

Biyani's Think Tank

Concept based notes

Under Graduation Program

(BVA-II Sem)

(Visual Culture of Rajasthan)

Dr. Ramakant Gautam

Assistant Professor (Visual Arts)

Dept. of Social Science

Biyani Girls College, Jaipur



Published by:

Think Tanks

Biyani Group of Colleges

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Sector-3, Vidhyadhar Nagar,

Jaipur-302039 (Rajasthan)

Ph : 0141-2338371, 2338591-95 •Fax : 0141-2338007

E-mail: acad@biyanicolleges.org

Website: www.gurukpo.com; www.biyanicolleges.org

First Edition: 2024

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On

BVA

Detailed Syllabus **[Visual Culture of Rajasthan]** **Common with Painting and Sculpture**

Unit 1: Miniature Schools

(Lecture-6)

Explore the distinct styles and historical contexts of the major Rajasthani miniature Schools: -

Mewar Style: Udaipur

Marwar Style: Jodhpur, Kishangarh, Bikaner

Dundhar Style: Alwar, Jaipur

Hadothi Style: Kota, Bundi

Unit 2: Folk Traditions

(Lecture-4)

Study Rajasthan's rich folk art forms such as Phad, Kawad, Mandna, and Mehndi. Understand their historical development, cultural significance, and visual characteristics.

Unit 3: Traditional Practices

(Lecture-8)

Examine Rajasthan's traditional art forms including terracotta, marble carving, metalwork, Wood work, Leatherwork, Jaipur fresco, and block printing.

Learn about their historical evolution, techniques, and cultural contexts.

Unit 4: Festivals and Fairs

(Lecture-8)

Analyze the visual and cultural aspects of major Rajasthani festivals and fairs:

Teej: Worship of Goddess Teej

Gangaur Festival: Symbolizing the union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati

Pushkar Camel Fair: A significant camel trade fair

Benswar Fair: Dungarpur

Ramdevra Fair: Jaisalmer

Gogaji Fair: Gogamedi

Kaila Devi Fair: Kalia Village

Tejaji Fair: Parbatsar

Unit 5: Synthesis and Application

(Lecture-4)

Synthesize knowledge from previous units to develop a comprehensive understanding of Rajasthan's Visual Culture.

Apply insights to create projects that reflect the stylistic and thematic elements of Rajasthani Art.

Course learning outcome:

- Students will Identify and differentiate between the major Rajasthani miniature art schools and their stylistic characteristics.
- Understand and describe the rich folk traditions and their visual representations.
- Explain the techniques and cultural contexts of traditional Rajasthani art forms and crafts.
- Analyses the visual and cultural significance of key Rajasthani festivals and fairs.
- Integrate their understanding of Rajasthani visual culture into practical projects that reflect its diverse artistic heritage.

Suggested Books and References:-

1. History and Culture of Rajasthan; Kishan Gopal Sharma; 2020; RG GROUP
2. Rajasthani Miniatures: The Magic of Strokes and Colours ; Daljeet ; 2018; Niyogi Books Private Limited
3. The Ragachitras of Mewar:: Indian Musical Modes in Rajasthani Miniature Painting; Anupa Pande ;2020; Aryan Books International
4. Rajasthan, an Oral History: Conversations with Komal Kothari; Rustom Bharucha; 2003; Penguin Books India.
5. Kaavad Tradition Of Rajasthan; Sabnani Nina;

E-Resources:-

1. <https://www.granthaalayahpublication.org/Arts-Journal/ShodhKosh/article/view/266/355>
2. Chromeextension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ncert.nic.in/textbook/pdf/lefa102.pdf
3. <https://www.artisera.com/blogs/expressions/phadpaintingsofrajasthan?srltid=AfmBOocKBwkB7BLj6QYHXMHpolMY4maylr5hw1UjioKZDN5iN24sux>

MINITURE ART

(1) Meaning and definition:-

Miniature art includes paintings, engravings and sculptures that are very small; it has a long history that dates back to prehistory. The portrait miniature is the most common form in recent centuries, and from ancient times, engraved gems, often used as impression seals, and cylinder seals in various materials were very important. For example most surviving examples of figurative art from the Indus Valley civilization and in Minoan art are very small seals. Gothic boxwood miniatures are very small carvings in wood, used for rosary beads and the like.

Western paintings in illuminated manuscripts are known as miniatures, even if not very small - this sense of the word in fact has a different derivation, from a Latin word for a reddish pigment. Miniature art has been made for over 2500 years and is prized by collectors. Museums around the world have collections of miniature paintings, drawings, original prints and etchings, and sculpture.

Miniature art societies, such as the World Federation of Miniaturists (WFM) and Royal Miniature Society, provide applicable of the maximum size covered by the term. An often-used definition is that a piece of miniature art can be held in the palm of the hand, or that it covers less than 25 square inches or 100 cm². Some exhibits require the subjects to be depicted in 1/6 actual size, and in all paintings the spirit of miniaturization should be maintained.

Miniature paintings are fine-looking, handcrafted works of art. These paintings are bright and colourful, but they are small. The elaborate and delicate brushwork that gives these paintings their individual identity is their best feature. Colors for miniatures are made by hand. Pure gold, silver, minerals, plants, valuable stones, indigo, and conch shells are the most common sources.

The word ‘miniature’ is derived from the Latin word ‘Minimum’, which means red lead paint.

This paint was used in illuminated manuscripts during the Renaissance period. It is generally confused with the word minimum, which would mean that they were small in size.

The Indian subcontinent has long traditions of these miniature paintings and many schools have developed that have differences in composition and perspective. Miniatures are small and detailed paintings.

(2) Origen and Development of Miniature Paintings in India:–

Miniature Paintings in India – Features:-

Indian miniature paintings are a class of paintings originating from India. Made on canvases a few inches in length and width, the Indian miniatures are noted for the amount of details that the artist encapsulates within the minute canvas frame; and the characteristic sensitivity with which the human, divine and natural forms are portrayed. They depict a variety of topics such as legends and myths, human passions and pains, aspirations, and physicality. From their origins in cave paintings, to the later Mughal and Pahari schools, the Indian miniatures represent a diversity of styles and themes, varying between the religious and the secular. Today most of these forms have perished, and are no longer practiced, due to the decline in royal patronage, and subsequent changes in the country's socio-cultural scenes. However, several of these canvases today survive in museums and private collections, defining India, her lifestyle and the aesthetic idiom of her past, as well as the essence of her soil, her creative imagination, colours, and thought. Miniatures are handcrafted paintings with a nice appearance.

- These paintings are vibrant, although they are little.
- The complicated and delicate brushwork that gives these paintings their individual identity is the best feature of them.
- Miniatures are painted using hand-mixed colors. Pure gold, silver, minerals, plants, valuable stones, indigo, and conch shells are the most common sources.
- There are various prerequisites that must be met in order to create miniature paintings.
- The painting should be no more than 25 square inches in size.
- The painting's subject should be portrayed at a scale of no more than 1/6th of its actual size.

- The human figurine is depicted with a side profile in the majority of Indian miniature paintings.
- Bulging eyes, a sharp nose, and a thin waist are common features.
- The skin color of the characters in Rajasthani miniatures is dark, but they are often paler in Mughal paintings.
- Furthermore, celestial entities such as Lord Krishna are blue in color.
- The female figurines have long hair, and their eyes and hair are almost always black.
- Men typically dress in traditional attire and wear turban on their heads.

Early Miniature:-

They were frequently painted on perishable materials like paper, palm leaves, and fabric for books or albums. The art of miniature painting emerged between the 8th and 12th centuries, virtually as a reaction to the massive wall paintings.

This style of painting can be seen in both the eastern and western parts of the country.

There are two well-known schools.

Pala School of Art

Apabhramsa School of Art

History of Indian Painting:-

The development of Indian miniature paintings began around the 17th century in the Western Himalayas. Mural paintings from the second half of the 18th century had a big influence on these works.

The Hindu Rajas of Rajasthan and Muslim kings of the Deccan and Malwa sponsored the growth of miniature painting throughout the Mughal era. Persian tradition was brought into Indian miniature paintings by the Mughals.

In India, painting, one of the significant branches of chitra, has a divine origin. It is said to have emerged as a spontaneous act by Vishnu, who unconsciously sketched a portrait of Urvashi on his thigh, enthralled by the ravishing beauty of the apsara. It was then passed on to Viswakarma, who taught the art of painting to the rest of mankind as per Vishnu's wishes. Chitra has several connotations, and forms an important part of the various Shilpa and the Agamas text. The earliest paintings, as per anthropological evidences have been found in the rock-cut shelters such as in Bhim-Betaka in Bhopal. Seven distinct phases of rock art have been discovered here, with the earliest dating back to 10,000 B.C. Indus pottery defines the next stage of painting where the surfaces of earthen pots became the artist's canvas, these paintings were characterised by geometrical patterns, bright colours, floral themes, etc. The two epics Ramayana and Mahabharata provide depict several of the characters engaged in art activities. For instance, in Ayodhya, there was a permanent space designated as chitra-vithi, which was supervised by Lakshmana, the brother of Ram. In Bhagavata Purana, Banasura's daughter, Usha has a friend, Chitrlekha, who is a skilled painter who painted Aniruddha, Krishna's grandson, after hearing about Usha's dream about him. The most glorious phase of Indian art spanned from the 4th-7th Centuries as seen in the delicate and exquisite murals at Ajanta Ellora caves, temples, monasteries, etc

Evolution of Miniature Paintings:-

This form of painting, in the Indian subcontinent, emerged during the 10th Century. The earliest known example is the 999 A.D.-illustrated Buddhist text Prajnaparamita, produced on a palm leaf. There are also the Kalpasutra folios which have been discovered during the 10th-14th centuries. The Kalpasutra tradition seems to have continued till 16th Century. These votive portable paintings earned the patronage of travelers, devotees and traders. The Mandu Kalpasutra, for instance, dated 1439 A.D., was rendered for Mandu, a Jain monk. The introduction of paper replaced the palm-leaf and revolutionised the art-scenario post-14th Century. Moreover, new mineral colours and pigments too were introduced in addition to the prior colours. Paper was tougher, smoother, and had a better colour-absorbing surface. Meanwhile, the Bhakti movement increased the demand for votive representations, while simultaneously rulers too began patronising painters to have their artistic styles preserved and reflected on the canvas. Against this scenario, the production of miniatures became profit-oriented, and artists began to carve their own

distinctions while competing with others. This also gave birth to various art schools, marking a shift from the religious to secular themes, and feudal lords replaced the traders as patrons. The major chunk of miniatures, and consequent medieval art forms, evolved from the 15th to the 19th century

Essence of Indian Miniatures:-

The Indian miniatures are characterised by a direct expressive quality, and remarkable transparency where lines, colours, forms, etc., synthesize to expose all that is depicted in the canvas. Nothing is concealed and it is this frankness that potentially moves the viewers, emotionally, and generates a transcendental delight in them. Several Indian texts ranging from the Buddhist Jatakas, Jain Kalpasutras, the two Hindu epics, Bhagavata-Purana, Kalidasa's Shakuntala, Rasamanjari, Gita-Govinda by Jayadeva, Rasikapriya, Bihari-Satsai, and Janamsakhi are frequently portrayed in these miniatures. Persian texts like Shahnama, Tutinama, Hamzanama, Mughal memoirs like Baburnama, Akbarnama, etc., folk legends like Bazbahadur-Roopmati, Dhola-Maru, Laila-Majnun, Nala-Damayanti, Panchatantra, etc., are also the staple content of Indian miniatures. Abstract emotions of love, pain and grief; beauty and nature; the Ragamalas, Baramasa, Tantra; history of court and village lives, various festivals and scenes of pleasure too are found in these paintings. Calligraphy played a significant role from the Buddhist and Jain depictions in the medieval age; while portraiture was encouraged by Akbar though only of male royal personages, while Jahangir allowed portraits of royal females such as Nur Jahan. Nature played a very important role in these paintings, and despite the minute space, the expansive detailing seemed to seamlessly unite the world of nature and man on the canvas space. Decorated borders, intricate lines, balanced and perfectly executed compositions, unique shades and colour palettes, scenic depictions, and thematic portrayals impart a mysticism and emotive appeal that characterises the essence of Indian miniatures.

Schools and Art Styles:-

PALA AND JAIN SCHOOL:- The Pala and Jain schools comprise the early miniature styles, while the later schools comprise the Rajasthani, Mughal, Pahari, and Deccan schools. Malwa, Raghogarh, and Orchha-Datia, often grouped under the Rajasthani school, form separate schools of Central India. Depending on stylistic variations, the Mughal miniatures can be further classified into the early, later and provincial Mughal schools, with the last referring to the art styles that emerged in the subas. On the other hand, Kangra, Basohli, Garhwal, etc., form different sub-schools of the Pahari miniature style. The paintings of the Pala school were produced in Bengal and the surrounding areas, and depict narratives, events, and tales from the life of Buddha. These paintings, composed on palm-leaf manuscripts, were created during the 8th-11th Century, under the patronage of Pala rulers. The Jain-Kalpasutra paintings depict the life of the Thirthankara Mahavira and Parashvanath. These paintings of the Jain school are made on palm-leaf or on cloth, and are characterised by short-statured men with deep protruding eyes, angular facial features, pointed noses, bright ornaments, and costumes, painted in gold, warm colours with active lines, connoting a distinct rhythm and vitality of movement.

RAJASTHANI SCHOOL:- The principal centres of Rajasthani miniatures included Mewar, Bundi, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Kishangarh, Jaipur, over fifteen smaller states, and thikanas. The Rajasthani miniatures are exceptionally expressive, characterised by primitive vigour, and exude the rich fragrant essence of the soil and the land. Serialised illustrations of texts and legends, depictions of Durbar scenes, festivals, processions, huntings, and harem life, have precedence over portraiture. The image of Krishna-Radha gave the Rajasthani painters an eternal source of sensuous delight, an ideal of the shringara rasa, and a way to transcend beyond the material into the spiritual.

Mewar paintings developed a sensitive portrayal of Hindu myths and legends. Sahibdin, a Muslim artist, interestingly pioneered the Mewar idiom. Nathdwara became an important centre of Mewar art. This was the result of the establishment of the Shreenathji shrine here. Soon, the image of Shreenath became a dominant theme in these paintings. The Kotah paintings excelled in the depictions of hunting scenes, realistic portrayals of nature, and human figures. The Bundi miniatures too are superbly composed and reflect both secular as well as religious themes. The Bikaner miniatures are characterised by their affinity

to the Mughal style, their portrayals of the Durbar scenes, delicate female forms and robust male figures. Art from Jodhpur, also known as the Marwar style, is defined by large thick eyes on well-defined physical features. The Kishangarh artists championed the Bani-Thani figures, that is the perfect model of womanhood, and were inspired by Raja Sawant Singh. A unique lyricism, elegance and rhythm characterise these masterpieces. The Jaipur style is distinguished by the presence of tall figures, with delicate eyes, ornate background, embellished costumes, etc., achieved by the amalgamation of Mughal and Rajasthani styles. The Malwa miniatures are beautifully composed and emotionally charged, while the Orchha-Datia styles (also, known as the Bundelkhand school) are dominated by episodes from the Ramayana, Bhagavata-Purana, folk narratives, and blue-black shades.

MUGHAL SCHOOL:- The Mughal art style was born in the hands of Akbar, whose liberalism led to the unification of Hindu and Islamic elements of art. His court saw the translations of Persian and Sanskrit texts, and illustrations of the same were carried on simultaneously. Miniatures produced during Jahangir's time testify to his sensitive eye for beauty. The paintings have a poetic fervour, neat lines, life-like portrayals of birds, and animals, etc. The influence of European styles too are visible in the paintings of this time owing to Jahangir's interactions with the Europeans. Portraiture and random depictions gained immense popularity during Shah Jahan's time. Serialisation of romances like Dara Sikhoh and Ranadil were significant in the miniatures of this period. Shah Jahan was a man of romantic and poetic fervour, and the paintings produced under his patronage show a delicate and typical softness. The Mughal miniature artists shifted to the subas with the ascendance of Aurangzeb, under whose rigid rule patronage was suspended, and all art was abhorred. The paintings which developed in the subas were referred to as the Provincial Mughal Miniatures.

DECCAN SCHOOL:- In Deccan, a fresh art style had started to develop, after areas of Deccan were conquered by Islamic rulers who brought them with their art styles, that mingled with the indigenous art forms alongside the influences from Persia and Turkey. Some of the distinct markers of this school are the exceptional synthesis of colour palette, the comely human figures, rich decorations, and indigenous ornamental patterns, etc.

PAHARI SCHOOL:- The Pahari miniature style developed at various centres spread across the lower Himalayan regions and Punjab hills. The major centres were Basohli, Guler, Chamba, Mandi, and Kangra, while the minor ones included those at Jammu, Bilaspur, Garhwal and Punjab. Pahari paintings derive their timelessness and emotive quality from the compositional details, rich symbolism, sensitive portrayals of humans, and natural landscapes. They have an unmatched serenity, and picturesque quality. The Basohli style is marked by the indiscriminate use of the lotus symbol, and human figures with large eyes, and broad foreheads. Royal portraits of the Chamba sub-school are well known. It is also noted for its unique technique of mixing colours, and representation of womenfolk. Guler style is defined by rounded faces, refined lines, and a sensitive depictions of nature. Kangra paintings represent the pinnacle of Pahari miniatures, and Himalayan art, characterised by mature technical finesse, and portraiture quality that imparts an almost pulsating softness of music, emotions, and colours. The Radha-Krishna legend forms the primary theme of the Kangra school.

FOLK TRADITIONS

INTRODUCTION:-

Folk traditions encompass a wide range of cultural practices, beliefs, rituals, stories, and customs passed down from generation to generation within a particular community or society. These traditions often reflect the cultural identity and values of a group of people and are deeply rooted in their history, environment, and social structures. Here are some key aspects of folk traditions:

1. **Oral Traditions:** Many folk traditions are transmitted orally, through storytelling, songs, chants, and verbal lore. These stories and songs often contain moral lessons, historical accounts, and explanations of natural phenomena.
2. **Customs and Rituals:** Folk traditions frequently involve rituals and customs performed during significant life events such as birth, marriage, and death, as well as seasonal celebrations and agricultural practices. These rituals often serve to reinforce social bonds and communal identity.
3. **Folk Music and Dance:** Music and dance play a central role in many folk traditions, serving as forms of artistic expression, entertainment, and cultural preservation. Folk music often features traditional instruments and themes related to everyday life, love, work, and nature.
4. **Folk Art and Craftsmanship:** Folk traditions are often expressed through visual arts and craftsmanship, including folk art, textiles, pottery, woodworking, and other handmade items. These artistic traditions often reflect the cultural heritage and aesthetic sensibilities of a particular community.
5. **Folk Beliefs and Superstitions:** Folk traditions frequently encompass a rich tapestry of beliefs, superstitions, and supernatural folklore. These may include beliefs in spirits, ghosts, fairies, and other supernatural beings, as well as practices aimed at warding off evil or bringing good luck.
6. **Local Knowledge and Wisdom:** Folk traditions often contain valuable knowledge about local ecosystems, medicinal plants, traditional healing practices, and sustainable living techniques passed down through generations.
7. **Adaptation and Evolution:** While folk traditions are rooted in the past, they are not static. They evolve over time through interactions with other cultures, technological advancements, and changing social conditions. However, many communities actively work to preserve and revitalize their folk traditions as a way of maintaining cultural identity and heritage.
8. **Cultural Identity and Diversity:** Folk traditions are an integral part of cultural identity, helping to distinguish one community from another. They contribute to the rich tapestry of human diversity, reflecting the unique histories, languages, and ways of life found throughout the world.

Overall, folk traditions are a vibrant and dynamic aspect of human culture, connecting people to their past, their community, and the natural world. They serve as repositories of collective wisdom, creativity, and resilience, enriching the tapestry of human experience.

MEANING AND DEFINITION OF FOLK ARTS:-

Folk arts refer to artistic expressions and creative practices that arise from the cultural traditions, beliefs, and everyday life of a particular community or society. These artistic traditions are often passed down orally or through informal apprenticeships and are deeply rooted in the cultural identity and heritage of the people who practice them. Folk arts encompass a wide range of artistic disciplines, including visual arts, music, dance, storytelling, crafts, and rituals. Here's a more detailed explanation of the meaning and definition of folk arts:

1. **Cultural Expression:** Folk arts serve as a means of cultural expression, reflecting the unique customs, values, and experiences of a community or ethnic group. They provide insights into the history, beliefs, and social structures of the people who create them.
2. **Community-Based:** Unlike fine arts, which are often created by professional artists for a broader audience, folk arts are typically produced within the context of a specific community or

cultural group. They are often practiced by individuals who are deeply embedded in their communities and who draw inspiration from local traditions and collective experiences.

3. **Traditional Techniques and Materials:** Folk artists often employ traditional techniques and materials that have been passed down through generations. These techniques may be specific to a particular craft or art form and may involve skills such as weaving, carving, pottery making, or musical instrument construction.
4. **Functional and Decorative:** Folk arts serve both functional and decorative purposes within the communities that produce them. For example, textiles may be created for clothing or household use, while decorative arts such as pottery or woodcarving may adorn homes or public spaces.
5. **Symbolism and Meaning:** Folk arts are often rich in symbolism and meaning, drawing upon cultural myths, religious beliefs, and historical narratives. Many folk art forms incorporate motifs and symbols that hold significance within the cultural context in which they are created.
6. **Continuity and Adaptation:** While folk arts are rooted in tradition, they are not static. They evolve over time through interactions with other cultures, changes in social conditions, and innovations in technology and materials. However, even as they adapt to new circumstances, folk arts often retain elements of their traditional forms and techniques.
7. **Community Identity and Heritage:** Folk arts play a crucial role in shaping and preserving community identity and heritage. They serve as markers of cultural identity, helping to reinforce a sense of belonging and continuity among community members, particularly in the face of social change and globalization.

Overall, folk arts are a vital expression of human creativity, cultural diversity, and resilience. They provide a window into the rich tapestry of human experience, connecting individuals and communities to their past, present, and future.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT:-

Generally the expression of impression is called art. Its origin is also supposed to have come in existence with the human life. As we do not find the chronological history of mankind, so it is not possible to trace the history of art also chronological order. But it is definite that art has always remained with him as a companion. The famous historian M. C. Warkit has written in his "Most Primitive Art that the help of art is very necessary to know fully about a country or the civilization of a race. The way of living can be known through the medium of the same. Whatever the remains of art have been found at Mohan Jodaro and Harappa, on the basis of the same, some guess have been made about that civilization. Though the time of the same has not yet been confirmed even then, one can feel the high standard of living during that civilization by the ornaments of ladies, utensils and other man made articles

According to Dr. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi the meaning of the word 'Lok (folk)' is not any habitation or village but, is the whole public living in cities and villages. The base of their ways of living and general outlook of life are not the books. These people live an unartificial and simple life. With education the culture changes because artificiality comes after the attainment of knowledge and the man starts going away from the nature. So the folk art remains confined to the normal folk but even then its area is extensive. It remains with the man in one way or the

other. Its form and style is based on sentiments and traditions because it is the expression of the experience of the normal folk. It is the background of modern classical and commercial art, as scholars believe.

The origin of folk art is supposed to go side by side with literature. Two types of language is believed to have existed in the Vedic Age. Main was Sanskrit meant for the literature and the other was folk languages. Apabhramsha and Prakrit language were spoken among the normal folk. The folk language also progressed together with the Sanskrit literature and it effected the Sanskrit literature directly or indirectly. Since the time research has been started on folk art, we have come to know of the treasures of folk art and folk literature. The development of folk art comes before us in so many ways. Its one form is based on divine illusions and traditional faiths and the second one is based on social customs. The first form of folk art is symbolic because gods and goddesses are found painted in a symbolic way in the same. In the social customs, symbols are not drawn but some figures are drawn simply in a clear way.

Folk art has played a very important role in the progress of art. The art has developed in the courts by the professional artists but folk art has developed in houses, worship-places, courtyards, villages, among illiterate races. The artists of folk art work without any fame, peacefully and innocently, with the religious and cultural traditions and without intellectual touch. Folk art does not need any shelter, impetus or allurements. It progresses with freedom and originality as it is related to all the living beings.

According to Stevens, folk art has got a deep relation with the primitive man. The primitive man took the help of divine powers and the inspiration from nature, whom he worshipped for his well being after giving it some shape. The work is magic and witch craft was started by the primitive man just after gaining consciousness. We find the examples of the same in prehistoric painting, the signs like 'Swastika' have been found in the ancient cave. The same signs are still continuing in the religious rites and folk art of today in a traditional way. When were they born, cannot be told. But it is definite that the modern folk art is the developed form of the primitive art. The earth has been called Dharti Mata (the mother earth) in India Matri Bhoomi or Mother land is cultural and developed version. By decorating the same mother land with devotion the folk man gave the proof of his cognate feelings. In different states the earth is decorated with different names. In Gujarat it is called Sathia, in Rajasthan Mandana, in Maharashtra Rangoli, in U.P. Chauk Poorna, in Bihar Ahapan, in Bengal Alpana and in Garhwal Apna. Under this the ground, the courtyard of home or the places of worship are decorated by different designs to be filled in with colours or powder which has got not technical or classical method but is traditional folk style, the aim of which is to add beauty to the ground. This decoration is done in every home in the nook and corner of the country through the decorative shapes and designs which differ from place to place. The Rangoli or decoration of courtyard is inspired by a religious sentiment in which drawings are made with devotion. The aim is to worship the spiritual and divine existence by making the designs beautifully. Nothing can be said about the origin of the tradition.

"Folk art enacts the full cycle of our lives from birth and procreation through different stages of life and death." - K.G. Subramanyam

India is a land of art and culture from the very beginning of life on earth. There is no doubt that India with its extensive dimensions and population with multi-cultured ethnicity presents almost infinitive varieties of traditional arts and crafts. Thus, folk art is rooted in traditions that come from, the community and culture of common people all over India. Indian folk crafts are nothing less than works of art in themselves. There are many folk arts related to the many regions of Indian folklore. The artisans who practice this art toil for many days to produce just one piece which is transferred to them from their ancestors. Thus it bears the heritage of generations. It forwards from one generation to another generation. This is why its motifs and symbols are the same, even though these vary from one region to another.

In this way, Indian folk art is full of variations. Their styles and patterns, reflect the indigenous character. Folk paintings did not emerge in chronological order but evolved in various districts of India depending mainly on the rural cultures, mythological stories and everyday rituals.

Characteristics Folk Art:-

These artistic expressions differ from region to region, due to the accessibility of material in different areas. Even then we find some common characteristics among different folk arts and crafts.

1. Material:-Folk paintings usually are made with natural colours on leaves, clothes, earthen pots, mud walls, floors etc. As Indian folk art consists of wall painting, miniatures, pottery, scrolls, weaving, knitting, embroidery etc.

2. Subject Matter:-Folk paintings are pictorial expression, which has the subject matters from not only the epics like Ramayan, Mahabharata and Bhagavat Gita but also from daily village life, birds, animals and natural objects like sun, moon, stars, plants and trees. Paintings of Gods and Goddesses are very popular in these folk arts. But objects and forms are imaginative, not natural. The figure 2/4 in every folk art are simplified forms of humans, animals, and other natural forms.

3. Artists:-The artists of folk art were not professional artists but they were mostly women who nourished these arts, as well as, and were transferred from one generation to another in the houses. Although some male artists also gave their contributions to some form of folk art they were very few. But now-a-days some artists have adopted these forms of art as their profession. As the government is also protecting these decaying different art forms.

4. Occasion:-These various folk arts were created on the occasion of any festival, ceremonies such as marriage, Birth, Rituals, etc. Many of these were thought pious and beneficial for the welfare of human beings. So these were associated with religion too.

5. Origin:-The present forms of folk arts were seems to be derived from primitive art. These forms do not express the aesthetic sense of the common people but are also a source of self-expression. These have some traditional beliefs behind the forms and motifs. There were some religious rituals in the background of their forms and shapes. The decorative motifs of the many folk arts can be found among the tribes and ethnic groups today too.

6. Geometrical Forms:-Geometrical forms are also a common characteristic of folk arts. Most art forms are based on geometrical forms such as circles, triangles, parallel-line and squares. Which have not only religious importance but also a decorative purpose behind them.

7. Colours:-Although natural colours are used in these various folk arts but they are very bright.

The colour is limited. Mostly primary colour (Red, Yellow, Blue, Green) with white, Black and Burnt Saina are used purely i.e. with high intensity. The colour is never dull.

Today after thousands of years we see these common characteristics among the ethnic groups and tribes as such. These forms attract art lovers and artisans towards them undoubtedly as their expansion is universal. Although these art forms are very simple and innocent. Inspiration is not lacking for these local unsung artists as they are very imaginative. So these are a rich source of inspiration for modern artists too. These art forms are based on the imagination of these artists. Thus folk art is the natural expression of folklore. It is filled with the hope, emotions, pleasure, enthusiasm and pious feeling of the man. It is free from any boundations. It changes its direction with the flow of society but its flow is endless.

TENDENCIES OF FOLK ARTS:-

Thus we find three main tendencies of the folk arts.

1. Decorative and full of entertainment.
2. Utility.
3. Associated with rituals.

1. Decorative and full of Entertainment

Man is always trying to make his environment more interesting. This feeling is reflected from the very beginning of the primitive man when he created rock paintings to express himself, entertain himself decorate his abode to make it more interesting. The same fellin 3/4 reflected from the folk arts by the decorative motifs and patterns of folk artists which not only entertain them but also satisfy their aesthetic and decorative passion.

2. Associated with rituals

The primitive magical feeling was transformed into the rituals and religious deeds with time, And the folk arts are also created at the time of the rituals, religious deeds and festivals as well as on different ceremonies performed in Indian society such as marriage, birthdays and other ceremonial occasions. Thus the folk paintings are the life fluids of Indian society because every region is full of folk colours of religion. Religion gave a path to folk art forms. Folk painting includes pictorial depictions of the Hindu deities like Lord Krishna, Rama, Shiva Goddess Durga, Laxmi, Saraswati and others.

3. Utility

Folk art is also associated with the things of utility. The earthen pots are decorated with folk motifs. The clothes are painted with different folk art forms as well as embroidered. These things have their utility in our day-to-day life. This is why it is transferred from one generation to another automatically. Different folk arts make life colourful in the region, to which they belong. Folk arts have a rich tradition in India dating back to prehistoric times. Many famous folk arts are belonging to various regions. Such as –

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Madhubani Painting | 2. Phad Painting |
| 3. Warli Painting | 4. Pata Chitra |
| 5. Pichwai Painting | 6. Kalamkari |
| 7. Kalighat Painting | 8. Godna |
| 9. Scroll Painting | 10. Pithoro (Bhil) Painting |
| 11. Santhal Painting | 12. Gond Painting |
| 13. Sanjhi | 14. Tanjore Painting |
| 15. Thangka Painting | 16. Palm leaf Painting |
| 17. Rangoli | 18. Mandana |
| 19. Kolam | 20. Chauk Purna etc. |

How various folk cultural aspects evolve and survive over time and space:-

Various folk cultural aspects evolve and survive over time and space through a combination of factors, including adaptation, transmission, innovation, preservation efforts, and external influences. Here's how these processes contribute to the evolution and survival of folk cultural aspects:

1. **Adaptation to Changing Contexts:** Folk cultural practices often adapt to changing social, economic, and environmental contexts. Communities may modify rituals, traditions, and artistic styles to suit new circumstances while retaining core elements of their cultural heritage. For example, traditional agricultural festivals may evolve to incorporate modern agricultural practices or urban migration patterns.
2. **Transmission Through Generations:** Oral tradition plays a crucial role in the transmission of folk cultural aspects from one generation to another. Knowledge, skills, and values are passed down through storytelling, songs, dances, and other forms of cultural expression. Elders within the community serve as repositories of traditional wisdom, ensuring continuity and preservation.
3. **Innovation and Creativity:** Folk cultural aspects evolve through the creative ingenuity of artists, artisans, and performers. They may introduce new techniques, materials, or themes while building upon existing traditions. Innovation allows folk culture to remain relevant and dynamic, attracting new audiences and adapting to contemporary tastes.
4. **Preservation Efforts:** Efforts to document, archive, and safeguard folk cultural practices contribute to their survival over time. Cultural institutions, museums, research organizations, and government agencies may undertake initiatives to preserve intangible cultural heritage, such as oral traditions, rituals, and performing arts. These efforts raise awareness, provide resources, and promote appreciation for folk culture.
5. **Interactions and Exchange:** Folk cultural aspects often evolve through interactions and exchanges with neighboring communities, migrants, travelers, and external cultural influences. Trade routes, conquests, migrations, and colonization have historically facilitated the exchange of ideas, customs, and artistic styles, leading to cultural fusion and hybridization.
6. **Resilience and Revival:** Despite challenges such as globalization, urbanization, and modernization, many folk cultural aspects demonstrate resilience and adaptability. Communities may actively revive or reinterpret traditional practices as a form of cultural resistance, identity assertion, or community empowerment. Revival movements, cultural festivals, and educational initiatives play a vital role in revitalizing endangered folk cultural traditions.
7. **Globalization and Digital Media:** Globalization and digital media platforms have facilitated the dissemination and exposure of folk cultural aspects to wider audiences. Social media, online videos, streaming platforms, and virtual exhibitions provide platforms for artists and performers to showcase their work, connect with enthusiasts, and preserve cultural heritage in digital formats.

Overall, the evolution and survival of folk cultural aspects are complex processes shaped by historical, social, economic, political, and technological factors. Through adaptation, transmission, innovation, preservation efforts, and cultural exchange, folk culture continues to thrive and resonate across diverse communities and geographical boundaries.

Motivation of Rajasthani folk art:-

The motivation behind Rajasthani folk art is deeply rooted in the cultural, social, and spiritual fabric of the region. Several factors have historically motivated artists and communities to create and sustain these art forms:

1. **Cultural Identity:** Rajasthani folk art serves as a powerful expression of the region's rich cultural heritage. It reflects the unique customs, traditions, beliefs, and values of the people of Rajasthan. Through art, communities celebrate their identity and preserve their cultural legacy for future generations.
2. **Religious and Spiritual Significance:** Many Rajasthani folk art forms have religious and spiritual significance. They are often associated with rituals, festivals, and ceremonies dedicated to various deities and folk heroes. Artists are motivated by their devotion and faith to create art that honors and venerates these divine beings.
3. **Entertainment and Celebration:** Folk art forms like puppetry, music, and dance have historically served as sources of entertainment and celebration in Rajasthan. They are integral parts of festivals, weddings, and other social gatherings, where they bring joy, laughter, and entertainment to the community. Artists are motivated by the desire to entertain and uplift their audiences.
4. **Storytelling and Oral Tradition:** Rajasthani folk art is deeply intertwined with storytelling and the oral tradition. Through paintings, music, dance, and puppetry, artists narrate myths, legends, folk tales, and historical events, passing down knowledge and wisdom from one generation to another. Artists are motivated by the desire to preserve and transmit the stories and wisdom of their ancestors.
5. **Economic Livelihood:** For many artisans and performers in Rajasthan, folk art is not just a form of cultural expression but also a means of livelihood. They rely on their artistic skills to earn income through selling their creations, performing at events, or offering workshops and demonstrations. Economic motivation plays a significant role in sustaining and promoting folk art practices.
6. **Community Bonding and Social Cohesion:** Folk art has historically played a crucial role in fostering community bonding and social cohesion in Rajasthan. It brings people together, fosters a sense of belonging and pride, and strengthens social ties within communities. Artists are motivated by the opportunity to contribute to the well-being and unity of their communities through their artistic endeavors.

Overall, the motivation behind Rajasthani folk art is multifaceted, encompassing cultural, religious, social, economic, and personal factors. It is a dynamic and evolving expression of the collective spirit and creativity of the people of Rajasthan.

Origin and development of Rajasthani folk art:-

Rajasthani folk art is a vibrant and rich expression of the culture and traditions of the Rajasthan region in India. It has evolved over centuries, influenced by various historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors. The art forms of Rajasthan are diverse, ranging from paintings, textiles, pottery, jewelry, music, and dance. Here's an overview of the origin and development of some prominent Rajasthani folk art forms:

1. **Miniature Painting:** Miniature painting is one of the most well-known art forms of Rajasthan. It originated in the royal courts of Rajasthan in the 16th century and reached its zenith during the Mughal era. The art flourished under the patronage of Rajput rulers who encouraged artists to depict mythological themes, royal events, hunting scenes, and portraits. The intricate details, vibrant colors, and exquisite designs are characteristic of Rajasthani miniature paintings.
2. **Phad Painting:** Phad painting is a traditional style of religious scroll painting practiced by the Joshi family in Rajasthan. It originated in the Bhilwara district and is dedicated to the folk deity Pabuji or Devnarayan. These large paintings narrate the life stories and heroic deeds of the deities and are traditionally used as mobile temples during religious ceremonies and festivals.
3. **Puppetry (Kathputli):** Puppetry is an ancient form of entertainment in Rajasthan, with roots dating back to several centuries. Kathputli, the traditional Rajasthani puppetry, involves the manipulation of wooden puppets to enact stories from mythology, folklore, and historical events. Puppeteers, known as "Bhats," have preserved this art form through generations, captivating audiences with their skillful performances.
4. **Folk Music and Dance:** Rajasthan is famous for its vibrant folk music and dance forms, such as Ghoomar, Kalbelia, Bhavai, and Chari. These art forms have evolved from the daily lives, rituals, and celebrations of the people. Ghoomar, performed by women during special occasions, is characterized by graceful movements and swirling skirts, while Kalbelia is a mesmerizing dance performed by the Kalbelia tribe, often accompanied by snake-charming instruments like the pungi.
5. **Pottery:** Pottery making is another integral part of Rajasthani folk art. The regions of Jaipur, Bikaner, and Jodhpur are particularly famous for their pottery traditions. The potters use traditional techniques to create a wide range of items, including earthenware vessels, decorative pieces, and tiles adorned with intricate designs.
6. **Folk Embroidery and Textiles:** Rajasthan is renowned for its colorful textiles and intricate embroidery work. Each region of Rajasthan has its distinct style of embroidery, such as Phulkari, gota patti, and mirror work. These textiles are used in clothing, home furnishings, and decorative items, reflecting the cultural identity and heritage of the region.
7. **Folk Theater (Bhavai):** Bhavai is a traditional folk theater form originating in Rajasthan, known for its lively performances and satirical themes. Typically performed by itinerant troupes, Bhavai combines elements of music, dance, and drama to entertain and educate audiences on social issues and moral values.

Over the centuries, Rajasthani folk art has thrived and adapted, incorporating new influences while preserving its traditional essence. Today, it continues to play a vital role in preserving the cultural heritage of Rajasthan and captivating audiences with its beauty and uniqueness.

About Rajasthani folk art- **Phad painting**

Phad painting is a traditional form of folk art originating from the Bhilwara district of Rajasthan, India. It holds significant cultural and religious importance, particularly among the Joshi families who have been traditionally involved in its creation and performance. Here's a closer look at Phad painting:

Origin and History: Phad painting has a long history dating back several centuries. It is

believed to have originated in the early 12th century, during the reign of Maharana Pratap, a revered Rajput warrior king. The Joshi families, who are traditionally the custodians of this art form, have preserved and passed down the technique through generations.

Themes and Subject Matter: Phad paintings typically depict the life and heroic deeds of local deities, particularly Pabuji and Devnarayan, who are revered as folk heroes in Rajasthan. These narratives are drawn from epic tales and oral traditions, recounting the miraculous exploits and adventures of the deities. The paintings serve not only as visual representations but also as mobile shrines used during religious ceremonies and festivals.

Technique and Style: Phad paintings are created on large pieces of cloth or canvas, often measuring several meters in length. The canvas is traditionally painted using natural pigments derived from minerals, vegetables, and other organic sources. The paintings are characterized by bold lines, vibrant colors, and intricate details. The figures are stylized and arranged in a narrative sequence, with multiple scenes depicted across the length of the canvas.

Performance and Ritual: Phad paintings are not merely static artworks but are also integral to religious rituals and performances. During religious ceremonies and festivals, the painted scrolls are unfurled and displayed in temples or village squares. Accompanied by traditional music, songs, and narration, the Phad artists recount the stories depicted in the paintings, bringing them to life for the audience.

Significance and Preservation: Phad painting plays a vital role in preserving the cultural heritage and traditions of Rajasthan. It serves as a visual medium for storytelling and religious expression, connecting communities with their ancestral roots and spiritual beliefs. Despite the challenges of modernization, efforts are underway to preserve and promote Phad painting through workshops, exhibitions, and cultural initiatives.

Phad painting artists name:-

Phad painting is traditionally practiced and handed down through generations within specific families in Rajasthan, particularly among the Joshi families. These families have preserved and mastered the art of Phad painting for centuries. Some renowned Phad **painting artists and families include:**

1. **Shree Lal Joshi:** Lal Joshi is one of the most celebrated Phad painting artists of recent times. He comes from the Nathdwara region of Rajasthan and has received national and international recognition for his contributions to the art form.
2. **Kalyan Joshi:** Kalyan Joshi is another notable Phad painting artist who hails from the same lineage as Lal Joshi. He has played a significant role in promoting and preserving Phad painting through exhibitions, workshops, and collaborations with contemporary artists.
3. **Shree Lal D. Chhipa:** Shree Lal D. Chhipa is a renowned Phad painting artist known for his intricate craftsmanship and mastery of the art form. He belongs to the Chhipa community, which has a long tradition of practicing Phad painting.

4. **Prakash Joshi:** Prakash Joshi is a skilled Phad painting artist who has garnered acclaim for his innovative approach to the art form. He has experimented with new techniques and themes while staying true to the traditional aesthetics of Phad painting.
5. **Shree Lal Joshi and Shree Teju Joshi:** Shree Lal Joshi and his son, Shree Teju Joshi, are a father-son duo carrying forward the legacy of Phad painting. They have collaborated on numerous projects and exhibitions, showcasing the versatility and adaptability of the art form.

These are just a few examples of Phad painting artists who have made significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of this traditional Rajasthani art form. Each artist brings their unique style and interpretation to Phad painting, enriching its cultural significance and relevance in contemporary times.

Overall, Phad painting stands as a testament to the rich artistic legacy of Rajasthan, reflecting the region's folklore, mythology, and cultural identity. It continues to captivate audiences with its vibrant colors, intricate designs, and timeless narratives.

About rajasthani folk art- **Kawad**

Kawad painting is a traditional folk art form originating from the Mewar region of Rajasthan, India. It is closely associated with the storytelling tradition of the Bhopa community, who are traditionally the custodians and performers of this art form. Kawad painting involves the creation of intricately decorated wooden narrative scrolls known as "Kawads," which depict mythological, historical, and folk tales. Here's a closer look at Kawad art:

Origin and History: Kawad painting has a long history dating back several centuries. It is believed to have originated as a form of visual storytelling among the Bhopa community, who travel from village to village, narrating epic tales and performing rituals. The word "Kawad" is derived from the Hindi word "kavad," which means a wooden box or cabinet. The tradition of Kawad painting has been passed down through generations within specific families.

Themes and Subject Matter: Kawad paintings typically depict elaborate narrative sequences drawn from Hindu mythology, folklore, and historical events. The stories often revolve around gods and goddesses, saints, heroes, and legendary figures. Each Kawad is divided into multiple panels or compartments, with each panel representing a different episode or scene from the narrative. The paintings serve as visual aids for the Bhopa storytellers, helping them to recount the stories accurately and engagingly.

Technique and Style: Kawad paintings are created on wooden panels or scrolls using natural pigments, dyes, and colors derived from minerals, plants, and other organic sources. The artists use fine brushes and meticulous detailing to create intricate designs and motifs. The paintings are characterized by vibrant colors, bold lines, and stylized figures. The wooden panels are often embellished with carved and painted motifs, adding to their decorative appeal.

Performance and Ritual: Kawad painting is intimately connected to the oral tradition and performance rituals of the Bhopa community. The painted Kawad scrolls are used as visual aids

during storytelling performances, where the Bhopa narrates the tales depicted in the paintings. The performances are accompanied by music, songs, and recitations, creating a captivating and immersive experience for the audience. Kawad performances are often held during religious festivals, fairs, and other auspicious occasions.

Significance and Preservation: Kawad painting holds significant cultural and religious importance in Rajasthan. It serves as a means of preserving and transmitting oral traditions, myths, and legends from one generation to another. Despite the challenges of modernization and changing social dynamics, efforts are underway to preserve and promote Kawad painting through exhibitions, workshops, and cultural initiatives. The art form continues to thrive as a vibrant expression of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage.

Kawad painting artists name:-

While Kawad painting is a traditional folk art form that has been practiced by various artists within the Bhopa community and other related groups in Rajasthan, individual artists may not be widely known outside of their communities. The art form is often passed down through generations within specific families, and multiple artists within these families may contribute to the creation of Kawad paintings.

That being said, here are a few names of notable Kawad painting artists who have gained recognition for their contributions to the art form:

1. **Shree Nathuramji Maharaj Katha Samrat:** Shree Nathuramji Maharaj Katha Samrat is a well-known Bhopa storyteller and Kawad artist who has dedicated his life to preserving and promoting the traditional art form. He has received national and international recognition for his performances and contributions to Kawad painting.
2. **Shree Motilal Kaleramji Joshi:** Shree Motilal Kaleramji Joshi is another respected Kawad painting artist who comes from a family with a long tradition of practicing the art form. He has created numerous intricate Kawad paintings and has played a significant role in passing down the skills and techniques of Kawad painting to younger generations.
3. **Shree Radheshyam Bhat (Bhopa):** Shree Radheshyam Bhat, also known as Bhopa, is a talented Kawad artist and storyteller who has gained recognition for his captivating performances and artistic skills. He has been actively involved in promoting Kawad painting and keeping the tradition alive through his performances and workshops.

These are just a few examples of Kawad painting artists who have made significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of this traditional Rajasthani art form. Many other talented artists within the Bhopa community and related groups continue to carry forward the legacy of Kawad painting through their work.

Overall, Kawad painting stands as a testament to the artistic prowess, storytelling prowess, and cultural resilience of the Bhopa community and the people of Rajasthan. It remains a cherished and integral part of the region's folk art tradition, captivating audiences with its beauty, symbolism, and narrative richness.

About rajasthani folk art- Mandna

Mandna, also spelled as Mandna or Mandana, is a traditional folk art form originating from the Rajasthan region of India. It is closely related to Mandana art but differs in its application and context. Mandna primarily involves the decoration of walls and floors of homes, particularly in rural areas, using rice paste, chalk, and natural pigments. This art form is often associated with auspicious occasions and rituals, such as weddings, festivals, and religious ceremonies. Here's a detailed overview of Mandna folk art:

Origin and History: Mandna has ancient roots and has been practiced for centuries by women in rural Rajasthan. The word "Mandna" is derived from the Sanskrit word "mandan," meaning decoration or ornamentation. Historically, Mandna was used to adorn the walls and floors of homes to celebrate special occasions and mark auspicious events.

Themes and Motifs: Mandna designs typically feature geometric patterns, floral motifs, auspicious symbols, and religious motifs. Common symbols include flowers, leaves, peacocks, elephants, sun, moon, and swastikas. Each motif carries symbolic significance, representing prosperity, fertility, protection, and good fortune.

Technique and Materials: Mandna art is created using simple materials such as rice paste, chalk, and natural pigments. The designs are drawn freehand directly onto the walls or floors, without the use of stencils or templates. Artists use their fingers or homemade brushes made from twigs to apply the paste and create intricate patterns. The process requires precision, patience, and skill.

Rituals and Symbolism: Mandna art is closely associated with rituals and traditions in Rajasthan. It is often created during auspicious occasions, such as weddings, childbirth, festivals like Diwali and Teej, and religious ceremonies. The designs are believed to bring good luck, prosperity, and blessings to the household, and also to ward off evil spirits.

Evolution and Contemporary Practices: While Mandna has ancient origins, it has evolved over time to incorporate new techniques, designs, and materials. Modern Mandna artists may use acrylic paints, colored powders, and other contemporary materials to create designs. Additionally, Mandna has gained recognition beyond rural villages, with artists showcasing their work in galleries, exhibitions, and cultural events.

Significance and Preservation: Mandna holds significant cultural and social importance in Rajasthan, serving as a form of artistic expression, community bonding, and cultural identity. Efforts are underway to preserve and promote Mandna art through workshops, training programs, and initiatives aimed at empowering women artisans. The art form continues to thrive as a vibrant symbol of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage and artistic legacy.

Tendencies behind mandna:-

The story behind Mandna art is deeply rooted in the cultural traditions and beliefs of the people of Rajasthan. While there may not be a single specific story associated with Mandna, its origin and significance are tied to the everyday lives, rituals, and spiritual beliefs of the community. Here's a general overview of the story behind Mandna:

1. **Ancient Origins:** Mandna art has ancient origins, dating back centuries in the rural villages of Rajasthan. It emerged as a form of decoration and ornamentation used by women to beautify their homes during auspicious occasions and festivals.
2. **Symbolism and Beliefs:** Mandna designs are rich in symbolism and carry deep cultural significance. Each motif and pattern is believed to have specific meanings associated with prosperity, fertility, protection, and good fortune. For example, motifs like flowers, leaves, and swastikas are commonly used to symbolize growth, abundance, and auspiciousness.
3. **Connection to Rituals and Festivals:** Mandna art is closely associated with rituals and traditions observed in Rajasthan. It is often created during special occasions such as weddings, childbirth, religious ceremonies, and festivals like Diwali and Teej. The designs are believed to bring blessings, happiness, and prosperity to the household, and also to ward off evil spirits.
4. **Passing Down of Tradition:** Mandna art is traditionally practiced and passed down through generations within families, with knowledge and skills transferred from mothers to daughters. It serves as a means of preserving cultural heritage, fostering community bonding, and transmitting traditional beliefs and values from one generation to another.
5. **Evolution and Adaptation:** Over time, Mandna art has evolved and adapted to changing social, economic, and environmental contexts. While traditional techniques and motifs remain central to the art form, modern Mandna artists may incorporate new materials, designs, and styles to create innovative and contemporary works.
6. **Empowerment of Women:** Mandna art has empowered women in rural Rajasthan by providing them with a means of artistic expression, economic independence, and social recognition. Women play a central role in creating Mandna designs, contributing to the cultural richness and diversity of the region.

Name of famous Mandna artists:-

Mandna art is a traditional folk art form practiced primarily by women in rural Rajasthan. While individual artists may not be widely known outside of their communities, there are families and groups who have been recognized for their contributions to the preservation and promotion of Mandna art. Here are a few names of families and groups associated with Mandna art:

1. **Bhavani Devi and Family:** Bhavani Devi, along with her family, is renowned for their expertise in Mandna art. They have been practicing this art form for generations and have gained recognition for their intricate designs and traditional techniques.
2. **Savitri Devi and Family:** Savitri Devi and her family are known for their beautiful Mandna creations. They have played a significant role in promoting Mandna art and keeping the tradition alive in their community.
3. **Kamla Devi and Family:** Kamla Devi and her family have made notable contributions to Mandna art, both in terms of preserving traditional designs and innovating with new styles and techniques.
4. **Rajasthani Women's Groups:** Various women's groups in rural Rajasthan are actively involved in practicing and promoting Mandna art. These groups provide a platform for women to showcase their artistic talents and collaborate on community projects.
5. **Artisan Cooperatives:** There are several artisan cooperatives and organizations in Rajasthan that support Mandna artists and promote their work. These cooperatives often provide training, resources, and marketing opportunities for artists to showcase and sell their creations.

While these names represent some of the families and groups associated with Mandna art, it's essential to recognize that Mandna is a collective and community-based art form. Many talented artists contribute to the creation and preservation of Mandna designs, each adding their unique style and creativity to this vibrant folk art tradition.

Overall, the story behind Mandna art is a reflection of the resilience, creativity, and cultural vibrancy of the people of Rajasthan. It continues to thrive as a cherished tradition, connecting communities and celebrating the beauty of everyday life.

About rajasthani folk art- **Mehandi**

Rajasthani folk art encompasses a wide range of traditional artistic expressions, including the practice of applying intricate designs using henna, commonly known as Mehandi or Mehndi. While Mehandi is not exclusively a Rajasthani art form, it holds significant cultural importance in the region and is deeply ingrained in Rajasthani traditions, particularly during weddings, festivals, and other auspicious occasions. Here's an overview of Mehandi in the context of Rajasthani folk art:

Origin and History: The art of applying henna has ancient origins, dating back thousands of years across various cultures in South Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East. In Rajasthan, Mehandi has been practiced for generations as a form of adornment and self-expression. It is an integral part of Rajasthani cultural and social rituals, symbolizing beauty, celebration, and auspiciousness.

Designs and Motifs: Rajasthani Mehandi designs are characterized by intricate patterns, geometric shapes, floral motifs, and traditional Rajasthani symbols. Common motifs include peacocks, elephants, lotus flowers, and mango leaves, each carrying symbolic significance. The designs are applied to the hands and feet of women during weddings, festivals like Teej and Karva Chauth, and other special occasions.

Technique and Application: Mehandi is created by grinding dried henna leaves into a fine powder, which is then mixed with water, lemon juice, and essential oils to form a paste. The paste is applied to the skin using a cone or applicator, allowing the artist to create intricate designs freehand. After drying, the paste is left on the skin for several hours, allowing the natural dye to stain the skin, resulting in a temporary tattoo.

Cultural Significance: Mehandi holds significant cultural and social importance in Rajasthan, serving as a form of artistic expression, celebration, and community bonding. It is an essential part of wedding ceremonies, where the bride's hands and feet are adorned with elaborate Mehandi designs as a symbol of beauty, fertility, and marital bliss. Mehandi is also associated with festivals and rituals that celebrate love, prosperity, and the arrival of auspicious occasions.

Evolution and Contemporary Practices: While traditional Mehandi designs continue to be popular in Rajasthan, contemporary artists and designers are innovating with new styles, techniques, and motifs. Modern Mehandi designs may incorporate elements of Rajasthani architecture, fashion, and culture, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of this art form.

Additionally, Mehendi has gained popularity beyond Rajasthan, with artists showcasing their work in galleries, exhibitions, and social media platforms.

Famous artists name of Mehendi: While Mehendi is predominantly practiced by a wide range of artists, particularly during weddings, festivals, and other celebrations, there may not be widely known individual artists in the same sense as other art forms. Mehendi artists often work within their communities, providing their services for various occasions. However, there are some Mehendi artists who have gained recognition for their exceptional skill, innovation, and contribution to the art form. Here are a few names:

1. **Deepika Sharma:** Deepika Sharma is a renowned Mehendi artist based in Jaipur, Rajasthan. She has gained popularity for her intricate designs and creative approach to traditional Mehendi art. Deepika often shares her work on social media platforms, where she has amassed a significant following.
2. **Rajasthani Women's Groups:** Various women's groups and cooperatives in Rajasthan are actively involved in practicing and promoting Mehendi art. While individual artists may not be widely known, these groups play a significant role in preserving and transmitting Mehendi traditions within their communities.
3. **Local Artists:** In addition to professional Mehendi artists, there are countless local artists and practitioners across Rajasthan who excel in the art of Mehendi. These artists often provide their services for weddings, festivals, and other events, showcasing their talent and creativity within their communities.

While these names represent some of the artists who have gained recognition for their Mehendi work, it's essential to recognize the collective nature of Mehendi art. Many talented artists contribute to the practice and preservation of Mehendi traditions, each bringing their unique style and creativity to this cherished art form.

In summary, Mehendi is an integral part of Rajasthani folk art and culture, embodying the region's rich traditions, symbolism, and creativity. It continues to be cherished and celebrated as a timeless form of artistic expression and communal celebration.

TRADITIONAL PRACTICES OF RAJASTHAN

Rajasthan, a state in India known for its rich culture and heritage, has several traditional practices that are deeply ingrained in its society. Some of these practices include:

1. **Rajasthani Cuisine:** The traditional cuisine of Rajasthan is characterized by its use of spices and rich flavors. Dishes like dal bati churma, gatte ki sabzi, and ker sangri are popular and reflect the culinary heritage of the region.
2. **Music and Dance:** Rajasthan is famous for its vibrant folk music and dance forms. Ghoomar, Kalbelia, Bhavai, and Kathputli are some of the traditional dance forms performed on various occasions such as festivals, weddings, and cultural events.
3. **Art and Craft:** The state is renowned for its exquisite handicrafts including block printing, tie and dye (Bandhani), pottery, jewelry making, and handloom weaving. Each region of Rajasthan has its unique art forms and craftsmanship.
4. **Fairs and Festivals:** Rajasthan hosts numerous fairs and festivals throughout the year, celebrating its cultural diversity. Events like Pushkar Camel Fair, Jaipur Literature Festival, and Teej festival are popular among both locals and tourists.
5. **Traditional Clothing:** The attire of Rajasthanis is colorful and reflects the vibrant culture of the state. Men often wear turbans (pagri) and dhotis or kurta-pajamas, while women wear ghagra (long skirt), choli (blouse), and odhni (veil) along with heavy jewelry.
6. **Rajputana Valor and Chivalry:** Rajasthan has a rich history of valor and chivalry associated with its Rajput rulers. Tales of bravery, honor, and sacrifice are an integral part of the cultural narrative of the state.
7. **Rural Lifestyle:** Rural life in Rajasthan revolves around agriculture and animal husbandry. Villages have their own distinct traditions and customs, including folk songs, rituals, and community gatherings.
8. **Traditional Medicine and Healing Practices:** Ayurveda and traditional herbal remedies are still widely practiced in rural areas of Rajasthan. Healers and traditional medicine practitioners play an important role in healthcare, especially in remote regions.

These traditional practices contribute to the unique cultural identity of Rajasthan and continue to be cherished by its people, passing down from one generation to another.

In Art and Craft various unique traditional practices in Rajasthan such as Terracotta, Marble carving ,Metal work, Wood work ,Leather work, Jaipur fresco, Blok print, etc.

TERRACOTTA ART OF RAJASTHAN

The entire area of Rajasthan state is especially known for clay arts and Pokhran of Jaisalmer is among them.,The clay art of Molela and Gogunda of Mewar and Dhundhaar and Hadauta and Ramgarh in Mewar is famous not only in the country.,But it is spread even in foreign countries. Ahar civilization located in Mewar,Gilund,Along with Balathal etc., Kalibanga of Hanumangarh has been such a place which has clay art as a heritage.,pieces,Pottery and clay sculptures etc. underline the importance of the ancient artistic splendor of the state.

Clay art of Molela (Terracotta art of Molela, Rajsamand)-



Molela village of Rajsamand district is internationally recognized for making Hingan (idols of deities) of folk deities from clay. Molela village is situated at a distance of about 13 kilometers from Nathdhara.

The clay craft or we can say terracotta art of this Molela village is world famous. The clay craftsmen here create various types of folk gods and goddesses in clay,

which are bought by the people of Mewar as well as the tribal villages, located on the borders of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh and are systematically installed in the courtyards of the villages for art related purposes and follow religious traditions. The Hingana art created by the Mrin artists of Molela has its own specialty along with traditional and folk elements and technique which is completely created in half relief. In Hingan art of completely handmade Molela, the tradition is followed by using bright colors and decorating it with silver garlands as per folk style. The fact related to the clay art of Molela is that along with following the religious traditions, the form and color elements have also been preserved along with secularism. It is noteworthy that on the basis of his traditional art, local artist Mohanlal Kumhar has been awarded Padma Shri and seven-eight clay artists went abroad and displayed their art and gained worldwide recognition. Not only this, inspired by the tradition of Molela, more than 50 artists from European countries have done clay craft work with the potters of Molela. Dr. Gagan Bihari Dadhich, professor of painting at Seth Mathuradas Binani Government Post Graduate College, Nathdwara, has done many contemporary experiments in this art and has organized workshops, which have been appreciated not only in the country but also abroad. To give information related to the history of Maharana Pratap, terracotta artefacts of Molela have been installed at Udaipur City Station and Rana Pratapnagar Railway Station to give a beautiful look to the stations.

The entire process of clay craft in Molela is done only by hand without using mould. To create the artwork, dry clay is beaten and then a wire mesh sieve is used to separate out stones and other impurities. Soft, pure clay is primarily used to make functional utensils. By mixing enough water and donkey dung in the clay,

the artist prepares a panel or strip of artwork and dries it in the shade, which turns gray when dried. After firing in the kiln, terracotta takes on a red/brown or even a shiny black hue. When clay is mixed with 5 -10% donkey dung, it is ideal for creating plaques and other sculptural pieces. It is said that adding donkey dung prevents cracks in the artwork.

Black Pottery of Gogunda-



The potters of Gogunda fire the clay pots with a special technique as a result of which the clay pots appear in a shiny black colour. Gogunda is a center in the tribal dominated Udaipur district which is surrounded by tribal villages and for this reason this place is also recognized as a major commercial center of the tribal society. Even today in Gogunda, many potters are following the art tradition related to clay.

The potters of Gogunda make clay pots used in daily life as well as special clay pots for agricultural purposes and festivals. The tribal communities here are still following the tradition by purchasing earthen pots made in Gogunda as utensils for their daily use. The clay vessels used to draw water from the well, 'Ged', are also

made by the Kumbhakars here and for auspicious and festive occasions, small and big sized clay vessels are made, which are painted with white and other colors and decorated with rhythmic bells and folk-inspired figures. Along with this, the clay artists of Gogunda make Keldi (earthen pan), Bhanai, Paroti (small pot), Kunja, Kundi, Parat, glass and pot as well as various decorative items from clay.

In this sequence of Mrin art, along with the clay vessels made in Kunwariya, places like Eklingji, Kumbhalgarh, Matrikundiya etc. are also recognized for the Mrin vessels. The specialty of the Kumbhakars settled in Baghpura village situated between Kumbhalgarh and Saira is that for years they have been making only clay pots which are sold in the villages of Mewar and Marwar as well as Gujarat.

Along with Sirohi and Pindwara, Thikarda located near Bundi, Nagaur and Pokaran of Marwar are such places where the inclusion of tradition along with traditional art forms is visible in the clay art. Till two decades ago, the identity of Pokhran's clay art was spread only to Marwar region, but today the clay art here has made its identity and market not only across the country but also in European countries. Due to the solid and shiny nature of Pokaran clay, the art forms made appear in their own color after cooking. Here, the tradition of making utensils for household use, decorative items as well as various types of play toys is being continued even today. Pokaran, situated on Jaisalmer road, 10 km away from Ramdevra, has a special tradition of making earthen vessels of various shapes and sizes, which are used by people of all communities living in the rural areas of Jaisalmer, Barmer and Jodhpur.

Clay art of Pokaran-

The specialty of the clay art of Pokaran is that along with the male potters, women also not only create clay vessels but also have a special contribution in painting and ornamentation. Along with Keldi and Parat, women have also been adept at making piggy banks and various types of play toys. Before cooking these clay vessels in the traditional way in a wooden pan, they decorate and design the bells in the traditional style with chalk, ochre, yellow and black colours.

Not only this, the inclusion of innovation along with tradition is also seen on sports toys. The specialty of the soil here is that when the earthen pots made of red and brown colored clay are cooked in the traditional Awara with the help of wood, then after cooking, the color of these earthen pots becomes light pink, which is The specialties of this soil can be said anywhere.

The clay craftsmen of Pokaran mainly make Badbeda, Kharal, Parat, Paroti, Chada, Para, Matki, Ghada, Kuldhi etc. along with small and big figures of various animals and birds and various decorated piggy banks. In terms of tools, the clay artists here use chalk, hathri, ghaga, pindi, thapa, tulkiya, kund, khurpa, mandai etc. to shape traditional art forms made of clay.

In this sequence of Pokaran, Nagaur, Balotra, Dhanerao ki Saddadi are also such places where even today pots, parats, jugs, kullad (sikora), keldi, lauta etc. along with sports toys and decorative items are made from clay.

Shiny clay art of Ramgarh –

Ramgarh village, located near Alwar in Rajasthan, has been world famous for its shiny clay art and the potters here have gained worldwide recognition by

displaying the techniques and forms of their art in the country and abroad.

Ramgarh is not only the main center of pottery and jars etc., nearby Banse Peeproli, Naugaon, Gugdod, Khanpur, Bagad Rajput Mubarikpur etc. are the villages of potters where even today the methods and forms of pottery tradition can be seen.

These are still sold in the markets and the villagers are still aware of using clay utensils. This is the reason why the pottery market here extends to Alwar and Bharatpur as well as Jaipur.

The specialty of clay art lies in its clay and if we talk about the clay of Ramgarh, then the potters here bring clay from Sainthli and Sareda villages and make clay pots. Since the black clay of Saithali has smoothness and flexibility, large jug-like vessels are made from it and by cooking them with a special technique, a spray-like effect is created. The second type of soil is from Sarethi village which is somewhat granular and this soil is used in making various utensils used in daily use as well as pots, plates etc.

The pottery here shows the inclusion of traditional art elements and even today the potters here use self-made tools and traditional techniques and wood are also used in cooking Avada.

The specialty of Kumbhakar villages situated in and around Ramgarh is the unique tradition of making clay vessels for use in daily life. Along with water collection and distribution, the potters here make artistic vessels used in preparing, cooking and serving food and even today there is a huge demand for them in the market. It is noteworthy that the artistic pottery from here is being sent to many countries but the traditional art elements still exist with their originality.

If seen in terms of form, size and name, the potters of Ramgarh are mainly Handi, Sandaki, Ghamla, Kadkalla, Kundi, Kunda, Chamli, Chapti, Dheeldi, Kadhavani, Bilovani, Tawa, Sakora, Kullad, Karwa, Koolada, Kooladi, Jhawa. , Sirai, Curry and Jholwa etc. create clay vessels which are mainly related to cooking, serving food etc. If we look at the water vessels, the potters here are following the tradition by making Mangya, Tapakya, Tauladi, Matka-Matki, Maat, Jhal, Moon, Surahi, Lotiya, Ghada and Ghadiya etc. on the wheel. Similarly, in festive and auspicious functions, lamp, Kalash, Jedhad, Dhatha Jeghad, Dhupeda, coconut and in miniature clay idols of Gods and Goddesses are made in practical earthen vessels. Along with this, clay toys made in Ramgarh, and traditional musical instruments made from clay like Tasa, Dholak, Tabla, Kundi, Maat and Nagari etc. have also been very popular and even today the potters who make them keep the clay art tradition alive to earn their living.

Clay art of Hadauta village-

The artistic identity of Hadauta village, situated near Chaumon town adjacent to Jaipur, has been in the form of clay art and even today the developed form of the tradition of making traditional pottery can be seen here. Not only are the clay utensils used for domestic use mainly made here, the clay artists of Hadota are also famous for large sized earthenware and decorative items. There is also a saying that only two things are famous in Hadota – camel laddas and earthen utensils. The potters of Hadauta, who consider themselves the descendants of Daksh Prajapati, bring red clay from nearby village Hathloda and black and smooth clay from Kalerva Dam near Jobner and Jeen Mata Bandha for making utensils and

prepare it methodically and turn the clay into - Make different types of shapes.

Broadly speaking, like other Kumbhkar centres, the Kumbhkars here also follow the same tradition of making clay and making utensils on chalk, but the Incorporation of innovation along with indigenous elements can be seen in the shapes and types of earthen pots, the ornamentation on the pots etc.

The specialty of Hadota's Kumbhakari art is that the potters here make many such vessels which are half cast on chalk and the bottom part is later molded with thape-pindi to give the clay vessel a complete shape.

Similarly, the potters here have also been adept in giving a larger shape to two-three clay vessels by joining them together. This is the reason why the clay art of Hadota has received worldly recognition in Jaipur and Delhi as well as in foreign countries.

In terms of tools, the artists here are carrying forward the art tradition related to clay by using traditional and handmade tools made of iron like Suwa, Banki, Kamdi, Girari, sandpaper, fanar, Pindithapa, Hathri and Nali. The potters here use Khadi Bhatti and after cooking Aava (Avada) with wood, apply a coating of paleva stone on those earthen pots etc., dry them and decorate them with the traditional style of Khadi and ocher color with the ornamentation of flowers and leaves.

Blue Pottery of Jaipur-



Blue pottery is originally a Persian art but it is considered a traditional craft of Jaipur. It is called Blue Pottery because of the indigo used to color the vessel. This art was brought to India by the Turks in the 14th century. The credit for bringing it to Jaipur goes to the king Sawai Ram Singh II (1835-1880). He sent Churaman and Kalu Kumhar to Delhi to learn this work and after they were trained, he started it in Jaipur. The credit for reviving this art, which was completely extinct by the 1950s, goes to the famous painter Kripal Singh Shekhawat, who has been honored with Padmashree and Shilpguru. Samples of this art can still be seen on the fountains of Rambagh Palace in Jaipur.

The four main steps involved in making blue pottery vessels are as follows:-

- (a) Making earthen pots**
- (b) Designing and painting**
- (c) Glazing**
- (d) Firing**

Quartz stone powder, multani mitti, borax, gum and water are used as materials in blue pottery making art. The above ingredients are mixed in fixed proportions and ground into powder to prepare flour. Water is used for kneading. The mixture is kept covered with a plastic bag. When the material like dough is prepared, then with the help of a thapi, chapati is made from the dough and then it is put into the mold. To create the definite shape, only the neck and lip are shaped on the potter's wheel. The edges of the chapatti are trimmed with a knife. To protect the artwork from distortion, the mold is filled with ash. When the material is dry, a potter's wheel and sand paper are used to give it smoothness and finishing. Earthen pots are coated with paste and dried in the sun. After this, attractive painting is done on the craft work. Squirrel hair quill and natural stone colors are used for painting. Nowadays there has been some change in the matter of colors and as modern colors cobalt oxide is used for blue, copper sulphate for turquoise, iron oxide for brown, chromium oxide for green and cadmium oxide for yellow. The kriti (raw artwork) is then fired over fire using a traditional kiln. The pot is placed in a hot kiln and kept at a temperature of 800-850 degrees centigrade for two to three days. After 2 to 3 days the kiln cools down and the masterpiece is taken out. Among the items made from it, toys, decorative items, jars, cups, tea sets, small bowls, crockery, utensils, ash trays, etc. are prominent. Blue pottery is the combined art of China's glazing techniques and Persian decorative skills.



Black Pottery of Sawai Madhopur -



A craft called Black Pottery of Sawai Madhopur region is famous in which earthen pots are made in a very unique style. The pottery made in this art is black in color and is made in a very special way. In this, the soil taken from the banks of nearby Banas river is thoroughly cleaned and unwanted stones and grass etc. are removed. Artwork is made by melting this clay and the polished product is dried in the sun for two hours, then shade dried for a day or two and finally baked in fire. When the kiln fire is almost ending, the artisan seals all the holes of the kiln, due to which a

smoky environment is maintained inside the kiln and it provides brownish black color to the clay artifacts. Here the artists produce a wide range of decorative sculptures, paperweights and plaques of animals and deities, in addition to the usual range of pottery.

Mortuary art of Bikaner division-

The Nohar region in Bikaner division is famous for the production of painted pottery, where lac colors are used. The golden glow of the painted earthenware of Bikaner adds more attraction to it. Bikaner is famous for golden terracotta.

Paper Pottery of Alwar-

Alwar of Rajasthan specializes in producing very thin pottery, which is known as paper pottery.

Black Pottery Kota-

It is famous not only in Rajasthan but throughout the country. In this, because the base of clay art is black, it is called black pottery. The golden black pottery here is especially famous for vases, plates and pots.

Apart from this, terracotta artifacts are prepared at places called Bhutala and Majavadi in Udaipur district. Basava of Dausa district is known for its pottery of various types, shapes and decorations. Mehtoli village of Bharatpur district is famous for its pottery crafts. In Harji village (Jalore), clay idols of folk deities riding on horses are made.

TRADITIONAL MARBLE CARVING IN RAJASTHAN

Traditional marble carving in Rajasthan, India, is an ancient art form that has been practiced for centuries. Rajasthan, known for its rich cultural heritage and artistic traditions, has a long history of marble carving, with techniques passed down through generations.

1. **History:** Marble carving in Rajasthan can be traced back to the Mughal era, when skilled artisans were employed to create intricate marble designs for palaces, forts, and temples. Over time, the art form evolved, blending Mughal influences with indigenous Rajasthani styles.
2. **Materials:** Rajasthan is home to various types of marble, including Makrana marble, which is famous for its purity and brightness. This high-quality marble is favored by artisans for its workability and lustrous finish.
3. **Techniques:** Traditional marble carving in Rajasthan involves a meticulous process that requires both skill and patience. Artisans typically begin by sketching the design onto the marble surface. Then, using chisels, hammers, and other specialized tools, they carefully carve away the excess stone to reveal the intricate patterns and motifs.

Jaipur is the centre of marble carving in Rajasthan. Craftsmen, not only create figures of deities, but also make household items like bowls, trays, items for kneading dough etc. The 'murtikars' or the sculptors of Jaipur, create exquisite ranges statues of Gods and Goddesses, temples, inlays from the purest marble.

Marble Sculptures -Jaipur

Introduction:

Murti Mohalla situated between Kishanpole and Chandpole in the walled city of Jaipur, is the biggest manufacturing center for marble statues of Hindu and Jain deities. Jaipur also produces Human figurines, animals, and exquisite-bowls, carved marble vases, carvings and portraits. The entire world has great admiration for marble works of Jaipur.

Usage:

Some of the finest examples of Indian stone sculptures are to be found in Rajasthan patronized by rulers and philanthropists for building temples. The tradition was carried forward by guilds of artisans. For **centuries artisans in Jaipur have carved marble sculptures of deities where religious iconography developed into a fine art.** This was facilitated by the ready availability of fine marble from the famous **Makarana mines**, not very far from **Jaipur**. Some examples of 19th century sculptures carved by Jaipur artisans are on display here showing an entire cosmology of Hindu and Jain deities. Even today, **a lane within Jaipur's walled city**, the Khazanewalon ka Rasta is renowned for workshops engaged in sculpting small and large images of **Hindu deities for temples throughout India and for temples overseas as well.**

Jaipur is the centre of marble carving in Rajasthan. Craftsmen, not only create figures of deities, but also make **household items like bowls, trays, items for kneading dough** etc. The 'murtikars' or the sculptors of Jaipur, create exquisite ranges statues of Gods and Goddesses, temples, inlays from the purest marble. They make an extensive range of marble statues of Hindu Gods and Goddesses such as **Ganesha, Lakshmi, Ram Durbar, Durga, and Hanuman** etc.

Significance:

Rajasthan has the best marble and sandstone quarries in India. The craftsmen here have an age-old tradition of carving and making sculptures.

The fascination for stone has transcended all times and ages. Whether it is ornate **inlay with onyx black marble or finely latticed soapstone**, the appeal of the stone has been immutable. Both **Hindu and Muslim rulers of India patronized this art.** Most of the **temples in and around Jaipur** have their deities sculpted from the **Murti-Mohalla** and this has been widely prevalent, since.

Myths & Legends:

In Hinduism, **Atri Rishi** is a legendary bard and scholar and was one of 9 Prajapatis, and a son of Brahma, said to be ancestor of some **Brahmin, Prajapatis, kshatriya and Vaishya** communities who adopt Atri as their gotra.

Atri Gotra originates in the lineage of Brahmarshi Atri and Anasuya Devi. Brahmarshi Atri is the seer in the fifth Mandala (chapter) of the Rigveda. Atri, also called The Devour-er represents the power of detachment. He is also the **Manasa Putra and was born from the mind of Lord Brahma** (from his eyes) to assist Lord Brahma in the act of creation. When the sons of Brahma were destroyed by a curse of Shiva, Atri was born again from the flames of a sacrifice performed by Brahma. His wife in both manifestations was Anasuya. She bore him three sons, **Datta, Durvasas, and Soma**, in his first life, and a son Aryaman (Nobility), and a daughter, Amala (Purity), in the second. His three sons are the incarnations of the Divine Trinity Brahma, Vishnu, and Rudra (Shiva) respectively. The Trinity channelled their full creative potential through Brahmarshi Atri when they granted boons to his wife Devi Anasuya for helping the Sun to rise in the East every day.

The sculptors initially bore the onus of creating sculptures and statues of deities, **coming from the lineage of Brahma, the creator of the universe.** They have been considered, for the same reason to be the purest to make these sculptures that were used in temples and for other religious purposes.

History:

Stone was amongst the first material used by prehistoric man to create tools. Though items made from stone gave way to, items made from metal, stone continued to be one of the **preferred materials for making sculptures.**

India has a rich tradition of stone craft. Guilds of masons and stone carvers have existed here since the **3th century B.C. Different types of stones like, marble, soapstone, sand stone are used by craftsmen in India.** The skills were handed

down as family lore from father to son, a practice prevalent in some parts of the country even today.

India has a rich tradition of stonework, as is evident from temples in **Khajuraho, Konark, Martand in Kashmir and Ellora etc.**, which have richly carved sculptures and relief work on them. Large temple complexes of **Ramashwaram, Dilwara and Tirupati** not only are marvels in stone, but they reflect a high degree of sophistication reached by craftsmen engaged in stone craft.

Rajasthan, rich in different types of hard rocks like **granites, quartzite, slates, marbles** and other metamorphic rocks, has been a paradise for stone-carvers' arts and crafts of Rajasthan are commanded by the availability of indigenous raw materials in the region. **Marbles and sandstones** are abundantly available in the arid lands of the state. Stone art and masonry are leading art forms cultivate din the state. The forts and palaces and **beautiful havelis of Rajasthan** are all great examples of the exquisite mason work of the state. The fine stone carving or fragile jaali work in stone is very typical of this area. Jaipur, Thanagazi, Kishori Makrana, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, and Dungarpur are the main centers. Well-ornamented domestic wares in stone are beautifully designed with lot of attention to the art and its elegancy.

The 'Mauryans' were famous for their art and architecture Evidence of the earliest known structural temples has been recovered through excavations. A circular brick and timber shrine of the '**Mauryan' period of 3rd century B.C. was excavated at Bairat District of Jaipur, Rajasthan.** The shrine measures 23 meters in diameter and was made of lime-plastered brickwork, alternating with 26 octagonal pillars, of wood. It was entered from the east through a small portico, supported by two wooden pillars and was surrounded by a seven feet wide ambulatory.

About 250 years ago, **Sawai Jai Singh II summoned these sculptors to Jaipur for their skill, as he shifted the operating capital of his empire from Amer to Jaipur.** At that time sculpture making was seen as a forte of the Brahmins. They were specifically commissioned because of the religious significance of the sculptures of deities. But today, an overwhelming 4 to 5 thousand people from across the boundaries of cast and creed are pursuing this ingenious art here. In the words of Kanhaiya lalji Atri, who has inherited the legacy of this skill for

generations, the profession that was initially limited to just one lane, has now spilled over surrounding lanes which are locally recognized as **‘bhindon ka raasta’**, **‘kalaamji ka raasta’** and **‘hijaron ka raasta’**. And to add variety to their work, in the present times, apart from marblecarving / sculpting for temples, even politicians and other native popular figures are modeled in stone. The craftsmen here follow the rules laid down in **Shilpa-shastra**, while creating images of gods and deities.

Design:

Craftsmen in India use different kind of stones like marble, soapstone, sand stone etc. **Large blocks of stone are quarried and then taken to various craft centers.** The basic design is traced on the stone and it is given a crude shape. The final carving is then carried out and the items are polished.

Apart from carving beautiful idols of gods and goddesses such as that of **Shiva, Radha-Krishna, Hanuman, Ganesh, Ram-Sita etc.**, artisans make products to be used in office, home and kitchen. They make simple and elegant forms like pen holders, **paper weights, bookracks, card holders, ash trays, napkin holder, spoon holders, toothpick holders, storage jars, coaters, dinner sets, chaklas and belans, cups, saucers, serving-trays, candle-stands, photo frames, mirror frames, usher bowls, soap dish, soap dispenser, incense stick holders, flower pots, jewellery boxes** etc.

Marble painting: A very unique feature of marble sculptures of Jaipur is painting on marble. Embossed and golden foil worked marble painting is done on beautifully carved figures. Marble paintings are adorned with Meenakari, embossed and kundan work.

Challenges:

Even as the bazaar continues to dwell in the narrow lanes of the heart of the city, **a considerable number of workshops have been moved to the outer parts.** This is a result of a government initiative to check on the noise pollution (caused by the hammering, machinery used to drill and chisel the boulders) and **dust levels** that

harm human health. Marble otherwise is quite an ecofriendly material. With the transportation becoming an easier facility, the demand for these marble splendours has only increased.

The stone powder left from buffing gets mixed into the air around and slowly starts causing breathing and lung problems to the craftsmen and others around. This too is another reason why they have been shifted away from the center of the city.

METAL HANDICRAFTS

Metal Handicrafts are beautiful and intricate works of art that are created using metal as the primary material. These handicrafts have a rich history, with metalworking being one of the earliest forms of art and craft. Over the years, metal handicrafts have evolved and developed into a wide range of styles, techniques, and designs. From metal wall hangings to photo frames, metal showpieces to Buddha statues, metal handicrafts are popular all over the world. In this blog, we will explore the history, characteristics, types, and importance of supporting artisans of metal handicrafts. With keywords such as metal, metal wall hanging, metal photo frame, metal showpiece, and more, this blog will provide a comprehensive overview of the world of metal handicrafts.

History of metal handicrafts:-

Metal handicrafts have a rich history that spans thousands of years and many different cultures. Metal handicrafts have a long and rich history that dates back thousands of years. Ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians and Greeks used metalworking to create beautiful and intricate sculptures, and household items. Metalworking has evolved over time, with new techniques and materials being developed, but the importance of this art form has remained unchanged. Metalwork has been used for both practical and decorative purposes for as long as people have been using metal. Some of the earliest metal handicrafts were made of bronze and gold, and used for religious and ceremonial purposes. As metalworking techniques evolved, metal was used to create a wide range of items including weapons, tools, and jewelry.

In the Middle Ages, metalworkers created intricate and ornate metal objects, such as metal wall hangings and metal photo frames, that were used to decorate homes and churches. These metal objects were often handcrafted using techniques like hammering, casting, and engraving. During the Renaissance, metalworking techniques became more advanced, leading to the creation of even more elaborate

and beautiful metal objects. Today, metal handicrafts continue to be popular and are often used to add a touch of elegance and style to homes and commercial spaces. Metal wall hangings, Metal Candle Stand, and other metal objects are now available in a variety of styles and finishes, ranging from modern and contemporary to traditional and antique. Whether you are looking to decorate your home, office, or any other space, metal handicrafts are a wonderful investment in history, beauty, and style.

Characteristics of metal handicrafts

Metal Handicrafts are known for their unique characteristics that make them stand out among other types of handicrafts. Some of the key characteristics of metal handicrafts include:

1. **Durability:** Metal is a strong and durable material that can withstand wear and tear, making metal handicrafts a long-lasting addition to any space.
2. **Versatility:** Metal can be shaped and molded into a wide range of shapes, sizes, and designs, making it a versatile material for metal handicrafts. From metal showpieces to metal Buddha statues, there is a metal handicraft to suit every taste and style.
3. **Reflection:** Metal has a natural reflective quality that can add a touch of shine and sparkle to any room. This makes metal handicrafts a popular choice for adding some light and brightness to a space.
4. **Elegance:** Metal has a sleek and sophisticated appearance that can elevate any space. Metal handicrafts, such as metal showpieces and metal Buddha statues, add a touch of elegance and sophistication to any room.
5. **Longevity:** Metal does not fade, rust, or deteriorate over time, making metal handicrafts a long-lasting investment in beauty and style. Whether you choose a metal showpiece or a metal Buddha statue, you can be sure that your metal handicraft will remain beautiful for years to come.

Types of metal handicrafts

Metal Handicrafts come in a wide variety of types, each with its own unique style and design. Some of the most popular types of metal handicrafts include:

1. **Decorative Items:** Decorative metal handicraft items, such as metal wall hangings, metal photo frames, and metal sculptures, are used to add a touch of elegance and beauty to a space. These items are often handcrafted using techniques like casting, engraving, and hammering to create intricate and detailed designs.
2. **Religious Items:** Metal handicrafts are often used to create religious items, such as metal Buddha statues, metal Ganesha idols, and metal Krishna idols. These

items are often used for religious and spiritual purposes and are cherished for their beauty and significance.

3. **White Metal Gift Items:** White metal handicrafts are made from an alloy of tin, antimony, and zinc and are known for their bright and shiny appearance. White metal gift items, such as white metal diyas, white metal showpieces, and white metal photo frames, are popular gifts for special occasions and holidays.
4. **Nautical Decor:** Metal handicrafts are also commonly used to create nautical decor items, such as metal anchor wall hangings, metal ship bells, and metal compass rose sculptures. These items are inspired by the sea and are perfect for those who love all things nautical.
5. **Ornaments:** Metal is also used to create ornaments, such as metal Christmas tree decorations, metal lanterns, and metal candle holders. These items are often used to add a touch of festive cheer to holiday celebrations and are perfect for those who love to decorate their homes during the holiday season.
6. **Sculptures:** Metal sculptures, whether abstract or representational, are highly prized for their beauty and craftsmanship. These pieces can be found in museums and private collections all over the world, and are often created by skilled metalworkers using techniques like forging, casting, and welding.

The Importance of Supporting Artisans in Metal Handicrafts:-

Handmade metal handicrafts are an important part of many cultures, and the artisans who create them are highly skilled and knowledgeable about their craft. By supporting these artisans, we are helping to preserve traditional techniques and skills, and ensuring that these crafts remain a part of our cultural heritage. Artisans who create metal India handicraft items are often small business owners or work in family-run workshops, and their livelihoods depend on the support they receive from buyers and collectors. By purchasing metal handicrafts, we can help to provide these artisans with a steady income and support their families, while also enjoying the beauty and uniqueness of these handmade items.

In addition, supporting metal artisans helps to promote sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Many metal artisans use recycled materials and employ environmentally-friendly techniques, such as using natural, non-toxic finishes. By purchasing metal handicrafts, we are helping to reduce waste and support environmentally-friendly practices, while also enjoying beautiful and unique metal items. When supporting metal artisans, it is important to look for high-quality, well-made items that have been crafted with care and attention to detail. You can do this by researching different artisans and workshops, reading reviews and product descriptions, and looking for detailed photographs of the items you're interested in.

It is also important to consider the origin of the metal handicrafts you purchase, as some artisans may use materials and techniques that are harmful to the environment and the workers who produce them. To avoid supporting such practices, look for items that are made using sustainable and environmentally-friendly methods, and made with materials that have been ethically sourced. So, whether you're interested in a metal diya, a metal candle stand, or a metal Ganesha wall hanging, consider supporting the artisans who create these beautiful pieces. Your support will not only help to preserve traditional techniques and skills, but also provide a livelihood for skilled artisans and promote sustainable and eco-friendly practices.

Theva Art:- Metal craft in Rajasthan has a rich heritage deeply embedded in the state's cultural fabric. Renowned for its intricate designs and skilled craftsmanship, Rajasthan's metal artisans have been producing exquisite pieces for centuries. Among the plethora of metal crafts in the region, several stand out for their popularity and unique characteristics.



Theva craft is one such prominent metal craft of Rajasthan. Originating from the Mewar region, Theva craft involves intricate designs etched onto brass or copper

utensils. Artisans meticulously carve patterns depicting traditional motifs such as peacocks, elephants, and floral designs. Theva craft items are often used for decorative purposes and are prized for their ornate beauty.

Filigree, another notable metal craft, is widely practiced in cities like Jaipur and Jodhpur. This delicate art form involves twisting and curling fine threads of silver or gold to create intricate patterns and designs. Skilled artisans meticulously shape the metal threads, often incorporating gemstones or enamel work to enhance the beauty of the final piece. Filigree jewelry, in particular, is highly sought after for its fine craftsmanship and timeless elegance.

Rajasthan is also renowned for its exquisite jewelry-making tradition. From elaborate bridal sets to everyday adornments, the state's jewelry artisans excel in crafting pieces that reflect the region's rich cultural heritage. Kundan, Meenakari, and Thewa are some of the traditional techniques employed in Rajasthan's jewelry making. Kundan jewelry, characterized by its intricate settings of gemstones in gold, is particularly famous for its opulence and grandeur. Meenakari involves the painstaking process of enameling colored designs onto metal surfaces, while Thewa is a unique technique where intricate gold designs are fused onto glass, creating stunning pieces of jewelry.

Aside from jewelry, Rajasthan is also known for its metalware, including utensils, decorative items, and religious artifacts. Brass and copper are commonly used metals, with artisans employing techniques such as embossing, engraving, and hammering to create intricate designs. Traditional utensils like 'thalis' (plates) and 'lota' (water vessels) are often embellished with ornate patterns, making them

prized possessions in households across the region.

The metal crafts of Rajasthan not only serve as decorative items but also hold cultural and religious significance. Items like 'Aarti' lamps and 'Kalash' (water pots) are integral to religious rituals and ceremonies, crafted with great care and precision by skilled artisans.

The metal crafts of Rajasthan embody the state's rich cultural heritage and artistic prowess. From the intricate designs of Theva craft to the timeless elegance of filigree jewelry, these traditional crafts continue to captivate admirers worldwide. By preserving and promoting these age-old techniques, Rajasthan's metal artisans ensure that their legacy lives on for generations to come.

TRADITIONAL WOODEN CRAFT IN RAJASTHAN

Wooden craft in Rajasthan is a significant part of the state's rich artistic heritage. Known for its intricate designs, vibrant colors, and skilled craftsmanship, Rajasthan's wooden craft reflects the cultural ethos and historical influences of the region. Here are some key aspects of wooden craft in Rajasthan:

1. **Types of Wooden Crafts:** Rajasthan boasts a wide range of wooden crafts, including furniture, decorative items, sculptures, toys, and architectural elements like doors, windows, and pillars.

One prominent example of traditional wooden craft from Rajasthan is the intricately carved wooden furniture, particularly the "Jharokha" or balcony window frames. Jharokhas are quintessential elements of Rajasthani architecture and interior design, often found in palaces, havelis (traditional mansions), and temples. These wooden Jharokhas are characterized by elaborate carvings depicting geometric patterns, floral motifs, mythological scenes, and intricate lattice work. Craftsmen skillfully carve these designs using traditional tools, showcasing their expertise and craftsmanship.

The Jharokhas serve both decorative and functional purposes. They provide ventilation and natural light while also adding aesthetic beauty to the building's facade. In addition to their architectural significance, Jharokhas are often

incorporated into interior decor, serving as focal points in living rooms, bedrooms, or courtyards.

2. **Traditional Techniques:** Craftsmen in Rajasthan employ traditional techniques passed down through generations to create wooden masterpieces. These techniques include carving, inlay work (such as bone, metal, or ivory inlay), painting, lacquering, and polishing.
3. **Materials:** Sheesham (Indian Rosewood), mango wood, teak, and cedar are commonly used in wooden craft in Rajasthan. Craftsmen select wood carefully, considering its grain, texture, and durability.
4. **Designs and Motifs:** Rajasthan's wooden crafts are known for their intricate designs and vibrant motifs inspired by nature, mythology, folklore, and royal symbols. Common motifs include peacocks, elephants, flowers, geometric patterns, and scenes from Indian epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata.
5. **Furniture:** Rajasthan is renowned for its ornate wooden furniture, including intricately carved chairs, tables, cabinets, beds, and swings. These pieces often feature traditional Rajasthani designs and are popular among both locals and tourists.
6. **Decorative Items:** Wooden craft in Rajasthan also includes a variety of decorative items such as wall hangings, panels, mirror frames, figurines, and boxes. These items are often embellished with elaborate carvings, paintings, or inlay work.
7. **Regional Variations:** Different regions of Rajasthan have their own distinct styles and techniques of wooden craft. For example, Jodhpur is famous for its blue-painted wooden furniture, while Udaipur is known for its intricate carving work.

Rajasthan is worldly known for its traditional intricate woodwork. Wooden craft artisans of Rajasthan are known for their intricate work of making everything from furniture to artifacts. Jaipur and Ramgarh in Shekhawati very well known for their wood carved furniture, Jodhpur and Kishangarh are famous for their painted furniture, Shekhawati, Bikaner, and Ramgarh are famous for their delicately carved wooden doors with or without some epic scenes, Tilonia is famous for its leather embroidered chairs. Whereas Barmer is known for woodcarving figurines of deities, animals, birds, plants, etc., Shekhawati is famous for its string bottom chairs with carved back. Gesso crafts of Bikaner are made using inner hide of camel, and there are known for lamp shades, hip flasks, perfume-vials, etc. Rajasthani furniture is known for their artistic, elegant work on small tables, chairs, chowkis, photo frames, and floral patterns on furniture. Artifacts include dancing figurines, dwarfpals, animals, figurines of deities, boxes, chests snuff boxes, etc.

8. **Market and Trade:** Wooden craft products from Rajasthan are highly sought after both domestically and internationally. They are sold in local markets, craft fairs, and exported to various countries.
9. **Preservation Efforts:** While traditional wooden craft continues to thrive in Rajasthan, there are also efforts to preserve and promote this heritage. Government initiatives, craft fairs, and NGOs work to support artisans, provide training, and create market opportunities for their products.

Overall, wooden craft in Rajasthan is not just about creating functional items but also about preserving a rich cultural tradition that has been an integral part of the region's identity for centuries.

TRADITIONAL LEATHER CRAFT IN RAJASTHAN

Leatherwork in Rajasthan is a traditional craft that has been practiced for centuries, reflecting the rich cultural heritage and skilled craftsmanship of the region. Here are some key aspects of leatherwork in Rajasthan:

1. **Materials:** Rajasthan is known for using high-quality leather sourced from animals like goats, cows, and camels. The leather is carefully processed and treated to ensure durability and flexibility, making it suitable for various products.
2. **Techniques:** Artisans in Rajasthan employ a variety of traditional techniques to create leather goods. These techniques include cutting, stitching, embossing, tooling, dyeing, and painting. Each step requires precision and expertise to produce high-quality leather products.
3. **Products:** Leatherwork in Rajasthan encompasses a wide range of products, including:
 - **Footwear:** Traditional Rajasthani footwear includes "juttis" or embroidered leather shoes, often embellished with colorful threads, beads, and mirrors.
 - **Bags and Accessories:** Artisans craft leather bags, purses, wallets, belts, and other accessories using intricate designs and traditional motifs.
 - **Saddlery and Equestrian Products:** Rajasthan has a long history of equestrian culture, and skilled craftsmen produce leather saddles, bridles, reins, and other horse riding equipment.
 - **Decorative Items:** Leather is also used to create decorative items such as lampshades, wall hangings, and cushions, often adorned with traditional Rajasthani embroidery or embellishments.
4. **Designs and Motifs:** Leatherwork in Rajasthan often features traditional Rajasthani designs and motifs inspired by nature, folklore, and royal symbols.

These motifs are intricately embossed or painted onto the leather surface, adding to the beauty and uniqueness of each piece.

5. **Regional Variations:** Different regions of Rajasthan may have their own distinct styles and techniques of leatherwork, influenced by local culture, traditions, and available resources.
6. **Market and Trade:** Leather products from Rajasthan are highly sought after for their quality craftsmanship and unique aesthetic appeal. They are sold in local markets, craft fairs, and exported to various countries, contributing to the state's economy.
7. **Preservation Efforts:** While traditional leatherwork continues to thrive in Rajasthan, efforts are made to preserve and promote this heritage craft. Government initiatives, skill development programs, and collaborations with artisans aim to support the sustainable growth of the leather industry while preserving traditional techniques and craftsmanship.

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Leather craft in **Rajasthan** mainly constitutes of goods made of **camel** hide. These are available in almost all parts of Rajasthan. **Bikaner** is popular as the center where leather goods are manufactured. For tourist the leather goods are of great interest for as a 'work of art' as well as possessions.

The leather goods are also exported to different parts of the world from the state. In the past, leather was not only used in making clothes and footwear, it was also used in making caps, bags, saddles, armour etc. The present day **leather craft** of Rajasthan has become a big industry and caters not only to local but foreign needs also. Utilitarian items like shoes, jackets, lampshades, pouches, bags, belts, wallets etc made from leather are exported from India in large quantity.



Leather Crafts in Rajasthan

History of Leather Crafts in Rajasthan

The history of craftsmanship in Rajasthan is rooted in ancient India. There have been numerous references in ancient texts and myths about the use of animal hides. Ancient sages and ascetics used to sit on deerskin, while meditating. The use of leather had begun for the first time when man hunted wild animals for food. The usage of leather for the purpose of clothing and others came into realization once the food requirements were fulfilled. Hide



1. Jootis 2. Kupa

from cattle, deer was used to make clothes and footwear.

Making of Leather Crafts in Rajasthan

Even though one medium sized bag can be stitched in one day, with the involvement of two people, the processing of hides for preparation takes up one month and a lot of involvement. In the leather crafts industry both the men and women participate. While the men do the tanning, cutting and stitching, the women do the ornamentation and embroidery. The outcome is sturdy leather, which lasts years and ages beautifully. While some of the classic designs created at the beginning of Jawaja project are still popular.

Jawaja leather Craft of Rajasthan

Jawaja leather is a flourishing craft now, with its unique identity and style, and is becoming known across the world. The beauty of Jawaja leather work is the evenly stitched leather strips instead of threads. Two layers of leather are first stuck together and then stitched by punching holes with awls, or large needle like tools, and leather strips are made to pass through the layers, binding them together. The leather stitches have a characteristic diamond shape that adds to the understated elegance of these leather products.

Leather Products of Rajasthan

The most popular Rajasthani leather goods are the "Jootis" or "Mojris" (Leather Sandals). Mojris are made out of locally tanned leather. These shoes are generally decorated with silk or metal embroidery, beads. Sometimes one can also find applique work done on them. Mojris are so soft and delicate, that they can be rolled up or folded easily. **Jaipur**, **Jodhpur**, **Barmer** and **Jaisalmer** are traditionally known for this footwear. Bikaner and Jaisalmer produce decorative saddles for horses and camels. Bikaner is also known for "Kupi", a particular type of leather bottle made from camel hide. Rajasthan is also known for beautiful lamp and lampshades made from leather. "Nagra" sandals of Jaipur and Jodhpur are traditionally known for such exquisite footwear. Besides these, leather is also an essential raw material for making **musical instruments** such as the '**Tabla**', '**Dhol**' and '**Kamaycha**'. These instruments are used by **Rajasthani folk** musicians. Handbags, saddles, pouches, lampshades, hip flasks, water pots and perfume vases are also a part of Rajasthani leather craft. Designer hand-bags, purses, belts, hats, stools and collapsible chairs with graphic embroideries made from leather at Tilonia village near **Ajmer** is also example of good craftsmanship. Overall, leatherwork in Rajasthan is not just a craft but also a reflection of the region's cultural identity, craftsmanship, and artistic expression. It continues to be valued for its beauty, quality, and contribution to the cultural heritage of Rajasthan

Usta Kala :-The work of gold enamel and gilding on camel skin done in Bikaner is known as 'Usta Kala'. The artworks made by Usta artists are very famous in the country and abroad. In this, rare gold enamel artistic work is done on the flasks made of camel skin, which is very attractive and charming. This art is engraved on vials, flasks, mirrors, boxes, earthen jars etc.

Origin and Development:-

In 1975, there was only one Usta artist left in Bikaner. The 400-year-old art form involving miniature paintings in gold and bright colours on camel hide, walls and other surfaces, was in the danger of dying out.

The state government gave it a new lease of life by setting up a training centre in Bikaner where hundreds of students learnt the intricate art. But now, almost half-a-century later, Usta art is once again facing an existential crisis.

In 1975, Hisamuddin Usta was the only artist pursuing Usta. But after the training centre opened, the art was revived. The Bikaner school of miniature painting thrived under the Rathore clan of rulers who ruled Bikaner. The style was started by master painter Ustad Ali Raza of Delhi who was visiting the Bikaner court in the mid-17th century. The miniature school is a mix of Mughal and Rajput styles and the paintings were characterised by awkwardly proportioned human figures with small bodies and large heads. The paintings delved into subjects inspired by the royal court, depicting royal activities, hunting, war expeditions, sports and leisure. Lateef Usta, an art and heritage expert, says during the time of the princely states, kings would commission paintings of gods and goddesses which the Usta

artists made with dedication. On festivals such as Diwali, [Holi](#), and Janmashtmi, the artists would present paintings of Hindu deities to the kings.

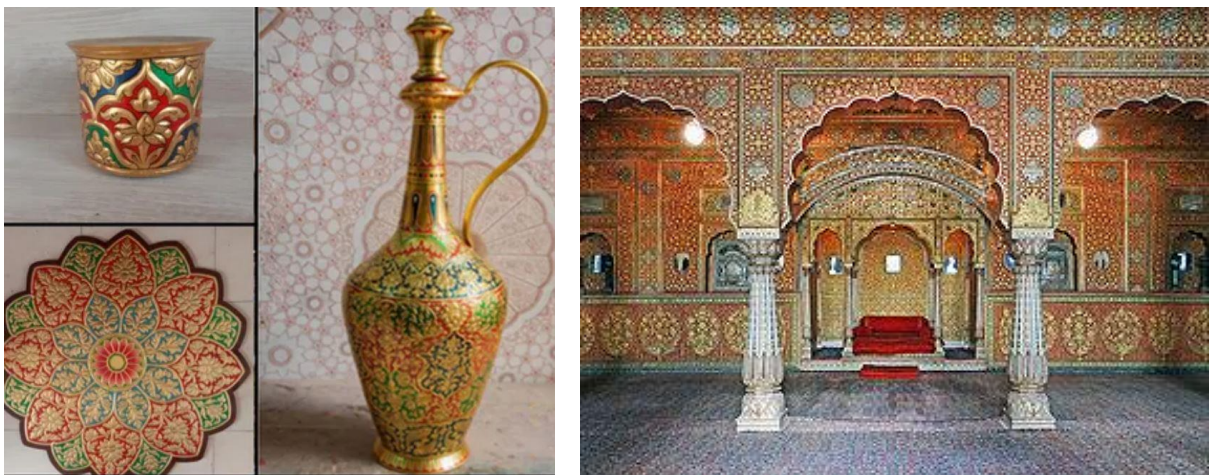
This unique master art of golden meenakari on camel skin was developed by the accomplished artist of Bikaner Late. Hisamuddin Usta, who was honored with Padma Shri in 1986 did it. He was also honored with the National Award in 1967. Even today many artists are doing the work of Usta art in Usta locality of Bikaner. Usta art has been displayed in many international and national art exhibitions.

Hisamuddin Usta's disciple Mohammad Hanif Usta has been awarded the National Award and Mohammad Asgar Usta and Ajmal Hussain Usta have been awarded the State Level Award for their commendable work in this art. Mohammad Jameel Usta, grandson of Padmashree Hisamuddin Usta, is working for the promotion of this art by using innovative experiments. amil Usta has been a member of 'Rajasthan Lalit Kala Academy Jaipur' twice and is busy finding new dimensions in this art. "Kemal Hyde Training Center" of Bikaner is a training institute for Usta art. Camel skin jugs, flasks, table lamps and jewelery decorated with this art have created special attraction in national and international trade fairs and exhibitions.

In Central Asia, there has been a trend of decorating grand palaces and buildings with paintings of different types of flowers and leaves. In this combination of flowers and leaves, the combination of golden mood and natural colors decorated the walls, umbrellas, pillars, windows, doors, arches and minarets of the buildings. In the medieval period, this art was established in the Mughal courts of India.

When this art reached the kingdoms of their kings from the Mughal courts, it became permanent. In Bikaner, the sixth Raja Raisingh had close relations with the Mughal emperor Akbar. This relationship continued from generation to generation. During this time, the art culture of the Mughals reached Bikaner. This art made the palaces, mansions and temples of the desert iridescent through the artists of the Usta caste. Usta art continued to receive adequate patronage and encouragement from the kings and moneylenders of Bikaner and the caravan moved ahead.

The world famous Usta art of Bikaner has taken the golden enamel on camel skin to new heights. In this journey of art, Devdutt has added new dimensions to the field of silver engraving by doing unmatched work of artistic engraving on silver.



The Process of Making ‘Usta Art’:-

The Usta artist gives a clay mould in the shape of the artefact to be made to the tanners who pull the hide over the mould. The mould is then left to dry for a few days. The hide acquires the shape of the mould and becomes hard. It is then that the work of the Usta begins. The artisan gives a generous coat of oil on the hide.

The oil laminates it and forms a protective cover, ensuring that the leather will not spoil in moist conditions.

The artist makes the design on paper and from there it is embossed onto the leather. Clay is ground finely and mixed with resin to form a paste which is applied to the design. A coat of yellow paint is done followed by a coat of orange paint to give it a glazed finish. When the paint is almost dry, the gold foil is applied over the area that is embossed. Using a fine brush, the design is outlined with black paint. Traditionally the brush used was made of squirrel hair.

The part of the design where there is no embossing is filled with bright colours such as red, green, blue, yellow and orange. The entire process to create an artefact takes about a week of hard labour. Lateef Usta says that traditionally, stone pigment colours were used. Stone pigment colours are made by grinding and crushing stones into a fine powder and mixing it with resin or adhesive to make a paste. Stone pigment colours are very long-lasting and they have a natural shine which does not fade. Unfortunately, these are rarely used today.

JAIPUR FRESCO IN RAJASTHAN

❖ Shekhawati region:-

The region of Shekhawati in Rajasthan is remarkable for its wealth of mural paintings which adorn the walls of many buildings, including havelis. Shekhawati describes a district, or nizamat, of the pre-Independence kingdom of Dhundar or Jaipur. This region was ruled by descendants of the 15th century Rajput baron, Rao Shekha, who were known as Shekhawats. It is covered by the two modern districts of Jhunjhunu and Sikar. Churu district lay in the neighbouring kingdom of Bikaner, but its nearest towns to the north and west, although never part of Shekhawati, contain similar painted buildings.

❖ Origin and Development:-

17th century:-

Traces of wall paintings are found on Shekhawati structures erected by Muslim nawabs, Rajputs and Banias dating back to the 17th century. A local style was



influenced by 16th/17th century Mughal work in Agra and Fatehpur Sikri via painted monuments in Amer. The earliest dated Shekhawati work includes the 'Jaipur fresco' work, which was employed before Jaipur's foundation by craftsmen employed by Mughal rulers and in Amer. This involves thick layers of pigment being applied and worked onto a wet plaster surface. The pigment is often incised scraperboard-like with geometric and floral designs. The interior work is usually painted secco, using tempera, onto dry plaster.

In the few surviving 17th century painted buildings some popular Jahangir period (1605–27) subjects such as winged-head cherubs (from Baroque Europe via Goa), hatted Persian angels, the pheasant-like simurgh, cypress trees, lotus bud decoration and the Sufi tale of the lovers Laila and Majnu may be integrated with popular Hindu religious and folk themes. Early 18th century structures in Udaipurwadi, Jhunjhunu district, such as Jokhi Das ki Chhatri, dated 1702, and the c1700 Chaturbhuj Temple at Nathusar, Sikar district, even include portraits of the emperor Aurangzeb (1658-1707). Most of these early murals are painted in red, yellow and green ochres but green copper carbonate and both white and red lead also feature in the palette.

18th century:-

In the 18th century, under the patronage of Rajput rulers and Vaishya merchants, a number of temples and chhatris were richly decorated with figurative paintings. Some forts also contained painted rooms. Again, ochres formed the general palette and the figures were largely drawn from the Hindu pantheon. Amongst other subjects chosen are stylised portraits, hunting scenes, folk tales and historic battles, particularly the Battle of Maonda 1767, in temples, or in chhatris which commemorated those who fought or died. Good examples are in small c1700 temples east of Sri Madhopur at Bagriawas, Nathusar and Lisaria, both Sikar district, in the chhatri (1750) and temple (1742) at Parasrampura, Jhunjhunu district, the 8-pillar chhatri (1776) in Churu and, perhaps by the same hand, the Bihari Temple in Jhunjhunu (1777). Such painting continued into the 19th century in forts, like those at Mandawa, Nawalgarh and Mahansar, all in Jhunjhunu district, as well as temples and chhatris, often using a richer palette.

Apart from a few temples and chhatris, merchant monuments predating an 1818 treaty between Jaipur and the new British regime were lightly painted externally with floral motifs and arabesques.

19th and early 20th centuries:-

The great merchant era of patronage began around 1830 when Shekhawati merchants, settled in Calcutta and



elsewhere, began to pour money back to their hometowns, much of which was turned to conspicuous building.^[2] By then, under British protection, they were no longer shy of drawing attention to their wealth. The most obvious blossoming of wall-paintings in Shekhawati is on late 19th and early 20th century havelis. They aimed to construct five buildings: a haveli, a temple, a memorial chhatra, a well and a caravansarai.^[3] Most were painted. The havelis offer the most variable subject matter, but temples, memorial chhatris and cupolas decorating wells are often richly decorated.

❖ **Painters:-**

The building boom attracted many Muslim chejaras, masons, and Hindu kumhars, members of the potter caste who became masons, to Shekhawati. The painters were mostly gifted, self-taught men drawn from amongst them. For the finest work, teams of professional painters were called in from the Jaipur direction. Where painters have signed, they are from Jaipur or its vicinity. Masons whose ancestors painted often talk of their family migrating from the southeast.

❖ **Technique of Jaipur Fresco painting:-**

The technique of Jaipur Fresco painting involves several steps and requires skilled artisans to achieve intricate designs and vibrant colors. The walls themselves are the richest source of information on techniques and scientific studies confirm their account. Half-finished work is always informative. Murals on the unfinished ceiling of Gopinath Temple, Parasrampura (1742) show that the pictures, though continuous, were drawn and coloured piecemeal on the dry plaster surface. Here's an overview of the typical process involved:

1. **Preparation of Surface:** The first step is to prepare the surface where the fresco will be painted. This surface is usually a wall or ceiling made of plaster or lime mortar. The surface must be smooth, clean, and free from any defects.
2. **Application of Lime Wash:** A layer of lime wash is applied to the prepared surface. This acts as a base coat and helps the pigments adhere to the surface. The lime wash is allowed to dry completely before the painting process begins.
3. **Sketching the Design:** Once the lime wash is dry, the design for the fresco is sketched directly onto the surface using charcoal or chalk. This initial sketch serves as a guide for the painters during the painting process. There is no trace of drawing away from the tracts of plaster the painter was decorating. Most was done freehand, but on other buildings there are clear signs of dotted stencilled outlines; arcs and straight lines were aided by string. Townscapes were constructed with a straight-edge. Unfinished examples depicting Jaipur survive in a Nawalgarh

chhatri and in Khetri's Bakhtawar Mahal. Rapid freehand sketches with a sharp stylus, often corrected, have left their mark in the plaster surface.

4. **Mixing Pigments:** Natural pigments are ground and mixed with water or lime water to create the desired colors for the fresco. These pigments are sourced from minerals, plants, and other organic materials, giving Jaipur Fresco paintings their vibrant and long-lasting hues. The pigments were mixed with an adhesive, often gum from the common plant, akra but also egg or saresh, gum made from camel bone. 'Jaipur Fresco' work on the outer walls of havelis shows construction lines created by a taut string covered with ochre or charcoal dust flicked against the wet plaster, leaving an imprint and colour.

Until the mid 19th century the paints were mineral or vegetable pigments. Ochres dominated but in finer interior work red and white lead, cinnabar, indigo, lapis lazuli, copper carbonate, vivid Indian yellow. The lead pigments were prone to oxidization, blackening. From the mid 19th century, Germany's industrial revolution created chemically synthesized pigments which were soon cheaply available. Ultramarine blue (from artificial lapis) and chrome red dominated external paintings after 1860. By the close of the 19th century many more colours were available, sometimes in jarring combinations.

5. **Painting the Fresco:** Using fine brushes made of natural fibers, the artisans carefully paint the design onto the surface. The painting process requires precision and attention to detail to achieve the intricate patterns and motifs characteristic of Jaipur Fresco painting. The paint was applied in blocks of thick pigment massaged against the wet lime surface to be partially integrated with calcium carbonate as it forms.
6. **Layering Technique:** Fresco painting often involves a layering technique where different colors are applied in successive layers to create depth and richness in the artwork. The paint is applied onto the damp lime wash surface, allowing it to penetrate and bond with the plaster as it dries.
7. **Finishing Touches:** Once the painting is complete, the fresco may be sealed with a protective layer of varnish or lime wash to preserve its colors and ensure longevity. This step helps protect the artwork from environmental damage and degradation over time. The surface was burnished with agate and polished with coconut flesh. Some fine details such as jewellery were added in tempera and stand proud of the surface.

The technique of Jaipur Fresco painting requires patience, skill, and a deep understanding of traditional painting methods. It is a labor-intensive process that

has been passed down through generations of artisans, contributing to the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan.

❖ **Subjects:-**

1. **Religious themes:-** These dominate all the pictures. Most relate to the ten or twenty-four most common incarnations of Vishnu. Of these Rama and Krishna are by far the most popular. Shaivite subjects, particularly Shiva, Ganesh and Durga are commonplace. Ganesh presides over every doorway. Brahma occurs but his consort, Saraswati, is more frequent. Local deities such as Gugaji, Ramdevji and Pabuji appear infrequently.
2. **Folk mythology:-** Folk tales are generally depicted by a single image, the most striking event in the story. In Dhola-Maru, the popular Rajasthani story, Dhola and his wife Maru are shown on a camel fleeing from the wicked bandit, Umra-Sumra. Maru turns to let fly a stream of arrows at him. Punjabi tales such as Heer-Ranjha, Sohni-Mehwal, Sassi-Punu and Binjo-Sorath all feature but the Middle Eastern Sufi tale, Laila-Majnu, is one of the earliest to be depicted. Many other less familiar stories appear, the significance of some now forgotten.
3. **Historical themes:-** Recognisable, or labelled, portraits of historical figures, both Indian and British, feature. These range from Mughal rulers and heroes who opposed them, local princes, British monarchs down to Freedom Fighters including Gandhi. Historical events occur, too, one being the Battle of Maonda, 1767. European figures are often used to accompany technical innovations including pumps, cars, ships, planes and bicycles.
4. **Everyday environment:-** The painters often draw from their surroundings, depicting farmers at work, folk drawing water from a well, potters, goldsmiths, swordsmiths, carpenters and, occasionally, masons building and painting walls. Domestic and wild animals, birds and plants are commonly depicted.
5. **Erotica:-** Pictures of couples making love are usually cheekily hidden amongst murals on external walls. Sometimes there are depictions of bestiality; men with donkeys or dogs, women with dogs. Homosexuality is very rarely depicted; self-conscious householders sometimes obliterate erotic paintings.
6. **Map pictures:-** Occasionally a team of painters has been commissioned to paint Jaipur or the local town. An excellent example is in the palace sheesh mahal at Sikar, where the walled town, complete with people and traffic, is neatly depicted as it was in 1864. The most accessible is in a bastion of the

main fort in Nawalgarh, where both Jaipur and Nawalgarh were painted c1850 on the domed ceiling. Other pictures show recognisable local or distant buildings, the Taj Mahal being popular.

7. **Decorative designs:-** Stylized plants or plant-like arabesques, architectural features and geometric patterns are common, chosen for subjects in panels, friezes dividing walls or in spandrels of arches.

❖ Key features of Jaipur Fresco painting:-

Jaipur Fresco painting refers to a unique form of traditional Indian art that originated in the city of Jaipur, Rajasthan. This art form is characterized by intricate and colorful frescoes painted on the walls and ceilings of palaces, havelis (traditional Indian mansions), temples, and other architectural structures.

Key features of Jaipur Fresco painting include:

1. **Rich Colors:** Jaipur Fresco paintings are known for their vibrant and bold colors, which are often made from natural pigments derived from minerals, vegetables, and other organic sources.
2. **Intricate Designs:** The paintings feature intricate designs, patterns, and motifs inspired by nature, mythology, folklore, and everyday life. These designs are meticulously crafted and often include elements such as flowers, animals, geometric patterns, and human figures.
3. **Traditional Techniques:** Jaipur Fresco painting employs traditional techniques that have been passed down through generations of artisans. These techniques typically involve the use of natural brushes, handmade pigments, and a variety of tools for creating detailed and intricate designs.
4. **Historical Significance:** The art of fresco painting has a rich historical significance in Rajasthan, dating back to ancient times. It was patronized by the royal families and nobility as a form of embellishment for their palaces and residences, as well as for religious and cultural purposes.
5. **Cultural Heritage:** Jaipur Fresco painting is an integral part of Rajasthan's cultural heritage and continues to be practiced by skilled artisans in Jaipur and other parts of the region. Efforts are being made to preserve and promote this traditional art form, including through government initiatives and cultural institutions.

Overall, Jaipur Fresco painting represents the rich artistic legacy of Rajasthan and continues to captivate audiences with its exquisite beauty and craftsmanship.

❖ Decline and destruction:-

Towards the mid 20th century successful merchants committed themselves to a new urban existence, rarely visiting the homeland save for ritual or charity purposes. Investing in industry, some of these families have become amongst the richest in India. Rented out, locked or neglected, havelis and chhatris are suffering. Wells have been superseded by hand-pumps then by tapped water. Buildings collapse, are whitewashed or are demolished to make way for some new structure. Old paintings are replaced by inferior new work. There is currently no legislation to protect such buildings. Interest inspired by the publication of Wacziarg and Nath's book on the paintings in 1982 led to INTACH commissioning a documentation of the buildings; many of those surveyed in 1985-87 have since disappeared. Attempts are being made by some groups, such as the Morarka family of Nawalgarh, to create an interest in preserving some of the buildings.

In recent years, the Government has undertaken some efforts towards spreading awareness about this unique art heritage. Both the Jawahar Kala Kendra in Jaipur and the National Crafts Museum in Delhi have specially commissioned works of Shekhawati frescoes on their walls. Sustainable heritage tourism is being seen as one way of both ensuring the protection and conservation of this art. The hoteliers and heritage conservationists Francis Wacziarg and Aman Nath's *Rajasthan: The Painted Walls of Shekhawati* and Ilay Cooper's *The Painted Towns of Shekhawati* are important works on these murals.

BLOCK PRINTING OF RAJASTHAN

❖ History of Block printing in Rajasthan:-

The history of block printing in Rajasthan dates back centuries and is deeply intertwined with the cultural and artistic heritage of the region. While the exact origins of block printing in Rajasthan are difficult to pinpoint, historical evidence suggests that the practice has been prevalent in the region for many centuries, with influences from various civilizations and cultures. Block printing is believed to have been introduced to Rajasthan by skilled artisans who migrated to the region from other parts of India and neighboring countries. Over time, Rajasthan developed its unique style and techniques, influenced by local traditions, cultural exchanges, and patronage from rulers and nobles.

One of the earliest references to block printing in Rajasthan can be found in the Ajanta caves, which date back to the 5th century CE. The intricate wall paintings depict scenes of daily life, including people wearing elaborately patterned textiles that may have been produced using block printing techniques.

During the medieval period, Rajasthan emerged as a center for textile production and trade. The region's strategic location along trade routes connecting India with Central Asia and the Middle East facilitated the exchange of ideas, technologies, and artistic influences. This period saw the flourishing of block printing in Rajasthan, with artisans refining their skills and creating exquisite textiles for local consumption and export.

Rajasthan's princely states, such as Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, and Bikaner, played a crucial role in promoting and patronizing the art of block printing. Rulers and nobles supported the development of local crafts industries, providing artisans with patronage, workshops, and resources.

The Mughal Empire, which ruled over large parts of India, also contributed to the spread and refinement of block printing in Rajasthan. Mughal emperors and nobles were known for their patronage of the arts and textiles, and they encouraged the exchange of artistic ideas and techniques between different regions.

Over the centuries, Rajasthan's block printing tradition continued to evolve, incorporating influences from Persian, Central Asian, and European styles. Artisans experimented with different dyeing techniques, motifs, and color palettes, resulting in a rich diversity of block-printed textiles.

Today, Rajasthan remains one of the foremost centers for block printing in India, with artisans preserving and perpetuating this ancient craft through their skilled craftsmanship and creativity. The region's block-printed textiles are cherished for their beauty, quality, and cultural significance, serving as a testament to Rajasthan's rich artistic heritage.

❖ **Method of Block printing in Rajasthan:-**

Block printing in Rajasthan is a meticulous and intricate process that involves several steps. Here's an overview of the method:-

1. Design Creation:

- The process begins with the creation of the design that will be printed onto the fabric. Designs can be traditional motifs, geometric patterns, or contemporary themes.
- Skilled artisans or designers draw the design on paper or create it digitally. This design serves as a guide for carving the wooden blocks.

2. Block Carving:

- Once the design is finalized, it is transferred onto a block of seasoned wood, typically teak.
- Artisans, known as block carvers, meticulously carve the design into the wooden block using chisels and other carving tools.
- Each block is carved by hand, requiring precision and attention to detail. A single design may require multiple blocks, each representing a different color or element of the overall pattern.

3. Fabric Preparation:

- The fabric to be printed is prepared by washing and bleaching to remove impurities and achieve a clean, even surface.
- In some cases, the fabric may also be dyed a base color before printing to enhance the final appearance of the design.

4. Printing:

- The printing process begins by stretching the fabric over a smooth printing table or surface.
- Artisans apply the first color of dye onto the block using a brush or a piece of fabric.
- The block is then carefully pressed onto the fabric with even pressure to transfer the design. This process may be repeated multiple times to cover the entire length of the fabric with the desired pattern.
- After printing with one color, the fabric is dried before the next color is applied. This ensures that the colors do not bleed or smudge.

5. Dyeing:

- Natural dyes derived from plants, minerals, and other organic sources are commonly used in block printing.
- Artisans mix the dyes according to traditional recipes, adjusting the concentration and proportions to achieve the desired shades.
- The dyed fabric is often rinsed and dried to set the colors and remove any excess dye.

6. Finishing:

- Once the printing and dyeing processes are complete, the fabric may undergo additional finishing treatments such as washing, ironing, or starching.
- Finishing touches may also include adding embellishments like sequins, beads, or embroidery for further decoration.

Throughout this entire process, skilled artisans work with precision and expertise to create exquisite block-printed textiles that showcase the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan. Each piece is a unique work of art, reflecting the craftsmanship and creativity of the artisans involved.

❖ Famous Regions of Rajasthan Block Printing:-

Block printing is practiced in various regions across Rajasthan, with each area often having its own distinctive style and techniques. Some of the prominent regions known for block printing in Rajasthan include:

1. **Jaipur:** The capital city of Rajasthan, Jaipur, is famous for its vibrant block-printed textiles. The traditional block printing technique known as "Sanganeri" originates from this region. Sanganeri prints are characterized by intricate floral motifs and vibrant colors. Jaipur is also known for its "Bagru" prints, which feature geometric patterns and earthy tones.
2. **Bagru:** Bagru, located near Jaipur, is renowned for its unique style of block printing known as Bagru printing. This technique involves the use of natural dyes and traditional motifs such as floral patterns, vines, and geometric shapes. Bagru prints often feature a combination of indigo blue and earthy tones.
3. **Barmer:** Barmer, situated in western Rajasthan, is known for its distinct block-printed textiles featuring bold geometric designs and vibrant colors. The region is famous for its "Barmeri prints," which often incorporate traditional motifs inspired by desert landscapes, folklore, and cultural heritage.
4. **Jodhpur:** Jodhpur, known as the "Blue City" due to the prevalence of blue-painted houses, is another hub for block printing in Rajasthan. The city produces a variety of block-printed textiles, including bedspreads, tablecloths, and garments. Jodhpur prints often feature bold patterns and bright colors.
5. **Udaipur:** Udaipur, often referred to as the "City of Lakes," is also known for its block-printed textiles. The region produces a wide range of prints, including traditional motifs and contemporary designs. Udaipur's block-printed fabrics are popular for clothing, home furnishings, and decorative items.
6. **Pali:** Pali, located in southwestern Rajasthan, is known for its hand-block printing tradition, particularly the "Pali Prints." These prints often feature intricate floral patterns, paisleys, and geometric designs. Pali prints are characterized by their fine detailing and vibrant colors.

These are just a few examples of the regions in Rajasthan known for their expertise in block printing. Each area contributes its unique style and techniques to the rich tapestry of Rajasthani textiles, showcasing the diversity and creativity of this ancient craft.

Festivals and Fairs of Rajasthan

- **Teej** - Worship of Goddess Teej
- **Gangaur Festival** - Symbolises Togetherness of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.
- **Pushkar Camel Fair** - A Camel Trade Fair.
- **Benswar Fair** - Dungarpur.
- **Ramdevra Fair** - Jaisalmer.
- **Gogaji Fair** - Jaisalmer.
- **Kaila Devi Fair** - Kaila Village.
- **Tejaji Fair** - Parbatsar.

Teej - Worship of Goddess Teej



Introduction of Teej :- Teej is a Hindu festival celebrated by women, primarily in the Indian subcontinent, especially in Nepal and some parts of India like the northern states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Punjab. The festival usually falls during the Hindu month of Shravan (July-August), specifically on the third day (Teej) of the bright half of the lunar month.

Teej is celebrated in honor of the goddess Parvati, the wife of Lord Shiva. It is believed that on this day, Parvati reunited with Shiva after a long separation. Women observe a fast on this day and pray for marital bliss, the well-being of their spouses, and the longevity of their marriages. Unmarried women also observe the fast with the hope of finding a good husband.

The festival is marked by various rituals, including dressing up in traditional attire (usually red saris), applying henna on hands and feet, singing folk songs, dancing, and exchanging gifts. Married women typically receive gifts from their parents and in-laws, while unmarried girls receive gifts from their parents.

Teej is not only a religious festival but also a cultural celebration that strengthens family bonds and celebrates the institution of marriage. It is characterized by joyous festivities and is an occasion for women to come together, rejoice, and express their devotion to the divine while celebrating the sacredness of marital relationships.

Rituals of Teej:- Teej is deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of regions where it is celebrated, especially Nepal and certain parts of India. Here's a more detailed explanation of the festival:

1. **Fasting and Rituals:** Observing a fast is a central aspect of Teej. Married and unmarried women alike fast from dawn till dusk, refraining from food and water. The fast is considered a way to demonstrate devotion to the goddess Parvati and seek her blessings for a happy and prosperous married life. Women wake up early in the morning, bathe, and then offer prayers to Parvati. They often visit temples dedicated to the goddess to seek her blessings.
2. **Traditional Attire and Adornments:** Women dress up in vibrant traditional attire, often red sarees or lehengas, which symbolize marital bliss and fertility. They adorn themselves with jewelry and apply intricate henna designs (mehndi) on their hands and feet. This adds to the festive atmosphere and reflects the cultural significance of the occasion.
3. **Songs, Dances, and Celebrations:** Teej is also marked by singing folk songs and performing traditional dances. Women gather in groups to sing Teej songs (Teej geet) that narrate the story of Parvati and Shiva or depict various aspects of married life. These songs are accompanied by rhythmic dances, adding to the joyous mood of the festival. Communities often organize cultural programs and competitions where women showcase their singing and dancing talents.
4. **Exchanging Gifts:** Exchanging gifts is another important aspect of Teej. Married women receive gifts from their parents, in-laws, and husbands as a token of love and appreciation. These gifts may include new clothes, jewelry, sweets, and other items. Unmarried girls also receive gifts from their parents, symbolizing their hopes for finding a suitable spouse in the future.
5. **Community Celebrations:** Teej is a time for communities to come together and celebrate. Various events and fairs are organized where women gather to participate in rituals, enjoy cultural performances, and socialize with each other. It fosters a sense of unity and solidarity among women and strengthens familial and social bonds.

Overall, Teej is not only a religious festival but also a celebration of womanhood, love, and marital devotion. It provides an opportunity for women to express their cultural identity, celebrate their relationships, and seek blessings for a harmonious and fulfilling married life.

Type of Teej and Time:- There are several types of Teej celebrated in different regions, each with its own unique customs and traditions. Some of the prominent types of Teej include:

1. **Hariyali Teej:** Also known as Shravan Teej or Chhoti Teej, Hariyali Teej falls during the Hindu month of Shravan (July-August), specifically on the third day of the bright half of the lunar month. It celebrates the arrival of the monsoon season and the lush greenery that comes with it. Women dress in green attire, adorn themselves with green jewelry, and participate in rituals to pray for a bountiful harvest and marital happiness.
2. **Kajari Teej:** Kajari Teej, also known as Badi Teej, is celebrated during the Hindu month of Bhadrapada (August-September), specifically on the third day of the dark half of the lunar month. It is primarily observed in the Indian states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh. Women worship the neem tree and sing folk songs known as Kajari to welcome the rainy season and pray for the well-being of their families.
3. **Hartalika Teej:** Hartalika Teej is celebrated primarily by women in North India, especially in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand. It falls during the Hindu month of Bhadrapada (August-September), usually a day before Ganesh Chaturthi. This Teej commemorates the reunion of Goddess Parvati with Lord Shiva, and women observe fasts, perform rituals, and visit temples to seek the blessings of the divine couple for marital bliss and prosperity.

4. **Akha Teej:** Akha Teej, also known as Akshaya Tritiya, is celebrated on the third day of the bright half of the lunar month of Vaishakha (April-May). It holds significance as a day of prosperity and good fortune. While it is not strictly a Teej festival dedicated to women, married women often observe fasts and perform rituals for the well-being of their husbands and families.

These are some of the main types of Teej celebrated in different regions, each with its own cultural significance and rituals. However, the essence of Teej remains consistent across these variations, focusing on devotion, marital happiness, and the celebration of womanhood.

The origin(Story) of Teej :-The origin of Teej can be traced back to ancient Hindu mythology and scriptures. The festival is closely associated with the legend of Goddess Parvati and her union with Lord Shiva. There are various mythological stories that explain the origin and significance of Teej, with different regions and communities having their own interpretations. One of the most popular legends associated with Teej is the story of Goddess Parvati and her intense devotion to Lord Shiva. Here's a summary of this mythological tale:

According to Hindu mythology, Goddess Parvati (also known as Teej Mata) was deeply in love with Lord Shiva and wished to marry him. However, her father, King Himavan (also known as Himalaya), was initially reluctant to give her hand in marriage to Shiva, who was known for his ascetic lifestyle and unconventional appearance.

Undeterred by her father's objections, Parvati decided to undertake intense penance and austerity to win the favor of Shiva. She retreated to the forests and engaged in rigorous meditation, fasting, and prayers to prove her devotion to him.

Impressed by Parvati's unwavering dedication and determination, Lord Shiva eventually agreed to marry her. Their union symbolized the ideal marital relationship characterized by love, mutual respect, and devotion.

The day of Teej is believed to commemorate the reunion of Goddess Parvati with Lord Shiva. It is said that Parvati fasted and prayed for Shiva's well-being and for a blissful married life during her penance, and her prayers were answered when Shiva accepted her as his consort.

Over time, Teej evolved into a festival celebrated by married women to honor Goddess Parvati and seek her blessings for the well-being and longevity of their husbands. Unmarried women also observe the festival with the hope of finding a loving and devoted partner like Shiva.

While the specific rituals and customs associated with Teej may vary across regions, the underlying theme of devotion, love, and marital bliss remains central to the festival's celebration. Teej thus holds significant religious and cultural importance in Hindu tradition, particularly among women who view it as an auspicious occasion to strengthen marital bonds and express devotion to the divine.

Area where Teej Celebration:-Teej is primarily celebrated in the Indian subcontinent, particularly in Nepal and certain regions of India. Here's a breakdown of where Teej is celebrated:

1. **Nepal:** Teej is a major festival in Nepal and holds significant cultural and religious importance. It is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervor throughout the country, with special emphasis in the Kathmandu Valley. Women of all ages, especially married and unmarried women, participate in the festivities, which include fasting, singing traditional songs, performing dances, and visiting temples dedicated to Goddess Parvati. The government of Nepal also declares Teej as a public holiday, allowing people to celebrate the festival with their families and communities.
2. **India:** In India, Teej is primarily celebrated in the northern states, especially Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, and Haryana. Each region has its own unique customs and traditions associated with the festival. For example, in Rajasthan, Teej is celebrated with grandeur and splendor, with women dressing up in traditional attire, applying henna, and participating in cultural programs. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, women observe fasts and offer prayers to Goddess Parvati for marital bliss and happiness. In Punjab and Haryana, Teej is celebrated with folk music, dance, and community gatherings.
3. **Other Regions:** While Teej is most prominently celebrated in Nepal and northern India, it is also observed in other parts of the Indian subcontinent where there is a significant Hindu population. For example, it is celebrated in parts of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra, albeit with varying degrees of significance and customs.

Arts rituals of teej:- Teej is not only celebrated with religious rituals but also with various forms of traditional arts and cultural practices. Here are some of the artistic rituals and activities associated with Teej:

1. **Mehndi (Henna) Application:** Applying intricate mehndi designs on hands and feet is an essential part of Teej celebrations, especially for women. Mehndi symbolizes beauty, auspiciousness, and celebration. Women gather to apply mehndi to each other's hands and feet, often incorporating traditional motifs and patterns. It is considered a form of artistic expression and enhances the festive atmosphere of Teej.
2. **Traditional Attire:** Wearing traditional attire is an integral aspect of Teej celebrations. Women typically dress in colorful sarees or lehengas, often in shades of red, green, or yellow, which are considered auspicious colors. The attire is adorned with intricate embroidery, sequins, and other embellishments, showcasing the richness of the region's textile heritage.
3. **Folk Songs and Music:** Teej is accompanied by the singing of traditional folk songs known as "Teej geet" or "Teej songs." These songs narrate the story of Goddess Parvati, express marital sentiments, and celebrate the joys of womanhood. Women gather in groups to sing and dance to these songs, accompanied by musical instruments such as dholak (hand drum), tabla, and harmonium. Folk musicians and singers often perform at community gatherings and cultural events, adding to the festive ambiance.
4. **Folk Dances:** Various folk dances are performed during Teej celebrations, reflecting the vibrant cultural heritage of the region. One of the most popular dances is the "Teej dance," characterized by graceful movements, rhythmic footwork, and colorful costumes. Other traditional dances such as Ghoomar (Rajasthani folk dance), Giddha (Punjabi folk dance), and Haryanvi dance forms are also performed by women as part of the festivities.
5. **Artistic Rangoli:** Creating rangoli designs is a common practice during Teej celebrations. Women decorate the entrance of their homes with intricate rangoli patterns made from colored powders, rice flour, flower petals, or colored sand. These decorative designs symbolize prosperity, good luck, and welcome the goddess into the household.

6. **Art and Craft Workshops:** Some communities organize workshops where women and girls can learn traditional arts and crafts associated with Teej, such as embroidery, mirror work, beadwork, and fabric painting. These workshops provide opportunities for artistic expression, skill development, and cultural exchange among participants.

Overall, Teej celebrations encompass a rich tapestry of artistic rituals, cultural practices, and creative expressions that highlight the diversity and vibrancy of the festival. Through these artistic endeavors, participants not only honor the traditions of the past but also celebrate the spirit of joy, togetherness, and creativity that define Teej.

Gangaur Festival - Symbolises Togetherness of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.



when gangaur celebrate:-

The Gangaur festival is typically celebrated in the Indian states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and parts of Uttar Pradesh. It falls in the Hindu month of Chaitra, which usually corresponds to March or April according to the Gregorian calendar.

Gangaur is a multi-day festival that lasts for about 18 days, starting from the first day of the Chaitra month (the day following Holi, the festival of colors) and culminating on the third day of the bright half of the month. The exact dates of the festival vary each year based on the Hindu lunar calendar.

During these days, women observe various rituals, fasts, and ceremonies dedicated to Goddess Parvati, seeking her blessings for marital bliss, harmony, and the well-being of their husbands. The festival is marked by colorful processions, traditional songs and dances, elaborate rituals, and vibrant celebrations, making it one of the most important festivals in the region.

Origin of Gangaur festival:-

Gangaur is a traditional festival celebrated predominantly in the Indian state of Rajasthan and some parts of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal. The word "Gangaur" is derived from two words, "Gan" meaning Lord Shiva and "Gaur" meaning Goddess Parvati, who is Shiva's consort. Hence, Gangaur is primarily a festival dedicated to Goddess Parvati.

The origin of the Gangaur festival can be traced back to ancient times. It is believed to have

originated as a celebration of marital happiness and the union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. According to Hindu mythology, it is said that Parvati performed penance to win Lord Shiva as her husband, and after a long period of rigorous tapasya (meditation and austerity), she finally succeeded in marrying him.

The festival also celebrates the onset of spring and is associated with agricultural prosperity. It is observed by both married and unmarried women, who pray for the well-being and longevity of their husbands or for finding an ideal life partner, respectively. Unmarried women pray to Gangaur Mata for a good husband, while married women seek the blessings of the goddess for the well-being and prosperity of their husbands.

During Gangaur, women dress up beautifully, apply mehndi (henna) on their hands, and participate in various rituals and festivities. One of the key rituals involves making clay idols of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, which are then decorated and worshipped. These idols are later immersed in water, symbolizing the departure of the goddess to her celestial abode, while carrying away the troubles and misfortunes of the devotees.

Overall, Gangaur is a vibrant and joyous festival deeply rooted in Hindu mythology and culture, symbolizing love, devotion, and the celebration of marital bliss.

Arts Rituals of Gangaur Festival:-

The Gangaur festival is celebrated with various rituals and customs, many of which are deeply rooted in traditional arts and cultural practices. Here are some of the key artistic rituals associated with the Gangaur festival:

1. **Idol Making:** One of the central artistic rituals of Gangaur is the creation of clay idols of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Skilled artisans or women in households mold these idols from clay, often with intricate details depicting the divine couple. These idols are then decorated with vibrant colors, clothes, and jewelry before being worshipped during the festival.
2. **Mehndi (Henna) Decoration:** Women adorn their hands and feet with intricate mehndi (henna) designs during Gangaur. Mehndi application is considered an art form in itself, with various designs ranging from traditional patterns to contemporary motifs. It is an integral part of women's preparations for the festival, adding to the festive ambiance.
3. **Traditional Clothing and Jewelry:** Women dress in traditional attire such as colorful lehengas, cholis, and odhnis (dupattas) during Gangaur. The clothing is often embellished with embroidery, mirror work, and other intricate designs. Additionally, women adorn themselves with traditional jewelry including necklaces, earrings, bangles, and anklets, enhancing their festive appearance.
4. **Folk Songs and Dances:** Folk music and dance play a significant role in the celebration of Gangaur. Women gather to sing traditional Gangaur songs (Gangaur geet) that praise the divine couple and express their devotion. Dance performances, such as the Ghoomar dance, are also a common feature of Gangaur festivities, adding to the cultural vibrancy of the celebrations.
5. **Processions and Street Decorations:** In some regions, colorful processions are organized during Gangaur, where people carry the idols of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati through the streets accompanied by music and dance performances. The streets are often decorated with

rangoli (colorful floor designs), floral decorations, and festive lights, creating a festive atmosphere.

6. **Artisan Craft Exhibitions:** During Gangaur, artisan craft exhibitions are organized in various places, showcasing traditional artworks such as pottery, handcrafted textiles, jewelry, and paintings. These exhibitions not only promote local craftsmanship but also offer an opportunity for people to purchase unique handmade items as souvenirs of the festival.

Overall, the Gangaur festival is a celebration of art, culture, and devotion, where various artistic rituals and practices come together to create a vibrant and festive atmosphere. These rituals not only preserve traditional art forms but also provide a platform for artisans to showcase their skills and creativity.

Pushkar Camel Fair - A Camel Trade Fair.



Introduction of Pushkar Fair:-

The Pushkar Fair, also called the Pushkar Camel Fair or locally as Kartik Mela or Pushkar ka Mela is an annual multi-day livestock fair and cultural fête held in the town of Pushkar near Ajmer city in Ajmer district in (Rajasthan, India). The fair starts with the Hindu calendar month of Kartik and ends on the Kartik Purnima, which typically overlaps with late October and early November in the Gregorian calendar. In 1998, over 1 million visitors came to Pushkar throughout the year. The Pushkar fair alone attracts over 200,000 visitors.

The Pushkar fair is one of India's largest camel, horse and cattle fairs. Apart from the trading of livestock, it is an important pilgrimage season for Hindus to the Pushkar lake. Pushkar fair has also become a significant tourist attraction for domestic and international travellers, given the cooler season, the abundance of colourful cultural themes. Cultural events and competitions include dances, tug of war between women teams as well as men teams, the "matka phod", "longest moustache" competition, "bridal competition", camel races and others.

Thousands of people go to the banks of the Pushkar Lake where the fair takes place. Men trade their livestock, which includes camels, horses, cows, sheep and goats. Rural families shop at the handicraft stalls full of bracelets, clothes, textiles and fabrics. A camel race starts off the festival, with music, songs and exhibitions to follow. Between these events, the most waited for is the test of how the camel is able to bring the items. In order to demonstrate, the men go up on the group of camels one after another.

Pushkar is in centre-east part of Rajasthan, on the western side of Aravalli mountains. The nearest airport from Pushkar is Kishangarh Airport in Ajmer, about 40 km (25 mi) northeast.

Jaipur is well connected with all the major cities in India. Pushkar is about 10 km (6.2 mi) from Ajmer, connected via Pushkar road (Highway 58) which goes over the Aravalli Range mountains. Ajmer is also the nearest major railway STATION Pushkar Railway Station is connected to Ajmer Railway Station.

Rituals of Pushkar Fair:-

The fair is not only about trading camels but also about showcasing Rajasthani culture and traditions. Here are some of the key rituals and activities associated with the Pushkar Fair:

1. **Camel Trading:** The fair is primarily known for the trading of camels, although other livestock such as horses, cows, and goats are also bought and sold. Camel traders from various parts of Rajasthan gather at Pushkar to participate in the trading activities.
2. **Religious Significance:** Pushkar is considered one of the most sacred places in Hinduism. The fair coincides with the Hindu lunar calendar month of Kartik (usually in October or November) and culminates on the day of the full moon (Kartik Purnima). Pilgrims flock to Pushkar during this time to take a dip in the holy Pushkar Lake, which is believed to cleanse sins and bestow blessings.
3. **Ghats and Ritual Baths:** During the fair, pilgrims and visitors gather at the ghats (steps leading to the lake) to perform rituals and take ritual baths in the sacred Pushkar Lake. It is believed that taking a dip in the lake during the fair is particularly auspicious.
4. **Religious Ceremonies and Pujas:** Various religious ceremonies and pujas (prayer rituals) are conducted at the ghats and temples around Pushkar during the fair. Devotees offer prayers and perform aarti (ceremonial worship with lamps) to seek blessings.
5. **Cultural Events and Performances:** The Pushkar Fair is not just about religious rituals; it also offers a vibrant display of Rajasthani culture. Visitors can enjoy folk music and dance performances, camel races, moustache competitions, puppet shows, and other cultural events throughout the fair.
6. **Shopping and Food:** The fair is a bustling marketplace where visitors can shop for a variety of goods, including handicrafts, clothes, jewelry, and souvenirs. Traditional Rajasthani cuisine is also a major attraction, with vendors selling local delicacies and street food.
7. **Hot Air Balloon Rides:** In recent years, hot air balloon rides have become a popular activity during the Pushkar Fair, offering visitors a unique perspective of the colorful festivities from above.

These rituals and activities make the Pushkar Fair a unique and vibrant cultural experience, attracting tourists and pilgrims from around the world.

Benshwar Fair – Dungarpur



The Beneshwar Fair, also spelled as "Bhainsrorgarh Cattle Fair," is an annual religious and cultural event held in the Dungarpur district of Rajasthan, India. The fair is named after the Beneshwar Mahadev Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, located on the confluence of the Mahi, Som, and Jakham rivers. The fair usually takes place during the Hindu lunar calendar month of Magh (January-February) and lasts for around five days.

Key aspects of the Beneshwar Fair :- Here are some key aspects of the Beneshwar Fair:

1. **Religious Significance:** The fair is primarily a religious event, drawing devotees and pilgrims from Rajasthan and neighboring states. The Beneshwar Mahadev Temple holds great significance, especially during the fair, as it is believed to be a sacred site where Lord Shiva resides.
2. **Ritual Baths:** One of the main rituals during the fair is taking a holy dip in the confluence of the rivers where the temple is situated. Devotees believe that bathing in the waters during this auspicious time cleanses them of sins and brings them blessings.
3. **Cattle Fair:** Similar to the Pushkar Fair, the Beneshwar Fair also includes a significant cattle fair aspect. Livestock traders from different parts of Rajasthan gather here to buy and sell cattle, including cows, bullocks, and goats. This aspect adds an economic dimension to the fair.
4. **Cultural Events:** The fair is also a platform for showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan. Visitors can witness traditional folk music and dance performances, including Bhil tribal dances, which are characteristic of the region. Other cultural activities such as puppet shows, magic shows, and acrobatics may also be featured.
5. **Crafts and Souvenirs:** Artisans and craftsmen set up stalls at the fair, selling a variety of handicrafts, textiles, jewelry, and other local products. Visitors have the opportunity to purchase unique Rajasthani handicrafts and souvenirs.
6. **Food Stalls:** Traditional Rajasthani cuisine is a highlight of the fair, with numerous food stalls offering local delicacies and street food. Visitors can indulge in specialties like dal bati churma, gatte ki sabzi, and various snacks and sweets.

7. **Religious Rituals and Ceremonies:** Throughout the fair, religious rituals and ceremonies take place at the Baneshwar Mahadev Temple. Devotees offer prayers, perform aarti (ceremonial worship with lamps), and participate in other religious activities seeking blessings from Lord Shiva.

The Baneshwar Fair provides a unique opportunity to experience the spiritual fervor, cultural vibrancy, and traditional charm of rural Rajasthan. It attracts both pilgrims and tourists, offering a glimpse into the religious and cultural tapestry of the region.

Baneshwar fair is an annual tribal fair held in Dungarpur district in Rajasthan state of India. The fair is held in the month of January or February (2 weeks following the new moon night in the month of Magh in the Vikram Samvat calendar) at Baneshwar, near the confluence of the Som and Mahi rivers. This fair is a major fair in tribal culture and has been described as "the Kumbh mela for the tribals

History and legend of Baneshwar Fair:-

The Baneshwar fair of Rajasthan, in its present form is actually a combination of two fairs: one which used to be conducted in honour of Baneshwar Mahadev (Lord Shiva) and another fair which started after the construction of the Vishnu temple by Jankunwari, daughter-in-law of Mavji, a highly admired saint considered to be a living form of Lord Vishnu. Two followers of Mavji named Aje and Vaje construct the Lakshmi Narain Temple near the convergence of rivers Som and Mahi. On Magh Shukla Ekadashi the pran-pratishtha ceremony of the idols was performed and since then, the fair is held on this day. The large audience that gathers here at the time of the fair pays respect to all the deities with equal respect. The Baneshwar fair of Rajasthan is mainly a tribal fair with more than half of the people attending worship consisting of Bhits. They admire Baneshwar Mahadev as well as Mavji. The majority of the assembly is from the Districts of Dungarpur, Udaipur and Banswara of Rajasthan.

Ramdevra Fair - Jaisalmer



Introduction:- Ramdevra Fair, also known as Ramdevra Jatra, is an annual religious festival held in honor of Baba Ramdevji, a saint revered by the people of Rajasthan, India. The fair takes place at Ramdevra, a village located in the Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan. It typically occurs during the Hindu month of Bhadrapada, which falls between August and September according to the Gregorian calendar.

Baba Ramdevji, also known as Ramdev Pir, is believed to have been a 14th-century saint who

dedicated his life to the welfare of the people, particularly the downtrodden and the oppressed. He is considered to be an incarnation of Lord Krishna by his followers. Legends surrounding Baba Ramdevji's life depict his miraculous powers and his compassion towards the poor and needy.

During the Ramdevra Fair, devotees from various parts of Rajasthan and neighboring states gather to pay their respects to Baba Ramdevji. The fair is characterized by vibrant festivities, including devotional singing, traditional folk music and dance performances, and various cultural events. Pilgrims offer prayers and make offerings at the shrine of Baba Ramdevji, seeking his blessings for health, prosperity, and protection.

One of the unique features of the Ramdevra Fair is the offering of sacred coconuts, known as "nariyal," by the devotees. These coconuts are believed to symbolize fulfillment of wishes and are offered with reverence at the shrine.

The fair also serves as a platform for social and cultural exchange, as artisans, craftsmen, and traders showcase their products and skills, ranging from traditional handicrafts to textiles and household items.

Overall, the Ramdevra Fair is not only a religious pilgrimage but also a celebration of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage, fostering a sense of community and spirituality among the participants.

Bhind the story of ramdevra fair:-

The story behind the Ramdevra Fair is deeply rooted in the legend of Baba Ramdevji, whose life and deeds form the core of the festival's significance. Here's a brief overview of the legend:

According to folklore, Baba Ramdevji was born in the Tanwar Rajput community in the 14th century in the village of Runicha, located in present-day Rajasthan, India. He was believed to be the son of King Ajmal Singh and Queen Mainadevi. From a young age, Baba Ramdevji exhibited spiritual inclinations and displayed miraculous powers.

One of the most popular legends associated with Baba Ramdevji revolves around his encounter with a woman named Rani Mainaldevi, who was the queen of King Kanakbhatta of Pokhran. Rani Mainaldevi was childless and had undertaken a pilgrimage to seek blessings for a child. Baba Ramdevji, in his divine form, appeared before her and blessed her with a son. In gratitude, Rani Mainaldevi promised to build a temple in his honor.

Another famous legend recounts how Baba Ramdevji helped the oppressed and marginalized communities, particularly the Meghwal community. It is said that during a severe drought, Baba Ramdevji miraculously provided water to the parched land by striking his wooden stick (danda) into the ground. This act of compassion and divine intervention earned him reverence and devotion from the people.

As Baba Ramdevji's fame spread far and wide, devotees from various walks of life started flocking to seek his blessings. After his passing, a shrine was established at Ramdevra, where he was believed to have taken Samadhi (self-burial). The shrine became a sacred site of pilgrimage, and the Ramdevra Fair began to be organized annually in his honor.

Over the centuries, the Ramdevra Fair has evolved into a grand event, attracting thousands of devotees from across Rajasthan and neighboring states. It serves not only as a religious pilgrimage but also as a cultural extravaganza, celebrating the life and teachings of Baba Ramdevji through devotional music, dance, and various traditional rituals.

Thus, the Ramdevra Fair continues to perpetuate the legacy of Baba Ramdevji, embodying the spirit of devotion, compassion, and communal harmony.

Art Rituals:-

The Ramdevra Fair is rich in cultural and religious rituals, including various art forms that add vibrancy to the festivities. Here are some of the art rituals commonly observed during the Ramdevra Fair:

1. **Devotional Singing (Bhajans and Kirtans):** Devotees gather at the shrine of Baba Ramdevji to sing bhajans (devotional songs) and kirtans (narrative hymns) in praise of the saint. These songs often recount the miracles and benevolence of Baba Ramdevji, creating a spiritually charged atmosphere.
2. **Folk Music and Dance Performances:** The fair features lively performances of traditional Rajasthani folk music and dance forms such as Ghoomar, Kalbelia, Bhavai, and Chari dance. These performances showcase the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan and entertain the pilgrims and visitors.
3. **Puppet Shows:** Puppetry is an integral part of Rajasthan's cultural heritage. Puppet shows, known as Kathputli, are organized during the fair, depicting mythological stories, folk tales, and episodes from Baba Ramdevji's life. Colorful puppets, accompanied by music and narration, captivate the audience.
4. **Street Performances:** Streets around the fairground come alive with various street performances by artists and entertainers. Magicians, acrobats, fire-eaters, and other performers showcase their talents, adding to the festive ambiance.
5. **Artisan Workshops and Demonstrations:** Skilled artisans from different parts of Rajasthan set up stalls and workshops to demonstrate traditional crafts such as pottery, embroidery, mirror work, leatherwork, and tie-dyeing. Visitors have the opportunity to interact with artisans and learn about their craft techniques.
6. **Rangoli and Decorations:** Intricate rangoli designs and colorful decorations adorn the pathways and entrances of the fairground. Women create beautiful rangoli patterns using colored powders, flowers, and rice flour, adding to the visual appeal of the surroundings.
7. **Folk Theatre (Nautanki):** Folk theatre performances, known as Nautanki, are also a common sight during the fair. These theatrical performances often blend humor, music, and social commentary, entertaining the audience while conveying moral lessons.
8. **Traditional Art Exhibitions:** Artisans and painters showcase their traditional artwork, including miniature paintings, Pichwai paintings, and tribal art forms. These exhibitions offer visitors a glimpse into the rich artistic heritage of Rajasthan.

These art rituals not only enhance the cultural experience of the Ramdevra Fair but also play a crucial role in preserving and promoting Rajasthan's diverse artistic traditions. They contribute to the festive atmosphere and create a sense of community and celebration among the pilgrims and attendees.

Gogaji Fair - Jaisalmer



Introduction:- The Gogaji Fair, also known as Goga Navami, is an annual religious festival celebrated in honor of Goga Veer, a deity widely venerated in Rajasthan, India. The fair is held on the ninth day of the bright half of the Hindu month of Bhadrapada, which usually falls in August or September according to the Gregorian calendar.

Goga Veer, also known as Gogaji or Jahar Veer Gogga, is believed to be a warrior-saint and a guardian deity who protects his devotees from snake bites, diseases, and other calamities. He is revered as a hero of the Chauhan Rajput dynasty and is associated with tales of bravery, compassion, and miraculous deeds.

The Gogaji Fair is one of the most significant religious gatherings in Rajasthan, attracting thousands of devotees from various parts of the state and neighboring regions. The main venue for the fair is located in Gogamedi, a village near the city of Bikaner in Rajasthan, which is believed to be the birthplace of Goga Veer.

During the fair, devotees visit the shrine of Gogaji to pay their respects and seek his blessings for protection, prosperity, and well-being. The shrine is adorned with garlands, flags, and colorful decorations, creating a festive atmosphere. Devotional songs, bhajans, and recitations of the Goga Veer epic resonate throughout the fairground, invoking the spirit of the deity.

One of the unique features of the Gogaji Fair is the ritual of offering prayers and sacrifices to snakes, as Goga Veer is considered to have a special affinity with serpents. Devotees bring live snakes or images of snakes made from dough (known as "Guggalu") as offerings to the deity.

These offerings symbolize the protection and blessings of Goga Veer against snake bites and venomous creatures.

The fair also features various cultural events and activities, including folk music and dance performances, puppet shows, traditional games, and handicraft exhibitions. Local artisans and craftsmen showcase their skills, offering a wide array of traditional Rajasthani handicrafts, textiles, and artifacts for sale.

Overall, the Gogaji Fair is not only a religious pilgrimage but also a celebration of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage and folklore. It fosters a sense of community and devotion among the pilgrims and attendees, reaffirming the enduring significance of Goga Veer in the hearts and minds of the people of Rajasthan.

Behind the story of Gogaji Fair:-

The Gogaji Fair, also known as Goga Navami, is deeply intertwined with the legend and mythology surrounding Goga Veer, the deity honored during this annual event. Here's a glimpse into the story behind the Gogaji Fair:

Legend of Goga Veer:

Goga Veer, also known as Gogaji or Jahar Veer Gogga, is a revered figure in Rajasthani folklore and mythology. According to legend, Goga Veer was born to Queen Bachal of Dadrewa, a village in present-day Rajasthan, during the 12th century. His father, Harpal Singh, was a Chauhan Rajput king.

As the legend goes, Goga Veer was born with divine blessings and exhibited extraordinary valor and bravery from a young age. He was known for his compassion towards all living beings and his ability to protect people from various dangers, particularly snake bites.

One of the most famous episodes from the life of Goga Veer revolves around his encounter with a snake demon named Pingal. Pingal had captured a princess and was terrorizing the kingdom. Goga Veer confronted Pingal, fought a fierce battle with him, and eventually defeated him, thereby freeing the princess and saving the kingdom.

The Gogamedi Connection:

Gogamedi, a village near the city of Bikaner in Rajasthan, is believed to be the birthplace of Goga Veer. It is said that Goga Veer attained Samadhi (a state of deep meditation or burial) at Gogamedi after his death. The village thus holds immense religious significance for followers of Goga Veer.

Origins of the Gogaji Fair:

The Gogaji Fair is organized annually to commemorate the birth anniversary of Goga Veer, which falls on the ninth day of the bright half of the Hindu month of Bhadrapada. The fair serves as a platform for devotees to express their devotion and seek blessings from Goga Veer.

Rituals and Traditions:

During the Gogaji Fair, devotees from Rajasthan and neighboring regions gather at Gogamedi to pay homage to Goga Veer. They offer prayers, perform rituals, and make offerings at the shrine dedicated to the deity. Devotees also engage in various acts of piety, such as taking holy baths in the sacred ponds of Gogamedi and participating in religious processions.

Cultural Celebrations:

In addition to its religious significance, the Gogaji Fair is marked by colorful cultural celebrations. Folk music and dance performances, puppet shows, traditional games, and handicraft exhibitions are organized during the fair, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan.

Art Rituals:- The Gogaji Fair is not only a religious pilgrimage but also a vibrant cultural festival, featuring various art rituals that add color and fervor to the celebrations. Here are some of the art rituals commonly observed during the Gogaji Fair:

1. **Devotional Music and Songs:** Devotees gather at the shrine of Goga Veer to sing bhajans (devotional songs) and recite hymns in praise of the deity. These musical offerings create a spiritually charged atmosphere, invoking the presence of Goga Veer and inspiring devotion among the pilgrims.
2. **Folk Music and Dance Performances:** The Gogaji Fair showcases lively performances of traditional Rajasthani folk music and dance forms such as Ghoomar, Kalbelia, Bhavai, and Chari dance. These performances entertain the crowds and pay homage to the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan.
3. **Puppet Shows:** Puppetry, known as Kathputli, is an integral part of Rajasthan's cultural traditions. Puppet shows are organized during the fair, depicting mythological stories, folk tales, and episodes from the life of Goga Veer. Colorful puppets, accompanied by music and narration, captivate the audience and convey moral lessons.
4. **Street Performances:** Streets around the fairground come alive with various street performances by artists and entertainers. Magicians, acrobats, fire-eaters, and other performers showcase their talents, adding to the festive ambiance and delighting the spectators.
5. **Snake Charmer Performances:** Given the association of Goga Veer with protection against snake bites, snake charmers often perform at the fair, mesmerizing the audience with their skills and showcasing the reverence for serpents in local folklore.
6. **Traditional Artisan Workshops:** Skilled artisans and craftsmen set up stalls and workshops to demonstrate traditional crafts such as pottery, embroidery, mirror work, and leatherwork. Visitors have the opportunity to interact with artisans and learn about their craft techniques, enriching their cultural experience.
7. **Rangoli and Decorations:** Intricate rangoli designs and colorful decorations adorn the pathways and entrances of the fairground. Women create beautiful rangoli patterns using colored powders, flowers, and rice flour, adding to the visual splendor of the surroundings.
8. **Art Exhibitions:** Local artists exhibit their paintings, sculptures, and other artworks inspired by the legends and folklore associated with Goga Veer. These exhibitions provide a platform for artists to showcase their creativity and contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the fair.

Through these art rituals, the Gogaji Fair not only celebrates the religious significance of Goga Veer but also showcases the diverse artistic traditions and cultural heritage of Rajasthan, fostering a sense of community and celebration among the pilgrims and attendees.

Conclusion: The Gogaji Fair stands as a testament to the enduring reverence and devotion towards Goga Veer in Rajasthan. It not only commemorates the legendary heroism of Goga Veer but also serves as a vibrant cultural extravaganza that brings together communities to celebrate their shared heritage and traditions.

Kaila Devi Fair - Kaila Village.

Introduction:- is a significant festival held in goddess Kaila as



The Kaila Devi Fair annual religious honor of the Hindu Devi, also known Mahalakshmi, in

the Indian state of Rajasthan. The fair is celebrated with much enthusiasm and devotion by devotees from various parts of the country.

The Kaila Devi temple, located in the village of Kaila Devi in Karauli district of Rajasthan, is the focal point of this fair. The temple is dedicated to Goddess Kaila Devi, who is believed to be an incarnation of the Hindu goddess Mahalakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity.

The fair usually takes place during the months of March-April and lasts for a couple of weeks, coinciding with the Chaitra Navratri festival. Devotees visit the temple during this time to seek the blessings of the goddess and to offer prayers and offerings.

The fair is not only a religious event but also a cultural extravaganza, featuring various traditional activities, including folk music and dance performances, puppet shows, magic shows, and local handicrafts and food stalls. It serves as a platform for local artisans and craftsmen to showcase their skills and sell their products.

One of the highlights of the Kaila Devi Fair is the colorful procession known as the 'Kaila Devi Procession,' wherein the idol of the goddess is carried in a decorated palanquin accompanied by music and devotees chanting hymns and prayers.

The fair attracts a large number of devotees and tourists from different parts of India, making it a significant cultural and religious event in Rajasthan. It not only strengthens the spiritual connection of devotees with the goddess but also promotes the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Behind the story of Kaila Devi Fair:-

The Kaila Devi Fair is deeply rooted in Hindu mythology and folklore, particularly surrounding the goddess Kaila Devi herself. While there are variations to the mythological stories, one common narrative revolves around the following:

Legend has it that once there was a powerful demon named Khandit. He was wreaking havoc on the earth, causing destruction and chaos. The gods and goddesses were troubled by his atrocities and sought the help of the divine Trinity—Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer).

In response to the prayers of the gods, Goddess Mahalakshmi, an incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi, decided to intervene. She manifested as Kaila Devi to vanquish the demon and restore peace and harmony to the world.

A fierce battle ensued between Kaila Devi and the demon Khandit. After a prolonged struggle, Kaila Devi emerged victorious, ultimately defeating the demon and freeing the earth from his tyranny.

In gratitude for her divine intervention, the people of the region built a temple dedicated to Kaila Devi at the site where she had fought and triumphed over the demon. This temple came to be known as the Kaila Devi Temple, and it became a revered pilgrimage site for devotees seeking the blessings of the goddess.

The Kaila Devi Fair is believed to commemorate this legendary battle and celebrate the victory of good over evil. It serves as an annual gathering for devotees to express their devotion, seek blessings, and participate in various rituals and festivities in honor of Goddess Kaila Devi.

Through the centuries, the mythological story behind the Kaila Devi Fair has been passed down through generations, enriching the cultural and religious significance of the festival for devotees who gather to pay homage to the goddess and celebrate her divine grace.

Arts Rituals of Kaila Devi Fair:-

One of the prominent rituals associated with the Kaila Devi Fair is the offering of various forms of art to the goddess as a gesture of devotion and reverence. Art plays a significant role in the worship of Kaila Devi during the fair, and several art forms are showcased and performed as part of the religious rituals and cultural celebrations. Here are some of the art rituals commonly observed during the Kaila Devi Fair:

1. **Folk Music and Dance Performances:** Folk musicians and dancers from different regions gather at the fair to showcase their traditional art forms. Performances of folk music and dance, such as Ghoomar, Kalbelia, Bhavai, and various other Rajasthani folk dances, are integral parts of the fair. These performances add vibrancy and cultural richness to the festivities, captivating the audience and invoking a sense of devotion to the goddess. Languria Dance is mostly Famous in the Kaila devi region (Daang- Aadiwasi People)
2. **Puppet Shows:** Puppetry is a traditional form of storytelling in Rajasthan. During the Kaila Devi Fair, puppeteers entertain visitors with colorful puppet shows depicting mythological stories,

folk tales, and episodes from the life of the goddess Kaila Devi. These puppet shows are not only entertaining but also serve as a medium to impart moral and spiritual lessons to the audience.

3. **Magic Shows:** Magicians often perform magic shows at the fair, showcasing their skills and mesmerizing the audience with their illusions. While entertainment is a primary aspect of these magic shows, they also symbolize the mystical and divine nature of the goddess Kaila Devi, reinforcing the belief in her supernatural powers among devotees.
4. **Traditional Crafts and Artwork:** The fair also features stalls and exhibitions showcasing traditional Rajasthani crafts and artwork. Skilled artisans demonstrate their craftsmanship by creating intricate handcrafted items such as pottery, leather goods, textiles, jewelry, and decorative items. Visitors have the opportunity to admire and purchase these artisanal products, thereby supporting the local craftsmanship and preserving the cultural heritage of Rajasthan.
5. **Rangoli Making:** Another art ritual commonly observed during the Kaila Devi Fair is the creation of rangolis (intricate patterns made with colored powders) outside the temple premises and in households. Devotees create beautiful rangoli designs as offerings to the goddess, symbolizing auspiciousness, prosperity, and devotion. Rangoli making is considered a form of sacred art and is believed to invite positive energy and blessings into the surroundings.

These art rituals not only enhance the cultural ambiance of the Kaila Devi Fair but also serve as expressions of devotion, creativity, and community bonding among the devotees and participants. They contribute to the overall spiritual and aesthetic experience of the fair, making it a memorable and enriching event for all who attend.

Tejaji Fair - Parbatsar(Nagaur)



Introduction:- Tejaji Fair, also known as Teja Ji Mela, is an annual fair celebrated in the memory of the folk deity Veer Teja. It is primarily held in the state of Rajasthan, India, where Veer Teja is highly revered. The fair is a significant cultural event in the region and attracts thousands of visitors from across the state and beyond.

Veer Teja, also known as Tejaji, is a legendary figure in Rajasthani folklore, known for his bravery, compassion, and dedication to social justice. He is believed to have lived in the 12th century and is revered as a deity by many communities in Rajasthan, particularly by the Rajputs and Meenas.

The Tejaji Fair usually takes place in rural areas, close to the temples dedicated to Veer Teja. It typically includes various cultural events such as folk music and dance performances, traditional sports like wrestling and horse racing, as well as religious rituals and ceremonies.

The fair provides an opportunity for people to come together, celebrate their cultural heritage, and pay homage to Veer Teja. It also serves as a platform for artisans and craftsmen to showcase their skills and sell their products.

Overall, the Tejaji Fair is not only a celebration of the legendary hero Veer Teja but also a reflection of the rich cultural heritage of Rajasthan. It plays a vital role in preserving and promoting traditional art forms, rituals, and beliefs among the people of the region.

Story Behind the Tejaji Fair:-

The story behind the Tejaji Fair is deeply rooted in the folklore surrounding the legendary hero Veer Teja, also known as Tejaji. Veer Teja's tale is one of bravery, sacrifice, and devotion, and it forms the basis of the cultural significance of the fair.

According to the legend, Veer Teja was born into the Rathore Rajput clan in the village of Kharnal in present-day Rajasthan, India, during the 12th century. He was known for his exceptional valor, righteousness, and compassion for the oppressed.

One of the most famous episodes in the life of Veer Teja revolves around his confrontation with the demon named Bhairav. Bhairav had been terrorizing the people of the region, causing destruction and suffering. Veer Teja, hearing the plight of his people, vowed to rid the land of this menace.

Armed with his courage and divine blessings, Veer Teja challenged Bhairav to a fierce battle. Despite facing numerous obstacles and dangers, Veer Teja ultimately emerged victorious, defeating the demon and freeing the land from its tyranny.

Veer Teja's heroism and selflessness endeared him to the hearts of the people, and he came to be revered as a deity embodying the virtues of courage, justice, and protection. Temples and shrines were erected in his honor, where devotees gathered to pay homage and seek his blessings.

The Tejaji Fair, therefore, is celebrated annually to commemorate the life and deeds of Veer Teja. It is a time for people to remember his courage and sacrifice, and to reaffirm their faith in his protection. The fair brings together communities from far and wide, who gather to participate in various cultural activities, religious rituals, and festivities.

Through the Tejaji Fair, the legend of Veer Teja lives on, inspiring generations with its message of bravery, compassion, and the triumph of good over evil. It serves as a vibrant expression of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage and spiritual traditions, fostering unity, harmony, and reverence among its people.

Story between tejaji and snake:-

One of the most famous legends associated with Veer Teja, also known as Tejaji, involves his encounter with a venomous snake. This story showcases Tejaji's bravery, compassion, and his divine connection.

According to the legend, during one of his journeys, Veer Teja came across a snake trapped in a thorny bush. The snake was struggling and in great pain, as the thorns were piercing its body. Despite the danger posed by the venomous creature, Tejaji felt pity for the suffering snake and decided to help it.

With great courage and determination, Tejaji approached the snake and carefully removed the thorns from its body, easing its pain and suffering. Grateful for Tejaji's kindness, the snake pledged its loyalty to him, vowing to serve and protect him whenever he needed.

As time passed, the snake remained true to its word, coming to Tejaji's aid whenever he faced perilous situations. It acted as his guardian, shielding him from harm and guiding him through dangerous paths.

In one version of the legend, when Tejaji was challenged by the demon Bhairav, the snake played a crucial role in assisting him during the epic battle. With its venomous bite, the snake helped weaken Bhairav, enabling Tejaji to emerge victorious and restore peace to the land.

The story of Veer Teja and the snake highlights the themes of compassion, loyalty, and the interconnectedness of all living beings. It underscores Tejaji's noble character and his willingness to help those in need, regardless of their nature or species.

Through his benevolent actions, Veer Teja earned the devotion and loyalty of the snake, illustrating the power of kindness and empathy in forging bonds of friendship and protection.

This legendary tale is often recounted during the Tejaji Fair and serves as a reminder of the enduring values embodied by Veer Teja, inspiring reverence and admiration among his devotees.

Arts Rituals of Tejaji Fair:-

The Tejaji Fair is not only a celebration of the legendary hero Veer Teja but also a vibrant display of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage, including various arts and rituals. Here are some of the prominent arts and rituals associated with the Tejaji Fair:

1. **Folk Music and Dance:** The fair is infused with the lively rhythms of Rajasthan's folk music and dance forms. Performances of traditional folk dances such as Ghoomar, Kalbelia, and Bhavai are common during the festivities. These dances, accompanied by instruments like dholak, sarangi, and khartal, add to the festive atmosphere and entertain the crowds.
2. **Puppet Shows:** Puppetry is an integral part of Rajasthan's cultural heritage, and puppet shows are often featured at the Tejaji Fair. Skilled puppeteers use intricately crafted puppets to narrate stories from folklore, including tales related to Veer Teja and other legendary figures.

3. **Craftsmanship:** Artisans and craftsmen from different parts of Rajasthan showcase their skills at the fair, offering a diverse range of handcrafted items such as pottery, textiles, jewelry, leather goods, and wooden artifacts. Visitors have the opportunity to admire and purchase these unique creations, contributing to the livelihoods of local artisans.
4. **Rituals and Offerings:** Devotees visiting the temples dedicated to Veer Teja participate in various religious rituals and offer prayers to the deity. These rituals often involve the lighting of incense, ringing of bells, and offering of flowers and sweets as a mark of devotion. Many people also tie sacred threads (rakhis) around trees or pillars near the temple, seeking the protection and blessings of Veer Teja.
5. **Processions and Parades:** Colorful processions and parades are a highlight of the Tejaji Fair, with participants dressed in traditional attire and adorned with jewelry and turbans. These processions, accompanied by music and dance performances, traverse through the fairgrounds, creating a spectacle that captivates both locals and tourists.
6. **Traditional Sports:** Traditional sports and games such as wrestling, kabaddi, and horse racing are organized as part of the fair's festivities. These sporting events showcase the physical prowess and competitive spirit of the participants, drawing enthusiastic spectators from all around.

Overall, the Tejaji Fair serves as a platform for showcasing the diverse arts, rituals, and cultural practices of Rajasthan, fostering a sense of community, identity, and pride among its participants and attendees.
