

PAINTING STUDY MATERIAL FOR CLASS 12TH BASED ON NCERT

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The Pahari School of Miniature Painting

Origin and Development

The Pahari School of miniature painting originated in hill state of Basohli situated on the bank of the river Ravi about 1690 A.D. Later, Guler, Chamba, Mandi, Kangra, Garhwal and Kullu became its main centres. Besides these, Jammu, Srinagar, Nurpur, Mankot, Nalagarh (Hindoor) and the plains of Punjab became its sub-centres.

Besides stylistic vividness, the **Himalayan environment, round faces, half-moon-shaped forehead, normal sized deep eyes and normal statured men-women** replete this world of miniature paintings and provide them Pahari speciality. The art of Pahari school has the following sub-schools of miniature paintings:

1. **Basohli Sub-school of Miniature Painting.** This style came into existence when Mughal emperor Aurangzeb had restricted all the forms of art in his court. In the middle of 17th century, the court painters/artists moved towards the hilly states. They implemented technical co-ordination of various elements of the Mughal style into the art forms previously existed there. The new form of art that came into existence was called **Sub-school of Basohli Miniature Painting**. Although these artists were subservient to their patrons, yet they were fully independent in selecting the subject matter. In their new paintings, they included only the specific elements of the Mughal style.

Topics of the Painting: The painters started making paintings on abstract themes of the literary volumes such as *Ras-Manjari*, the *Ramayana*, *Geet Govinda* and *Raagmala*.

Characteristics: The paintings of this style are almost square in shape. Double storied or high-towered buildings have been shown in the background of these paintings. Hilly environment, river, waterfall, clouds, lotus and other flowers have been used as ornamental elements in the paintings.

2. **Guler Sub-school of Miniature Painting.** Guler is famous for both types of the paintings—individual and subjective. It wonderfully inaugurated the mysteriousness and the beauty of women.

The emotional disposition of Guler's paintings is not seen even in paintings of the Mughal style.

Characteristics: Extraordinary tenderness in colours, extraordinary execution of work, wonderful thinness in underlining, emotional delineation and the perspective provide excellence to Guler's paintings. Fawns, cottony clouds and emotive nature are characteristics of Guler's paintings.

3. **Kangra Sub-school of Miniature Painting.** Miniature paintings of Kangra are glory of Pahari painting. In these paintings we can feel smell of the soil of that place. Tenderly engraved features of women are pleasing.

Kangra style was on apex of its excellence in the reign of the king Sansar Chand. The pomp and show of the king's court has been shown with the medium of thin lines and colours. The human portraits painted here are natural and beautiful.

Topics of the Painting: Keshav Das' poetry '*Rasik Priya*' has been the lovely topic of Kangra-style painters. Radha-Krishna have sometimes been painted as a lover-beloved and the other side as an actor-actress.

The painters of this style have painted the love-stories of Sasi-Punno, Heer-Ranjha and Sohani-Mahiwal and others.

Characteristics: Red, yellow and blue basic colours are placid and decorative. Delineation of beautiful margins, ornaments and buildings are praiseworthy. Balanced shape of trees and the panoramic, natural scenes, magnificence teeming with the leaves, flowers, shrubs and hills provide speciality for Kangra-styled paintings.

4. **Chamba Sub-school of Miniature Painting.** Inordinate bewitching, tender and unusual figures of women give distinct identity to miniature paintings of **Chamba**. The painters of this style have prominently showed **red** and **blue** colours with the co-ordination of artistry and technique.

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