

Pahari Paintings

Art and culture of India is an important focus area for [UPSC Prelim](#) as well as mains exam. If we look at the UPSC previous year question paper, we will understand that it is difficult to forecast the number but they may ask a significant amount of questions blended with Ancient, Medieval history and current affairs.

What are Pahari paintings?

Pahari painting is an umbrella term used for a form of Indian painting, done mostly in miniature forms, originating from Himalayan hill kingdoms of North India. It is quite similar to [Rajput paintings](#) in terms of style and colours. These paintings, established and developed during the period of 17th to 19th century, have been done mostly in [miniature painting](#) forms. Here we are giving some keen details about Pahari painting styles.

Styles

Pahari paintings of India can be categorized into two groups based on their geographical variety.

- Basohli and Kullu Style is influenced by Chaurpanchasika style
- Guler and Kangra Style based on calm colors and modification

Types of Pahari Paintings (Himachal Pradesh)

Some forms of Pahari paintings from the Himachal Pradesh regions are as follows:

Basohli Paintings

- The Basohli town in the Kathua district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is known for Basohli Paintings
- This town has created a wonderful Devi series, magnificent series of the manifestations of the Supreme Goddess.
- It is also known for the magnificent depiction of the Rasamanjari text.
- Geometrical patterns, bright colors and lustrous enamel depict Basohli paintings.

Chamba Paintings

- The appearance of Chamba paintings is similar to the Mughal style of paintings.
- It has the strong influences of Deccan and Gujarat style of paintings
- The late 17th century saw Chamba paintings being dominated by Basohli style, which eventually paved the way to Guler painting tradition.

Bilaspur Paintings

- Bilaspur town is located in Himachal Pradesh.
- This town has witnessed the growth of the Pahari paintings around the mid-17th century.
- Apart from the artworks of the Bhagavata Purana, Ramayana and Ragamala sequence, painters also made paintings on coverlets for sacraments and rituals.

Guler-Kangra Style Paintings

- The Guler Kangra painting style was developed somewhere around the year 1800.
- It was a naturalized version of the painting, with an evident difference in the treatment of eyes and modeling of the face.
- Landscapes were also generally used as themes in Guler-Kangra style paintings.
- This style also emphasized the grace and refinement of the Indian women.

Garhwal Paintings

- Garhwal Paintings started in Srinagar when painters from outside the regions settled there
- It was initially dominated by the Mughal style
- Later, it began reflecting the simpler version of Kangra traditions.

Kulu Paintings

- The paintings of Kulu style comprise two Madhumalati manuscripts, Bhagavata Purana, etc.

Mandi Paintings

- Mandi has witnessed the evolution of a new style of painting under Raja Sidh Sen from 1684 to 1727
- The paintings portrayed the ruler as a colossal figure with exaggerated huge heads, hands, and feet.
- Geometric configurations and subtle, realistic details characterized other works.

Nurpur Paintings

- Nurpur paintings are found in Himachal Pradesh
- Nurpur paintings generally employ bright colors and flat backgrounds.
- Later periods, the dazzling colors were substituted by subdued ones.

Jammu & Kashmir style of Pahari Paintings

Some forms of Pahari paintings from the Jammu and Kashmir regions are as follows:

Jammu Paintings

- Jammu paintings bear a remarkable resemblance to the Kangra style.
- The Shangri Ramayana of the late 17th and early 18th century was produced in Jammu itself.

Jasrota Paintings

- Jasrota paintings are mainly found in Jammu and Kashmir
- It orbits around events from the life of the kings, court scenes, symbolic scenes, etc.

Mankot Paintings

- Mankot paintings are found in Jammu and Kashmir
- It bears a similarity to the Basohli type
- It uses vivid colors and bold subjects.
- In the mid-17th century, portraiture became a general theme.
- Later, the emphasis drifted to naturalism and muted colors.

Relevant Questions for Pahari Paintings

Which Colour was used in the Pahari school of painting?

An important feature of the Pahari paintings were the delicate touch of line and the use of vibrant colors like yellow, red and blue. It is important to note that the Pahari paintings had their own style and of all the different schools of paintings, the Kangra school was most popular.

When did Pahari painting flourish?

Pahari painting flourished and developed during the 17th to 19th century in the hilly areas in the northwest like Jammu, Garhwal, Basohli,. These paintings are mostly done in miniature form of painting and influenced by Mughal paintings of Aurangzeb's period to some extent.

Which Pahari School of Art is famous in the world?

It is in the development and modification of **Pahari paintings** that the Kangra **School** features. Under the patronage of Maharaja Sansar Chand (c. 1765-1823), it became the most important centre of **Pahari painting**.