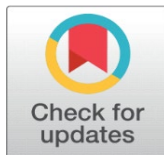
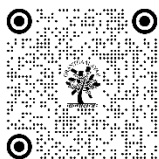


## DEVELOPMENT OF PAINTING IN MADHYA PRADESH

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### ABSTRACT

Indian traditional art has always been rich in its style, form, and technique. Apart from sculpture, poetry, textile art, character art, drama, dance, music etc., paintings are also an inseparable form of Indian art. The area of Madhya Pradesh is large, here from time to time there has been power of various states and groups, and the amalgamation of diverse traditions of different groups has made the culture of the state vibrant and multifaceted. The various forms of arts and crafts of Madhya Pradesh also contribute to the rich culture of the state. Various art education centers are there in the state which continuously trying to improve the level of art which helps future generation to explore themselves in art. This is not just the situation of the present time, whereas since prehistoric times, Madhya Pradesh holds a special place in the painting of the whole world in the form of its rock paintings. This paper prove to be useful for finding the current position of painting in state and how different art institutes, art groups or freelance artists are taking part for enriching the art.

**Keywords:** Visual Arts, Paintings, Paintings in Madhya Pradesh, Folk Paintings

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. RESEARCH METHODS

This research has critical philosophical aspects of the primary and secondary data. It includes generation and selection of material, synthesis and planning of work, presentation, and critical discussion.

### 1.2. ABOUT MADHYA PRADESH

"Madhya Pradesh" defines its position by its name - Madhya means "central" and Pradesh means state - this is the region which is part of the middle of India. Madhya Pradesh is also named as 'Heart of India', 'Tiger State', 'Central India',

'Diamond land'. Situated in the geographical heart of the country, it is an important state, which has a wonderful combination of different religions and cultures of the country. Indore is the major city of the region while Ujjain is an important historical city of Malwa region. Bharat Bhawan, Jahangir Mahal and Jahaz Mahal are the three historical monuments of the state. The beauty of Khajuraho's crafts has got its place in the World Heritage List whereas Bhimbaitka are world famous for its rock paintings. [Balasubramanian \(2017\)](#)

### 1.3. PAINTINGS IN MADHYA PRADESH

“चित्र ही सर्व शिल्पनाम् मुखं लोकस्य च प्रियाम् ।”

It means, in all the crafts (art), painting is the best. In ancient times due to the tradition of Rock paintings, painting was considered a part of architecture but soon it has been developed as an independent art. These all are mentioned in ancient texts and scripts. [Agarwal \(2020\)](#)

1) **Prehistoric period:** According to Vanaspati Goirala by looking at the primitive artifacts of the world, the exact history of the progress made by human civilization can be well known. Nature has embellish Madhya Pradesh with a free hand. Prehistoric centers have been found everywhere in the whole of Madhya Pradesh, but from the point of view of painting, three centers are prominent whose fame has spread to abroad – Bhimbaitka, Pachmarhi (Mahadev Mountain area) and Hoshangabad (Adamgarh).

- **Bhimbaitka rock paintings:** The world heritage site Bhimbaitka which was discovered by Dr. V.S. Wakankar has two levels of paintings found- the first level "hunting dance" and in the second level the human is marked as a friend with the animal. Elephants, unicorns, cheetahs, bears, wild boars, wild cows, bulls, buffaloes, nilgai, sambar, deer, monkeys are shown in the pictures. Somewhere fish, turtle and crab are also depicted. Dance, costumes, ornaments, mother- Social themes like son, drinking, hunting, group etc. are also depicted. [Pratap \(2020\)](#)

Figure 1



Figure 1 Bhimbaitka Rock Paintings

Source Photograph at Bhimbaitka Caves, Bhopal

- **Pachmarhi rock paintings:** Queen of Satpura Pachmarhi which is situated in Mahadev mountain range has paintings of hunting and battle scene and also of dance and daily scenes. Here three types of paintings

have found where comes plank-shaped and drum-shaped figures, chaotic and unbalanced form, and natural figures.

- **Adamgarh rock paintings:** In Adamgarh hilly areas which are located in Hoshangabad (present Narmadapuram), the paintings have made also from Stencil technique, “Girrafe group” and “Four Archers” are famous in it.
- **Chhatarpur area rock paintings:** Apart from the above mentioned places, there is a very important area of Madhya Pradesh from the point of view of prehistoric times, which has not yet been fully conserved. In these, the Head of the Department of Government Maharaja College, Prof. S.K. Chhari and his associates are constantly searching the rock paintings of this area. He has gave information about the cave paintings near Bakswaha village of Bundelkhand, which the villagers call by the name Dhimarkhuwa. There is a red ochre painted roof with curved lines on the ceiling. According to research, the time of these paintings has been described as Mesolithic, here the depiction of animals and humans is dominant.

More than 500 rock paintings have been discovered in Jatashankar hill near Bijawar tehsil and also in Maunasaiya hills near Bahagaon Dilari village. The paintings in Ammaswami caves near Kishangarh are also comparable with the European cave paintings.

Apart from this Madhya Pradesh, rock art is also found in Shivpuri, Pahargarh of Morena district of Gwalior region, Raigarh, Raisen, Rewa, Panna, Chhatarpur, Katni, Sagar, Narsinghpur, Bastar, Chambal Ghati, etc. [Pratap \(2020\)](#)

**Figure 2**



**Figure 2** Ammapani Rock Paintings

**Source** Personal Collection of Prof. S. K. Chhari

- 2) **Early Middle Ages (Bagh Caves):** Indian culture in history is represented by the cave paintings here. After Ajanta, the important caves from the point of view of painting are the caves of Bagh. This cave is two to three miles away from the river Baghini, a tributary of the Narmada, near the Vindhyaachal mountain range in the

Gwalior state of Madhya Pradesh. There are a total of 9 caves, which are all viharas, but paintings can be seen only in cave number 4 (Rangmahal) located on

the right side and cave number 5 (Pathshala) located on the left. Here, not only the Buddha scene, but the paintings of daily life are also depicted, the depiction of nature, animal, bird, and flower is also very beautiful, by getting the scene of a dancer somewhere in the paintings, it can also be guessed that it must have been related to the center "Padmavati" under the Nagas. [Sharma \(2018\)](#)

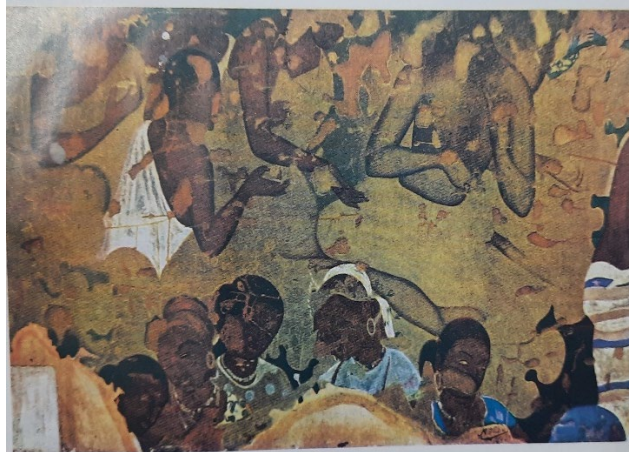
**Figure 3**



**Figure 3** Bagh Cave Paintings (Copied)

**Source** Shivrammoorti: Indian Paintings

**Figure 4**



**Figure 4** Bagh Cave Paintings (Copy by M.S. Bhand)

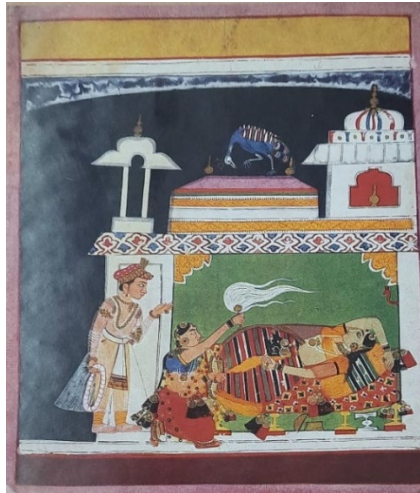
**Source** Lakshman Bhand: Madhya Pradesh me Chitrkala: Jansampark Sanchalanay, Bhopal, 2010

**3) Middle Ages:** After the painting of Bagh Cave, in Madhya Pradesh, the picture remains are seen in the picture described in the literature, so after about 1200 years with the encouragement of Jain religion, the fragrance of painting again spread far and wide. The main three styles developed in the medieval period – Malwa, Bundelkhand, Gwalior and as the regional styles of these, Narsingharh, Rajgarh and Ratanpur are prominent.

- **Malwa school of paintings:** After the pictures of Samarangan Sutradhar, this style can be inferred from the pictures found in the texts of Jain religions. The best example of this is the Kalpasutra obtained from Mandu,

in which the letters are written in golden color on a red background and the pictures of humans, animals, birds and deities are decorated with flower leaves. Due to the rule of Rajputs, Turks, Pathans at different times, the creation here was always interrupted, but during the time of Parmar kings, there was a good development of painting along with fine arts. In this style, a combination of Jain style and Shiraz style is seen. here the arched eyebrows, large eyes with clear vision, adornment of the hair of the head, girls, maids and servants are depicted according to Indian culture. The themes of Malwa painting were Ragmala, Krishna Leela, Nayika Bhed, Durga Patha etc. which can be seen in Kala Bhavan Varanasi. The royal families of Dhar, Dewas, Neemuch, Mandsaur, Ratlam had a good collection of miniature paintings. Many murals are also found in Amjhera and Nimar region. [Anandakrishna \(1968\)](#)

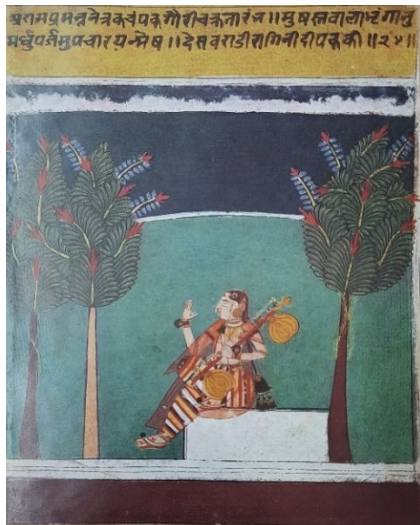
**Figure 5**



**Figure 5** Malwa School of Paintings (Asavari Ragini)

**Source** Anandakrishna: Malwa paintings: Banaras Hindu University

**Figure 6**



**Figure 6** Malwa School of Paintings (Desa Varadi Ragini)

**Source** Anandakrishna: Malwa paintings: Banaras Hindu University

- **Gwalior (Gopanchal) school of paintings:** In the Mahabharata period, the area known as Goparashtra is the Gopanchal region, after that it was also addressed by the name Sudesh, which means Gwalior which is the center of Agra (Akbar's territory). The Tomar dynasty took this area to Indraprastha, the king of Delhi, Chahadpal, was known as Gopanchal Vasi. Many idols were built here from time to time in fortifications and temples. Many of Jainism, copies of which are still available in various Jain temples of Madhya Pradesh. According to Dr. Stella Kramrisch, "Rajput art" has started due to the emergence of classical art and folk art, the best example of which is the terraced lattice on Mansingh's Man temple, in which dancing figures are depicted. The paintings here are no longer available, it is believed that they have been destroyed due to ignorance of the style. According to Shri Laxman Bhand, he got to see 12-13 Raga Raginis and Krishna Leelas pictures in Gwalior and a painted book of Ramayana was also obtained from the litter of his landlord's house, which got the specialty of Gopanchal style. The characteristic of these paintings are square shaped face, the anatomy and physique has tightness and a beard that dates back to the Renaissance. Raga- Ragini was discussed a lot by Damodar during the time of Raja Man Singh. [Bhand \(2010\)](#)

Figure 7



Figure 7 Wall Painting at Giriraj Temple, Gwalior

Source Lakshman Bhand: Madhya Pradesh me Chitrkala: Jansampark Sanchalanay, Bhopal, 2010

- **Bundelkhand School of paintings:** After the rule of Nagas and Vakataks for 600 years, the Tomar kings of Gwalior protected the Bundela culture by resisting the Muslim invasions after the fall of the Chandelas. Paintings were made in Bundelkhand during the time of Chandel dynasty, as well as the artists of Gwalior also came here and made paintings. Chandela dynasty paintings are found from Madanpur village of Lalitpur district, Vaishnav temple has murals, which are of Apabhramsa style, as well as murals of Ramayana, Krishnalila are found on the palaces of Orchha. Many features can be seen in the paintings like

a spectacled face, change in appearance is visible in tunic, pajamas, veil, bodice, skirts. [Bhand \(2010\)](#)

**Figure 8**



**Figure 8** Bundelkhand School of Painting

**Source** Lakshman Bhand: Madhya Pradesh me Chitrkala: Jansampark Sanchalanay, Bhopal, 2010

**4) Paintings in Contemporary/Modern Period (19th century to the present):** Under the British rule, the western style was used in India, which had a direct impact on contemporary Indian painting. Art schools were opened by the British rule in Madras, Calcutta, and Mumbai respectively. Also, the Bengal School was founded by Avinandranath Tagore, leading to a revival in Indian painting, but this renaissance period could not be encouraged in Madhya Pradesh. The king here was influenced by the realistic style of western paintings and liked to paint in that style. Some artists also painted independently, which were influenced by the painting technique of artists like Raja Ravi Varma, Amrita Shergill. Painters like Shri Ramchandra Harnath and Babu Raopainter also contributed to the painting of Gwalior at that time, artists like Nanaji Bhujang and Ram Prasad Rao of Indore worked by coordinating European style in Indian style. After independence, the artists here painted independently, which started by drawing a line on rock, it progressed from European influence to abstract art. NS Bendre, D.J.Joshi, Vishnu Chinchalkar, Laxmi Singh Rajput, Chandresh Saxena, Shranik Jain worked in the Impressionist style, while Shri Laxman Bhand worked in the Cubist style with the influence of Picasso. There are 6 main centers in Madhya Pradesh where painting was developed over the centuries, they are –Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Dhar

- **Bhopal:** Due to Muslim rule, painting and sculpture got less encouragement in Bhopal, but Contemporary Muslim artists of Shri DD Deolalikar, and Mukundrao Bhand were perfect artists in landscape. And also, Late Sushil Pal who came here at the time of India Partition worked in almost all mediums and got specialization in oil painting. At present in Bharat Bhawan Bhopal which established with the contribution of eminent artist J. Swaminathan and M.P. tribal museum so many activities, workshops for art or paintings are going on. Also, colleges are giving degrees in graduation or master level in painting subject.

Figure 9



Figure 9 MP Tribal Museum, Bhopal Activities

Source <https://mptribalmuseum.com>

- Indore:** Indore became the main center of political activities in the 19th century, Holkars has contributed a lot in developing Indore aesthetically, many mural paintings have been made by the Maharajas in Rajwada, whose themes are Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagwat Geeta and many mythological and folk tales depicted in tempera illustration method, An artist named Soparshree Harnanda made a painting of Malhar Rao Holkar in Rajasthani style, which is preserved in the dumpling office of Kota, also The painting of Rani Ahilyabai Holkar made by Prabhash Chandra is a combination of Malwa and Deccan style. Nana Bhujang, Bherulal Musawar, Deolalikar were prominent artists in the field of painting in Indore. Others who played important roles were Dr. Devkrishna Jatashankar Joshi, M.F. Hussain, Vishnu Chinchalkar, N. S. Bendre, Shranik Jain, but of whom M.F. Hussain, N. S. Bendre left Indore and moved to Mumbai where he gained national and international fame with his skills. 'Friday Group' of painting also gave its significant contribution. [Sethi \(2011\)](#) Today so many govt. or private institutes are giving education in painting due to these youngsters engage themselves in exhibition and camps and doing appreciable work in this field. At present, Indore has taken the form of a metropolitan and art activities are also increasing every day. This is the place where the first fine Art college of the state was opened by Mr. Deolalikar, which is still holding its prominent place. Recently the students of GIFA have organized exhibition where they themselves dressed and set up as the important paintings of the eminent Indian artist which looks so attracting. Apart from this, Nutan Girls college is also giving education graduate and post graduate level education in drawing and painting. In the memory of the famous artist Aamir Khan Sahab of Indore, many artists participate in the painting exhibition organized by Madhya Pradesh government every year in "Rang e Aamir".



**Figure 10**



**Figure 10** Exhibition at Deolalikar Kala Vithika Indore by GIFA Students  
**Source** Personal Collection of Mrs. Gunjan Yogi (Studio Assistant, GIFA Indore)

**Figure 11**



**Figure 11** GIFA Indore Students Dressed and Form a Famous Painting of Amrita Shergil in their Recent Exhibition  
**Source** Personal Collection of Mrs. Gunjan Yogi (Studio Assistant, GIFA Indore)

- **Ujjain:** Ujjain has been the metropolitan area during the historical period, as a result of the Scindia rule during the Maratha period, the Maratha and Nathdwara style of paintings are found on the walls of many ancient temples and Havelis. In the mid 20th century, there was unprecedented work in the field of art in Ujjain, various artists and students were exposed to the work being done in the outside world. Mr. Madan Lal Sharma made free sketches of film actors, Ujjain is well known for the Kalidas Samaroh which is started by Pandit Suryanarayan Vyas organized every year in Kalidas academy. Today also so many camps for artists and students has organized here. Institute for higher education in painting as also set up where the name of eminent artists like Shri Chintamani Khadilkar, Dr. V.S. Vakankar, Dr. Shivkumari Joshi, Dr. R.C.Bhawsar, Dr. Krishna Joshi are worth mentioning. M.P.'S oldest painting college – Madhav College also conducts so man events for the students and this institutes continuing their work for appreciating young generation in this field. College

students also took part in Rahagiri and used to make live paintings or sketches there. Even at present, the name of Ujjain is famous in the country for the Kalidas festival, at this time many young and senior artists of the country show their participation. A state level exhibition also organized every year in the memory of Shri Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar.

**Figure 12**



**Figure 12** Kalidas Samaroh Ujjain (4 November 2022)

**Source** The Facebook Profile of Higher Education Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav

**Figure 13**



**Figure 13** Artists and at Student at Rahagiri Program Ujjain

- **Gwalior:** During the reign of Maharaja Jivaji Rao Shinde it has shown from the palaces, that he was very fond of palaces. He heir artists for making wall paintings in the walls of Moti Mahal. During the 1857 independence movement, many artists from Jhansi started living in Gwalior by making a settlement which came to be known as "Chitera Oli". An organization named "Cultural Society" was formed in Gwalior, which was the result of the efforts of Rudra Hauji and Sardar Mohite, in which the painting topic was discussed and the pictures of the members were reviewed. Education institutes are also there which was first started by Shri Mukund Rao Bhand in the form of "Lakshmi painting house". As Gwalior always has art based atmosphere today also so many artists are working in that field and encouraging young artists for the future. Today also so many art exhibitions namely Kalarang, kalasang 'kalaparva'. Many workshops by

M.P. Cultural department and Lalit Kala Institute also organised for many freelance artists or art experts. Just like Kalidas samaroh Gwalior is well known for 'Tansen Samaroh' in which every year exhibition are held by M.P. Cultural department. The work of Shri Triyambak Rao Nanaji Yawalkar in Gwalior History is also an important part in Gwalior Art History, the name of painters of Gwalior include Hari Bhatnagar, Devendra Jain, M.S. Kanade, Abdul Hameed, Vijay Mohite are notable. [Bhand \(2010\)](#)

**Figure 14**



**Figure 14** Painting Workshop by MP Cultural Department and Govt. Fine Art Institute, Gwalior 2021  
**Source** Personal Collection of Dr. Neena Khare (Guest Faculty Drawing and Painting, MLB Gwalior)

**Figure 15**



**Figure 15** Kalarang, Kalasang, 'Kalaparva' 2022 Gwalior  
**Source** Personal Collection of Dr. Neena Khare (Guest Faculty Drawing and Painting, MLB Gwalior)

- **Jabalpur:** The holy city of Jabalpur, situated on the banks of river Narmada, has a rich cultural heritage of its own. Here Shri Ram Manohar Sinha and Shri Amritlal Vegad were skilled artists who adopted the style of Shantiniketan. With the establishment of the State Academy of Fine Arts in 1961, Painting, Applied Arts got an excellent position. Artists like Hari Srivastava, Om Pandey, Bhagwan Das Gupta, Prabhu Dayal Prajapati, Shranik Jain are also included in the history of Jabalpur. Presently painting activities are seen in Lalit Kala Mahavidyalaya, Jabalpur. Many artist camps are also organized by M.P. Cultural department, fine arts school and also some private associations in which the camps and exhibitions organized every year by 'Etiadi Art Foundation' are prominent.

**Figure 16**



**Figure 16** Art Exhibition at Jabalpur

**Source** Personal Collection of Mr. Somesh Soni (Guest Faculty GIFA Jabalpur)

**Figure 17**



**Figure 17** Artists with Senior Artist Amritlal Vegad

**Source** Personal Collection of Mr. Somesh Soni (Guest Faculty GIFA Jabalpur)

- **Dhar:** Dhar, the center of the Parmar kings, located to the southwest of Indore and Mandu, is an important center of art in Madhya Pradesh. In the year 1939, Padmashree Dr. Raghunath Phadke established the “Lakshmi Kala Mandir” which is today known as Dhar School of Arts or Lalit Kala Mahavidhyalaya. Many eminent artists have appeared from Dhar - Shri Kanungo, Shri Madhukar Saswadkar, Shri Baburao Bhonsle, Shri Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar, Shri Chandresh Saxena, Shri Madhav Vishwanath Giri, Shri Mirza Ismail Baig are the main ones. Today so many freelance artists are working in their best way and inspiring other artists for this.

5) **Folk paintings of Madhya Pradesh:** India has always been known as a land depicting cultural and traditional vibrancy through its traditional arts and crafts. Rural folk paintings of India have distinctive colorful designs, made with religious and mystical motifs which is also seen in the folk painting of Madhya Pradesh, this state is mainly known for its Gond paintings, Mandana, chitravana and Pithora paintings. The themes of Gond painting are mainly fixed on local festivals like Karva Chauth, Deepawali, Ahoiashtami, Nag Panchami, Sanjhi etc. horses, elephants, tigers, birds, deities, humans and objects of daily life are painted in bright and vibrant colors. In Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, India, the art of drawing on the floor on festive occasions is known as Mandana art, which includes geometric graphs that originated from eastern Rajasthan. Chitravan is based on local festivals like Deepawali, Sheetla Saptami, Karva Chauth, Nag Panchami, Sanjhi, Ahoi Ashtami etc. It is not only ornamentation, but it is also a spontaneous outburst of religious devotion. [Sethi \(2011\)](#) today Govt. is trying to appreciate folk artists and so conducted various workshops or exhibition especially in tribal or state museums of Bhopal for the better exposure. Folk artists like Bhuri bai of Patol (Bheel art), Durga Devi Vyom (Gond art), Jodhya bai (Baiga art) recently got Padmashree by Indian Government in last three years.

Figure 18



Figure 18 Gond Painting by Yashwant Dhruve  
Source <https://mptribalmuseum.com>

## 2. CONCLUSION

It can be seen that painting holds the special position in state like Madhya Pradesh from prehistoric till today. It maintains its consistency from ancient time till modern. As we seen it's a state having maximum no. of rock paintings centers and also artists are consistently working either that time or the other. It also well-known across nation for its folk paintings also folk artists gaining fame for their work. Earlier as only the nature available materials have used or artists bound to work in their respective a style but today they are free to use different media technique and keep experimenting for the better future. In education sector though the situation is not that much good but we can say we are facing transition phase this time as the amalgamation of traditional and modern can be seen in the education system right now and so we can expect the new better face will soon come for the state in art or the art education sector. The experts in that sector are putting their efforts continuously for the better future.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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