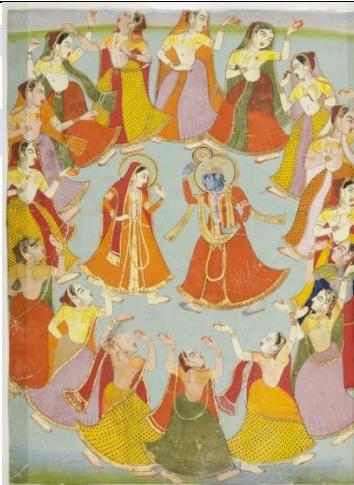
Bundi Murals (Umaid Bhawan Palace, Bundi)		
		
Elephant's participating in a war	Woman Hunting Deer	Saraswati Painting
		
Krishna Leela Paintings		

(4) Jaipur

- **Sawai Jai Singh** (1699–1743), an influential ruler, shifted from Amer to the newly established **capital city Jaipur** in 1727. Jaipur School of paintings thrived under his reign and emerged as a well-defined independent school.
 - He invited eminent craftsmen and artists (including some Mughal painters) to settle down in Jaipur and reorganised the **Suratkhana**, the place where paintings were made and stored.
 - There was a strong Mughal influence over this school.
 - **Portrait painting** was also popular during his time and an accomplished portrait painter, **Sahibram**, was part of his atelier.
 - He was drawn to the **Vaishnavite** sect and commissioned numerous paintings on the theme of Radha and Krishna. Artists during his reign painted sets based on Rasikapriya, Gita Govinda, Baramasa and Ragamala, where the hero's figure is in striking resemblance with the king.
- **Pratap Singh** (1770-1803)
 - In the 18th century, the Mughal influence was thrown off and a genuine Jaipur style emerged as the aesthetics were reformulated. Under him over 50 artists worked.
 - Many pictures are devoted to **Krishna theme**. Literary and religious themes, such as Gita Govinda, Ragamala, Bhagvata Purana, etc
 - **Royal portraits**, courtly pomp and splendour.
 - By the early nineteenth century, there was a **lavish use of gold**.
 - Jaipur preferred large size formats and produced life-size portraits.



Sawai Jai Singh, the founder of Jaipur, today UNESCO WHS.



Krishna performing a folk dance.



The Hour of Godhuli, Jaipur, 1780.



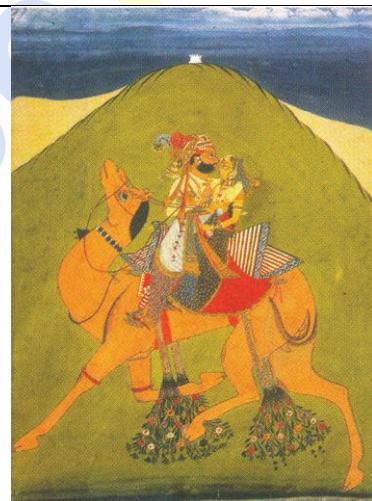
Bharat meets Rama at Chitrakut, Ramayana, by Guman, 1740s

(5) Jodhpur

It was the largest state of Rajasthan and home to the Rathore clan of Rajputs. In 1459, Rao Jodha founded Jodhpur.

- **Mixture of Indigenous with Mughal Styles:**

- Originally, it followed **Jain style of western India** since the patrons were mostly Jain merchants.
- With the **political presence of Mughals** since the 16th century, influence of their visual aesthetics made its way in the style of portraiture and depiction of court scenes, etc.
 - Due to the matrimonial relations with the Mughals Jodhpur soon followed **Mughal portraits style**.
 - **Maharaja Jaswant Singh** (1638–1678), who served as Mughal viceroy of Malwa, Deccan and Gujarat, started a trend for **documentary painting** through portraiture and court life. Numerous portraits of Jaswant Singh survive today.
- However, the **formidable indigenous folkish style** was deeply embedded in culture that it resisted getting overpowered and managed to prevail.
 - Rajasthani preference for **rhythmic lines and jewel-like colours** asserted itself.
 - Due to his inclination towards the Vallabha cult of Shrinathji, Jaswant Singh patronised many **Krishna-related themes**, with Bhagvata Purana as the most prominent one.
 - **Ajit Singh** (1679–1724) became the king after 25 years of war with Aurangzeb. **Durgadas and his heroism** were popularly celebrated in poems and court paintings of Ajit Singh's period. Durgadas's equestrian (horse riding) portraits became popular.



Dhola and Maru, Jodhpur, 1810



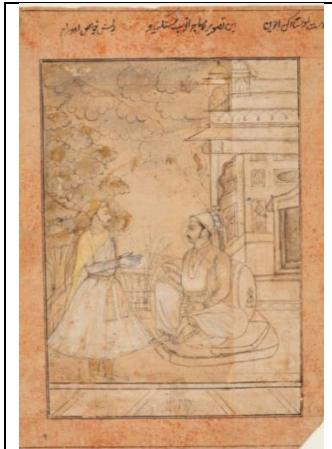
Chaugan Player by Dana

- **A true Jodhpur style developed only after 1760 during Bijai Singh.**

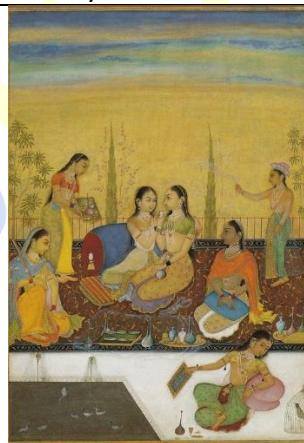
- Beautifully long uplifted eyes – notable feature of Jodhpur style.
- **The last but the brightest phase** was during the reign of **Man Singh (1803-1843)**
 - After British took over Jodhpur, Man Singh devoted all his time in pursuit of art and literature. Man Singh was the follower of the Nath Sampradaya and paintings of him in the company of the Nath gurus survive. His own poem Krishna Vilas and other stories from Shiva Purana, Ramayana, Nala Charita, Durga Charita as well as Panchatantra, Dhola-Maru were illustrated.

(6) Bikaner

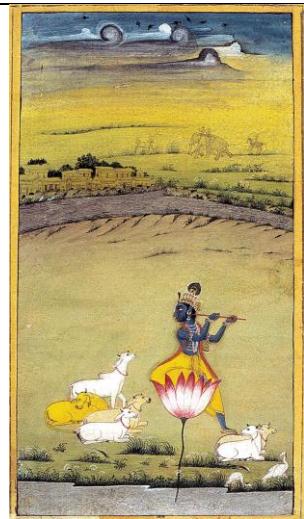
- **Rao Bika Rathore (1438-1504)** established one of the most prominent kingdoms, Bikaner, in 1488.
- **Mandis** (studios): In these studios, many artists worked under the supervision of a **master artist**. Apart from making new miniatures, the studio did **marammat** (repairing) and **nakals** (copies) of older works.
- When Bikaner accepted Mughal sovereignty, many artists from Mughal court migrated and thus it emerged as an important painting centre with **high Mughal character**.
- During his regime, **Anup Singh (1669–1698)** instituted a **library** in Bikaner that became a repository of manuscripts and paintings.
 - Bikaner king Anup Singh had served in Deccan for long and acquire a fine collection of paintings of Bijapur. So, from this point onwards, there was **Deccani influence**. (Clever use of jewel-like colours, landscape details, treatment of cattle)
- **Master Artists**
 - **Ali Raza** was an important painter who painted in the Shah Jahan style.
 - In the reign of Anup Singh, **Ruknuddin** (whose ancestors came from Mughal court) was the master artist, whose style amalgamated Rajasthani, Deccani and Mughal conventions. He painted Ramayana, Rasikapriya and Durga Satpsati.
 - Ruknuddin's son **Shahadin** painted one of the finest Bikaner masterpieces Krishna supporting Govardhan mountain.



Maharaja Anup Singh
by Ruknuddin



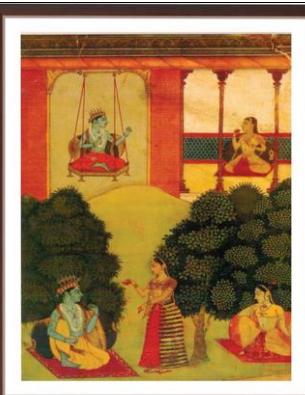
Ladies party on roof
(Ruknuddin)



Krishna playing flute
surrounded by Cows.



Krishna supporting Mount Govardhan by Shahadin,
Bikaner, 1690

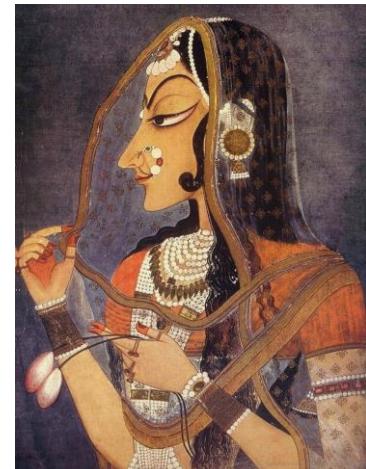
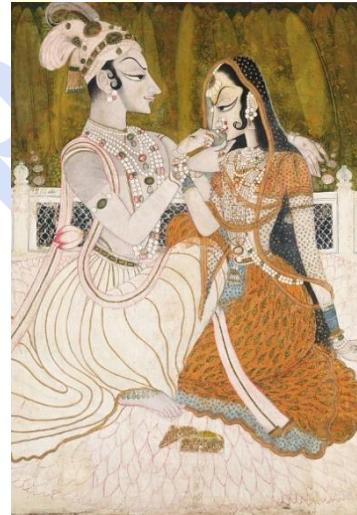


Krishna on Swing, Rasikpriya,
1683 (Nuruddin)

(7) Kishangarh

This was the most stylized of all Rajasthani miniatures, known for exquisite sophistication and distinct facial type.

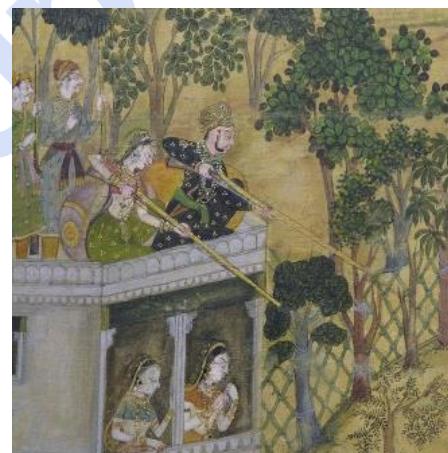
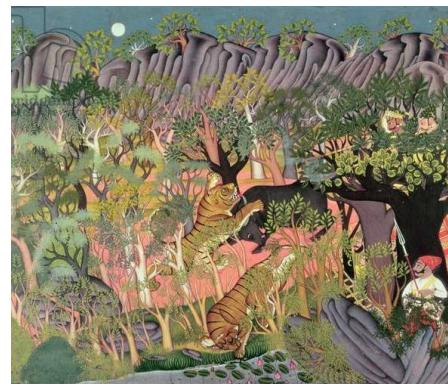
- While by 1700 century, most Rajasthani states had come close to their end, a sudden spark of genius lit up in the small state of Kishangarh.
- **Raj Singh (1706–48):** A distinctive style of the state emerged.
 - Making lavish use of green, penchant for depicting **panoramic landscapes**.
 - When Raj Singh was initiated into the Pushtimargiya of Vallabhacharya, **Krishna Lila** themes became personal favourites.
- **Raja Sawant Singh (1748-57):**
 - He was a Great devotee of Krishna and wrote many poems in Brijbhasha by name of Nagari Das.
 - He fell in love with a maid called Bani Thani, who was also well-versed in poetry.
 - **Nihal Chand**, an outstanding artist composed paintings on Sawant Singh's poetry that portrayed the theme of divine lovers — Radha and Krishna Thus,
 - The couple is placed in courtly surroundings, often appearing tiny in the **vastness and minutiae of their panoramic landscape settings**.
 - **Blending of poetry and painting.**
 - **Unique face of Bani Thani:** Long eyes curved upwards, exaggerated arch of eyebrows, decorative curl of hair spiraling down the cheek in front of ear, long straight nose, thin lips and pronounced chin.
 - E.g. hallmark painting is of Bani Thani



- Troubled by fratricidal conflict, eventually he abdicated the throne in 1757 and retired to Vrindavan along with Bani Thani.

(8) Kotah

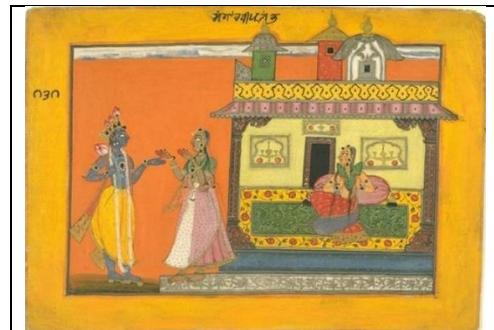
- Kota state was created by Jahangir as an offshoot of Bundi in 1625.
 - After its separation from Bundi, Kota had its own painting school. In the following decades, Kota style of painting became strikingly individual.
- The hilly tracts of Kotah lent themselves for **hunting scenes** which have an exceptional **excitement of animal chase**.
 - **Royal forays into jungle for hunt**
 - Umed Singh (1770–1819) occupied himself with wildlife and gaming from an early age and spent most of his time in hunting expeditions. Paintings served as flattering records of his exploits.
 - Even ladies took part in hunting as expert shots.
 - **Real theme of painting is:**
 - **Excitement of chase, thrill of adventure**, combat and struggle for life and death
 - Jungle and wildlife are the major part, hunters play minor role. Thus, for the first time, **landscape was the real subject** of compositions.
 - **Style**
 - Rajasthani love for simplified forms (not Mughal attention to details)
 - Vegetation, animals – refinement of Jahangir-era naturalism
 - No ulterior or allegorical meaning in forms – direct and simple



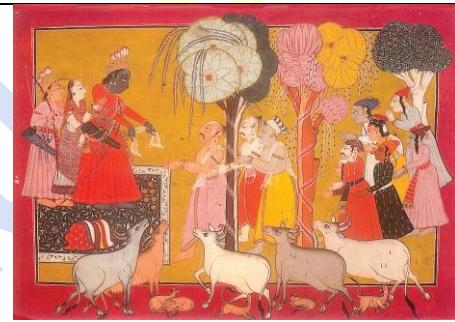
Pahari Painting

(1) Basohli

- It is considered as the **cradle of Pahari miniatures**, which later evolved into Kangra painting.
- Painting here was considered **primarily as a religious art** and it was rooted in folk tradition. Over time, there was a **fusion of religious + folk + Mughal**.
- **Evolution:**
 - **Sangram Pal** (r. 1635-73)
 - He adopted **Vaishnavism**. Thus, early paintings show its influence.
 - He also came **in contact with Mughal painters** when he visited court of Shah Jahan.
 - **Kirpal Singh** (1678-93) was an enlightened prince. Under him, Basohli developed a distinctive and magnificent style.
 - **Vaishnavism** took roots – so Bhagavata Purana, Geeta Govinda.
 - With **Manaku, Guler influence** crept in (lush scenery, fluency of line). Gradually, Guler elements were assimilated and distinctive Basohli style soon vanished. When **Nainsukh** came here for pilgrimage, his style was **absorbed**.
 - Thus, a new style of painting came in vogue during 1690s to 1730s, which was referred to as the Guler-Kangra phase. Artists during this period indulged in experimentation and improvisations that finally resulted and moulded into the **Kangra style**.
 - **Spread of Basohli influence:** Artist ateliers from Basohli gradually spread to other hill states, such as Chamba and Kullu, giving rise to local variations of the Basohli kalam. By mid-18th century, it had influenced styles in many hill states – Mankot, Nurpur, Lulu, Mandi, Suket, Bilaspur, Nalagarh, Chamba, Kangra etc.
- **Basohli Style:**
 - **Bold vitality of colour and line:** Strong use of primary colours and warm yellows to fill the background and horizon.



Radha and Krishna (Rasmanjari)

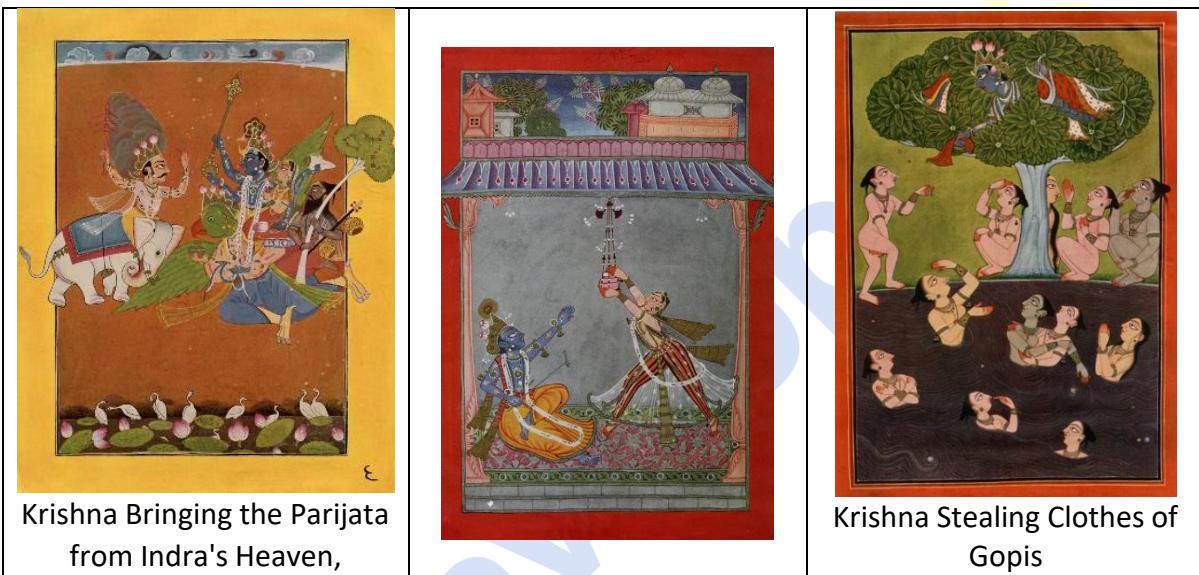


Rama gives away his possessions.



Krishna attacked by Dhenukasur (Bhagavata Purana)

- **Borders:**
 - Mostly bright red to symbolize passion
 - Often the scenes cut into border or ruthlessly fit in.
 - Often inscriptions in **Takri script**
- **Background:** Stark and conventionalised
 - Lush scenery (from Guler)
 - Rhododendron with brilliant red flowers is favourite.
 - Architecture resembles Mughal or Rajasthani style.
- **Human forms**
 - Female type with sharp intense emotions and Mughal clothes
- **Jewellery:** Profusion of jewellery – lavish ornaments (pearls, emeralds)



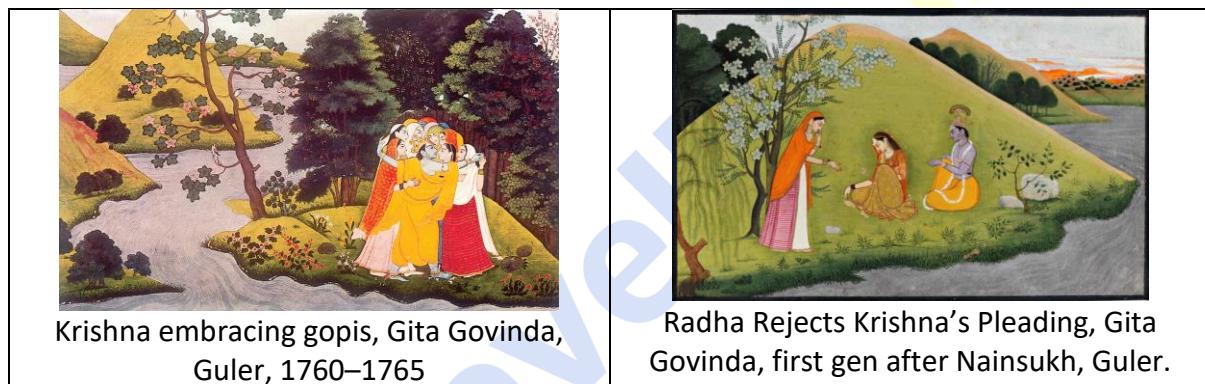
(2) Guler (Haripur Capital)

Guler state was established by Raja Hari Chand in 1405 between Punjab plains and Kangra Valley. This was the actual birthplace of Kangra painting style, and sometimes it can be termed as an *early phase of Kangra Kalam*.

Older tradition:

- **Dalip Singh (r. 1695-1741): Early Phase**
 - Artists running away during invasion of Nadir Shah (1739) came here for safe haven, thus **late Mughal style influence** of Muhammad Shah Rangile period is seen.
 - Many early portraits belong to Dalip Singh, thus indicating **royal interest** in painting.
- **Guler-Kangra Phase (or Pre-Kangra phase):** The first quarter of the 18th c saw a complete transformation due to two reasons:
 - Pandit Seu with his sons Manak and Nainsukh changed the course of painting.

- Passionate patronage of **Raja Govardhan Chand** (1744–73) and his son **Prakash Chand**.
- **Style:**
 - More refined, subdued and elegant compared to the bold vitality of the Basohli style.
 - Effectively assimilated Rajput and Mughal types emerged in full vigour
 - Later this style matured in Kangra by 1780s.
- **Themes:**
 - **Background: Picturesque scenery** of Guler
 - Abundant use of **local scenery** – trees, hills, wavy ridges
 - **Plain background, use of gold**
 - **Naturalistic treatment of animals, and birds in pairs**
 - **Angular architecture with no perspective**
 - **Human forms:** Beauty, serenity and grace of women – most characteristic and lovely idealization of Guler women.
 - **Portrait:** Raja Govardhan Chand listening to musicians.

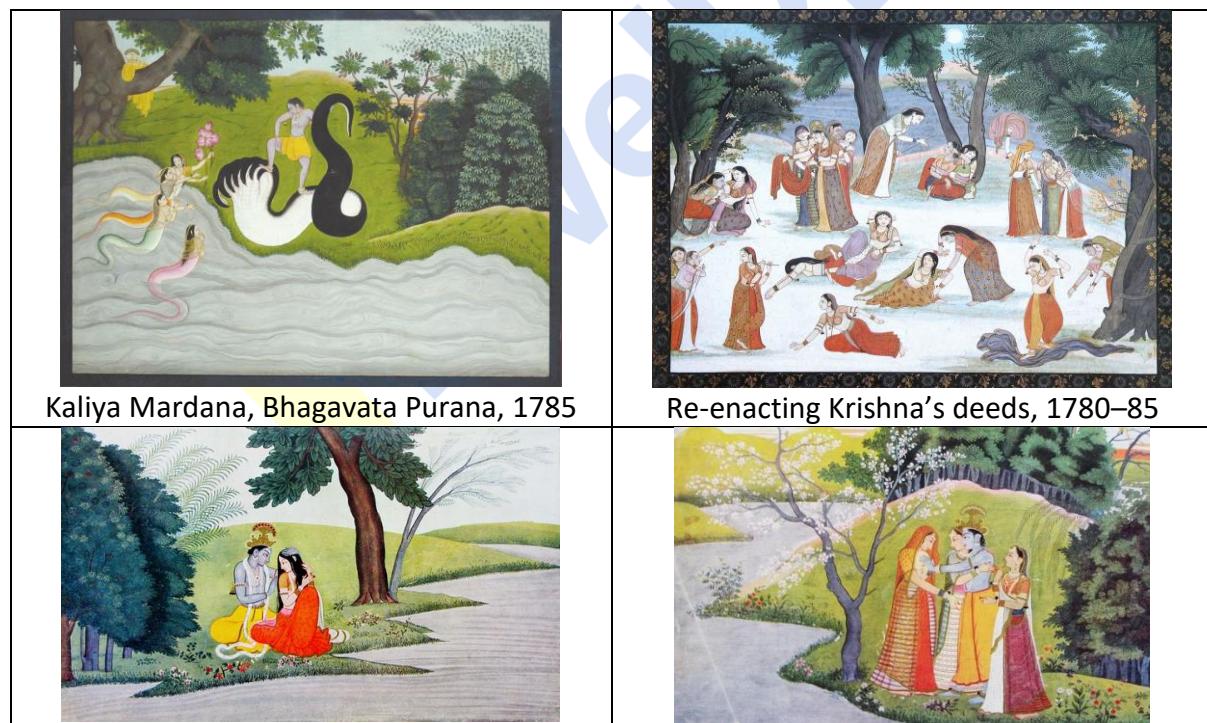


(3) Kangra

Kangra school of painting:

- Early influence of **Guler** and **Mughal** styles. When Guler declined, Kangra rose to become the most prominent Pahari kingdom under **Sansar Chand (1775-1823)**. He was a visionary leader, military power, an aesthete, one of the greatest patrons of art of Kangra style. He had interest in poetry, music and painting. He established ‘**Chhattis Karkhanas**’ each dedicated to a different art.
- Lured by wealth and generous patronage, painters flocked to his court, including those from the neighbouring state of Guler. The court favourite was Manaku’s son Kausala, Fattu, Purkhu, and Bassia. Others are Nainsukh’s son Gaudhu.
- Under his patronage, more than 40,000 paintings were produced.
- **Themes**
 - **Royal activities:** Royal portraits of Sansar Chand.

- **Krishna theme and his romantic literature:** Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata Purana, Jayadeva's Geet Govind, Rasikapriya of Keshavdas, Satsai of Bihari, Baramasa, Ragamala
- Intertwined **music, poetry, romance and religion** in their paintings.
- **Style**
 - Mastery over **delicate lines**: Fluid, refined and deceptively free lines.
 - Sensitive portrayal of **nature**.
 - Rich and brilliant use of **colour**.
 - Minuteness of **decorative details**.
 - **Lack of perspective**: Stiff architectural forms (mostly dazzling marble) help in emphasizing the human rhythm and their delicate colouring.
- **Kangra Feminine Beauty:**
 - Distinctive female face with straight nose in line with the forehead, graceful forms and charming poses came in vogue around the 1790s.
 - Dress and veil forming a curve as though filled by a gentle breeze suggests graceful forward movement.
 - Kangra gave eloquent expression to the Rajput ideal of beauty. Above all, it created an idealised type of feminine beauty which was the focal point of Kangra painting.





The Family

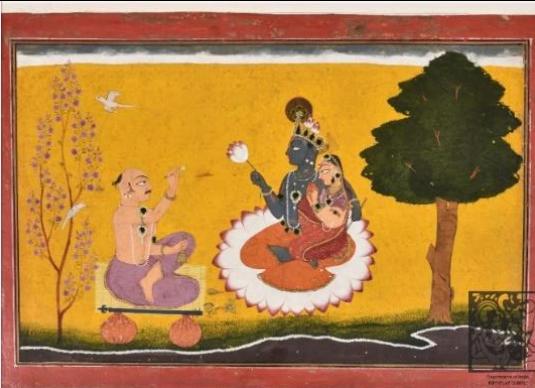
- **Pandit Seu (1680-1740)**
 - He came originally from the Mughal court. His family belonged to Guler from where various members of his family emigrated to other states to practice their art.
 - Seu's family was instrumental in evolving superb style. Their contribution in maneuvering the style of Pahari painting from the stage of Basohli to that of Kangra is immense.
- **Manaku of Guler (Guler to Kangra)**
 - Like Nainsukh, Manaku too did numerous **portraits of his patron Raja Govardhan Chand** and his family. However, his most outstanding work is a set of **Gita Govinda** painted in 1730 at Guler.
 - When Guler came under grave financial crisis and could no longer maintain the atelier, Manaku and his sons took service under Sansar Chand of Kangra.



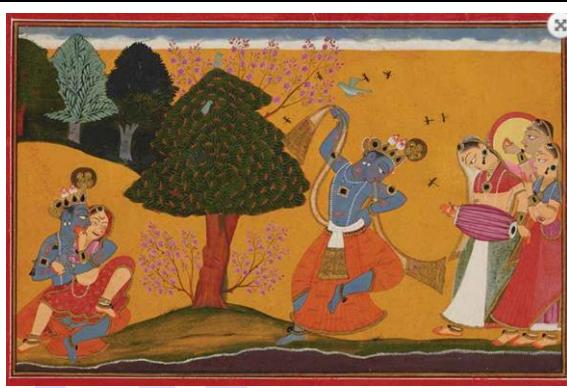
Vishnu as Varaha challenges Hiranyaksha from Bhagavata Purana series, c. 1740.



Yudhishtira performs the Horse Sacrifice, Bhagavata Purana, Manaku, Guler 1740



Jayadeva worshipping Radha and Krishna based on Jayadeva's Gita Govinda, c. 1730



Krishna Idolised, Gita Govinda series of 1730, by Manaku of Guler.

- **Nainsukh (Active ca. 1735–78): Guler → Jasrota → Basohli**

- Exceptional painter who infused original freshness into Pahari paintings. He was a genius for sensitive drawing, astute insight into character, precise facial features, soft modulate colours, simple but elegant setting.
- **Compared to Manaku:** Like his brother Manaku, he was schooled in the stylistic idiom developed by his father, Pandit Seu. Nainsukh's gift for precise observation and his interest in realistic pictures indicate that he pursued an artistic vision wholly different from that of his brother Manaku, who worked within more traditional parameters.
- Around 1740, Nainsukh left from Jasrota, across Ravi. The best documented phase of Nainsukh was in **Jasrota**, where he began painting for **Balwant Singh** who was to become his greatest patron.
- **Nainsukh's celebrated pictures of Balwant Singh of Jasrota are unique.**
 - Nainsukh depicted Balwant Singh in countless paintings that attest to the painter's incredibly sensitive ability to capture specific situations and moods. The artist gratified his patron's obsession by painting him on every possible occasion and with minutiae of details. Nainsukh's genius was for individual portraiture that became a salient feature of the later Pahari style.



- **Then to Basohli:**

- After Balwant Singh's death, in mid-1760s, Nainsukh moved and entered the service of **Amrit Pal (r. 1757–78) of Basohli**.
- For him, Nainsukh produced entirely different kinds of work, stories from the great **religious epics** like Gita Govind.

