

ROSARY OF RAGA-RAGINI PAINTINGS BILASPUR (KEHLOOR)

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ABSTRACT

Pahari, the Hindi word meaning hilly, refers to a variety of painting schools that flourished in the Himalayan foothills between Jammu and Garwal in the 18th and 19th centuries. Ragamala paintings were made by schools in Basohli, Kullu, Bilaspur, Garwal, and Kangra. Ragamala paintings are unique to Indian culture and represent a fusion of three distinct arts: music, poetry, and painting. Raga is a musical mode (a specific arrangement of four or five notes), with variants for sub-modes known as Ragini (women of Ragas) and Ragaputra (sons of Ragas). 84 parts. Pahari Ragamala is based on the system of Mesakarna, a 16th-century court priest from Rewa. In his dissertation, Ragamala, he lists a visual and audible equivalent for each of the six Ragas, 31 Raginis, and 49 Putras. The artists, in turn, converted their verses into paintings, frequently using the poet's vision with their own. Rarely in the history of human culture has there been such an artistic partnership to convey the collective vision of an entire nation, as there was in northern India at the time. A series of 72 folios from Bilaspur, around 1750 A.D., can be found in Berlin's Museum Für Indische Kunt. This set is the visual counter parts; relate the music to a sound in nature or in the home. Bilaspur Court painters found it much easier to depict animals engaged in activities whose voices or sounds are comparable to music. The major purpose of this essay is to provide historical context for Ragamala Paintings of Pahari miniature schools. Special attention on the Ragamala painting of the Bilaspur School of painting, musical sources and literary influences on these paintings.

Keywords: Kehloor, Ragamala Painting, and Ragini.

INTRODUCTION

Ragamala paintings are visual renderings of Indian musical modes previously imagined in heavenly or human form by musicians and poets. They usually depict amorous or devotional moments in a fairly stereotypical, aristocratic environment. These paintings were painted in albums of thirty-six or forty-two folios, organised in a "families" scheme. Each "family" is led by a (male) Raga and consists of five or six Raginis (women), occasionally multiple Ragaputras (sons), Ragaputris (daughters), and sons' wives.

All known specimens of this art were painted between the 16th and 19th centuries in Rajasthan, central India, the Deccan, and the Ganges. Jamunaplains, or Pahari area. Only a few paintings are properly dated and signed. Most can be confidently assigned to specific eras and locations; others' origins are more disputed, and a vast proportion provide very few trustworthy clues to their province. Ragamala paintings depict Indian musical modes in divine or human forms, as imagined by musicians and poets..

Ragamala paintings combine music, poetry, and painting, making them unique to Indian painting traditions. Ragamala's musical and literary origins predate its painted renditions by centuries. The advent of paper and miniature painting in India, among Jains, Hindus, and Muslims, led to the creation of the first pictures of Ragamala poetry or prayer formulas around 1450-1550. During the next 300 years, there was an increasing need for reproductions based on local fashion trends.

This material is mostly consumed by Hindu and Muslim kings and noblemen, as well as their polygamous households, who value painting, music, and poetry. Women appear to be the primary consumers, as evidenced by themes of love longing and union, piety, subservience, and home activities.

The man often preferred different subjects, including proud portraits, adventurous hunts, intense conflicts, and sensual pictures. These paintings, depicting the personification or deification of a musical style, drew inspiration from numerous iconographic sources. The most notable examples are

- Include religious and aristocratic iconography in human behaviour, architecture, and paraphernalia.
- Visualising poetic symbolism.
- Nayaka-Nayika (love heroes and heroines) are commonly cast in play, poetry, and dance.
- The emotional state and duration of the musical mode. –
- The patron's religious preferences. –
- The painter's technical and stylistic limitations. –
- The local fauna, flora, and landscape.

Iconographies are divided into three classes, with the first two being more popular in terms of quantity. The paintings depict divine or aristocratic lords and their spouses in two stages of love: Srīngara love fulfilled in union and Vipralambhalovelonging in separation. Both states are conveyed through subtle and symbolic compositions, avoiding overtly sensual portrayals that are frequent in Indian painting and sculpture. The third set of iconographies depicts everyday activities common to the life of the patrons.

O.C. Gangloy defined Ragamala composition as the classification of Ragas and contests inside a single painting, subject to consistent and long-lasting craft criteria. The rules are categorised as "systems," "iconographies," and "iconographic traditions." Some rulers differed between schools. When combined with stylistic factors, these elements can provide insight about the province and date of Ragamla paintings, aiding in their identification. Approximately 50% of the 400 paintings inscribed with this act form do not use the following sequential method.

The origin of this system is unknown, as it cannot be traced back to any historical musical or literary source, unlike other systems. In his book Ragamala painting, Ravi Kuman referred to it as the painters' systems.

THE PAINTER'S SYSTEM-TABLE

BHAIRAVA	Bhairavi	Nat	Malasri	Patmanjari	Lalit
MALKOS	Gauri	Khambhavati	Malavi	Ramakali	Gunakali
HINDOL	Bilaval	Todi	Desakh	Devghandhari	Madhumadhavi
DIPAK	Dhanasri	Vasant	Kanada	Bairadi	Desvaratiapurvi
MEGHA	Gujari	Gormalar	Kakubha	Vibhasa	Bangal
SRI	Pancham	Kamod or Kamodani	Setmalar	Asavari	Kadari

Hanuman, an ancient musical poet, is credited with creating a second system, which is still utilised in around two dozen Ragamalas today. It is led by the same major Ragas and consists of 23-24 Raginis from the painters system.

HANUMAN'S SYSTEM-TABLE

BHAIRAVA	MadhyamadiorMad hunadhavi	Bhairavi	Bangali	Varati	Saindhavi
MALKOS	Todi	Khambhavati	Gauri	Gunakri	Kakubha
HINDOL	Vilaval	Ramakari	Desakh	Patmangari	Lalita
DIPAK	Kedari	Kanada	Desi	Kamodi	Nat
SRI	Vasant	MaruorMalavi	Malasri	Dhanasika	Asavari
MEGHA	Mallar	Desakari	Bhupali	Gurjari	Tanka

The third system, prevalent in PahariRagamalas but uncommon in Rajput and DeccaniRagamala, involves eight sons (putra) per household. Mesakerna's manuscript from 1576 A.D. describes the system as follows.

Mesakerna's System-Table

- Raga BhairavaRaginis: Vangali, BhairaviVelavali, Panyaki, Snehaki
- Putras: Vangala, Pancham, Madhu, Harsa, Desakh, Lalit, Velaval, Madhava
- MalakousikaRaginis-Gundagri, Gandhari, Srihathi, Andheyaki and Dhanasri
- RagputraMaru includes Mevada, Varvali, Mistanga, Chandrakaya, Bhramara, Nandna, and Khokhara.
- HindolaRaginis (Tilaji, Devagiri, Vasanti, Sindhuri, Abhiri)
- Putras: Mangala, Chandravimva, Subhrang, Ananda, Vibhasa, Vardhana, Vinoda, and Vasanta
- DipakaRaginis: Kamodani, Palmanjari, Todi, Gujjari, and Kaheli
- Putras: Kamala, Kusuma, Rama, Kuntala, Kalinga, Vahula, Champaka, and Hemala
- Sri Raginis: Vairati, Karnatika, Saveri, Goudi, Ramagiri, Saindhavi.
- Putras: Sindhava, Malava, Gouda, Dambhira, Ganasagara, Vigada, Kalyana, Kumba, and Agada.
- Raga MeghaRaginis ,Mallari, Sorathi, Suhavi, Asavari, and Kokani.
- PutrasNata, Kanara, Saranga, Kedara, Gundamallara, Gunda, Jalandhara, and Sankara.

THE PAHARI REGION

The Pahari region, located in the foothills of the Himalayas, encompassed the states of Basoil, Kullu, Bilaspur, Kangra, and Tehri-Garhwal. These states were tucked in valleys between steep mountain ranges. The origins of pahari miniature painting are disputed, but it is assumed that during Aurangzeb's reign in the 17th century and between the Persian sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah in 1739 and the Afghan invasion in 1747, a large number of painters emigrated to the hill and mixed their talent with existing folk tradition. The local school of painting in these states produced 84 folioRagamala, but its iconography differed from the earlier and more widespread Rajasthani heritage of plains. Mesakerna System.

In the 17th century, the Rajas of Bilaspur were prominent sponsors of pahari miniature painting. To gain a better understanding of the development of Bilaspurkalam, it's important to consider its roots in Mughal miniature art and Rajasthanipahari painting.

Raja Devi Chand (1741-78) was a prominent patron of art and literature in the state of Bilaspur. During Devi Chand's rule, Bilaspur saw an influx of artisans and merchants from the plains. A series of 72 folios painted by Raja Deavi Chand's court painters in Bilaspur around 1750 A.D. can be found in the Museum fur IndischeKunt in Berlin. The Ragamal set is based on the Meskarna system. This group of paintings depicts 6 Ragas, 31 Raginis, and 49 Ragaputras. Ragamal paintings are a one-of-a-kind mix of three distinct arts. Music, poetry, and painting. During this time, musicians, poets, and painters collaborated in their studios, resulting in artists with musical and poetical knowledge who used their brushes to create musical notes and poetry.

MUSICAL SOURCE FOR RAGAMALA PAINTING

Since the first millennium B.C., Indian music has slowly progressed from folk tunes to classical music. Music was believed to have divine origins and can evoke a specific feeling (rasa) in both the listener and the musician. Rasa is commonly used in Indian dance, drama, poetry, and painting. To understand the divine characteristics of music, practitioners believed that each song had a personified or deified form in addition to its sound. Matanga's Brbaddesi, written between the 5th and 7th centuries, uses the term "Raga" derived from the Sanskrit word ranga, meaning colour. The term "Ragini" (meaning female raga or wife of raga) first appears in Narada's panchamasara, Sambita, which was likely written between the 7th and 11th centuries. Sons originated to accommodate more melodies in raga systems with both male and female components. The term "putra" appears first in Measakarma. Sarangadeva compiled a list of raga linkages with their respective deities and patron saints. He linked animal calls to certain musical scale notes, as well as human and household sounds.

POETICAL INFLUENCES

In treaties and compilations, musical qualities are used to express heavenly nature, provide technical knowledge, and identify the evoked rasa. Poetry, as a medium for verbalization, evolved into music, which also changed the medium. The musicians' dhyanas place a stress on human attributes, flaws, and emotions.

Krishnalila was one of such subjects. Bhakti, a religious movement centred on Krishna devotion, interprets divine love through the lens of human love. Nayikabhedacategorises love heroes and heroines based on their mood and circumstances, reflecting the ongoing cycle of love longing (vipralambha) and love (sringara). In Ragamala settings, Krishna is either the happy lover dancing with maidens in Raginivasanta (a spring melody) or the errant lover returning at dawn in Megha (a rainy season song). Lalita Painters from the Bilaspur school have well portrayed the ragalmala motif.

COLOURS OF RAGAMALA PAINTINGS

The miniatures themselves are barely damaged. The colour may be partially worn or scraped off, and may have changed with time and with moisture. The distance colouring is significant since it corresponds to each member of the six Raga families using the same text.

- Family I (Bhairava) olive green.
- Family II (Malakausa): pale bluish green (Chrysocolla).
- Family III (Hindola): ivory-white.
- Family IV (Dipaka) a somber livid.
- Family V (Sriraga) pea-green.
- Family VI (Megha) is light chocolate brown.

Ragas and Raginis have seasonal names. Some names, like Megha or Vasanta, are derived from flowers like Malti (jasmine) or Kaumidi (lily), while others are based on geographical names like Malva (central India), Purvi (Eastern India), and Desh (Northern India). Poetic verses depict each kind of devotion, including tranquilly, loneliness, heroism, and sexuality, and are intended to be sung during a specific season and time of day or night.

Birds and Animals

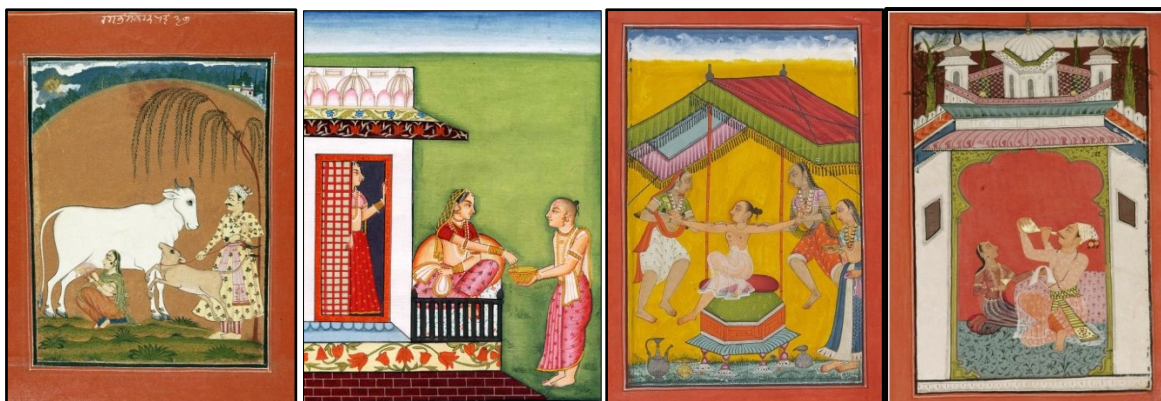


Desakh Raga



Shri Raga

Human Activites





Kusuma Ragaputra and Vivaca Ragaputar

A COMBINATION OF MUSIC, POETRY, AND PAINTING

Combination of music, poetry, and painting. Ragamal paintings are a unique mix of three distinct arts. Music, poetry, and painting. During that time, musicians, poets, and painters used to share studios, resulting in an artist's musical and poetic knowledge was so high and through that knowledge their brushes effortlessly created music and poetry in the form of Raga-Ragini paintings.

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