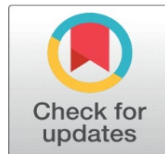


AESTHETICS AND IMPLICATIONS OF HADOTI SCHOOL OF PAINTING: AN EVALUATIVE ANALYSIS OF VIBRANT REFLECTION OF THE RAJPUT STYLE OF PAINTING

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DOI
[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i4.2024.1832](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i4.2024.1832)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

This forum explores the ways in which the Hadoti School of Painting, more than other forms of art, reflects the love of chromatic expression. Hadoti paintings, which are known for their strong lines and vibrant colours, effectively contrast with the vigor and strength of Rajasthani paintings' characterization. Rajasthan's topography is characterised by dramatic contrasts, from the wealthy black soil and environment of Malwa to the river Chambal, the verdant eastern region, and the nearly unending dry desert of Western Rajasthan. These landscapes are strikingly colourful and fascinating. The brave and courageous people of Rajasthan have always maintained their resilient spirit despite living in a place with harsh weather and geographical conditions. For Rajasthanis, colour is an integral aspect of daily existence. The tone is an important symbol of the rigorous spirit in its arts and architecture, in its clothing and costumes, and in its rites and rituals. Perhaps Hadoti has a distinct style but the common trait is, it called Rajasthan Style of painting constructs Rajasthan as rich in colour and united with culture.

Keywords: Rajasthan, Hadoti, Bundi, Kota, Art, School of Painting

1. INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan, a land of majestic forts, vibrant festivals, and a captivating cultural heritage, is also renowned for its rich artistic traditions. Painting in Rajasthan also flourished and reached the pinnacle of artistic development during the Rajput era, much like architecture and sculpture. These paintings depicted deities and religious figures, as well as visualizations of songs and poetry. They showcased the region's rich artistic palette, primarily utilizing vibrant hues of red, yellow, and green. Such paintings can still be found in the museum collections of old palaces belonging to the Rajas and Maharajas, as well as in the grand havelis of feudal lords. This distinct style of painting is known as the "Rajput style of painting". The rulers of Rajasthan

actively patronised and supported painters, providing them with shelter, sustenance, and financial resources. This patronage extended even to artists who had been exiled or banished by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Consequently, the art of painting exhibited a fusion of Iranian and Rajasthani artistic elements. Mewar, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Krishnagarh and Bundi, Kota are some of the most prominent regional schools of Rajput painting that emerged during this period. Rajasthani paintings can be broadly categorised into two main types: courtly and literary. The courtly paintings include portraits of rulers, scenes of the royal court, hunting, and other recreational activities. The literary paintings, on the other hand, express a connection with poetry, such as "*Amaru-Sataka*," "*Sur-Sagar*," "*Rasmanjhari*," "*Rasikpriya*," "*Raagmala*," and "*Barahmasa*." (Sharma, et al. 2019, p.778)

2. OBJECTIVES

- To be aware more of the Historical background of Rajasthani Painting through the eyes of Hadoti style.
- To study the contemplating relationship between the art and artisans.
- To understand the reminiscence, ideas, and principle that are the part and umbrella of the Folk culture of Rajasthan.
- To discuss the fondness of the "*Raagmala*" set which has been part of all styles of paintings in Rajasthan (Mewar, Marwar, Dhundhar, Hadoti).

3. DATA METHODOLOGY

Primary and Secondary sources are the foundation of the current investigation . For this research paper, relying on the historical records , Contemporary art work and in-dept interviews of the local artists and art historians and cultural experts to explore the richness of Hadoti painting , to understand the current development stage of such art work wall , miniature paintings , murals and factors contributing it to decline .Simultaneously, secondary sources where a number of books, internet, journals are included. Before gathering data for this research paper, a thorough analysis of all secondary sources was conducted, and sufficient data were then gathered for the purposes of this research paper.

4. EXPLORATION OF RAJASTHANI ARTISTRY FROM 1200 CE TO 1500 CE

The ancient art of paintings from the 13th century are the Jain miniature painting of illustrated manuscripts such as "*Shravakapratikraman Sutra Churni*" painted during 1260 A.D. At Ahar near Udaipur, under the rule of Guhila king Teja Singh and "*Supasanahachariyam*" painted at the time of King Mokala . These artistic works provide insight into the secular and religious life of that era through the emotional expressions depicted in the figures. The "*Kalpasastra*" painting and the "*Pustakprakash*" depicts conventionalised images with a flat, two-dimensional quality, a characteristic feature of early Rajasthani paintings. Latest of the fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries, the Rajput paintings saw a significant evolution in style, technique, and content. The manuscripts became more luxurious and astonishing . Plenty of gold was used along with a rich palette of colours that were applied in bold (Sharma, et al.2019 , p.779)

5. PROBING THE ORIGIN OF BUNDI STYLE OF PAINTING

Until recent years, the distinct Bundi School of Painting was not widely recognised, but scholarly research into the artistic works has now established its existence as a separate regional painting tradition. The Bundi School of Painting can be considered an early offshoot of the broader Rajasthani painting tradition. The reign of Rao Surjan Singh, who became a feudatory of the Mughals, marked a significant turning point in the development of the Bundi style. Rao Surjan Singh was a strong patron of art and culture, actively fostering the growth and flourishing of the Bundi School of Painting within his kingdom. Additionally, Rao Ratan Singh, Rao Surjan Singh's successor, received honours from Mughal emperor Jahangir and led the Mughal army to the Deccan region. Rao Ratan Singh's son, Chhatrasal, further contributed to the advancement of the Bundi School by employing painters to create works within the tradition-built "*Rangmahal*" especially known for wall painting (Sharma, et al.2019 , p.785) Recent research has revealed that three miniature paintings from Bundi Raagmala have an inscription in Persian from 1591 that lists the names of the artists, Shaykh Hasan, Shaykh Ali, and Shaykh Hatim. The artists identify themselves as students of Mughal court master painters Mir Sayyid Ali and Khwaja Abddus Samad. They identify the painting's original location as Chunar, which is close to Banaras and is home to the palaces of Rao Bhoj Singh and his father Rao Surjan Singh. Among the persisting few album of the Chunar set are "*Raginis Khambavati*", "*Bilaval*", "*Malashri*", "*Bhairavi*", "*Patmanjari*" and a few others. (An Introduction to Indian Art Part II, 2020 ,p. 17-18) Bhoj Singh was serving under the Mughal emperor Akbar, "epitomizing "*Ragini Bhairavi* in the Allahabad Museum" "*Raga Dipika* in the Bharat Kala Bhawan at Banaras, "*Ragini Todi*" in the Baroda Museum and Picture Gallery collections and "*Ragini Malasari*" in a private collection in the United States of America" (Sharma, et al. 2019 ,p.786). The Bundi School of Art flourished" thanks to the support of rulers like Rao Chhatrasal, Umed Singh, Bhishan Singh, and Bhao Singh. With changing reigns, the subjects and styles of Bundi paintings evolved to suit the tastes of their royal patrons. Artists relied on the backing of the elite class for their livelihoods which required them to adjust their work accordingly.

Figure 1



Figure 1 Wall paintings of Rangmahal under the reign of Chhatrasaal

Source Gaatha

Figure 2

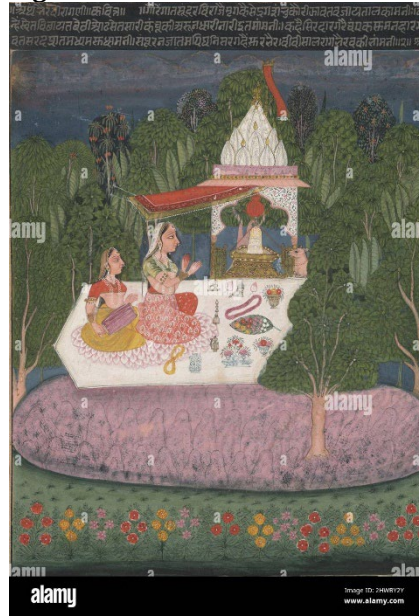


Figure 2 Ragini Bhairavi the Raagmala set of Bundi style of painting

Source Gaatha

Figure 3



Figure 3 Wall Painting in Garh Palace of Bundi

Source Gaatha

6. MOMENTOUSNESS OF CHITRASHALA AND MINIATURE PAINTING IN BUNDI ART

The Chitrashala , or the 'House of Paintings,' in Bundi Palace is a testament to the artistic legacy of the Bundi School. known as the Ummed Mahal, this ornate structure was commissioned by Rao Ummed Singh II during the late 18th century is a part of Garh Palace complex in Bundi. The Ummed Mahal's interiors are adorned with exquisite wall paintings that depict a range of subjects depicting hunting, processions, court scenes, life of feudals , birds, animals and scenes from Krishna's life and mythological and religious scenes to court life, hunting, and processions. These paintings are of exceptional quality and can rival the finest examples of art globally. Additionally, the illustrated "*Bhagawata -Purana*" manuscripts housed in the Kota Museum showcase the remarkable artistic tradition of Bundi. The

Chitrashala gives a history colourful glimpse. One such painting the gallery described as (Gaatha,2022)

Figure 4



Figure 4 Raas leela of Krishna with Gopis in Bundi style

Source Gaatha

Figure 5



Figure 5 Chitrashala murals

Source Rooftop

“On a spring day in the 1700s, under Ummed Singh's rule, the forest is chilly, foreboding, and enticing. A young princess makes the decision to go hunting rather than attend her music lesson. Riding a white stallion and brandishing a spear, she charges into the trees, accompanied by a man on horseback and a servant who beats a drum to frighten the animals. Upon spotting a family of deer, she makes the decision to attack. The deer run for their lives as she whips the horse, sending it racing forward. Though it's only inches away, one of them will soon outpace the horse in speed. The princess needs to attack right now. She extends her hand and back, bending low over the left side of her horse, and hooks the deer's hind leg, making a catch”.(Gaatha,2022)

The miniature murals adorning the walls of the Bundi Fort are rich in movement and drama, allowing visitors to imagine numerous captivating narratives within the span of a single afternoon. The Chitrashala, formerly a thriving art school within the fort, houses hundreds of these paintings that invite viewers to weave their own stories. Referred to as Rajasthan's Sistine Chapel, the Chitrashala is renowned for its convoluted ceiling work depicting themes from the “*Raas-Lila*”. Additionally, the paintings feature depictions of the “*Nayaka-Nayika Bheda*”, showcasing passionate and devoted lovers, as well as scenes from the “*zenana*”, or “women's quarters”, including women hunters, full court, and encounters with mythical creatures(Gaatha ,2022). The remarkable intricacy, finesse, and beauty of

Chitrashala's paintings are accessible to all, regardless of one's level of art expertise, inviting viewers to engage with the work through their own imagination and interpretation. Miniature painting has a long-standing tradition, with artists creating works on a variety of media including canvas, parchment, stone, and mud walls. This art form demands meticulous attention to detail, perseverance, and patience. The creation of each miniature painting can take months, and some even require years to complete (Gaatha,2022). These small-scale, handmade paintings are characterised by their vibrant, colourful palette. The Bundi painting materials were handcrafted from natural sources such as vegetables, minerals, indigo, conch shells, and occasionally precious metals like gold and silver.

Figure 6



Figure 6 Colour pallete used in Paintings

Source Gaatha

The paintings typically depicted the flora and fauna of the Bundi forests, having the main theme being the “*Ragini*”, a depiction of the various manifestations of “*Raagas*” within the changing seasons and landscapes of Bundi (Gaatha,2022). The Bundi painting style is noted for its reminiscent Mughal influence, which is evident in the naturalistic depiction of faces and the predominant focus on rendering the natural world, particularly trees. The Chitrashala murals depict the “*zenana*”, the private quarters designated for the women of the royal court and palace. This space was segregated based on the social status of its female occupants, with only princes and kings granted access. Bundi paintings of the “*zenana*” showcase various scenes, including female courtiers engaged in discourse, and princes participating in leisure activities, as well as the ponds, courtyards, and terraces of the palace. These works also record the festivities of the “*Teej*” celebration, as well as the women's indulgence in leisurely pursuits such as wine consumption and hookah smoking (Rooftop,2023). “*Raga Malkounsa, Raga Sri, and Ragini Ramkali*” in the ‘Khajaanchi’ collection demonstrate a strong influence from the Chunar *Raagmala* style (Rooftop,2023), the “*Bhagawata -Purana*” manuscripts housed in the Kota Museum feature Bundi paintings. The National Museum of Delhi houses a collection of Bundi paintings and numerous miniature “*Raagmala*” artworks were created during the rule of Rao Ratan of Bundi. Moreover, the Chhatra Mahal in Rajasthan used to showcase Bundi fresco paintings, but most of them have gradually decayed. Today, artists in Bundi still include Chitrashala themes in their postcards, souvenirs, and handicrafts. An artist named Yug Pratap runs a studio known as ‘Yug Art’. Smaller artists have also added individualized elements to the Bundi style, experimenting with new subjects and color schemes in their artwork (Rooftop,2023)

Figure 7**Figure 7** Teej Celebration

Source Rooftop

Figure 8**Figure 8** Raag malkounsa in Khajaanchi from Chunar

Source Rooftop

7. THEMES IN BUNDI STYLE OF ARTISTRY

The Bundi style of painting exhibits several distinctive features. Mainly the Bundi painting based on “Nayak -Nayika bheda”, “Barahmasa”, “Bhagawata Purana” and “RasikPriya”. One common theme in Bundi paintings is “Barahmasa”. It is, as previously mentioned, an atmospheric account of the twelve months by Keshav Das, included in the tenth chapter of “Kavipriya”, which was written for “Rai Parvin”, a renowned courtesan of “Orchha”. (An Introduction to Indian Art II, 2020 ,p.19) human figures is characterised by a unique aesthetic, with round faces, almond-shaped eyes, pointed noses, and a reddish-brown skin tone. A notable attribute of the Bundi paintings is the naturalistic depiction of the landscape, which features lush greenery, rolling hills, flowing rivers, dense vegetation, and vibrant flowers. The artists paid meticulous attention to capturing the diverse flora and fauna of the Bundi region, including peacocks, parrots, deer, and other animals. Additionally, the Bundi paintings frequently depict the water in rivers and pools, as well as the sky rendered in various shades of blue. In the later period, the artists incorporated a distinctive palette blending greyish-blue, green, vermillion, and orange hues. Over time, the subject matter of the Bundi paintings shifted from literary works to scenes depicting hunting, courts, “darbars”, and festivals. In terms of colouration and the emphasis on landscape, the Bundi school of painting expresses a close affinity with

the Deccan painting tradition. As the grandson and successor of Raja Chhatrasal, Raja Bhao Singh and Raja Aniruddha Aurangzeb's expansion into the Deccan region. (Sharma, et al., 2019, p. 787). Rao Ram Singh's Bundi painting style lost its unique artistic quality and started to become monotonous and repetitive around the middle of the century.

8. ORIGIN OF THE KOTA SCHOOL OF PAINTING

A family feud between the Hada Rajput clan's Bundi and Kota branches began in 1625. Moreover, in 1628 Shahjahan gave Madho Singh, the brother of Chhatrasal, the title of jagir of Kota, and Kota split off from the Hada Rajas and Rajputs. In 1719 Bhim Singh annexed Bundi and compelled its ruler Budha Singh to flee. But later the terrific events and interference of Marathas Bundi never recovered fully by. Kota now had developed its tradition and culture distinct from the Bundi (Sharma, et al., 2019, p. 787). The Kota painting tradition gained prominence when Colonel D.G. Geyer Anderson acquired a collection of Kota paintings from the Maharajas of Kota, which he then donated to the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. The Kota school of painting shares similarities with the Bundi style of painting also exhibits influences from Mughal art. (Sharma, et al., 2019, 788)

9. ADVANCEMENT OF KOTA PAINTING STYLE AND PECULIAR FEATURES

Under the rule of Jagat Singh (1658–1683), Kota established its own artistic school after separating from Bundi. Previously, differentiating between Bundi and Kota paintings was challenging, as Kota artists drew inspiration from Bundi paintings. (Rooftop, 2023). However, over time, the Kota school developed a distinct visual language, characterised by a greater emphasis on detailed renderings of courtly scenes, festivals, and natural landscapes. There were usual sets of "*Raagmala*", "*Ramayana*", "*Bhagawata Purana*" amid of Jagat Singh. It came into existence independently under the governance of Ram Singh. During the period of Bhim Singh, the elements of "*Krishna -Leela*" were depicted which influenced the Vallabh sect in Rajasthan. There was a new and sudden style of painting of Kota under the period of Ummed Singh, with depiction of hunting scenes princes, nobles somewhat sparsely wooded forest. The reign of Arjun Singh male was depicted with a hooked nose. The Kota paintings experience a resurgence during Ram Singh commissioned number of paintings depicting hunting, worship scenes, and processions scenes "*Darbar*", (Prasad, 2019, p. 436-440) clouds are rendered in a flamboyant style as dark swirling spirals interspersed with curling strands of golden lightning. Ram Singh was an eccentric man with a zest for life who often indulged in unusual activities. He was also one of the last great rulers who offered royal patronage to the arts (Rooftop, 2023). Male and females has the ruddy, orange-tinted complexion and sharp features, stout bodies, shining faces, bulging eyes, long necks, pointed chins and large foreheads, and nose The facial features and bodily proportions are distinctive compared to the Mughal style. , Royalty wear long "*jama*" coats, "*pajamas*," a diamond-studded turban, and a "*patka*" around their waist. Women have round faces with elongated, almond-shaped eyes. They are slender and short and wear ornamented cholis, short lehengas, and transparent dupattas. (Rooftop, 2023) Hunting scenes often display the magnificence of the scenery of Kota, displaying its beautiful terrain filled with rugged hills and cliffs, as well as dense jungles and wildlife. Water bodies, cliffs, thick shrubbery, tall trees, and animals in their natural habitats are depicted in Kota paintings. The scenery is

painted realistically, which is a step away from the stylized interpretations of Bundi paintings. The colours are bright, and the foliage is especially detailed and vivid (Rooftop,2023). Application of Red, green, and golden colours in the background as well as costumes. The “Shikar”, or hunting theme, was immensely popular during the reign of Maharao Ummed Singh I. People of all social classes liked to hunt, as it was a popular social activity. Hunters used to carry weapons such as swords and spears, as well as modern guns in later periods. Animals painted in this style like tigers, elephants, horses, pigs, and are very realistic and lively. The elephants fighting scenes hunting rhinos are painted with realism and dynamism. The Kota painters also gained priority as they painted hunting scenes of beautiful women (Prasad ,2019, p.436-440). The “Garh Palace” in Kota was built in the 17th century and over the years, it improved an intensive compilation of murals, miniature paintings, manuscripts, and other heritage artifacts. All the crowned heads of Kota presented to the palace in their own way. Unique paintings and murals were added to the ‘Hathi Pol Gateway’, ‘Bada Mahal’ and the “zenanas” (women’s palace). Concepts and themes from Bundi were reimaged at the “Garh Palace”. It soon became a hub of activity, art, and commerce, and while Kota flourished into an industrial centre, Bundi remained a small rural town (Rooftop ,2023)

Figure 9



Figure 9 A miniature painting of kota depicting the elephants

Source rooftop

Figure 10



Figure 10 Hunting scenes most peculiar feature of Kota Art

Source Arga collection

10. FINDING AND DISCUSSING THE OBSTACLE HADOTI STYLE OF PAINTING BATTLING

The Bundi and Kota schools of painting encountered numerous obstacles in the later period. Several of the initial artworks were either destroyed or harmed because of political unrest and insecurity in the area. The traditional Rajasthani painting styles declined due to the Mughal invasion and occupation of the Rajput kingdoms, which introduced Mughal influences. The increasing dominance of the Maratha empire in the 18th century caused further disruption in the Rajput kingdoms, affecting the support and creation of these artworks. Furthermore, the British invasion of India during the 1800s resulted in notable alterations in the artistic and cultural environment, ultimately causing the decline of the unique Rajasthani painting customs. Currently, a few craftsmen are engaging in this trade. The young artisans of today are not keen on carrying forward the age-old craft they inherited, leading them to explore other job prospects to sustain their living. Because of this, art is becoming less and less creative and is beginning to lose its skill. Another conflict with the fact that the bulk of Coomaraswamy's book on Rajput's painting developed later. However, there are several areas out of the geographical limit that are required to be surveyed. The rate at which new discoveries are being made suggests that when the collection of various minor and major durbars is made available to qualified scholars, a wealth of new and significant information will become available, completing our understanding of Rajasthani painting.

11. CONCLUSION

Consequently, the study of the Hadoti Style of painting has a separate importance from the Rajasthani style of Painting. As early as 1916, Anand Coomaraswamy pointed out the Rajput painting's special characteristics that in generic form there can be different styles of painting in Rajasthan, but it is noted as the Rajput Art in all comprehensions, the product of Malwa and Bundelkhand. The way the architecture and sculpture was flourished the painting also rise in its heights in Rajasthan and India and the Painters did not lag behind in the forward march of art testifies the great skill and hard work in the industry of Fine art. Anand Coomaraswamy said it is called The Rajasthani or Rajput style of Painting, no doubt due to the varied tastes and pleasure of various regions the Rajasthan style of painting got patronised but still they some common in all, and every one of them gave characteristics name of Rajasthani style of Painting. Many artists and art enthusiasts consistently support these paintings in an effort to preserve their historical legacy. Paintings have also been modernised in many ways with traditional elements by art enthusiasts in an effort to increase their prominence in today's environment. Rajasthan's paintings safeguard a rich cultural legacy that includes customs, rites and religions. This research forum is a meager attempt to highlight some of the themes and distinctive features of Hadoti's Bundi and Kota artwork.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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