

## **MODULE 2: MEDIUM, TECHNIQUES AND STYLES**

- 4. Traditional and Contemporary Method and Material**
- 5. Symbols and Motifs of Folk Art**
- 6. Importance and Relevance of Folk and Tribal Art**
- 7. Possibilities and Opportunities**





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## MODULE – 2

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# TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY METHOD AND MATERIAL

Dear learner, in the previous lesson you have learnt about the contribution of scholars and artists in this field. In this lesson, we will learn about the traditional and contemporary methods and materials used for folk and tribal art. Human beings have been very close to nature from the very beginning. Every necessity of human beings was supplied by nature. Primitive humans studied nature and get inspired by natural occurrences to develop their needful things. They discovered how to extract colours from flowers and leaves, which have many colours. They learnt to extract colours from the earth and stone. A few inquisitive people observed that clay could be used as paints on surfaces when mixed with water. They also learnt to make colour pigments by grinding stones. The folk and tribal painters follow the experiences of their ancestors. Many changes have occurred in the area of folk and tribal art in India for the development in teaching methods and materials for art. It is known from the prehistoric painting sites of Mirzapur and Bhimbhetka of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh that white clay, lime and ochre (Geru) were used, which were available locally. The earthen utensils, toys and statues from Indus Valley Civilization sites were painted with white clay/lime, Geru and black clay or lamp soot. They used animal fat as a binder.



### OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- describe the method and materials used by folk and tribal artists;
- identify the features of traditional and non-traditional methods and materials;
- analyse the changes that took place in these methods with the change of time;
- explain the methods of tribal and folk painting.



### Notes

### Materials Used in Present Time

The same method and materials are being used by folk and tribal painters even in present times. After coating the wall and courtyard with cow dung and clay mixture, the paintings are done with earth colours and colours extracted from fruits, leaves and tree barks, though there are some changes in the method to prepare colours from clay, minerals and vegetation; these days. There have been some changes in the social system too. Through the ages, society was divided according to the profession and lifestyle of the members. Thus the people who used their art and craft commercially came into existence, like goldsmiths, blacksmiths, potters and others. These artists and craftsmen provided utilitarian objects to society. They added many new methods and materials along with traditional ones.

### 4.1 COLOUR

First, we need to understand the different types of colours used in folk and tribal arts.

<b>Title</b>	<b>: Colour</b>
<b>Type</b>	<b>: Acrylic plastic, oil etc.</b>
<b>Use</b>	<b>: Art, Folk art, Festivals and home decoration</b>

#### Basic Information

The methods and materials of folk and tribal art have changed a lot since the development of the industry. The availability of colours, brushes and other art materials has brought more changes, specially in the last four decades. There are distinctly two types of folk and tribal arts based on the urban areas. Women utilise one during festivals and celebrations, and professional painters make the second type for urban clients. There is a lot of difference in the methods and materials of these two categories. The first paintings done by rural folk artists is made using natural and vegetable colours, cloth and brushes made of twigs etc. The second type of art is made with ready-made materials available in the market. The traditional form of art is mainly utilised for festivals and worships, which is temporary, but those made for urban clients for home decoration are durable. The painters use bright colours like acrylic, plastic and oil in place of earth and vegetable colours.

The original folk and tribal arts are very expensive and time consuming. First, the artists get the outlines of the painting or printed in the screen print process and fill the spaces with colours. These folk and tribal paintings are painted on canvas and plywood. Fabric colours are used for cloth, and acrylic colours are used for plywood and canvas. Varnish is applied to these to get shine. The folk painters sell their frames and manage to fetch a higher price.



Notes



Fig. 4.1

### General Description

**Colour:** Materials like chalk, geru, rice powder etc., for different colours like red, black, yellow and white can be used directly to paint walls, floors, utensils etc., by the common village folk. These colours can be used both dry and wet. The young women of some rural areas use dry rice powder to paint Alpana, Rangoli, Aripan, Chauk etc. while the Warli painting is done with wet rice powder. Other kinds of colours are prepared and used by professional painters. These are colour pigments are made by mixing binder like gum from mango, neem, Babul leaves etc. the leaf of bel fruit or apple is also used to make a binder.

**White Colour:** Lime and chalk are mainly used to prepare white colour. For a bright type of white colour, the conch shell is used in West Bengal and Odisha. The conch shell is first cleaned properly and then boiled in earthen ware. It is made into a paste and stewed after that. The paste is mixed with gum.

**Yellow Colour:** Turmeric (Haldi) and Arsenic (Hartal) are used to prepare yellow colour. Bright and warm colours can be extracted from turmeric. Raw turmeric and arsenic are made into a paste and mixed with gum and water for painting.

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### Traditional and Contemporary Method and Material

**Sindur Colour:** Orange colour is made from sindur (vermillion). Sindur is not used much these days. It is mixed with dry oil then used.

**Red Colour:** The red colour is prominently used in Indian folk art. Red colour is obtained from Palash and Gudhal flowers. Hingul stone is powdered and mixed with gum and water to make the colour.

**Pink Colour:** Hingul powder and conch powder are to be mixed in half-half proportion to make the pink colour. Alta is also used to make the pink colour.

**Green Colour:** Green colour is available from any green leaf. Saim fali creeper is used to extract green colour in the Bundel Khand area. Baland tree leaf is used in Malwa. The painters of Bengal and Odisha mix blue and Pewadi to get the green colour.

**Black Colour:** Black clay and lamp soot is used to draw lines. The kerosene oil lamp is covered with an earthen plate, on which soots are accumulated. The colorium is mixed with gum and water.

**Blue Colour:** Folk and tribal painters love to use blue colour. Neel (indigo) is mixed with gum and water. A few painters also prefer to use Aparajita flower (*Clitoria Ternatia*).

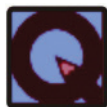
**Gum:** Gum is used as a binder to make colours permanent and shining. Gum helps to stick colours on the surface and helps to use a brush on it.

Generally, gum is extracted from Kher, Babul, Mango and Kainth tree. These trees are sliced on the trunk to get the gum. This gum is collected and dried. It is made into paste later and mixed with water for use.

**Gelatin/ Animal Glue (Saresh):** Animal fat is dried and kept. It is boiled in hot water when it is required to use.



Fig. 4.2



### INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.1

1. How were human beings inspired to paint?
2. How did folk and tribal painter, learn to select methods and materials of painting?
3. Which colours were used by most of the primitive men?
4. Name the materials used for painting the objects of the Indus Valley Civilization.



**ACTIVITY**

Draw a colour chart and also write the locally available sources of the same colour.

Colour	Sources



Notes

**4.2 BRUSHES**

Learner, now we will learn about the brushes used for painting.

- Title** : Brushes
- Use** : Painting
- Material** : Bamboo, grass, cotton etc.
- Type** : A fine bamboo stick to be wrapped with cotton to make a brush

**Basic Information**

Generally, the folk and tribal painters use fingers wrapped with cloth, blades of grass etc., to use colours in the paintings. Branches of a tree are used after flattening one side of it with stone. The same process is used for making a brush from the leaf of a date tree.



Fig. 4.3

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### Traditional and Contemporary Method and Material

#### General Description

Commercial folk painters make better quality brushes for colouring. They make two types of brushes. One is made of bamboo sticks which tapers towards one end. The other one is wrapped with cotton on one end. The brushes are made of different hair types suitable for the quality of colours, and these hairs are obtained from the tails of squirrels, rats, cows, goats etc.



#### INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.2

Fill in the gaps:

1. Commercial folk painters make ..... types of brushes.
2. The process they used for making brushes from .....

#### 4.3 MODERN MATERIALS

Now, let us know about the Modern Materials used for folk art now.

**Title** : Modern Materials  
**Materials** : Ink, Poster colour, Fabric, Oil colour etc.  
**Use** : To paint on cloth and wall

#### Basic Information

It is already mentioned in the previous chapters that there were changes in traditional folk and tribal painting material and method due to the development of industry and urbanisation. These changes happened due to the changes in the needs and demands of the consumers. These paintings are not only done for rural festivals, rituals and celebrations but for earning a living. Thus these paintings should be considered products that are attractive and durable. It should be available in the market and be painted with easily available materials, simple usage and good results. These materials are replacing the traditional ones in fast pace.



Fig. 4.4: Ink



**Pigment Colour for Painting Cloth and Wall.** Initially, these colours were used by folk painters. These are available in the village shops in different shades and brightness. These are also called colours for Holi. The folk painters also use those paints during Diwali.

**Writing Ink:** Folk painters use coloured inks of different shades such as black, red, green and blue on paper. These inks come in liquid form and tablet form. Waterproof inks are also used by these painters. Most Madhubani painters now use these inks. Gond painters prefer to use black writing ink.

**Poster Colour:** Poster colours are the most favored colours of folk and tribal painters. Poster colours are now used both paintings for home decoration and for sale. Warli painters now use poster colour instead of ground rice white colour.

### Fabric and Acrylic Colour

Fabric and acrylic colours are used by the folk and tribal painters since they use cloth and canvas for painting. Gond, Bhill, Warli and Madhubani painters use these colours on every kind of surface like paper, cloth, canvas, wooden toys, earthen utensils etc.

**Oil Colour:** The folk and tribal paintings are now being done with oil colour due to its easy availability in the market. The Rathwa paintings of Gujarat are mostly of oil colours, Muria, Madia, Bhill, tribes prefer oil colours to paint. The crowquill pens, readymade brushes are now being used instead of traditional brushes.

**Method of Painting:** Traditionally, the grounding is prepared with a coat of cow dung and clay on the wall or floor. A piece of cloth is used to apply the mixture. After it is completely dry drawings are done with brushes. These drawings are done with freehand and in mono-colour. For multicoloured painting, outlines are drawn, and gaps are filled with different colours. The method of painting of folk and tribal art could be divided into two categories:

1. Freehand drawing
2. Drawing with graphs

**Freehand Drawing:** The folk and tribal painters use freehand drawings for home decorations and commercial works. The painters of Madhubani, Warli, Gond, Pithora, Patachitra, Mandana use graphs. The floor painters of Alpana, Kalamkari, Kolam Rangoli and Mandan also use graphs. The Drawing with graphs are geometrical in the pattern. Firstly, dots are marked on the surface according to the pattern. These dots are connected with lines to compose the desired picture. Colours are used to fill the empty areas to complete the painting. This method is popular in Bihar, Maharashtra, Odisha, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Karnataka.



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## Traditional and Contemporary Method and Material



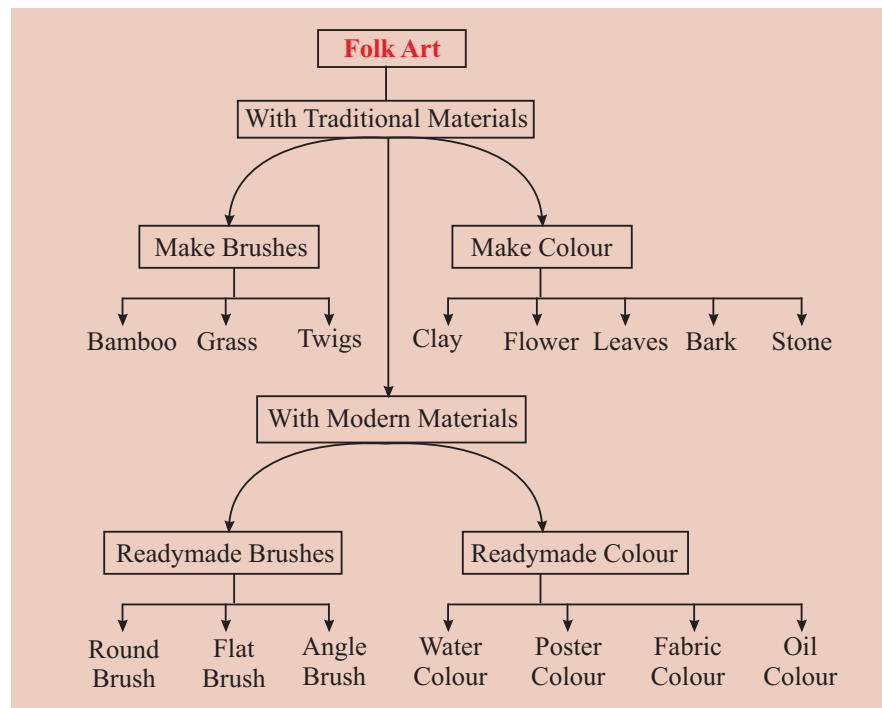
### INTEXT QUESTIONS 4.3

#### Multiple choice questions:

- Name any one untraditional materials of painting.
  - Ink
  - Leaf
  - Flower
  - Bamboo
- Name any one type of drawings to compose a painting.
  - Material
  - Abstract
  - Graph
  - None of them



### WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT



#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

The learner can

- compose traditional and non-traditional methods and materials to make different artwork.
- create different tones from easily available local materials.



### TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. How did humans develop methods and materials of painting?
2. What are the contributions of commercial folk and tribal painters in developing methods and materials?
3. Make a list of traditional materials of folk and tribal art.
4. How did tribal and folk painters make brushes?
5. Name the animals who provide hair to make brushes.
6. What difference did it make in the use of materials after urbanisation and commercialised?
7. Make a list of untraditional materials of folk and tribal paintings.



### ANSWER TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

#### 4.1

1. Human study nature and get inspired by nature, and start painting, describing its method and materials.
2. After observing and experimenting with natural resources, they learnt to use methods for painting.
3. These paintings are done with white clay or lime.
4. While clay, lime, black clay, and Geru are used on earthenware for drawing.

#### 4.2

1. Bamboo and hair
2. Bamboo

#### 4.3

1. (i) Ink
2. (iv) Graph

### GLOSSARY

- Pigment : Powdered colours  
Screen print : Printing technique with the help of mesh  
Graph : a diagram



Notes