

AN INTRODUCTION TO INDIAN ART

PART II

**Textbook in Fine Arts
for Class XII**



**राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

12144 – AN INTRODUCTION TO INDIAN ART

Textbook for Class XII

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OFFICES OF THE PUBLICATION**DIVISION, NCERT**

NCERT Campus Sri Aurobindo Marg New Delhi 110 016	Phone : 011-26562708
108, 100 Feet Road Hosdakere Halli Extension Banashankari III Stage Bengaluru 560 085	Phone : 080-26725740
Navjivan Trust Building P.O. Navjivan Ahmedabad 380 014	Phone : 079-27541446
CWC Campus Opp. Dhankal Bus Stop Panighati Kolkata 700 114	Phone : 033-25530454
CWC Complex Maligaon Guwahati 781 021	Phone : 0361-2674869

Publication Team

Head, Publication Division	: <i>Anup Kumar Rajput</i>
Chief Editor	: <i>Shveta Uppal</i>
Chief Production Officer	: <i>Arun Chitkara</i>
Chief Business Manager	: <i>Vipin Dewan</i>
Production Assistant	: <i>Prakash Veer Singh</i>

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FOREWORD

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), being at the helm of school education in India, has taken the initiative of developing the curriculum and syllabi in different art related areas for higher classes, especially, since the National Curriculum Framework (NCF)-2005 came into practice. There has been a noticeable shift in the development of textbooks, their presentation, interdisciplinary approach, typology of exercises, etc.

The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020, too, recommends that students will be given increased flexibility and a wide choice of subjects to study, particularly, at the secondary school stage, including subjects of art and craft, so that they can design their own paths of study and life plans. Therefore, at the senior secondary stage, which is also the school leaving stage, they should have more options to explore in different fields of higher or professional education.

At this stage of education, emphasis has been laid on professional approach towards the subject of visual or fine arts, making it a discipline rather than only creating awareness and knowledge, which is generic in nature till the secondary classes. The learning objectives also shift towards sharpening of skills in fine arts and developing a perspective in design, instead of free expression and doing arts in the early stages of education. There has been an emphasis on students' expressing themselves in their own language and medium. Also, there has been a need to develop a historical perspective of art in the larger context of the world, as well as, India. Art history is a part of studies in arts and a major area of education, from which the students can learn about the country's rich cultural heritage.

It was observed that many education boards offer visual or fine arts as an optional subject at the senior secondary stage, which includes painting, sculpture, applied arts or commercial arts. These were reviewed and a new syllabus was formed. Since this course apart from the practical component includes theory, which introduces students to the country's diverse historical heritage of



art and architecture, this textbook in Fine Arts has been developed for Classes XI and XII.

Our attempt is to bring a comprehensive view of the history of Indian art, and see it chronologically and in continuity with the present day. As an organisation committed to systemic reform and continuous improvement in the quality of its products, NCERT welcomes comments and suggestions, which will enable us to undertake further revision and refinement.

New Delhi
August 2020

HRUSHIKESH SENAPATY
Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training

PREFACE

During the British rule in the nineteenth century, few British colonial officers took active interest in studying India's past in collaboration with Indian scholars, and a systematic study of architectural monuments, sculptures and paintings began in the Indian subcontinent. With the study of religious texts, history of religion was studied and identification of icons, sculptures and paintings was initiated, which became a dominant area of early scholarship.

As the study of art history has grown out of extensive documentations and excavations, one finds description of art objects as a prominent method of study. There are few significant studies of the early twentieth century, where concerns are addressed beyond mere description. Subsequently, several generations of Western and Indian scholars of Indian art history have studied the subject at great depth, making us realise the magnificent past of the Indian civilisation reflected in the architectural monuments, sculptures and paintings. We can claim a distinct Indian approach to the arts of building edifices, sculpture making and language of painting in comparison with the European art on one hand and the far Eastern art on the other. Therefore, the Indian art historical studies have emerged as a prestigious academic discipline at university level education.

Often, the study of art objects is based on two important approaches—formalistic or stylistic analysis and content and contextual studies. The first category involves the study of formalistic characteristics of architecture, sculpture and paintings, whereas, the second concentrates on content analysis, which has several components, such as iconographic study, iconology, narratives and semiotics.

In this series of textbooks for Classes XI and XII, Class XI textbook introduces different visual art forms, such as murals, paintings, sculptures, architecture, etc., from the beginning to the medieval periods. This textbook for Class XII includes chapters on the development of painting traditions in India during the medieval and modern periods.

Considering the level of young generation learners, belonging to the higher secondary stage, the textbook outlines few examples to create an understanding of the nature of developments in Indian art.

There are eight chapters in this textbook and each deals with a particular school or period of painting and other visual arts. The first chapter talks about palm leaf manuscript painting in Western and Eastern India, which serves as a backdrop of further development in various schools of painting, discussed in the following chapters. The second chapter deals with 'The Rajasthani Schools of Painting'. Each school of Rajasthani paintings belongs to a different darbar of



a Rajput king and has unique features in its composition, colours, context and depiction of human, as well as, flora and fauna, architecture, etc. The third chapter talks about how the Mughal rule in the Indian subcontinent, in its almost 250 years, brought in a culture from Persia that amalgamated local, as well as, other foreign cultural practices and became indigenous in due course of time. The workmanship had different influences in visual features. The paintings had an array of subjects from historical texts, illustrated biographies, literary and religious manuscripts, epics, study of flora and fauna, ordinary people, etc.

Further down in Deccan provinces, painters and royal patrons developed a unique school of painting that had influences of the Mughal style. However, it was largely related to the regional cultures and heavily influenced by the Persian artistic aesthetics. The Deccani schools have been dealt with in the fourth chapter.

Almost at the same time, Himalayan kingdoms of Rajput kings in Garhwal, Kumayun, Himachal and Jammu regions gave shelter to many artists of Delhi, who beautifully adopted the local features and characters, as well as, subject in their paintings. Chapter five describes the Pahari Schools of Painting. With the crumbling of the Mughal power in northern India and coming in of British and other Europeans as traders and later becoming rulers, Indian identity once again faced the crisis. But at the same time, it absorbed new things, both in content and technique, and came up with new ideas of nationalism. The sixth chapter takes us through the journey of an artistic era with many new developments.

The new Sun of freedom shining on the country's horizon saw different modern trends, which have been highlighted in the seventh chapter. A new definition of individual artistry and experimentation became evident in the post-Independence years till date. The last chapter takes the students through the local living traditions of crafts in the country, practised by various communities over generations, passing on the unique art forms without much change in their spirit.

The textbook also carries a glossary of words and terms used in the chapters. In Bibliography, select references of books have been given, which can be beneficial for the students and teachers. Each chapter is embedded with a Quick Response (QR) code. Besides, there is a single QR code for the entire textbook.

Each chapter is illustrated with representational coloured plates, descriptions and captions. Looking at the captions of the photographs, one can learn that the works of Indian art have been displayed across the continents in numerous museums, galleries and collections. The QR codes take one to many similar visuals and one can explore a plethora of them online at the official websites of these museums.

TEXTBOOK DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

CHIEF ADVISOR

Ratan Parimoo, *Professor and Dean (Retd.)*, Faculty of Fine Arts,
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M. S. University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat

MEMBER-COORDINATOR

Jyotsna Tiwari, *Professor*, Department of Education in Arts and
Aesthetics, NCERT, New Delhi





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Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna
Museum für Islamische Kunst (The Museum of Islamic Art), Berlin
N. C. Mehta Gallery, Ahmedabad
National Crafts Museum and Hastakala Academy, New Delhi
National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi
National Museum, New Delhi
National Museum, Prague
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Raja Raghbir Singh Collection, Shangiri, Kullu Valley
The San Diego Museum of Art, California
Smithsonian Institution, Washington D. C.
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata
Visva-Bharati University, Shantiniketan

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