

## **MODULE 5: OTHER MEDIUMS OF PAINTING**

- 9. Painting on Cloth**
- 10. Painting on Clay**
- 11. Painting on Wood**
- 12. Making of Puppet**



**9****PAINTING ON CLOTH**

Till now, we have learnt about different types of folk paintings. Let us learn about the art of painting on fabric or cloth in this lesson. Cloth has been used for painting since the ancient period. The making of illustrations started along with the advent of cloth. In the beginning, humans must have learnt colouring the cloth and later decorating it with lines or dots.

**OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the history of painting on cloth;
- explain the method of fabric painting;
- identify fabric painting prevalent in the different states;
- draw about 'Pata Chitra' or illustration on cloth; and
- identify colours used for fabric painting.

**9.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

To begin with, you need to understand the general description of cloth painting. Paintings made on fabric are usually known as 'Patachitra', and the method of painting is called 'Patachitran'. 'Pata' is a Sanskrit word generally meaning cloth or fabric. The modern canvas is also included in it.

In Rajasthan, 'Phad' on the life sketches of folk personalities like Devanarayan and folk Gods such as Pabu Ji were created. Apart from these, instances from the Ramayan in Phad of Ramadala and instances from life of Shri Krishna; in Phad of



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Krishnadala started being painted. Presently, the painting of Phad is being done in Bhilwara of Rajasthan and its district Shahpura. The family of Chhipa Joshi are involved in this work.

The 'Harshacharit' was composed in the eighth or ninth century, during the reign of Harshavardhan, 'Kupalayamalakaha' and 'Neetivakyamrit'. The people of righteous inclination kept these types of Patachitras showing pleasures and sorrows of heaven and hell according to the 'Harshacharit'. The Pata that shows the atrocities of Yama is called Sulok Pata. The Bhikshuks used to show the Patachitras to encourage people to practice righteous behaviour. These were called Kundalit The Patachitra. Pichvais refers to illustrated curtains hung behind the main idol in temples. The Patachitra with the objective of worship hung behind the idol is called Pichvai. Various instances, stories, scenes, nature etc. related to that period are painted on the said curtains to link the environment to the life of the said God. Therefore, Pichvai is an attempt to recreate the image of that period in the temple of God.

In this lesson, an introduction to the tradition of fabric painting and its forms is being given. The Pichvai art of Rajasthan is mainly based on worship of Shri Krishna, folk Gods Devanarayana and Pabuji legends in Phad art of Rajasthan and folk art of traditional Kalamkari of Andhra Pradesh are being taken up in this lesson.

## 9.2 TRADITIONAL CLOTH PAINTING MOTIFS

Now, let us learn the traditional motifs used in cloth painting.

1. Folk legends: Life sketch of Devanarayana and folk God Pabu Ji, instances based on the life of Shri Krishna etc.
2. Shri Krishna dancing: Shri Nathji is shown dancing to depict Maharas Pichvai.
3. Musical instruments: flute, conch etc.
4. Kadamb (burflower) and Kadali (Banana) trees.
5. Cow, lotus, peacock, fish, axe, scorpion etc.
6. Court scene: Pichvai consists of curtains hung behind the main idol. Since it is behind the idol, images related to the life of God are created. These can be of nature, court etc., that show stories of that period.
7. Geometric shapes: Use of different types of geometrical shapes.



Notes



Flute



Conch



Geometrical shoppes



Lotus



Bur flower tree



Kadali tree



Peacock



Axe



Scorpion



Fish



God Pabuji

Fig. 9.1

**Notes**

### 9.3 MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR CLOTH PAINTING

- Drawing board
- Pencil
- Scale
- Drawing pins
- Eraser
- Markin cloth
- Poster colour
- 1, 3, 7 number round brush
- Wheat flour, maida or rice maand to prepare starch
- Plastic mug
- Plate for mixing colours

#### Preparing the Surface for the Cloth Painting

- Cut one metre plain markin cloth.
- Prepare starch by boiling 100 g wheat flour or maida after sieving and mixing in water
- Mix the starch in a bucket filled with one litre water, and soak the markin cloth in it for some time.
- Take out the cloth from the water after the starch mixture has covered the cloth and put it for drying in the sunlight without squeezing.
- Once the cloth has dried, spread it on a flat floor and straighten it.
- Now polish the surface of the cloth with a glass, spherical paper weight or stone with smooth surface so that it becomes smooth.
- The surface of the fabric is now ready for painting.

### 9.4 TRADITIONAL METHOD OF CLOTH PAINTING

You have learnt the traditional motifs use in cloth painting. Now, you will learn the traditional method of cloth painting.

The cloth used for making Phad is thick and coarse. The artist paints the folk legend on five to thirty feet of this type of fabric. The method of preparing Phad is given below.

Apply rice (maand) starch on the cloth to make Phad and polish to using a stone so that the cloth hardens and the colour does not spread. Once the starch dries, the

illustrations are outlined. Usually this is done using temporary yellow colour. After that, the colour is filled. Saffron colour is used to colour the face and body. The rest of the Phad is coloured using yellow, green, brown (Kathai), yellow (Hingul) and blue as required. Usually, Phad artists use basic and bright colours. These are mixed with gum and white musli. The colours are filled using a soft brush made of cow, buffalo, bull, goat and dog hair. After filling with colour, the Phad is polished using a smooth stone. This method is called 'Ghutai'. The Phad colours also pass through the process of Ghutai. It gives shine to the colours in the illustrations.

### Phad of Devanarayana

**Form and Presentation:** Devanarayana is a prominent folk God of Rajasthan worshipped by Gurjars. This Phad shows the reference to the revenge that Devanarayana takes on behalf of his forefathers through battle. The battle defines his character. Instances from his life history such as the birth of Devanarayana in Malaser Dungrai, his going to Malwa with mother Sadu along with Hira Dasi, drinking lioness milk on the way, swinging of the cradle by a serpent as a rope, his childhood miracle in Malwa, slaying of Khokha Peer upon returning to Mewar, filling of the pond in Soniyana, completing unfinished construction work of Mandal and battle with Ranaji are shown in this Phad.

### Maha Ras (Dance Festival) Pichvai

The Pichvai hung on Ras Purnima is Maha Ras Pichvai. This type of Pichvai shows Shrinathji dancing with everyone who wishes to dance with him, showing that he is for everyone. Shrinathji is shown standing in the centre playing the flute and two Gopis are shown on each side.

Moreover, he is shown dancing around the Gopis in baath forms. The Gopis are shown playing musical instruments, and cows are shown at the base. Kadli and Kadamb trees are shown above. Gods and Goddesses are shown enjoying the Ras from above. The sky is shown as clear and filled with stars. The 25 forms of Shrinathji are shown on three sides. The second Pichvai of Maharas is very large. A single Pichvai shows different Leelas of Shri Krishna. A star-filled night in which Gods are roaming is shown above. In the centre, scenes such as Gopis enjoying listening to the flute, frolicking and bathing in water etc., are shown. These represent Ras Panchadhyayi Prasang.

### Method of Kalamkari

Kalamkari is a painting style of Andhra Pradesh. It is of two types. The Kalamkari of Machilipatnam makes use of wooden blocks and brushes. The Kalamkari of Shrikalahsti makes use of Kalam and brushes. Vegetable colours are used in both styles. Machilipatnam is famous for curtains, bedsheets, Dev temple canopy, aasan





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pillow cover and table cloth. Shrikaalahasti is famous for Kalamkari of mythological paintings.

Cotton fabric is used for Kalamkari and it is prepared first. Red, black, blue, yellow and green colours are used for Kalamkari. Many illustrations are made only using red and black colours. Usually, the use of colours is according to the story instances shown. Traditionally, serious instances are only shown in red colour. Once the fabric has been prepared, a sketch is made over it. Charcoal prepared by burning Tamarind fruitwood called 'Chint Bogyu' is used to make the sketch. Whatever illustration is to be made, its outline is sketched on the prepared fabric. The method of Kalamkari is complicated and may take several days as it includes colour making, sketching, colouring, washing, drying and boiling. For this reason, Kalamkari artist has to be very patient. The use of line is essential in this art based on drawing.

### Method of Making Pichvai

Initially, a thick fabric was used to make Pichvai, but later on, fine cloth started being used. The starch prepared from wheat flour is applied to this cloth. After drying it and smoothening the surface, an initial design, called 'Kacchi tipai' is made. Once Kacchi Tipai is done, it is made permanent using vermillion (Sindoor). This way, an outline of the painting is created.

After that, the defined images are filled with detailing using lines and proper colours. Usually, natural colours are used for colouring the illustrations and motifs of Pichvais. In places, gold and silver are also used for colouring. First of all, the illustration is filled with flat colours and outlined. After that, the work of light and shade is done. Every image gets defined in this manner. Basically, six colours are used in the Nathdwara painting style. These are red, yellow, white, blue, black and green. The black colour is prepared with Kohl, and the rest are prepared using minerals, though they are now available in the market.

The Pichvai of Shrinathji temple is usually 11 feet long and 7' 6' ' wide.

### PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1

In this exercise, you will learn how to make a Fabric Painting by selecting some motifs. Observe a traditional cloth painting of Devanarayana, and study the style of painting, form, colour composition etc., minutely.

**First step:** Choose a cotton cloth of 50cm and prepare the surface for painting according to the method given earlier in the lesson about how to prepare the surface for painting.





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Fig. 9.2

**Second step:** Now select those motifs and characters from this painting that you want to make for your painting. Imagine how you wish to compose the selected motifs and characters as shown in the figures below. Now make a border of the painting using a scale. Make a light sketch of the shapes to be made in the painting after deciding their respective places using a pencil.

Now clearly outline the sketched shapes.



Fig. 9.3

**Third step:** After that, using number 3 brush, start colouring the drawn figures. Fill colours according to the original Devanarayana Phad painting.

First, fill the drawn figures with light plain colour followed by dark colours.

## MODULE – 5

Other Mediums  
of Painting



Notes

Painting on Cloth



Fig. 9.4

**Fourth step:** In the end, outline each figure with black colour using number 1 brush. If there are any spots or patches in the painting, rub them with an eraser.



Fig. 9.5

Your painting is now ready.

**PRACTICAL EXERCISE 2**

Now, you will illustrate a Maharas Pichvai Painting on cloth.

**First step:** Take a piece of 35 cm × 50 cm markin cotton cloth, and prepare the surface of the painting according to the method of preparing the surface of the fabric painting given in the lesson earlier.

Only a section of the Maharas Pichvai painting has to be copied, not the whole painting. Therefore, make a mental note of the fine details of Shrinath Ji painting. Now with the help of a scale, make the border or boundary of the painting and sketch the image of Shrinath Ji with a light hand using a pencil.



Notes



Fig. 9.6

**Second step:** After that, define the border design and shape of Shrinath Ji, defining every detail realistically. Remove the extra lines using an eraser and start colouring the background. Fill the whole painting with flat and light colour.



Fig. 9.7



Notes

**Third step:** Now define the face, clothes, jewels etc. by filling different colours neatly.



Fig. 9.8

**Fourth step:** Make outlines of the figures using black colour with the help of number 1 brush according to the original painting.



Fig. 9.9

Finally, use the darkest and brightest colours for the finishing touches. Your Pichvai painting is now ready.



Fig. 9.10

**PRACTICAL EXERCISE 3**

Now, you will draw one more design that is Kalamkari Painting on Cloth.

**First step:** Cut a piece of 35 cm × 50 cm cotton markin cloth. Now, prepare the surface for painting following the method given in the previous lesson.

After that, study the Kalamkari painting and understand its design, shape of figures, and style of painting. Learn the painting style carefully and start by making the border, followed by light sketching of the main motifs once their place has been decided. After that, draw the rest of the figures.

**Notes****Fig. 9.11**

**Second step:** Now define each figure clearly along with its details and erase the unnecessary lines.

**Fig. 9.12**



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**Third step:** Fill the different motifs with colour, keeping in mind the colour composition of Kalamkari painting. Now, outline all the figures using black colour with the help of the number 1 brush. Outlining should be done very neatly.



Fig. 9.13

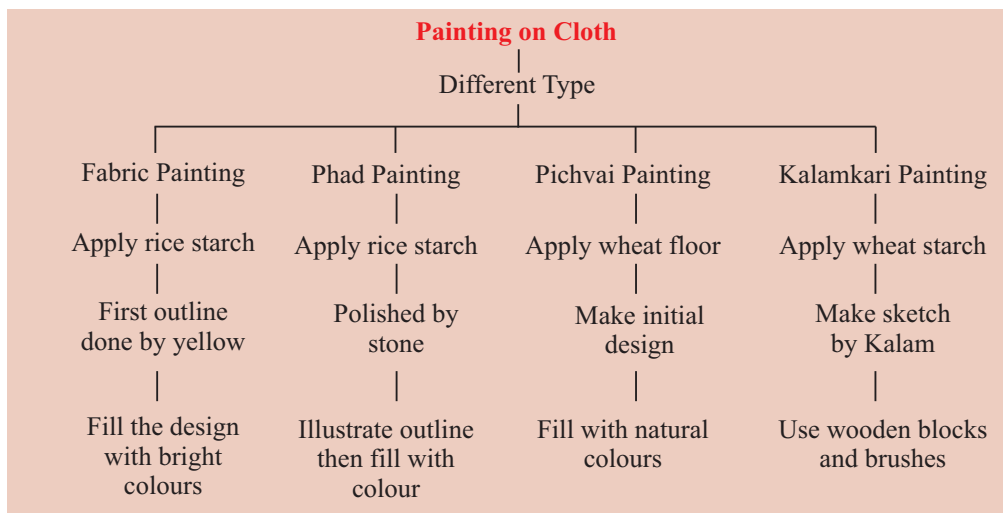
**Fourth step:** Colour the composition carefully. Kalamkari painting is now ready.



Fig. 9.14



**WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT**



Notes



**TERMINAL EXERCISE**

1. How is the surface prepared for painting on cloth?
2. Which are the main traditions of fabric painting in India?
3. What is Phad or Pad painting?
4. What are the subjects for Pichvai painting, and why are they made?
5. Give the characteristic features of Kalamkari painting.
6. Make a painting of Shrinathji.
7. Make the image of Ramdev from the Phad of Ramdev.

**GLOSSARY**

- Ghota : smooth round stone
- Starch : material applied on cloth prepared from rice maand or wheat flour/maida to make the cloth stiff.
- Advent : origin
- Forefather : ancestors