

MODERN & FOLK

PAINTINGS-3

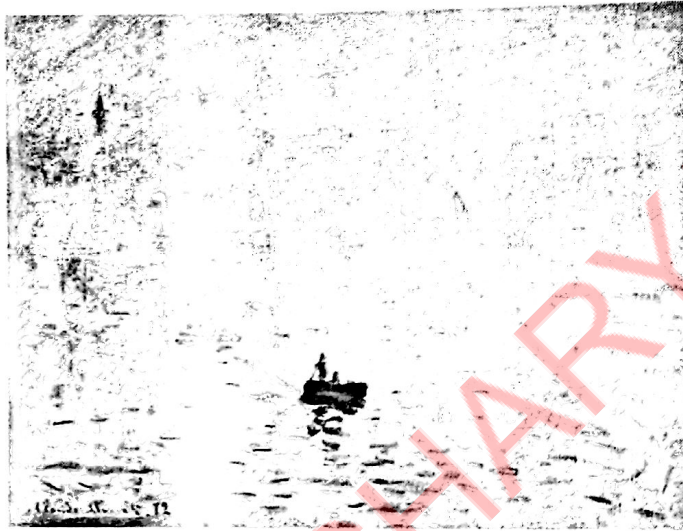
IPSACHINRAVAI

MODERN PAINTING

In the west, the modern period starts conveniently with the Impressionists. However, when we talk of modern Indian Art, we generally start with the **Bengal School of Painting**.

Both in the matter of precedence and importance, we have to follow the course of art in the order of painting, sculpture, and the graphics, the last being comparatively a very recent development.

Impressionism is a 19th-century art movement that originated with a group of Paris-based artists whose independent exhibitions brought them to prominence during the 1870s and 1880s.



Broadly speaking, the essential characteristics of the modern or contemporary art are a certain freedom from invention, the acceptance of an eclectic approach which has placed artistic expression in the international perspective as against the regional, a positive elevation of technique which has become both proliferous and supreme, and the emergence of the artist as a distinct individual.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century, Indian painting, as an extension of the Indian miniature painting, snapped and fell on the decline and degenerated into feeble and unfelt imitation largely due to historical reasons, both political and sociological, resulting in the creation of a lacuna which was not filled until the early years of the twentieth century, and even then not truly. There was only some minor artistic expression in the intervening period by way of the 'Bazar' and 'Company' styles of painting, apart from the more substantial folk forms which were alive in many parts of the country.

Then followed the newly ushered **Western concept of naturalism**, the foremost exponent of which was Raja Ravi Verma. This was without parallel in the entire annals of Indian Art notwithstanding some occasional references in Indian literature of the idea of 'likeness'.

An attempt to stem this cultural morass was made by Abanindranath Tagore.

Bengal School of Painting

1. Under the leadership of Abanindranath Tagore
2. It held its way for well over three decades
3. Also called the **Renaissance School** or the **Revivalist School** - it was both.
4. This school of painting served as a inspired and well intentioned, if not wholly successful, link with the past.
5. Despite its country-wide influence in the early years, the importance of the School declined by the 'forties' and now it is as good as dead.
6. However, it has had little consequence even as a 'take off ground for the subsequent modern movement in art. The origins of modern Indian art lie elsewhere.

MODERN PAINTINGS

Late 18th / Early 19th Centuries

Late 19th Centuries
↳ Before Independence

↳ Post-Independence

Phase I

- ① In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, paintings comprised semi-westernised local styles which were patronised by British residents and visitors.
- ② Themes : Indian social life
Popular festivals
Mughal monuments
- ③ The paintings reflected the improvised Mughal traditions.
- ④ Examples :
 - (a) Shaikh Zia-ud-Din's bird studies
 - (b) Ghulam Ali Khan's portrait paintings for
 - William Fraser
 - Colonel Skinner

① In the late 19th century, art schools on the European model were established in major Indian cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

② Raja Ravi Varma^{of Travancore} depicted mythological and social themes through his oil paintings.

Ex. Lady in the moon light

Ravana kidnapping Sita (Tatayu Painting)

Shakuntala

③ Bengal School of Art :

(i) - Rabindranath Tagore, Abanindranath Tagore, E.B. Havell, Ananda Khetish Coomaraswamy.

(ii) - Characteristics

(a) Essence of Ajanta is clearly noticeable — there is rhythm, linear gracefulness and poise in the Bengal paintings.

(b) The paintings are simple and standard.

(c) Figures are refined and elegant w/o any hardness.

(d) Attractive colour scheme has been used with no bright colours to bring synchronisation wash.

(e) Mughal and Rajasthani influence can be noticed.

(f) The paintings dexterously exposed light and shade.

(g) Associated with Indian nationalism and writings.

(iii) Abanindranath Tagore = Arabian Nights Series painted

Rabindranath Tagore = Bharat Mata.

Phase II (Contd.)

Nandalal Bose : Inspiration from Indian folk art and Japanese paintings.

Binod Behari Mukherjee : Oriental traditions

Tamini Roy : Orissa's 'Pata' paintings
Kalighati Paintings.

Amrita Shergil : Painted on Indian themes in bright colours specially Indian ~~peasants~~ women and peasants

In 1943, during the period of the Second WW, Calcutta painters led by Paritosh Sen, Niroda Majumdar and Pradosh Dasgupta formed a group, which depicted the condition of the people of India through new visual language and ^{novel} techniques.

Phase III

In 1948, Progressive Artists Group in Bombay was formed by under Francis Newton Souza. SH Raza, MF Hussain, KM Aza, ~~etc~~ ^{were} part of it. It broke away from the Bengal School of Art and represented the modern forceful art of independent India.

In the 1970s, artists began to critically survey their environment. National issues became the themes. The Madras School of Art emerged as an important art centre under Abhi Prasad Roy Chowdhary and KCS Pariker. It influenced a new generation of modern artists.

PAG (Bombay, 1948)

- Francis Newton Souza
- SH Raza
- MF Hussain
- KM Arca
- SK Bakre
- HA Gode

"Cubist Style"

- Objects are broken, analysed and then reassembled in an abstract form.
- Perfect balance b/w line and colour.

Madras School of Art

- Debi Prasad Roy Choudhary
- K.C.S. Paniker

Government institutions

- ① National Gallery of Modern Art
- ② Lalit Kala Academy

Tagore: Dominant Black Ink lines & Pencil sketching and shading
Sense of rhythm
Spirituality

→ Directly linked with his writings.

"Bharat Mata"

FOLK PAINTINGS

Madhubani

Kalamkari

Warli

Kalighat

Pattachitra

Phad

Batik

Manjusha

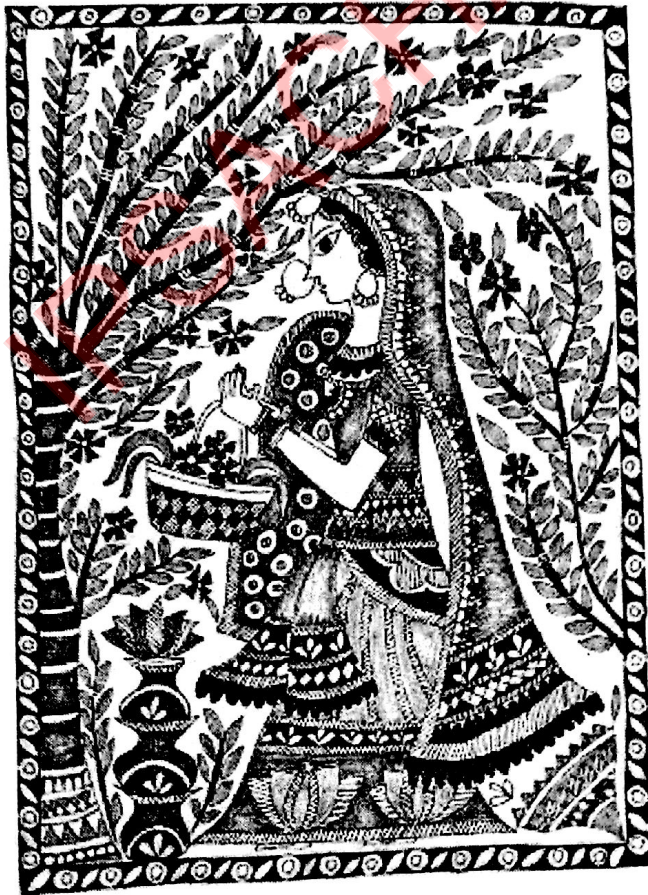
Patra Qalam

DECORATIVE ARTS

Rangoli

Madhubani / Mithila Paintings

- ① G.I. - Traditional art of the Mithila region of Bihar
- ② Exclusively by women artists
- ③ Passed on by the mother to the daughter.
- ④ Initially executed on mud walls (as murals) but after 1967, when a famine occurred, these were executed on cloths, papers etc. for commercialisation.
- ⑤ Drawings are very conceptual. First the painter thinks and then she 'draws her thought.' No pretence (attempt) is there to describe the figures accurately.
- ⑥ No space is left empty in the painting. Gaps are filled by figures of animals, birds, flora and geometrical designs.
- ⑦ Use of indigenous / natural colours at the initial stage - using leaves, flowers and herbs. Finished in black lines.
- ⑧ Outline is drawn directly with a brush, w/o any preliminary sketching.
- ⑨ Use of coloured rice, called aripan. (floor paintings)
- ⑩ Erotic paintings in bedroom called kohbar. (wall paintings)
- ⑪ Themes :
 - Ramayana
 - Hindu Gods and Goddesses
 - Celestial objects
 - Court Scenes
 - Marriages and social happenings.
- ⑫ Famous painter = SIYA DEVI (promoted it globally)
JAMUNA DEVI

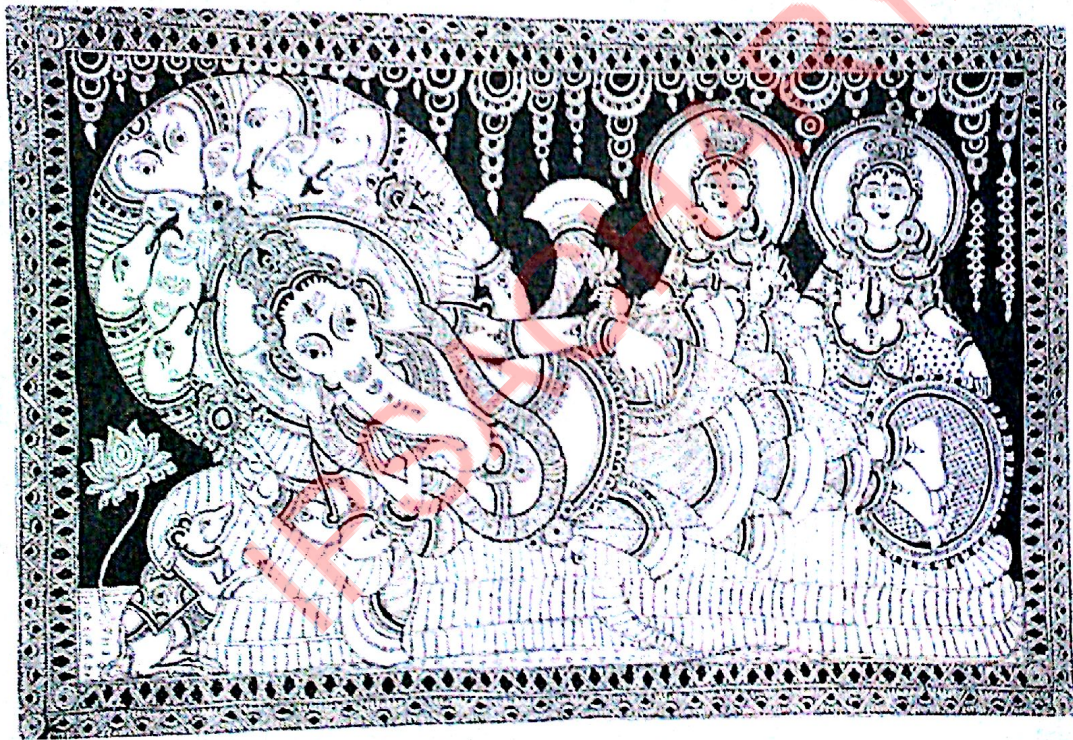
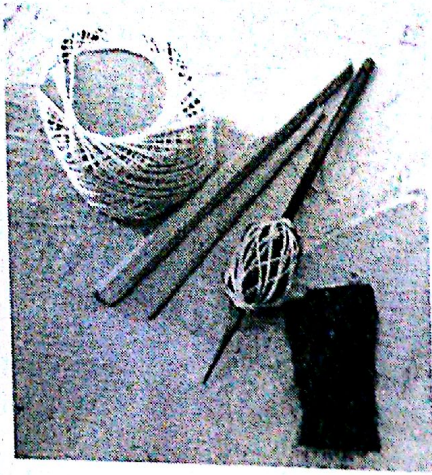


Sub-styles :

- # Kachri - Lines dominant
- # Bhavri - Bright Colours

Kalamkari Painting

- ① Andhra Pradesh : legacy from father to son.
 - Sri-Kalahasti
 - Masulipatnam
- ② The Kalamkari art includes both : hand painting & block printing
- ③ The Kalamkari artist uses a bamboo or date palm stick pointed at one end with a bundle of fine hair attached to the other end to serve as brush or pen.
- ④ Done on cloth
- ⑤ Vegetable dyes obtained from plant roots, leaves along with salts of iron, tin, copper, alum etc are used.
- ⑥ Themes :
 - Ramayana
 - Mahabharata
 - Hindu religious mythology.
- ⑦ Technique : After deciding the subject, scene after scene is painted. The outlines and main features are done using hand carved blocks. The finer details are later done using the pen.
- ⑧ Styles :
 - (a) Sri-Kalahasti Style : Developed in the temple region and hence mostly related to themes from the Hindu mythology.
 - (b) Masulipatnam Style : Owing to Muslim rulers in Golconda, this style was widely influenced by Persian motifs and designs. More block paintings are done.



* The Kalahasti and the Machilipatnam styles — both use only vegetable colours.

Warli Paintings

- ① Decorative paintings on floors and walls of 'Gond' and 'Kol' tribal homes and places of worship.
- ② Maharashtra
- ③ Made mostly by the women.
- ④ Themes: Predominantly religious
Flora and fauna
Daily life

NOTE: Unlike other tribal art forms, Warli paintings do not employ religious iconography and is more secular art.

⑤ Background:

- Made in a geometric pattern e.g. square, rectangle, triangle etc.
- Using cow dung.

⑥ Materials:

- Local materials like white colour, rice paste.

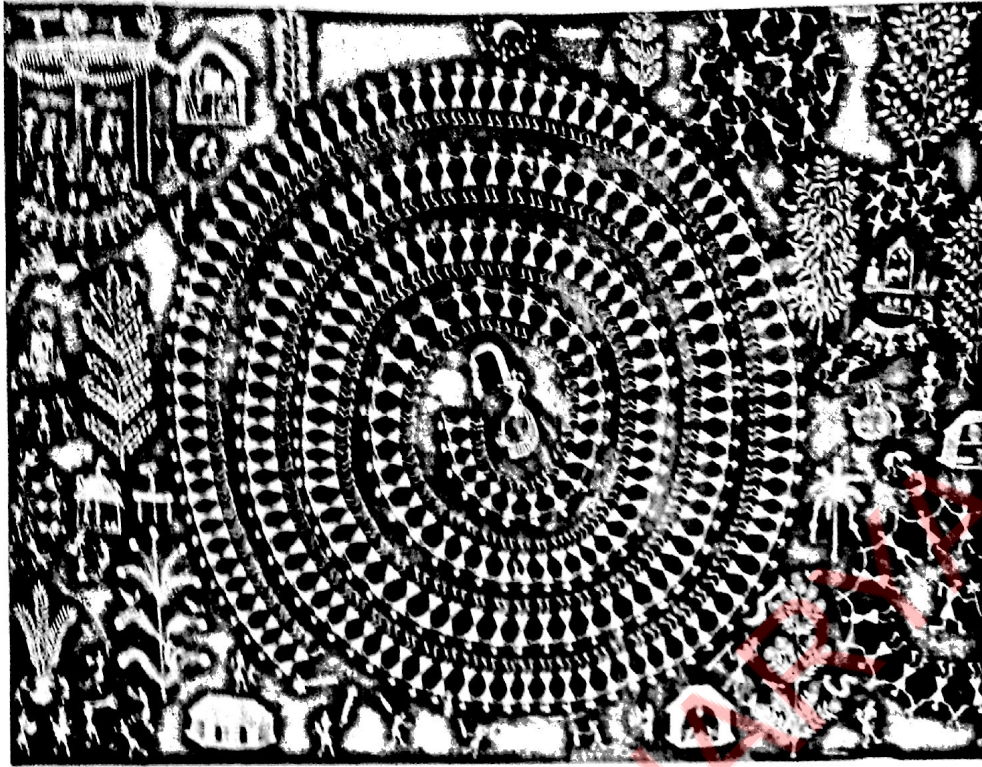
⑦ Technique:

- Dots and crooked lines are the units of these compositions
- Paintings are expanded by adding subject after subject in a spiraling manner.

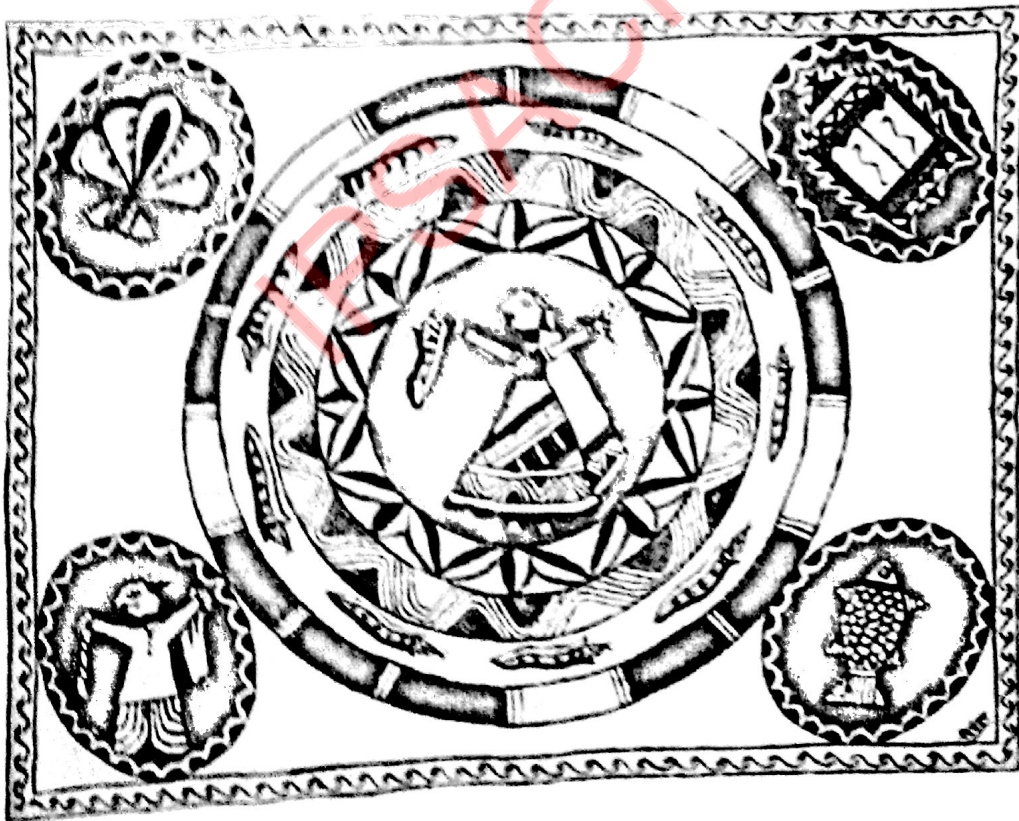
Manjusha Paintings

- i) Bhagalpur region
- ii) Also called Angika art
- iii) Snake motifs always present
- iv) Paintings executed on boxes of jute and paper.

* ANGA was one of the 16 Mahajanapadas.



Warli Paintings, Gond & Kol Tribes, Maharashtra



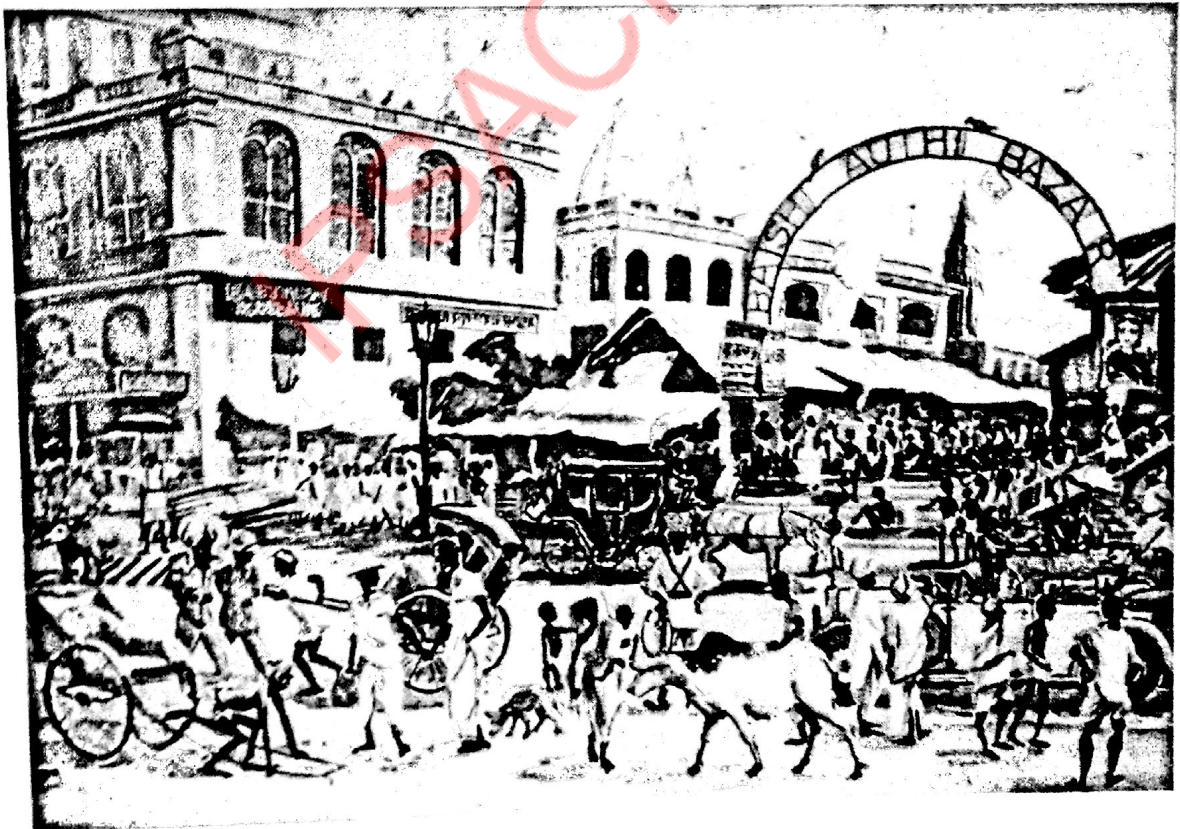
Manjusha Painting, Bhagalpur, Bihar

Kalighat Painting

- ① Product of the changing urban society of the 19th Cen. Calcutta.
- ② Pataua painters evolved a quick method of painting on mill-made paper with water colours.
- ③ Features :=
 - Clear sweeping line drawings
 - Bright colours, clear background
- ④ Themes :=
 - Figures of deities, gentry and ordinary people.
 - Romantic depictions of women
 - Satirical painting lampooning the hypocrisies of the newly rich
 - Changing roles of men and women after the introduction of education for women.
- ⑤ Name: The painting derives its name from its place of origin - Kalighat, a bazaar near the Kali Temple in Kolkata.

Bazaar

- * The bazaar paintings have European influence as Roman and Greek statues were copied in these.
- * Theme — Everyday bazaar
 - Courtesans dancing before British officials
 - Religious.
- * Figures of Indian gods and goddesses with more than 2 arms and elephant head is condemned as it did not follow the human figure.
- * Bengal - Bihar region.



Orissa Patachitra

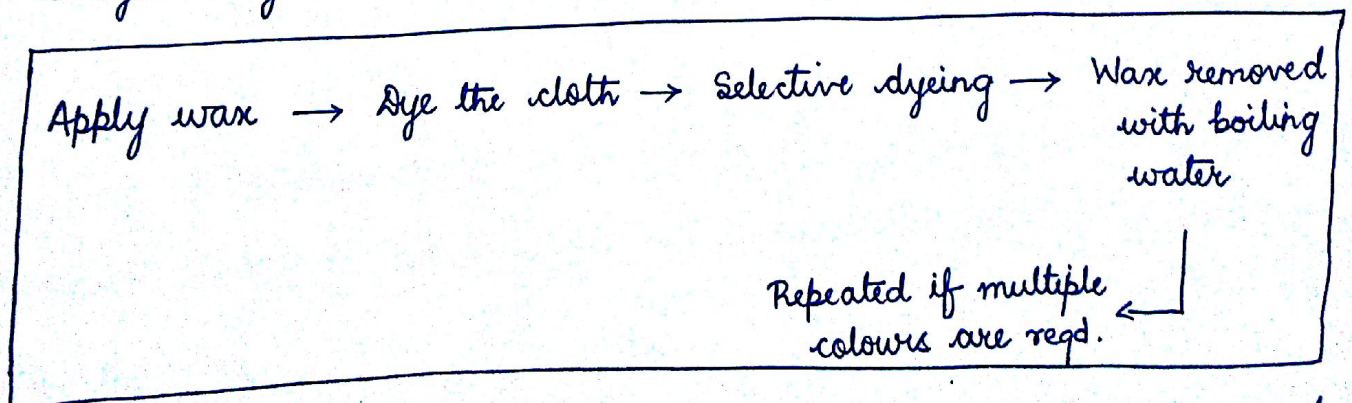
- Similar to Kalighat Pats
- Mostly painted on cloth
- More detailed and more colourful
- Hindu Gods and Goddesses.
 - Lord Jagannath
 - Radha-Krishna
 - Incarnation of Vishnu
- Mix of both folk and classical elements but leans more towards folk forms.
- Background is mostly painted in red.
- Natural colours are used.
- Painters are called as CHITRAKARS.

Gond Art

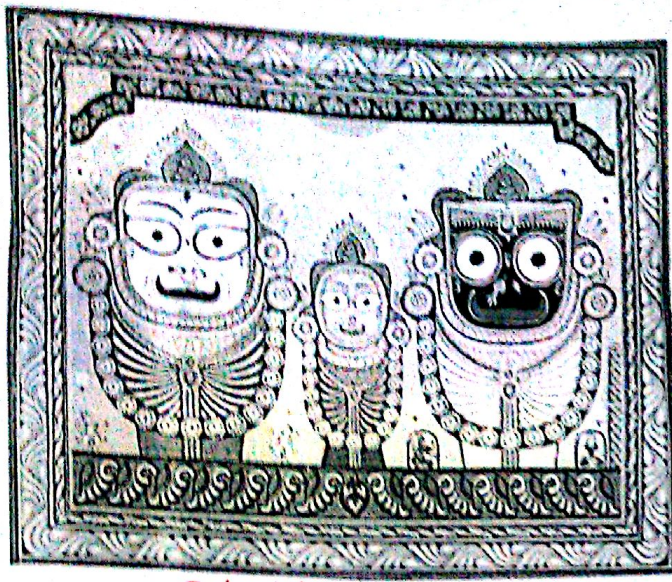
Gond tribe of the Godavari belt — Produce figurative works
Santhals — Very highly sophisticated and abstract art works.

Batik Print

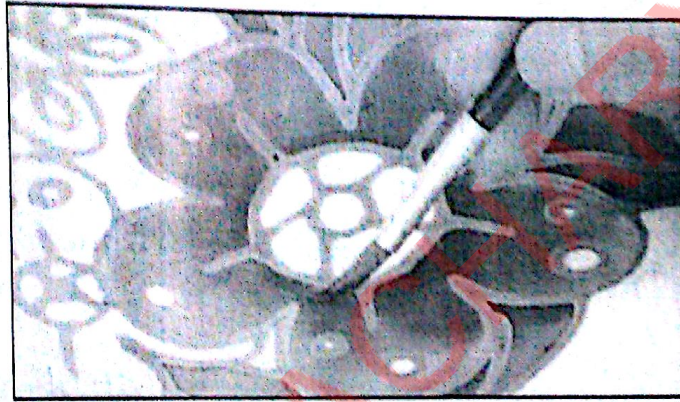
- Batik is a technique of wax-resist dyeing applied to whole cloth.
- Foreign origin (Indonesian Batik is the best-known).



- Indian Batik is now a matured art, immensely popular and expensive.



Patachitra



Batik

Patna Galam

- Have mughal influence
- Common man and daily life scenes
- Dominated by male artists
- Famous painters : Sevakram
Hulas Lal

Tribal Paintings = Warli
Gond
Bhil
Kuwumba

(v) light coloured
background generally

- (i) Nilgiri tribes of hunters and medicine men.
- (ii) Figures are flat and similar to Warli with rectangular bodies.
- (iii) 2-D stick figures
- (iv) Theme = Tribal life.

Phad Paintings

① Phad is a type of scroll painting.

② Bhilwara district, Rajasthan

③ Theme:

- Heroic deeds of a hero
- Daily life of a peasant
- Flora and fauna
- Rural life

- * Deities and their legends
- * Stories of erstwhile Maharajas

④ Bright and subtle colours ; raw colours

⑤ Unique features:

- Bold lines
- 2-D treatment of figures
- Entire composition arranged in sections.

⑥ Technique:

The outlines of the paintings are first drawn in black and then filled with colours.

⑦ History:

- Approx. 700 years old
- Originated in Shahpura, 35 kms from Bhilwara
- The continuous royal patronage gave a decisive impetus to the art which has survived and flourished for generations.

⑧ Its smaller version is called PHADAKYE.



PHAD PAINTING, BHILWARA

Rangoli - Decorative Art

- Rangoli - North
- Apara - Bengal
- Aipan - Uttarakhand
- Rangavalli - Karnataka
- Kollam - Tamil Nadu
- Mandana - M.P.

* Usually rice powder is used but coloured powder or flower petals are also used to make them more colourful.

* Decorative designs on floor - passed on from generation to generation.

INDIAN HANDICRAFTS

- Kashmir - embroidered shawls, carpets.
Namdar Silk
Walnut wood furniture
- Rajasthan - Tie-and-dye (bandhni) fabrics
Glazed blue pottery
Minakari
- A.P. - Bidri work (blackened alloy of zinc & Copper with silver)
Pochampally Saris
- Tamil Nadu - Bronze Sculpture
Kanjeevaram Silk Saris
- Mysore - Silk, sandalwood items
- Kerala - Ivory carvings and rosewood furniture
- M.P. - Chanderi and kosa silk
- Lucknow - shikan work
- Banaras - Brocade and silk saris
- Assam - cane furniture and goods
- Bankura (WB) - Terracotta modelling and handloom items