Chitra

PARAMPARYAM



Volume 5

Other Canvasses



STUDIO
PARAMPARYAS

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No 3, 3rd Cross Street
Dr. Radhakrishnan Nagar
Thiruvanmiyur
Chennai – 600041
India
lakkikris@gmail.com
www.artbylakki.com
All images and interpretations are the author's own, except those specifically credited otherwise.

Title Page: 'Tie and Dye Par Excellence' Oil on Canvas, 36" x48" With each strand of the feathers multi-coloured creating a perfect symphony! A precursor to the IKAT Tradition?

Technical details of preparing and painting the canvasses are in Volume 9

A short summary of the different schools with details of patron, artist etc.

are in Volume 11 - Appendices.

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Chapter III: Kagaz (Paper): Handmade from Kashmir, Deccan, China, and other paper producing centres: Ahmedabad, Daulatabad, Junnar, Kalpi, Kashmir, Sanganer, Kagdipura, Mandu and Sialkot in Persia. (A few layers are stuck together to get the required thicknesses and the top layer burnished). Miniatures.

Chapter IV: Thanjavur, Mysore Paintings

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Chapter VI: Mica. Similar technique is used as in reverse glass painting.

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Chapter VIII: Ganifa Cards.

Chapter IX: Travelling Temple, Sandal wood and Teak

Chapter X: Silk (Tussar or fine silk) and cotton: Two layers are stuck together and the top layer burnished with agate or any other smooth stone. Could also be applied with a thin layer of rice gruel and then polished.

Chapter XI: Leather: softened and painted with natural colours, leather is mainly used for puppetry

(Reference from Google Arts and Culture)

Palm Leaves



Brich Bark



Handmade Paper



Sandal wood





Tassur



Ivory



Mica



Leather

Prologue

Caveman!!!

He was able to discover a safe abode perched high up in the natural caves,
Protected from sun and rain and always near a waterhole,
Enabling him to survey his hunting ground!!
Pancha Bhutas were at his beck and call,
Evolving gradually,
Creating wonders so many, that
Most of the intriguing puzzles are yet to be resolved!
Tools were only accessories,
For their creative genius was a perennial spring,
Enabling them to be pioneers/great designers in fields of communication and clothing.
From the beautifully wedge-shaped reed stylus markings on the millions of Sumerian claytablets,

Some samples of inscriptions from yester years


Neo-Assyrian Cuneiform Lexical List



The Rosetta Stone on display in the British Museum, London





"Book of the Dead" on papyrus

- to the Egyptian hieroglyphs standing tall with illustrative colourful narratives,
- to the undeciphered Indus Seals on steatite (soft stone), terracotta, gold, agate, chert (finegrained sedimentary rock rarely found on earth but only undersea), petrified wood etc.
- to the Prakrit, Brahmi scripts to calligraphy
- to express their unwavering faith in Nature and beyond creating their own literary marvels, laced with reverence and an innate aesthetics. Adding layers of beautification, on canvasses as varied as can be! All before papers were even made!

Odyssey of Manuscripts

a. *Yogic: Yagna* at *Brahma Muhurat* (propitious time before sunrise) to initiate an auspicious vision.

b. Illustrated Manuscripts became the revered books for both Jainism and Buddhism.

c. Birth of Buddha and Mahavira around 6th BCE precipitated Philosophy of Enlightenment and Ahimsa respectively and absence of ritualistic icon worships. People from all walks of life were drawn towards this awakening.

d. Divine revelations were passed on to chosen few by oral tradition – Guru – Shishya Paramparyam. Later manuscript tradition slowly evolved in Hinduism also

e. Themes could be broadly classified into religious, semi religious and secular with textual references and secular concepts.

f. Introduction of other canvasses.

They are extensively treasured in both private collections and museums of the world, analysed, studied, documented in research annals.



Chapter I

Introduction

Oneness of God is the essence of Vedas. Oneness of purpose towards that goal is the underlying principle of all Indian paintings. A visual expression through symbolism, where human form becomes the image, and the background landscape of the mind, interpreting instantaneously and simultaneously the entire wealth of thoughts, feelings and knowledge of scriptures is a living tradition.

Enchanting world of miniatures spanning 1000 years, encompassing almost the whole of Northern India (Bengal, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, Assam) and collectively termed Rajasthani Miniatures and Allied schools, came to fruition in 11 - 19 CE.

It is rather difficult to pinpoint the origin and development of Miniature painting. Metamorphically speaking, it is almost like sourcing the natural streams meandering to join mighty rivers on their journey towards the sea. No man is an island by himself. Commingling of different cultures from the dawn of civilization was inevitable and Miniature Painting scenario was greatly influenced by the seemingly heterogeneous impact of

- silk route and trade links,
- movement of Jain *Tirthankaras* with their sacred scriptures and sculptures,
- movement of Buddhist monks with the sacred literatures,
- evolution of neo-Vaishnavism in Assam,
- the spread of Islam and Calligraphy,
- establishment of Mongol Empire by Genghis Khan in 13th century, with an amalgamation of cultural influences of different areas of the empire and the resultant exodus of artists to the courts of Muslim rulers in India,
- traditional concepts of Rajasthan (inclusive of Madhya Pradesh, Kashmir, Punjab, Himalayan regions) representing entire Northern India almost, with the constant

changing political climate, making it difficult to be precise,

- Muslim Invasions and Moghul Occupations,
- renaissance of Rajasthan School,
- the availability of variety of papers
- and some works on wood, silk, ivory and marble.

Miniature generally refers to a painting, illustration, or illumination, small in size, meticulous in detail and delicate in brush work, often encyclopaedic in content and executed in opaque water colours. The name is derived from the red colour *Minium* (Latin) extensively used in early illustrated manuscripts. The artist who painted became *Miniator* and the painting Miniature.

These illustrated manuscripts needed a highly systemised team work of illuminators to illuminate the margins, opening chapters etc., miniaturists to illustrate and calligraphers to copy the text.

Themes

The themes could never be expressed better than to borrow the words of Francis Brunel. Miniatures are "treasures of ageless beauty materialized on a few square centimetres telling of love, the joy of living the splendour of creation in its cosmic manifestation and summing up thousands of years of thought, meditation and creativity. Each miniature is an expression of the soul and sensitivity, admiration for natural beauty and an illustration of the most secret dreams and highest aspirations - both poetry and music."

While the common themes are based on epics, Bhagavata Purana and local legends, some unusual compositions like *Aswatha* (horse) Sastras and *Gaja (elephant)* Sastras across Sattriyas'of Assam and the Marathas'of Thanjavur are intriguing. The concept of representing

God as an amalgamation of animals and birds as in *Navakunjara* of Orissa and Al Buraq of Deccan Miniatures, is extraordinarie.

Textual References

Some of the textual references are

- earliest Manuscripts - Jain *Kalpasutras* and Buddhist scriptures-Mahayana, Hinayana (*Taravada*),
- later developments such as Sripal Ras's 5 Volumes published by Harshadray Pvt. Ltd., First edition 2011 on Jaina philosophy and
- exclusive manuscripts on Vaishnavism based on *Sattriya* culture of Assam.
- varied literary sources on Buddhism from Nepal, Dharamshala, China, Sri Lanka and Far Eastern countries and many more.

Themes from Hindu Puranas

Shiv Purana, Bhagavata Purana, Devi Mahatmyam etc and the two great epics Mahabharata and Ramayana have been a constant source of inspiration. Even though the Rajputs (being warriors) pray to the Durga aspect of Devi – e.g., Karni Devi in Bikaner, Chaturbhuja Devi in Mewar and Hanuman from Jaipur to Jodhpur, the number of paintings on Krishna-Lila concept outnumbers all other themes.

In one sense, He is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient, and as a human being, He is endowed with extraordinary intelligence and power. This unique combination of supernatural and humane aspects has led to the growth of a highly composite, yet charming concept of Krishna expounded in different forms both in folk and classical styles, and in different schools of Rajasthan miniatures.

Krishna is prayed to as a child of five in Nathdwara (Udaipur), as an adolescent in Mathura and Brindavan and as an adult in Dwaraka. The three distinct stages in the life of Krishna - the delightful pranks of child Krishna, adolescent dalliance expressed through Rasa Lila and Shringara, and the divine teacher, expounding the highest truth and absolute reality through Bhagavad Gita, have all been uninterrupted fountainheads for creativity. A great renaissance in vernacular literature has helped to expand the dreamer's horizon.

Sri Ballabacharya has codified the procedures to venerate Balakrishna and the ceremonial worship of Radha Krishna through Pushti Marg (Grace of God) of the *Ballabhkul Sampradaya*, a religious order started by him in 15th CE.

In Bengal Vaishnavism - (Doctrine of Chaitanya) Radha has a unique position based on the elaboration of tradition laid down by Gita Govinda of Jayadeva. This has even been executed in Kanheri Style in Bishnupur, Bengal (Amit Guha, Art Historian).

Shringar rasa has been elaborated In the Rasika Priya of Keshav Das and the Rasa Manjari of Bhanudatta, while in the Kavi Priya of Keshav Das, the *Barahmasas* (Seasons) has been highlighted.

The legacy continues with the works of Mira, Kabir, Vidyapati, Umapati, Chandidas, Bihari, Tulsidas, Srimanta Sankaradeva (Assam), Kalidas of Ujjain and the list is endless.

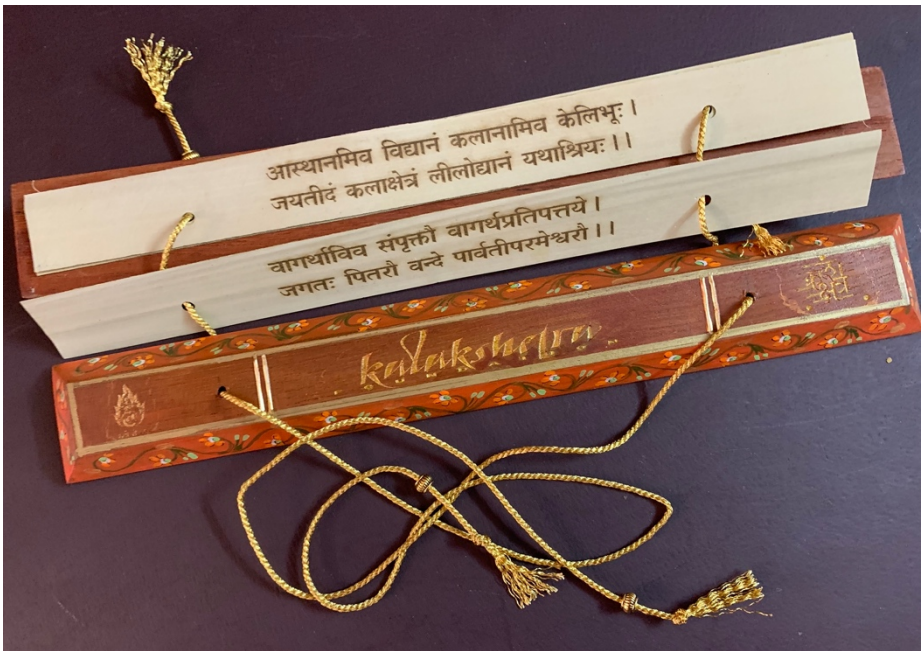
The devout prince Savant Singh of Kishangarh adopted the pen name of Nagari Dasa and his ladylove Banithani, Rasika Binary. They not only wrote poetry but became role models for Krishna and Radha. Other rulers became savants and identified themselves as their regents of their God.

Other textual sources are the ballads of Nala-Damayanthi, Sohni-Mahival, Sass Punnu, Hammir-Hath, Dola Meru, Vedal and Vikrama etc.

A very significant and unusual contribution of Rajasthan to miniature painting is the Ragamala series (Garland of Ragas), a fusion of music and painting. The abstract art of musical ragas is organised in a system of 6 families - each family headed by a *Raga* (male) with 5-6 *Raginis* (wives), sometimes several *Ragaputras* (sons) and *Ragaputris* (daughters and daughters-in-laws). The contents of these paintings depending on the personification or deification of the musical mode has been grouped under three iconographic codes and four schools of tradition. Bundelkhand has some unusual paintings of wives of different vocational men.

Quran, considered the Speech of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad, and the fundamental and most important source of Islamic religion, opened the doors to a wondrous world of calligraphy.

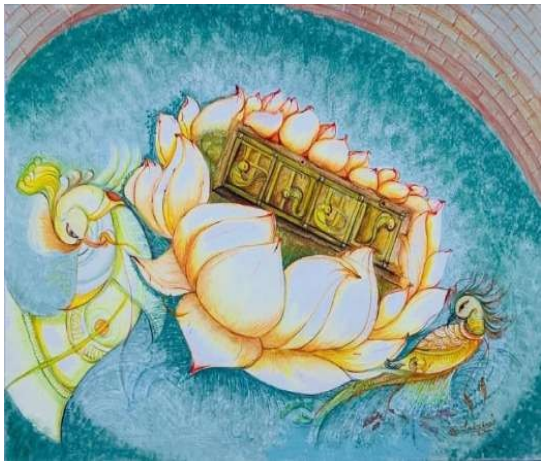
Continuing the legacy: The wooden covers for Kalakshetra Diploma Certificates engraved on Palm Leaves. Designed and executed by author with the support of students of Visual Art Department of Kalakshetra Foundation.



Chapter II

Palm leaves, Birch Barks and Agar wood.

Faith loaded with Fealty (Commitment)and displayed with Fervour (Enthusiasm) is the Hallmark of Illuminated/Illustrated Manuscripts.





Painting – Pilgrimage Centres of India Series: Madurai,
Tempera 36" x36" by author.
As the legend goes, Sangam literary manuscripts would be evaluated, when in doubt, by placing it on the Golden Lotus. If it is held aloft, the validity is confirmed.
The Madurai story has been narrated as a bundle of manuscripts, tied together by gem-studded anklet of *Kannagi* of *Silappadikaram* – a Tamil Sangam literature.

Tad Patra (Palm Leaves)

Long and thin *Sritala* leaves, are written on with a reed pen after an application of gingelly oil, while, thick and coarse *Tala* ones need to be inscribed. They are coated with black ink which is cleaned with a soft cloth, leaving the inscribed part readable.

They are normally 5-6 cm wide but the length could vary from 15 cm to 80 cm.

Both the longest and smallest specimens are available in Oriental Research Library, Mysuru.

Viramaheshvarachara Sangraha Manuscript A bundle of 180 palm leaves. each measuring 90 cm or 2.95’



Bhagavad Geeta

matchbox size





Oldest extant copy of Kautilya’s Arthashastra manuscript which measures 37×5 cms stored at ORI.

Birch bark

Buddhist manuscripts are written mostly on the inner layer of birch bark. The oldest Gandhara one belonging to 1st CE is in Afghanistan.

Around 1800 manuscripts were handed over to the National Archives by the Kashmir Govt. in 1948 CE, in various sizes (from 27" x 2.5" to 9" x 2").

These manuscripts are still being generated for recording sacred mantras and astrological predictions etc. in both Hindu and Buddhist faiths.



Segments of the birch bark manuscript recently acquired by the University of Washington.

Manuscripts of Assam Sanchi and Xashi (Agar wood)

The bark of the agar tree is used in Assam for their manuscript paintings, a rich tradition existing from the time of Ahom Royals flourishing from 16th century with the rise of Neo-Vaishnavism under the Vaishnava saint Sromanta Sankaradeva.

One of the earliest dated manuscripts that comes from *Satra* (Vaishnavite Monasteries), is a copy of the Bhagavata Purana, Book 6. It is a transcript of the book written by Sankaradeva and was prepared in 1678 for illustration work in the prominent *Sattriya* style. Other styles are *Darrang* from Darrang region and *Majuli* from Majuli region. Two indigenous products, Painting in manuscript format and Mask Making from Majuli, representing the heritage of Assam have been registered with G.I. Tags (The Economic Times).

Pavuchi script of Ujjain

A rare manuscript in Pavuchi script which has not been deciphered is one amongst the extensive collections of Maharishi Panini Sanskrit Evam Vedic Vishwavidyalaya Manuscript Repository, Scindia Oriental Research Institute, Manuscripts and Manuscript Resource Centre in Ujjain.

Parchment

Parchment made from the inner lining of the stomach of a calf, which was commonly used in the Christian and Arab world, was not used in India perhaps for religious reasons.
All manuscripts were normally strung together and held between elaborately painted wooden covers.

Origin and Development

Eastern and Western Indian Traditions of Manuscript Illustrations:
Veneration of scriptures is an age-old practice. Illustrated manuscripts based on the episodes from the lives of Buddha and Jain Tirthankara Mahavira and Parasnath constitute the earliest miniatures. They were mostly executed on palm leaves cut to size and shape and later on paper. In Assam an exclusive concept on Vaishnavism spearheaded by Srimanta Sankaradeva evolved in 16th century. They were painted on bark of Agar tree and called Sanchi or Xashi.

Jain and Buddhist miniatures in these manuscripts are not free illustrations but are of saved symbols, divinities and of / or historical data pertaining to religion. They seem to have served as protective charms with magical qualities, while in Assam the focus is mostly on Krishna. Narrative ones on the great epics and secular concepts have also been executed.

Jainism's antiquity is evidenced by artifacts like the *Lohanipur* Torso (2nd CE) and palm leaf

Kalpasutra Manuscripts

King Siddhartha hearing about the birth of his son Mahavira from astrologer





Baby Mahavira with his mother

The earliest painted palm leaf manuscripts dated 1060 from the *Oghaniryukti* are preserved in the Jaisalmer *Bhandar*. Metropolitan Museum has a set of book covers from the same period and is the oldest outside India.

Manuscripts of Assam

One of the earliest dated manuscripts that comes from *Satra* (Vaishnavite Monasteries), is a copy of the Bhagavata Purana, Book 6. It is a transcript of the book written by Sankaradeva and was prepared in 1678 for illustration work in the prominent *Sattriya* style. Other styles are *Darrang* from Darang region and *Majuli* from Majuli region.



Two indigenous products, Manuscript Painting and Mask Making from Majuli, representing the heritage of Assam have been registered with G.I.Tags (The Economic Times).

The recitation and worship of the Books of Wisdom and the patronage of rich business community has created a great repository of materials. Chalukyan King Kumarapala, who ruled Gujarat, Malwa and Rajasthan in the 12th century is credited with distributing hundreds of copies of Kalpasutras and founding 21 Bhandars (Monastic Libraries).

Buddhism

Spitzer Manuscript China - Oldest Sanskrit manuscript on Buddhism



Astasahasrika Prajaparamita (Perfection of Wisdom in eight thousand lines) in Cambridge University Library is the earliest Buddhist Manuscript – 30



Illustrated manuscripts are based on Buddhist iconography, mythological stories and / or Mandalas - Yantras. The tradition of painting which originated in India and spread to Tibet was greatly influenced by the art of Nepal.

Iconoclastic degradations caused by Muslim invasions compelled the monks and painters of Eastern Pala Kingdom to flee to Nepal and the Himalayas, while curbs on the building activities of the pious and affluent Jains in and around Gujarat precipitated their movement to Malwa. The concept of extensive wall murals was then scaled down and a proliferation of illustrated manuscripts in a similar format (long and narrow) based on the lyricism of Ajanta paintings and the stylization of Ellora paintings were produced. The purpose of copying as numerous as morning dew, seems to be for thousands of years of thought, meditation and creativity.

Hinduism

Hinduism has long been an oral tradition before anything was written down in manuscript formats. The oldest available manuscripts are supposed to be of *Tholkappiam* 500 BCE (ref Quora - Divakar Vittal) in Tamil and *Rigveda* (2 millennium BCE) in Sanskrit.

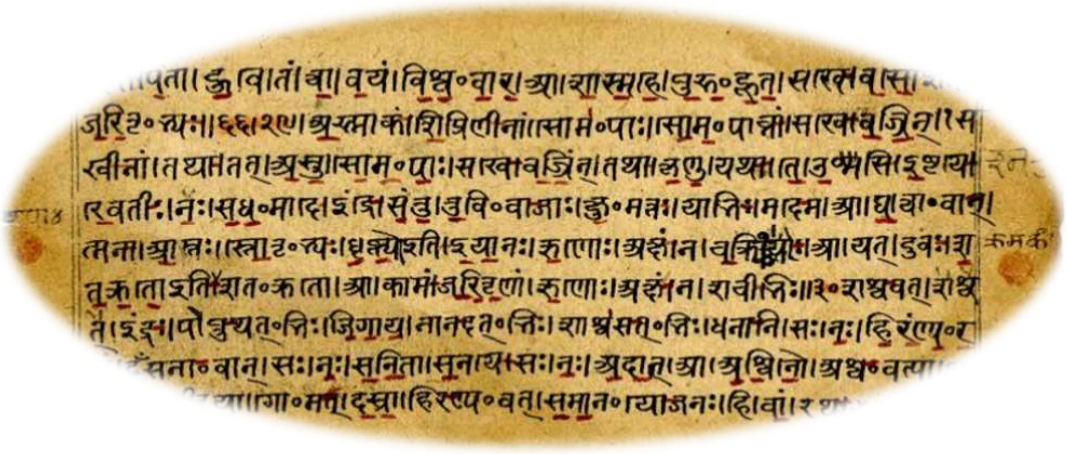
The copy of Mahabaratha in Bhandarkar Research Institute, Pune is supposed to be among one of the oldest available 11CE in Sanskrit





From the collections of British Museum from Google – fragment of birch bark manuscript, one of 29 birch bark scrolls in Kharosti, 1st Century CE, from the ancient region of Gandhara - Shelf mark - Or 14915 Featured in Discovering Sacred Texts.





Described as one of the available oldest manuscripts on Vedas in British library: This manuscript, written on coarse paper by various scribes, is a *Padapatha* version - representing a word-by-word,recitation of the hymns. The accentuation marks in red are used to signal three main accents: *udatta*, (acute), *anudatta* (unmarked low), and *svarita* (accent between udatta and anudatta).

All the manuscripts or the printed versions of epic and other religious doctrines are considered sacred and reverentially placed and worshipped even today.
The Tamil "*Thirumurai*" compiled by Appar, Sundarar, Thirunavukkarasar and Thirugnana Sambandar are placed inside the Nataraja shrines and are offered the *deeparadhanai.*

Picture of a Nataraja in Devakoshta or a shrine with the books reverentially placed



Different ways of illuminations

Ref: Painted Manuscripts of Saraswati Mahal Library Published by Director, Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji' s Library, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. Courtesy V.K. Rajamani.

Simple



Slightly elaborate

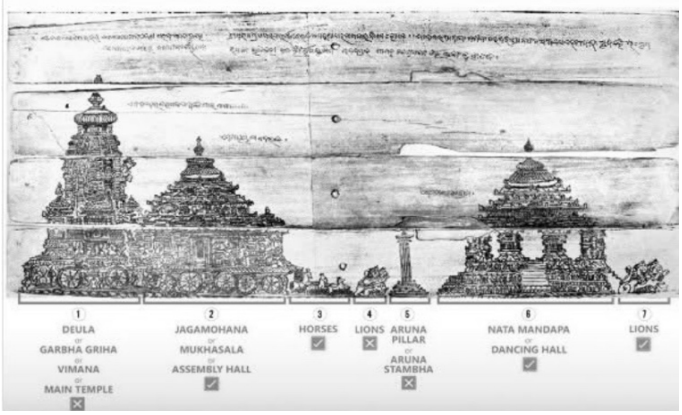


Plate 30: Mahabharata – Anushasanaparva

Highly Illuminated Borders or could cover the entire leaf.



Records.
A rare manuscript from Odisha displaying original architecture of sun temples.
Courtesy: Indian History, A new perspective - Facebook



Chapter III

Kagaz (Paper)

Handmade from Kashmir, Deccan, China, and other paper producing centres: Ahmedabad, Daulatabad, Junnar, Kalpi, Kashmir, Sanganer, Kagdipura, Mandu and Sialkot in Persia. (A few layers are stuck together to get the required thicknesses and the top layer burnished). Miniatures. Paper was first produced in Lei-Yang, China by Ts'ai Lun from mulberry, fishing nets and rags about 2000 years back, Papyrus from Egypt, 3000 BCE: Papyrus was made from slicing a papyrus plant, laying it horizontally first then a second layer vertically and by pounding them together. There have been different centres of papermaking at Herat, Shiraz, Samarkand and Isfahan especially converging during Timurid Dynasty (a Persianate Turco Mongol Empire) They were influenced by Persian school.

Kashmir: Paper seems to have been manufactured in Kashmir from 14th century CE, when Sultan Zain-ul Abiden brought in paper makers from Samarkand to make papers. Use of waste silk cocoons in pulp, use of some kind of soda water for rinsing the pulp, polishing with pumice stone and glazing it with rice water all gave it an edge. It was widely used in the northern part of India for the smoother and whiter finish with silken texture. (Ref – Forgotten Art of Paper making thekashmirimages.com, Nov 25, 2018) Other centres that produced handmade paper were Sialkot (now in Pakistan), Sanganeer (Rajasthan), Junnar (Maharashtra), Kagdipura (Madhya Pradesh), Assam amongst many others individually supported by the ruling dynasties of the period.

Paper has been extensively used for Miniature Painting Traditions of Rajasthan and Allied Schools, Miniature Paintings precipitated by indirect influences of Muslim invasions and Moghul occupation, Mysore Painting of Karnataka and Ganifa Cards.

Muslims arrived in the 8th CE and continued to slowly dominate the parts of India almost till 13th CE politically.

A Copy of Niamis Khamsa. Consummation of marriage between Khusrav and Shirin - Iran, Shiraz 1560, Demascus room in Metropolitan Museum New York.





Ceiling cornice: The poem begins at the upper right corner of the far wall with an extended garden metaphor that complements the floral imagery decorating the woodwork: "The lightning saw the darkness frown and smiled. It skimmed and wafted over the flowers of the hills."

The introduction of paper by the Persians and their bibliographic enthusiasm in calligraphy accentuated the existing concepts, as could be seen from the *Chaura Panchashika* Series (1425 CE), a series of paintings illustrating the 54 verses sung by Bilhanna. The paintings covering almost the entire surface had become incidental to the text relegated to a narrow panel in the upper section. In textile designs and stylisation one can see a similarity to Vijayanagara-Nayak tradition, may be precipitated by the popular textile dying and block printing (with natural dyes) practised in both Sanganeer (Rajasthan) and Kalahasthi (Present day Andhra Pradesh)



With the disappearance of the projecting eye, the development of proper face, the gradual elimination of angular faces and the inevitable changes in drapery and ornamentation, the Indian School became transformed as Rajasthani School.

Exodus - Collection: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi



Probably the first Hindu manuscript to be illustrated in this style is the popular Bhagavata Purana extolling the virtues of Lord Vishnu.



A whole new concept of Ragamala Paintings, visual interpretation of Indian musical modes envisioned in divine or human form and assigned to different seasons developed by musicians and poets became an all-new concept, exclusive to Indian painting scenario.
Chunar Ragamala Series – 1591 Bundi School (on loan from Benares Bharat Kala Bhavan, India at MET New York - metmuseum.org at Benares (Bharat Kala Bhavan) -

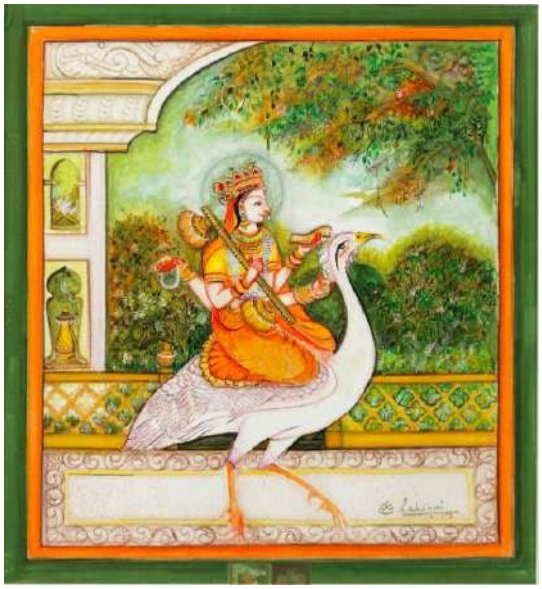
The regional variants of the *Ragamala* series produced at Mandu, Gwalior, Delhi and Jaunpur were also instrumental in channelising the evolution of miniature paintings sequentially.

The intense religious fervour with passionate devotionalism brought about the transformation of existing forms of religious, cultural, literary and aesthetic expressions of the period. The great epics and religious scriptures were retold in vernacular languages for enormous volumes on religious paintings.

Pahari Saraswathi



Pahari influenced Hamsa Vauhini by author



Moghul Influence

"Painting and sculptures always go together. As soon they attract attention they are taken to the service of God, as one race learns from another and takes possession of a previous discovery. Such progress is not often traceable." History repeats itself because the great human impulses are principles of action in all ages. History never repeats itself without changes as those principles work differently, under different circumstances. The ethos from the archaism of Egyptian school found its way to the Persian school of Miniature Painting, which reached its zenith during the reign of Timurid Rulers (15th CE) at Shiraz and Herat.
Babur, the fifth descendant of Timur subjugated the Sultans of Delhi in 1526 CE, heralding a new era of artistic creativity under the Great Moghul rule especially under the patronage of Akbar, Jehangir and Shahjahan. It lasted for nearly three centuries.

Indian art became the potpourri of multicultural traditions, each energizing the other and precipitating a whole new world of miniatures collectively termed Moghul Miniatures. (Ref Greek and Gothic Progress and Decay in Three Arts of Sculpture, Architecture and Painting Rev. R. St. John Tyrwhitt London Walter Smith 1881) While the Imperial Moghul school of painting was more concerned with secular and count life, (Ref from Sri R. Venkatraman and Metropolitan Museum of Art)





The indigenous schools were inspired by religious themes (Ref. Marg).

Shiva family – Pahari School





Renaissance of Rajasthan Miniatures

Rajasthan is a land of barren deserts with stretches of golden sand dunes shifting forever, pristine oases gleaming like quintessential emeralds, nice blue sky making kaleidoscopic patterns through open vistas, sunrises and sunsets creating Holi on the sky. With occasional peacocks dancing away and the squirrels strutting here and there, it has almost no colour for miles on end. But the very name Rajasthan conjures up colourful murals, miniature paintings, bandhanis, bangles, ornate jewellery attires and arts galore.

The harshness of nature was a great challenge to the warrior clan. The Rajputs surmounted it with total faith in their chosen religious path, defending their clan and country with great elan by creating picturesque palaces and public places, enjoying and encouraging poetry, literature and fine arts in their leisure, recording all these events in wall frescoes and miniature paintings for posterity.

Rajasthani and Allied Schools of Painting

The Rajput rulers from Delhi, Mahoba, Ajmer and other places driven from their strongholds during Muslim invasion established their rule in Rajasthan and Pahari hills. With their love for everything traditional, they patronised the artists who reached their courts relinquishing the waning Mughal Empire. The resultant art form imbibing the local colour evolved into different schools, which could be broadly classified into five groups.

1. Mewar, Bundi, Kota, Sirohi, Jaipur, Bikaner and Jodhpur with their close affinity to the School of Malwa, Bundelkhand and in turn to illustrated miniatures of Jain Tradition
2. Kishangarh
3. Pahari Hills- Kangra, Guler, Chamba, Garhwal, Kulu, Basohli
4. Kashmir
5. Punjab- Sikh School.

Highlights

Bundi and Kota – Hunting scenes are portrayed ir



Jaipur – the festivals had a regal splendour.



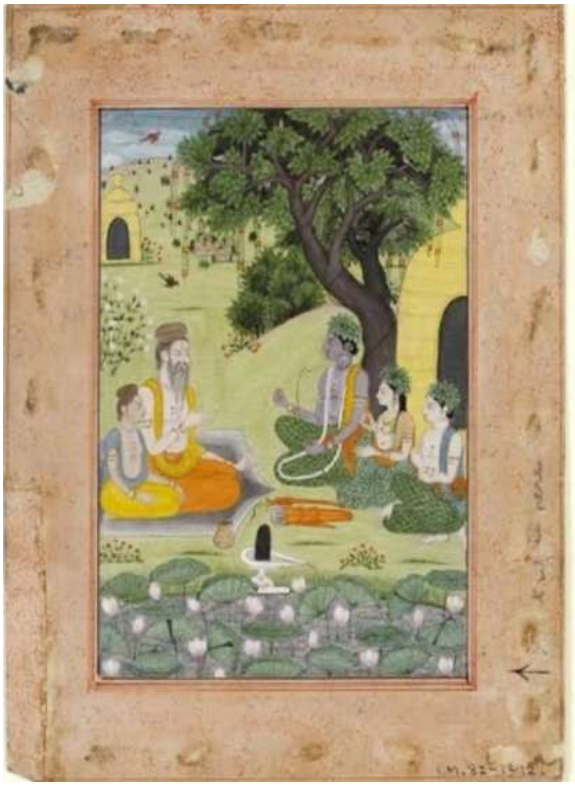
Kishangarh – where the slanting eyes Banithani imparted a definitive style to the school – National Museum, New Delhi.



Nathdwara, Udaipur - Pichwais were either painted on silk or cotton to be hung behind Srinathji befitting



Pahari – The bounty of nature vibrating in its glory in all the paintings, especially in their Ramayana series (Ref V&A Museum London)



Punjab – Paintings in Miniature tradition of Sikhism(the life story of Guru Gobind Singh) and Shaivism



Chamba – Embroidered miniatures on

rumals (woven silk) instead of paintings.



Kashmir – a definitive impact of the exclusive beauty of flora, fauna and the people on one hand and the *Spanda* school of Shaivism influenced concepts on the other, marks this school.





Muslim invasions and Moghul occupation:

The development of calligraphy with its limitations that only Quran can be copied precipitating a plethora of creatively expressed borders with geometrical designs to fantasized flora and fauna to encyclopaedic recordings marks these schools apart. The oldest Quran manuscript on parchment is at the University of Birmingham, England.

(This picture is from British Library to highlight the illumination)

Kufic



Arabic



Chinese - Ming



Chinese Canton



Tajmahal



Flowering Kufic Agra calligrapher from Shiraz





Supposed to be the copy of the Quran with letters in gold gifted by Akbar to a prominent family in Bhilwara, Rajasthan lost and found (Ref. Indiatoday.in)

Differences between the Rajasthan and Moghul Miniatures

Rhythm



Persian translation of Mahabharata commissioned by Akbar in 1574. One of the pages at British Library Collections titled "Sub- Imperial Mughals" Bhima kills Kichaka and his brothers - by Dhannu



Ragamala exclusive concept of Rajasthan School

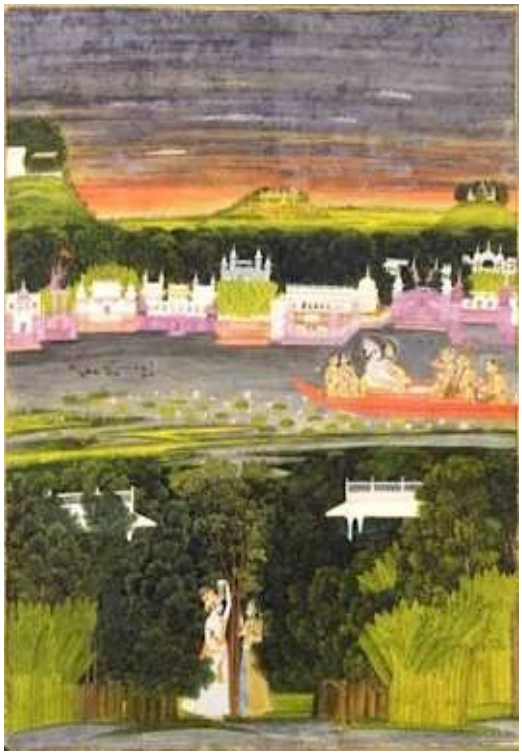


Elaborate borders exclusive to Moghul School.





Kishangarh - Vertical typical Indian Perspective



Moghul, Western Perspective

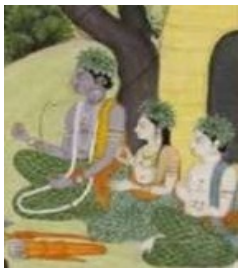


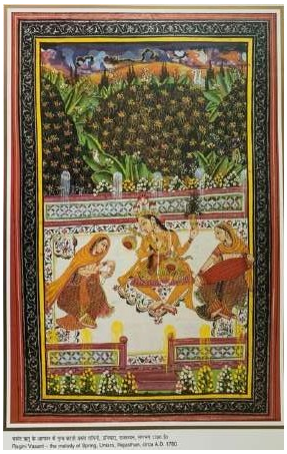
In Appreciation

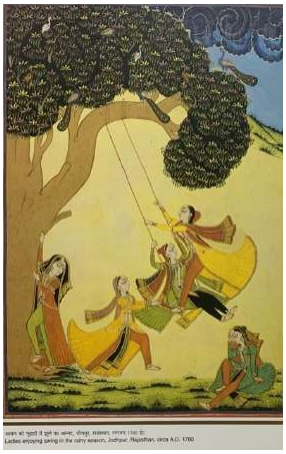
Innate and intrinsic awareness of *Shadangas* seems to flow intuitively through all these works of the great masters of yesteryears. Heralding from the very first Kalpasutra palm leaf manuscripts, ascertaining the *Rekha,* the hallmark of Indian art, the journey flows through like a peacock dancing in ecstasy with the raindrops of Shadangas.



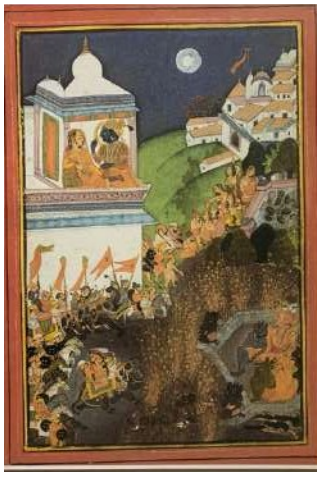








Whether it is the *Ragini* Gauri (Mughal Style: Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares) or Gita Govinda ,Kangra (Pahari group) or the Ramayana series of Pahari miniatures, the beautiful rendering of carpet of flowers and leaves, portrayal of rain clouds for rainy season and the spring blossoms for *Vasantha rithu,* highlight the intuitive use of *Sadrisyam* to bring in the focus, and helps in bringing out the encyclopaedic awareness of nature and *Varnika Bhanga* at its best.



The representation of the army could be the paradigm for *Premnani*

Pining Radha is a study for *Bhava*



Malwa

The Malwa school of painting, a 17th-century school of Rajasthani/Central Indian miniature painting, flourished in Malwa and Bundelkhand (modern Madhya Pradesh) and is known for its Hindu Rajput court themes, featuring a blend of styles and influences.

Bundelkhand

From the book, "The Paintings of Bundelkhand, Some Remembered, Some Forgotten, Some Not Yet Discovered" by Narmada Prasad Upadhyaya and Harsha V. Dehejia and to quote poet Indra's words (from the same book)

Surrounded by the ranges of Vindhya Mountain
And the Betwa, Dhasan and Ken rivers
That region is known as Bundelkhand.

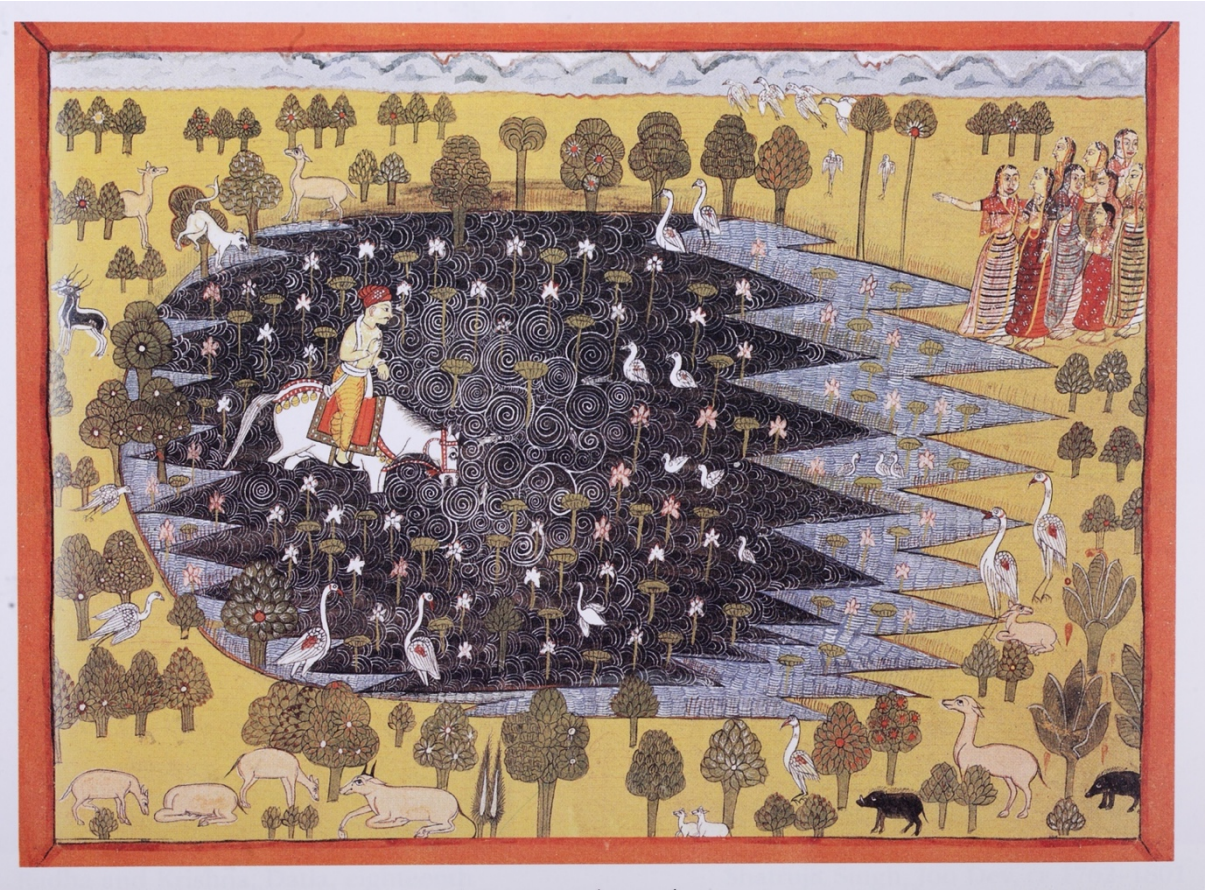
Where places of pilgrimages
Kalijar, Sonagir, Orchha, Unnavaare situated
And wich place is the dwelling of Rama
That is Bundelkhand

Where the fame of Chandellas
And the chivalry of Bundellas are still alive
And where the art of Kajuraho reached its hight
That is Bundelkhand

It is the land of deities,the land of warriors
And according to poet 'Indra',
That beautiful land is Bundelkhand.

clearly indicates past, present and future of the cultural wealth of India as a whole and need for

creating awareness to prevent from further decay and to educate at all levels the beauty that was, its value in understanding in preserving, documenting and evolving from the storehouse of knowledge.



This painting seems to echo the sentiments expressed. (Courtesy: Narmada Prasad Upadhyaya)

Amidst all the murals and paintings of Bundelkhand, a few different concepts stand them apart. They are the folk stories of two brothers Alha and Udhal, Vikramaditya and Betaal and the wonderful group of miniature paintings of women as a wife of a jeweller or carpenter or as an acrobat and a professional and so many more highlighting their allure, a concept that has not been seen in other schools of miniatures.

Natini - Acrobat, Kundigaran - wife of an artisan, Kalotin - wife of the liquorseller,

Pinjarni - bedding maker, Julahin - wife of a weaver, Gadrin - wife of a cattle owner



Kasain - wife of a butcher, Kuderini - Trickster, Tirgarin - enticer,

Kakaigiran - comb maker, Vatparin - who takes care of pilgrims, Kurmin - a



Bhilani - Wife of a tribal man, Kujariya - Vegetable vendor, Badahani - Wife of a carpenter,

Jauharin - Jeweller's wife, Dagin - Jeweller, Pasini - Dark beauty.



Bhil

Even though these paintings belong to 18th century, they are included to highlight the Deccan and Moghul influences even in remote areas.

Bhil Couple Deccan 18th Century
Two Bhil women and a man hunting, Provincial Moghul
18th Century
Courtesy: Narmada Prasad





The list is endless as the available materials are spread across the world in both museums and private collections and newer expressions based on these schools are being continuously created in various mediums and styles

Some of the author's expressions



'Blessing' Tempera - 2' x 2'Third of 'Janani' Series

A painting based on *Valmiki Ramayana* where Bharathvaj *Muni* (saint) asks *Janani* (Sita) to bathe in the confluence of rivers near the banyan and to pray for a safe return after 14 years -
Expressed, based on a medley of miniature traditions with creative freedom by the author



Krishna
Concepts





To summarise

Each painting of this genre seems to resonate with the music of vibrating life as expressed in *Sapta Vitanka Thandavangal* (expression of dancing in different moods in seven shrines of Thyagaraja).

In Thiruvarur *Ajaba* (like breathing in and out),

Thirunallaru – as a mad man,

Nagaikkaronam – as the rising and falling of waves,

Thirukkarayil - *Kukkuda* dance (like a chicken),

Thirukkuvalai – *Bringa* dance (like a bee) and in

Vedaranyam – *Hamsapada* dance (like the gait of Hamsa)

Name	Founder period	Patron	Highlight	Source	Short summery
Eastern Indian Manuscripts- Bengal, Nepal, Bangladesh,	Pala Dynasty 800-1200	Pala Kings Devout traders and merchants	Lokeshvara from Ashtasahasrika Manuscript on palm leaf. Vasanta jataka on wood.	National Museum	These are the earlier available manuscripts on the life of Buddha, Iconographic portrayals of Buddhist deities and occasionally the narrative details of Jataka tales. Characteristics: Colour harmony, rhythmic narration and frontal portrayal.
Assam	16th Century	Saint Sankaradeva	Neo-Vaishnavism	Satra Instituitions	Manuscript leaves made from *Agar (*Sachi) wood mainly among others. Exclusive to Assam with the paintings centred around Sankaradeva, Raslila and religious concepts.

A short summary of the different schools with details about the patron, artist and highlights has been included in a table - Vol - 11 Appendices.

Chapter IV

Thanjavur and Mysore Paintings

If History was the canvas, the ebb and flow of different dynasties that painted continuously on them, creating a beautiful Kaleidoscopic Expressions of Art and Culture overlapping sometime, totally a different impression of similar concepts at other times or innovative themes intermittently, is a continuous spring of inspiration.

To understand, elucidate and appreciate is like unravelling a spider's web!
Channelising a chronological assay is rather difficult in this paper, as the focus is on the Canvasses.

The distinct schools of Mysore and Thanjavur Paintings that evolved from the Vijayanagar Period (1336 -1565 CE) absorbing the local climatic conditions and artistic traditions came to fruition during Maratha Rule (1674 -1799) in Thanjavur and Mysore, using gold embossing on different gessoes but with common thematic concepts - icon, portraiture and narrative.

A need for portable icons for *Kathakalakshebam* of Vijayanagara - Nayak idiom (narration of scenes from the Great Epics accompanied by music and dance) and *Bajanai Mandali* (the eulogistic singing especially on Krishna concepts) of the Marathas necessitated evolution of Travelling Temples of Tirupathi as portable icons for worship. Originally started like a painting placed on a simple base and carried around to be placed, wherever discourses were taking place got transformed into a puja mandap from 3' x 3' to 10' x 10', every inch painted with the whole Hindu Pantheon of celestials. They became the harbinger of both Mysore and Thanjavur Schools of Paintings (more on Wood as Canvas).In Kaavad, Rajasthan, a folk ensemble of travelling temple has been produced explaining both Ramayana and Mahabharatha epics.

‘Part of a Travelling Temple’ Private Collection

Size - 8’ x 8’ when open with doors extending on either side



Mysore Paintings

Viswarupa Darsanam

Magnum opus in Mysore Painting

“Eyes are sun and moon driving Chariots,

Trinity on the head,

Other Gods, Goddesses and Devas on the space

between the shoulders and crown,

Kings on the arms,

People on the fore arms

Earth around the stomach

Seven seas below and goes on….”



The term "Mysuru" is believed to stem from "*Mahishasur*," a demon king defeated by Goddess Parvathi, reincarnated as Chamundeeshwari (tutelary deity of Wodeyar). Mysore paintings, originating in Mysore, Karnataka, gained prominence in the late 13th century CE, symbolizing aristocracy. Despite political changes, art patronage persisted. Krishna Raja Wodeyar elevated Mysore painting during his reign. After his demise in 1868, the art declined until its revival in 1875, notably through the establishment of Jagan Mohan Palace and Chitrakala Parishad.

Textual References

*Shritatvanidhi, "*The Illustrative Treasure of Realities" written in 19th century attributed to Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, on the iconography and iconometry of divine figures and translated into English, is a veritable treasure trove amongst other literary references.

Materials and Techniques

Detailed version is presented in Volume 9 - 'Repository of Painting Techniques'.

Exclusivity to the Mysore School

- use of *Gold Varak (as is used for sweets)*
- *Safeda* (white lead) and
- *makhi* gamboge (yellow) drawn from the juice of a tree (*Revana Chinni Halu).*
- Mirrors and stones were not used for embellishments.
- Architecture and costumes were influenced by the Wodeyar and Tipu Sultan's era.
- Use of Tri-banga (where the body is shown with three bends) and Adi-banga (multiple bends) in the portrayals of figures lend a rhythmic posture. The landscape is highly conventionalized as in the Thanjavur School.

All the Mysore paintings are from Chitra Kala Parishad unless otherwise mentioned. Courtesy: Chitra Kala Parishad.

Painting of Venkateswara playing dice with Hariram Bhavaji. The decorative ornamentation, the slightly oval face of the Lord and round face of the Bhaktha seem to be the precursor of the Mysore school.



Adibhanga



Tribhanga



Tribhanga



Icon – Chamundeeswari



Narrative
Dasavatar with the use of exclusive green of the school



Portrait

Mummudi Krishnaraja



‘Arupadaiveedu’
Mysore Paintings 5”x 8”
Narrative, by author



Palani –When Arunagirinathar was challenged to bring the sacred Parijatha flower from heaven, He discarded his body at one of the towers of Thiruvannamalai, flew as a parrot to the heavens and brought back the Flower. On his arrival at Thiruvannamalai, when he was upset in not finding his body (which has been burnt by his enemies), Lord Muruga appeared and asked him to remain as parrot on his dhanda forever.



Swamimalai – It is an artificial hillock 60’ high with 6o steps denoting the 60 years of the Hindu Cycle. True to being the Granary of South, the whole place is rich with paddy fields coconut, mango and plantain groves dotted with water holes and rivers. Here Muruga was the teacher and Siva His disciple!



Palamudhir Cholai – The Vel (spear)made up of stone is worshipped as the main deity.



Tiruchendur –Lord Muruga, vanquished the demonic forces led by Surapadman at Tiruchendur. Surapadman asked for forgiveness and was transformed into a peacock and a cock, Muruga took them as His Vehicle and the Symbol in His flag respectively.



Tirupparankunram – When Lord Muruga was staying at the Kandamadana Parvata, the two daughters of Vishnu, Amritavalli and Sundaravalli were performing austere penance at the Saravana *Poigai* (Tank) to marry Him. Pleased with their prayers, Muruga promised to marry them in due course. Amrithavalli born as Indra's daughter was brought up by Iravata, hence named Deivayani. Sundaravalli was born to Sage Sivamuni, to be brought up by Nambi, the headman of Hunters. In this abode, Muruga marries Deivayani, after the *Surasamharam.*



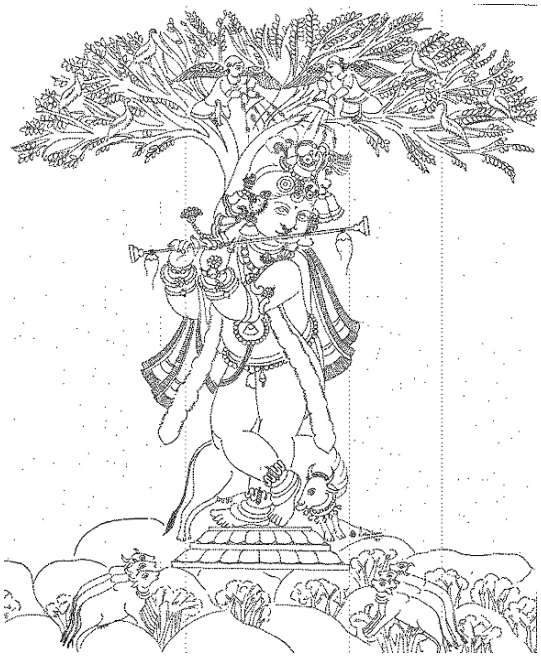
Tirutthani – After the Surasamharam, the righteous indignation of Muruga towards the asuras' is said to have been quelled at this place. Also termed Shanthipuri, this is considered most venerated amongst all the abodes.

Thanjavur Painting

All the Thanjavur Paintings are courtesy the Madras Museum Chennai, unless otherwise mentioned.
The most powerful branch of the pictorial art in this period was the making of religious Icon Paintings, which had evolved into an exclusive, distinctive and highly influential style that came to be known as Thanjavur Painting and the credit goes to Serfoji II Maharaja of Thanjavur.
Thanjavur paintings are known as *Palagaipadams* (pictures done on wood). Jack wood plank is covered with paper using gum made from tamarind seeds and covered with unbleached cotton cloth.

The cloth is coated with *Sukkan* (unboiled limestone) ground with gum. The surface is polished with a smooth stone. The paintings conform to iconographic conventions.
The principal deity faces forward and is often enthroned, accompanied by consorts and votaries,depicted with proper attributes. The deity may be housed in a pavilion (Deccan influence)





of cusped arches or standing under a stylized tree forming a canopy. The figures are plump and heavy and those of the women are rather short, squat, fair and round cheeked. The women wear sarees and cholis of the Maharashtrian style, while the male supernatural beings wear dhotis and are crowned and jewelled in a princely fashion. The jewellery and garland reflect the Vijayanagara idiom

slowly transforming to Maratha tradition. Jewels, drapery and architectural elements are slightly raised as in low relief by the use of special plaster and are covered with gold leaf. (Detailed explanations refer Volume - 9)

The Bhakthi Movement heralded portrait paintings of *Alwars* (Vaishnavite saints), *Nayanmars* (Saivite saints) and Sikh Saints along with Royal Portraits.
The ingenuity of the painters resulted in novel themes like the architectural layout of a temple.

The gold work and decoration may seem excessive from an aesthetic point of view, but when placed inside the Pooja room (prayer room located in the centre of the house) which is normally dark and lit only by a traditional *Kuthuvilakku* (oil wick lamp), the impact is that of a glowing presence.



'Ashtabhuja Raja Venu Gopala' Real Gems, Size 24" x 24" by author, is a rare form wherein he represents his four Avatars accompanied by *Bhudevi* and *Sridevi.* With the portrayals of *Periya Thiruvadi*, Garuda and *Siriya Thiruvadi*, Anjaneya offering flowers, *Dasavatars* painted on either side and the portrayal of Balaji and *Alarmel Mangai Thayar*, Anantha Padmanabhaswamy, *Rasaleela*, *Govardanagiridhari,* Harihara and *Guruvayurappan* at the bottom of the composition, the painting is like a magnum opus for Vishnu worshippers.

In portraiture, there were two phases

The older Thanjavur paintings had perfect relief work, very little gold embossing and used pastel colours like grey-blue in the background.

while the later ones had the influence of the European school from sitting on a diwan to Ivory Throne to Victorian chairs and the coniferous trees replacing the temple view,











Secular - Caparisoned Horse and Elephant





A comparative assay of Mysore and Thanjavur idioms

Arches





Madurai Veeran – A village deity in Thanjavur



Shiva and Parvathy riding a horse as male village deity is not worshipped in Karnataka.



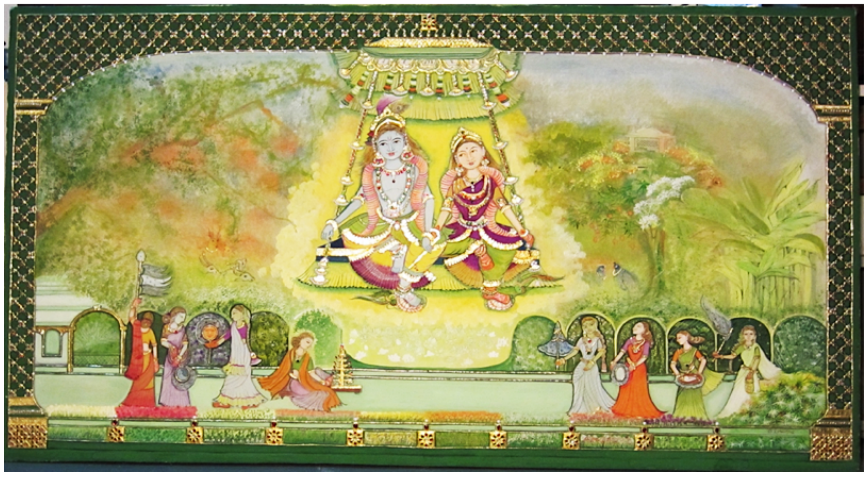
Portrait



Icon



Narrative



Secular





By author

End Note

The Marathas had annexed most of the Deccan overthrowing the Mughals, thus forming a corridor from North to South. As a result, each area with a local culture merged with the culture of a neighbouring area and got enriched. Iconic paintings arose in places, where there was a religious movement around a specific deity. The portrayal is stylized, images identified with the deity, to cater to the needs of pilgrims. Typical examples are of Srinathji in Nathdwara (Rajasthan). When statue of Srinathji was brought from Brij to Nathdwara in 1671 (Pichwais - Painted canvas - evolved from Mewar School with its own peculiarities), Jagannath in Puri (Orissa - Patachithras) and Krishna in Mathura (Uttar Pradesh).

Synthesis of different cultures – that of Vijayanagar and Karnataka together with that of Maharashtra and the Islamic Deccan, precipitated in the evolution of Shorapur School, the southernmost of the miniature schools with the exclusive layout - 2/3 of the top of the painting in typical Thanjavur style and the lower 1/3 like a Mughal garden.

The fine art of painting was reduced to craft and imitative painting by the 18th century CE. By the early part of the 19th century CE, European painting techniques began to influence the art scene. The new medium of oil painting by Raja Ravi Varma started replacing the murals and his portrayal of Gods and Goddesses and their litho-prints started replacing the icon paintings.

Under the auspices of Kalakshetra (Madras), Chettinad School (Madras) traditional art forms were revived by veteran painters like K. Sreenivasulu, S. Kuppuswamy Raja. Designs, motifs and sketches are available in Guruparampara (From Teacher to the taught) Tradition (line drawings). Dr. Meena Muthiah still continues to mentor Thanjavur Painting artists.

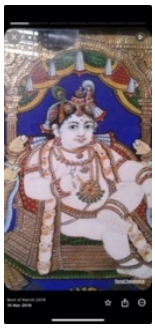
By author



By Sri.K. Sreenivasulu



Private Collection
Antique



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Typical examples are of Srinathji in Nathdwara, Udaipur, Rajasthan when statue of Srinathji was brought from Brij to Nathdwara in 1671, a special school evolved *Pichwais (*Painted canvas*es that* evolved fro Mewar School with its own peculiarities), Jagannath in Puri (Orissa - *Patachithras*) and Krishna in Mathura (Uttar Pradesh).





In Western India, similar paintings are seen at Shorapur. The artists are supposed to be from Kamalapur in Cuddapah district of Andhra. Later, in Shorapur, the synthesis of different cultures – that of Vijayanagar and Karnataka together with that of Maharashtra and the Islamic Deccan, could

have resulted in the evolution of Shorapur School. The paintings could be generally classified with the Deccan group but are rather distinctive having marked southern features.

The style is of interest being the only attempt to unite northern and southern idioms. The exclusiveness lies in the 2/3 of the top of the painting in typical Thanjavur style while the lower1/3 is like a Mughal Garden. Together with the production of Cuddapah and Kurnool, it is the southernmost of the miniature schools.

The beauty of Indian art is the understanding and visualisation of the transient nature of emotion as could be seen for example in the resultant portrayal of harmonious blend of both anger in destruction of evil and the benevolence *anugraha* (graciousness) in both.





Mahishasuramardini (eyes are angry but mouth is smiling) Chitra Kala Parishad Bangalor

Mysore Painting, Madras Museum, Thanjavur Painting.





Chapter V

Glass Paintings

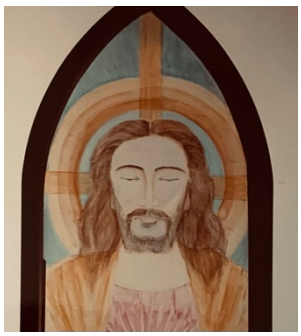
Pranava Porule (Embodiment of Ohm)

12x10" Glass Painting with 24carat Gold foil by author.

Influenced by the sculpture of Dancing Ganesa in Belur temple,

Pranava Porule was seated in Tamil Ohm with creative designs.

Jesus and Mary in for worship in a Chapel





Reverse Glass Painting by author



Along with Thanjavur paintings, a separate though related tradition of painting on glass, mica, ivory, marble, sandalwood, silk, leather, playing cards and wooden shrines (Travelling Temples of Tirupathi, Andhra) were introduced for the first time in South India. All of them had similar theme and presented an overall impact similar to that of Thanjavur paintings but the technique varied to suit the medium. Glass Paintings served as less expensive icon paintings while others were considered as minor arts executed mainly for European markets.

In Kaavad, Rajasthan a folk ensemble of travelling temple has been produced explaining both Ramayana and Mahabharatha epics.

Glass paintings were supposed to have been introduced by Chinese painters in Tipu Sultan's court for the first time with the introduction of use of charcoal sticks.
The use of silverplated Copper strips to infuse stone effect and anchoring it with *Vajram* (animal gum) to coincide with opaque lines in the painting was innovative.



Probably the portrayal of small feet has also sprung from this influence. Local artists in Thanjavur, Karnataka and Andhra, adopted this technique for creating inexpensive devotional paintings. As the sequence of steps was reversed (after the picture was drawn, it was shaded and decorated with gold leaf), often the picture had a flat single dimensional effect with a folk- art quality.

Stages in glass Painting done in layers and superimposed by author.

1-Line drawing ,2 – Painting on the reverse ,3 -Gold foil included at the back, on an acrylic



Gold foil

Icon Painting:

Unusual portrayal of Shiva



Durbar like Rama Durbar,
with the canopy of a European arch, native tiled roof and placed atop Mount Kailash.

Portrait: A Kerala Woman playing *Tanmbura* and Mridangam



Dancing girls: in folk style with small feet





As in Thanjavur paintings, secular themes such as, women highly stylized and portraiture with some effort to infuse reality along with icon and narrative pictures were executed. Colour scheme was minimal as were using natural colours.





Potpourri of concepts – Indian Concept with European devil, chair etc and small feet.





Kind Courtesy-Chennai Museum

Glass Paintings from Chitra Kala Parishad

Diversity in unity through concepts and creations











Astrologer and two noble women



Paintings by author

The beautiful blending possible with the use of oil colours has precipitated a whole new series of paintings

Icon

One of the series of 32 Ganesas based on Iconography12”x12”





Navaneetha Krishna 10”x13”

Rati and Manmatha

Glass paintings – 24”x 24”

Rati – Goddess of Love - with Her flower arrows and sugar cane bow riding a *hamsa* is an embodiment of Love.



Manmatha - God of Love –As regal as can be, He is none the less and spreads the warmth/ glow of Love.



Narrative Vakrathunda 24”x24”

Tempera on Board superimposed with Glass Painting on top adding depth to the visualisation process.

Inspired by a Devakoshta image of Nrithya Ganapathy from the Belur temple of Karnataka and the polish of the pillars in the Halibed Jain temple gave rise to Vakrathunda seated on Ohm.

Story line from Tamil poetry added narrative element.

- When Muruga teases Him of the broken tusk, Ganesa picks up the moon from Shiva and looks at His reflection after positioning it to cover the broken tusk.
- Vishnu does *Thoppukaran (sitting and standing up with the right ear held by the left finger and the left ear by right hand)* to make Ganesa laugh, so that the Conch shell and the Wheel He had swallowed would fall out.



'Patina 2 Saraswathy Real Gems 15" x18"

A Medley of Thanjavur (Natural Colours) and Glass Painting (Oil) Techniques giving rise to 3D kind of picturisation



Hamsavauhini 24” x24” glass painting superimposed on Thanjavur adding visual depth. The water pavilion is ready to receive the *Pushpaka Vimanam* (flying Chariot) with Saraswathi seated in *adibhanga* on Her Hamsa and seven *hamsas* gliding the chariot down gently.



Adithyahridayam 3 feet diameter

A medley of Thanjavur and Glass Paintings framed in copper sheet-metal embossed frame

Based on the Adithya Hridayam slokas narrated by Sage Agasthya extolling the virtues of the Sun God to Sri Rama" Oneness of God is the Essence of the Vedas”. Surya becomes God Supreme.

- Executed as a homage to Raja Raja Chola
- using early & late Chola details for the conceptualisation
- sheet metal embossing for the frame work and
- Thanjavur & Glass painting techniques which evolved in the Culture Capital in later years





Painted and fired stained Glass



Chapter VI

Mica Paintings

Similar technique as in reverse glass painting.

The transparency, translucency and opaqueness of mica sheets lured the artists with a potential choice of a new medium to appease their thirst for creative experiments. Same reverse glass painting technique was used and the results are available in both Chennai Museum and Chitra Kala Parishad museum.

Icon







Courtesy of Chennai



Agni, Varuna, and Vayu in their iconographic splendour





Mica Paintings from Chitra Kala Parishad: Narrative, Vocational



Chapter VII

Ivory Marbles and Granite

Surface has to be smooth and the paintings are done with vartanas or stippling



Portrait Ivory Sculpture of Thirumalai Nayakkar and his wife from Srirangam, Courtesy Balaji Srinivasan

With the inherent texture of ivory, it needs to be painted by Varthanas (rendering) Courtesy Madras Museum.



Icon Approx – 4" square

Portrait
Approx.-3" round



Portraits of ‘Jahangir and Nurjehan’ on Marble

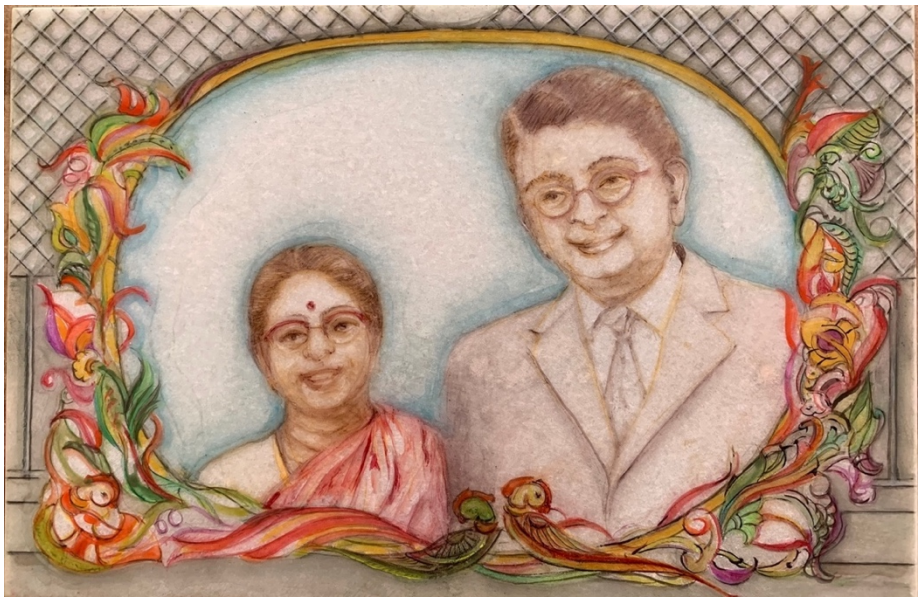
Courtesy B.G. Sharma Studio Arts.

As Shivaji annexed part of North India, the techniques of gilding and paintings on different media spread to his entire kingdom. Interactive exchanges of concepts and canvasses could be seen across the Maratha sovereignty as was during Vijayanagara-Nayak rule – While continuous reproductions were created to keep the tradition alive, newer interpretations existed side by side.





Portrait on marble approx. 6.5’ x4.25







Tempera on Marble 3” round

Thanjavur on Marble 3” round

Coasters on Marble





Author’s

Marble and Granite

Similar to ivory paintings, both marble and granite have to be painted using *Varthanas*

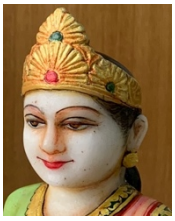
Painting on Granite





Painted with opaque water colours and varnished using silken cloth

Restored Marble Icon



Chapter VIII

Ganjfa Cards

Ganjifa playing cards introduced by the Mughals from Persia and Iran were usually in round shape created exclusively for the entertainment of the rulers. Spread to other parts of India, imbibing different traditions and faiths evolved into various thematic sets as could be seen in Orissa and Karnataka for example.



By
Sudha Venkatesh
A hereditary artist of Mysore School, a revivalist and an artist

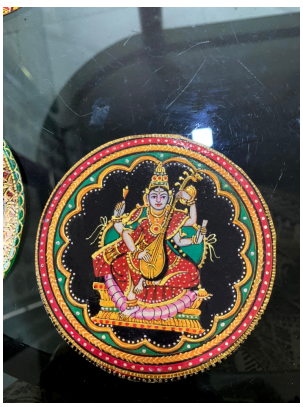












Chapter IX

Travelling Temple, Teak and Sandal wood

Travelling Temple - Old



Folk travelling temple, Kaavad, Tradition of Rajasthan







Narrating Ramayana and Mahabharat Courtesy Satya Narayan Suthar of Bassi Art and Craft




Trisakthi





Travelling temple created in an antique window frame - 3x3 Feet approx., Tempera

All pervading *Adisakthi* - the *Sutradar*, as Her name implies can easily be explained by the formula 'the totality of energy – E – is constant which can only be converted from one form to another. She then becomes the *Kriyasakthi* – The Creator, *Gnanasakthi* – The Teacher and *Icchasakthi* – The Provider.

Kriyasakthi -

Coming down from Her mountainous abode, with crescent moon sprinkling nectar all the way and the nature swelling with pride, The Mother She is, with the Sugarcane Bow and Flower Arrows wants to bind us with love and compassion while with the Pasa and Ankusa wants to release us from attachments. In short, she wants to take us step by step to *Peranandam* or Bliss.

Gnanasakthi –

She is an embodiment of Wisdom, abode of the 64 different sources of knowledge. All set to impart *Gnana* (Wisdom), She is coming ashore, engulfed with the fragrance of thalampoo (Screwpine Flower), a teacher par excellence.

Icchasakthi –

Armed with *Gada,* Shield, Pomegranate, *Yoni* with *Linga*, Lotus and Elephant, she is eager to shower Her blessings to all. Water gives connectivity, continuity and tranquility to the picturization.



Teak Wood

Illustrated manuscripts have already had painted wooden end pieces
Courtesy Chennai Museum.



Painted teak coffee table “Lotus Pond”
Opaque water colour
approx. 27” x 54’ by author





Engraved outlines and painting on teak wood

By Author



Sandal Wood Fragrance Series

The fragrant flowers and the sandalwood -always inspiring, igniting a sense of admiration with their variety, changing scenario and their graceful movements which is almost like a ballet to the rhythm of wind, a delight and a dream to fantasize for the artists.

Series of 17 paintings of fragrant flowers on sandalwood, with hand-painted lyrical poetry in a narrative manuscript

By author format.3” x 4” using opaque water colour framed in 8.5” x7.5” bevelled glass and teakwood frame



Fragrance Series on Sandalwood
Illustrated Manuscript Format
Size – Approx 5.25” x3.25”
Framed in: 8.5” x 6.75” Bevelled glass and Teak wood Frame




















©Lakshmi Krishnamurthy

Chapter X

Silk (Tussar, fine silk or cotton)

Two layers are stuck together and the top layer burnished with agate or any other smooth stone, could also be applied with a thin layer of rice gruel 9sizing) and polished.

Pitchwai on silks and Patachitra on silk. (Techniques in Volume – 9)



Courtesy - Bhilwara Artist --- Susheel Soni - Antique

Pichwais are also available from Benares - Sanjay Sharma Museum and Research Institute, Jaipur and Patachitra has also been executed on silk.

Egg tempera







Egg tempera on silk By Author.

Influenced by

Moghul Miniatures 15” x 18”

Chola Frescoes from Brihadeeswarar Temple 24” x 18”

Ravi Varma Yasoda Krishna 20” x 24”

Based on Chinese concepts

12” x 36” Intelligence



- For painting on silk Tussar is used normally (Details in Volume 9).
- Two pieces are stuck together (*vasli*) with rice gruel and after drying the top one is burnished.
- Egg tempera: After a few layers of water colours are painted, silk is brushed over with egg white and Arabic gum to give it a protective coating as is an emulsion. Intermittent repetition adds to easier washes maintaining transparency, something akin to acrylic colours, which when dry serves the same feel.
- Different temperas are used depending on their availability and comfort of the artist

Chapter XI

Leather

Softened and painted with natural colours are mainly used for puppetry. Courtesy Chitra Kala Parishad.







Renaissance of Hinduism under Vijayanagar rulers precipitated a whole array of activities across fine arts. Apart from paintings

1. Travelling temples for Katha Kalakshepam,
2. Leather puppets for Shadow plays,
3. Painted dolls for religious and decorative purposes. (Cheriyal, Kollu-Dasara-Kondapalli Toys etc),
4. Paintings on cloth and Block Printing on natural textiles (Kalamkari)for both religious and secular purposes,

were all produced each one vying in colour and design with other to suit the local dictum.

(1,2 and 4 have already been discussed earlier)

Chitrakathi



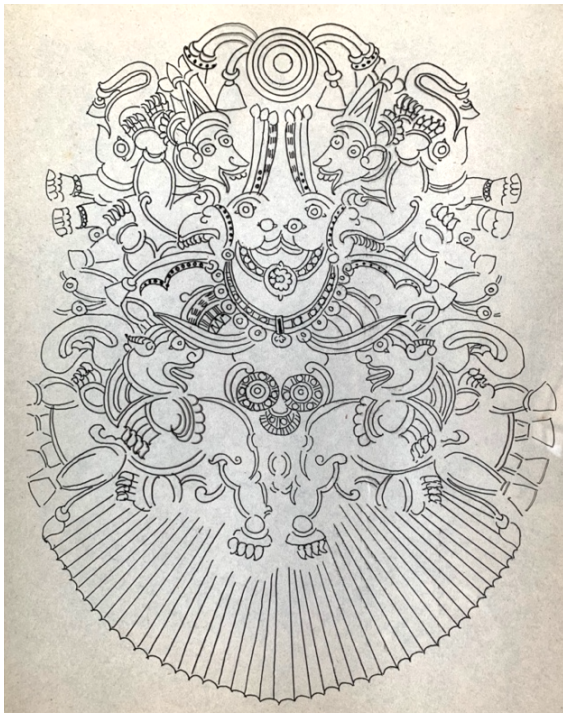
In Karnataka, influence of Chitrakathi paintings precipitated bright colours and the second eye of Maratha School which has roots from Ajanta Cave paintings

Saraswathi-Chitrakathi











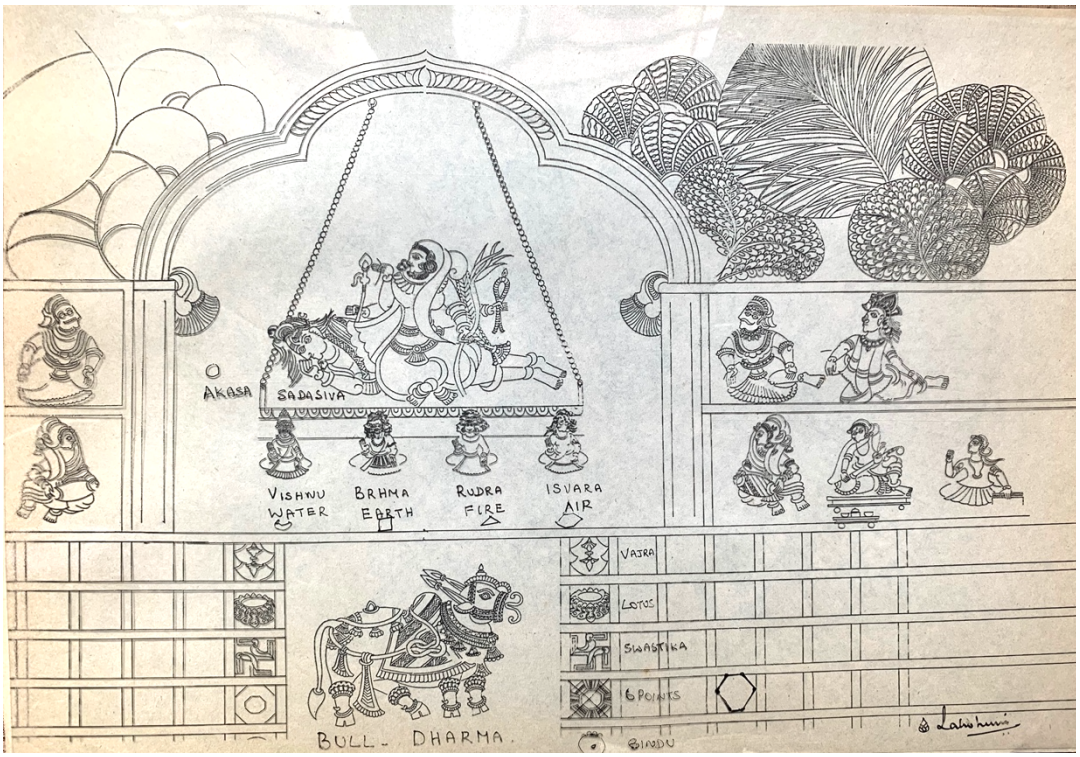
Line drawing based on old anda-perunda emblem of Wadiyars





In Kerala colours were almost absent, while in Andhra and Tamil Nadu the second eye was absent Delineation continued to follow the Vijayanagara-Nayak idiom.

Line drawing for painting by Author



A puppet painting on leather by Author



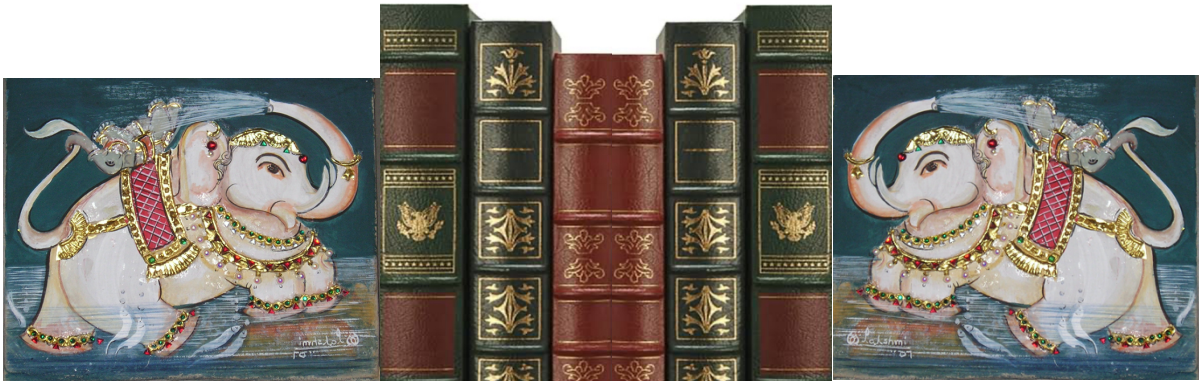
Epilogue

The scenario can be likened to the vast expanse of the open sea, where shifts occur akin to the undulating waves, generating novel patterns and effects. These changes encompass alterations in ruling dynasties with the expansion or contraction of their empires. Amidst this dynamic flux, culture and heritage serve as the immutable fulcrum and anchor, steadfastly absorbing the fluctuations while retaining their essential identity across folk, tribal and classical streams.



'Afterword Book1'

Book Tapestry



Like individual strands of fibre become threads that are then woven with warps and wefts into a master piece of tapestry – the authors and references listed here bring their individual insights and knowledge to create a tapestry that spans the eons from the beginning of memory and extends into unknown futures.

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Extracts from "Mythic Imagination"
A Critical Appreciation of the scholar
Mrs. Lakshmi Krishnamurthy
by Dr Ashrafi S. Bhagat

Art Historian, Art Critic & Independent Curator, Associate Professor & Former Head Department of Fine Arts Stella Maris College (Autonomous), Chennai

Lakshmi is a versatile personality wearing many hats. She is an Artist, Poet, Administrator, Art researcher, Art restorer and Archivist, with specializations in traditional Indian painting forms including Thanjavur and Mysore styles, Frescoes, Tempera, folk art. She has interest in Indian Art History having conducted co-curricular courses in Indian Art for students and professionals. Her intellectual interests also extend to writings on art and iconography, when she researched and was the Associate Subject editor to the volume titled "Encyclopedia of Hinduism", First Edition, Vol. 1-10, published by Rupa & Co. in 2010. A book titled, "South India: Heritage and Introduction; was published by East West Books Pvt. Ltd in 2004. A monograph on her teacher K. Sreenivasulu titled "South of The Adyar River: Kalakshetra", was published in 2006.

Lakshmi's varied interests, particularly her thirst for knowledge, learning and experimenting with artistic mediums, have led her to create a large corpus of works, which she has enhanced further with her knowledge of Indian iconography and an understanding of its diverse symbolism through her process of creative visualization. Her paintings do not provide a paradigm shift, but remain within the framework of tradition. They fulfil the artist's aspirations to return to roots by removing the veil of amnesia cast on past traditions, to pitch forth with renewed dynamism. When Lakshmi talks about her works, its inspiration and various myths that she has read, there is passion in her voice and her gestures, but she is never overtly excited and will continue in the same controlled voice narrating inspirations and concepts. Her aesthetic predilection for the past contours her visual language, which gestures towards a transcendent mission of revival of mural and miniatures, as well as folk and tribal traditions, with respect to materials, pigments, techniques, style and the compositional structure.



'Genesis/ Symphony'

15" x18" Tempera. An ethereal composition for vision, visualisation with anchor to spread wings of creativity through eons with the evergreen messenger Hamsa

by Author