CHAPTER III
Thematic Classification
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Thematic classification is the assignment of data into groups according to themes in order to simplify the information and for better understanding of the subject. In this chapter, Kotah paintings are arranged according to various themes or subjects chosen and painted by the artists in Kotah atelier. Various themes painted at Kotah are Mythological themes, Nayaka- Nayika Bheda, Baramasa, Ragamala, Love legends, Portraits, Hunting etc.

A. Mythological Themes

Mythological themes dominate most of the Kotah miniatures depicting the scenes from the Hindu epics such as Shiva, Vishnu, Dasa- Avtara, Krishna Legends, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata Purana and Rukmani-Parinaya.

i. Shiva

Shiva literally means Auspiciousness, Welfare; He is third God of Hindu triad. He is the destroyer of all evil, represents darkness (tamas), and is said to be the Angry God. Shiva is regarded as a reproductive power which restores what has been dissolved. As one who restores, he is represented as the Lingam or phallus, a symbol of regeneration as can be seen in many Indian temples.

He has 1,008 names, including Mahadeva (the great god), Mahesh, Rudra, Neel Kantha (the blue throated one) and Mahayogi, the great ascetic, who symbolizes the highest form of austere penance and abstract meditation, which results in salvation. Shiva is believed to exist in many forms. His most common depiction is as a dark-skinned ascetic with a blue throat as can be seen in Raga Bhairava (pl.105). He is usually shown seated cross-legged on a Tiger skin. Shiva′s hair is matted and coiled on his head. He is adorned with a Snake and a crescent moon. Ganga is also depicted flowing out of his topknot. Shiva has four arms and three eyes. A garland of skulls, rudraksha beads or a Snake hangs from his neck. Shiva also wears snakes as armlets and bracelets. In one hand, Shiva holds his trishul. The trishul usually has a damaru or waisted drum tied on it. In other hand, he holds a conch shell and in the third, a rudraksha rosary, a club or a bow. One hand is usually empty, raised in a gesture of blessings and protection, the other points to his feet, where the devotee is assured of
salvation. He wears a Tiger or Leopard skin around his waist, and his upper body is usually naked, but smeared with ashes, as befits an ascetic.

The five mantras that constitute Shiva’s body are Sadyojaata, Voamadeva, Aghora, Totpurusha and Eesaana. The Vishnu Dharmaottara Purana of the 6th century assigns a face and element to each of the above mantras, Sadyojaata-earth, Vaamadev-Water, Aghora-fire, Tatpurusha-air and Eesaana-space. His third eye is believed to have appeared when Parvati, in a playful mood, covered his eyes with her hands, immediately the Universe was plunged into darkness. To restore order, Shiva formed another eye on his forehead, from which emerged fire to restore light. The light from this eye is believed to be very powerful and therefore destructive. Shiva opens his third eye in anger, and the offender is burnt. During the Samundra Manthan, when poison was churned out of the ocean, Shiva is said to have swallowed it to save the world from destruction. As he drank the poison, it remained in his neck and darkened his neck. Because of this, he is known as Neelkantha, the blue necked one.

According to a story, Brahma was not successful at creation. He propitiated Shiva who took this form and separated Parvati from his body. Kali, Durga and Uma are the incarnations of Parvati. Their sons are Kartikaya and Ganesha. Shiva is inseparable from Skati. There is no Shiva without Shakti and no Shakti without Shiva; the two are one or the absolute state of being.

Shiva is believed to have a large number of attendants called Ganas. These mythological beings have human bodies with animal heads. Shiva’s son Gensha is the leader of the Ganas. There are hundreds of temples and shrines dedicated to Shiva. He is usually worshipped in the form of a Shivalinga (pl.24) and also an idol.

Lingam is the non-anthropomorphic form of Shiva. Lingam is symbol of that which is invisible yet omnipresent. It denotes the primeval energy of the creator. There is a legend that first of all Parvati fashioned a Shivalingam with a fistful of sand at kanchipuram and worshipped Shiva, Shiva Lingams in several temples appeared on their own which are untouched by a chisel. The carved Lingams are also installed in temples.

Nandi, the Bull is depicted facing the sanctum in all Shavite temples, symbolizing the human soul (Jeevatma) yearning for realizing its oneness with (Parmatma) god, the ultimate reality. We find the depiction of Nandi in Kotah painting Shiva and Parvati seated under a tree (pl.47a). Kotah artists were also
attracted by the form of Shiva. Paintings like Shiva and Parvati seated on their vahanas (pl.47) and Shiva and Parvati seated under a tree (pl.47b) depict Shiva as a blue coloured human form having one head or many heads. The figure of Shiva can also be seen in the Ragamala miniatures, as he is depicted as a Raga Bhairava (pl.106a). This picture is now preserved in the National Museum of India, New Delhi. This painting depicts the holy couple seated in a Palace pavilion. The Shiva as Bhairava is shown seated on the lotus petals carpet, wearing animal skin on his lower body. He is holding a musical instrument in his hand. The hand gestures of Shiva and Parvati suggests that they are in conversation. A symbolic shadow of Elephant has also been depicted on the back side of the head of Shiva. A fly whisk bearer is shown standing behind Shiva. A peacock is also depicted on terrace, two long legged birds are flying in the sky. Two birds playing in a pond are also depicted in the foreground. Props like jars and glasses in the foreground and in the back wall of Palace seem to be depicted to maintain balance in the painting and in the name of vegetation only a single fan like tree is depicted in the background. In the Bada Mahal, Kotah there is another beautiful depiction of Shiva and Parvati seated on their vahanas (pl.47).

Besides these depictions of Shiva in a human form, we also find depictions of Shiva in symbolic form as Lingam in Kotah paintings. A beautiful painting of Kotah style in the collection of H.H. Maharaao Brijraj Singh of Kotah depicts Young prince on Horse back near a Shiva Shrine (pl.24). He seems to have come with the eight ladies in royal dress, who are shown worshipping Lingam beneath a large tree which have snake like shaped branches. Ladies are shown bejewelled with pearl jewellery. The prince is accompanied by three attendants, one holding chauri, other holding a musical instrument. One of them has been distracted and turning his gaze towards a worshiper, who is shown removing, thorn from her feet. There are two depictions of Shiva-Lingam in this painting: one in the shrine and other inside the trunk of tree. In the background Yogis are shown seated with fire in front and seem to be boneless creatures. A Dog has also been painted by their side.

In the Bada Mahal, Kotah there is another beautiful picture depicting Ladies worshipping Shiva Linga (pl. 48), in which a lady is shown worshipping Lingam placed near a banana tree. This picture is very much similar to Bundi picture Lady Worshipping Lingam (pl.48a), which is preserved in the National Museum of India, New Delhi. Besides these miniatures, Shiva and Parvati in the form of Idols have also been painted by the artists of Kotah.
**ii. Vishnu**

The word *Vishnu* is derived from the Sanskrit root *Vish* which means to pervade. *Vishnu* is the second god of the Hindu triad, and as the preserver of the universe represents mercy and goodness\(^1\).

The *Padma Purana* describes that there was a supreme being, indentifying him with *Brahman*. It states that he (*the Brahman*) wanted to create the universe. To this end, he divided himself into three parts from the right side, he produced *Brahma*: the creator, from his left, he produced *Vishnu*: the preserver and from the middle he produced *Shiva*: the destroyer\(^2\).

*Vishnu* is a very popular deity and is widely worshiped. He has 1,000 names, whose repetition is believed to bring great merit. He is also called *Satyanarayan*, *Narayan* (One who moves on the waters), *Pitambara* (One with yellow garments) *Hari* the remover. The river Ganga is said to originate from *Vishnu*’s feet. He is mostly depicted as resting on a coiled *Serpent Seshnaga or Ananta* which floats on the cosmic ocean. His vehicle is *Garuda*, which is swift-flying bird and can spread the *Vedic* knowledge with great courage. *Lord Vishnu*’s consort is *Goddess Lakshmi*: the Goddess of wealth and fortune. She is believed to have emerged from the *Samudra Manthan* and considered to be the daughter of Bhrigu and Khyati. She is a fair woman who wears red cloths and is always depicted as sitting or standing on a red lotus.

*Vishnu* is represented as a dark man with four arms. The first holds a conch shell (*Sankha*) indicating spread of the divine sound *Om*. One holds a discus (*chakra*), a reminder of the wheel of time and to lead a good life. One holds a lotus (*Padma*) which is an example of glorious existence. Fourth hand holds a mace (*Gada*) indicating the power and the punishing capacity of the lord if discipline in life is ignored. The dark color of the lord represents the passive and formless either, a great quality of pervading *God*. *Sheshnaga* represents the sleeping universe.

It is believed that *Vishnu* takes different *Avtars* to re-establish *dharma* or righteousness and destroy tyranny and injustice on earth. Ten *Avtars* of *Vishnu* are *Matsya* (the fish), *Koorma* (the tortoise), *Varaha* (the boor), *Narasimha* (the human lion), *Vamana* (the dwarf), *Parasurama* (the angry man, Rama with an axe), *Lord Rama* (the perfect man, King of Ayodhya), *Lord Krishna* (the divine statesman), *Buddha* (enlightened one), *Kalki* (the mighty warrior). The last *Avtar* is yet to appear\(^3\). The Philosophy of *Avatars* in Hindu Mythology is very significant. According to it,
there is only one god, the supreme reality who takes *Avtars* to destroy evil. These *Avtars* are of two kinds, *Purnavtara*: complete incarnation, *Anshavtara*: partial incarnation. It is also called *Avesavatara*. The great incarnations of *Vishnu* are known as *Dasavtara*.

**Dasavatara of Vishnu**

1. *Matsyavtara*: *Avtar* in form of fish, who saved Manu and rescue *Vedas*. This *Avtar* is the symbol of restoration of true knowledge.

2. *Kurmavtara*: Incarnation in the form of tortoise, who held Mount Mandara on his back during the churning of ocean for nectar of immortality by Gods and demons.

3. *Varahavtara*: Incarnation of *Vishnu* as a Boar to rescue the earth.

4. *Narasimhavtara*: In this *Avtar*, *Vishnu* took the form of half man and half lion and defeated the demon Hiranyakashyap.

5. *Vamanavatara*: Incarnation in the form of Dwarf begging three steps of land which in two steps covered three lakes and in third destroyed the overambitious king. This *Avtar* is symbolic of crushing of the ego and teaches that valor can only find fulfillment when we surrender completely to God.

6. *Parshurama*: A hero with an axe or Parshu, destroying the ego of the *Kashatriyas* or warrior class.

7. *Rama-Avtar*: This incarnation is in the form of perfect man who destroys Ravana and many other demons.

8. *Lord Krishna*: He is believed to be a divine statesman.


10. *Kalki Avtara*: This *Avtara* is yet to come and will destroy the wicked, restoring peace and order on earth.

In Kotah, we find depiction of *Vishnu* both in murals and miniatures. We can see many paintings depicting *Vishnu Mounting on Garuda with his Consort Lakshmi*, as can be seen in plates 25, 49. There are Khakas in the Government Museum, Kotah depicting *Vishnu on Sheshashaia*, which is drawn in Kotah folk style. *Vishnu on Sheshashaia* is also depicted on the front walls of the interior chamber of the *Bada Mahal*, Kotah, above the door leading to balcony at the back. We also find depictions of *Vishnu* on the walls of the Chattar Mahal, Kotah. Paintings of *Avtars* of *Vishnu* are also studded on the walls of the *Bada Mahal, Kotah*. 
iii. Krishna Legends

Krishna, the eight incarnation of Vishnu appeared 5000 years ago in Mathura, to Vasudeva and Devaki in jail cell of his tyrant uncle Kansa. He was brought up by his foster parents, Nanda and Yashodha in the Ideal beauty of Gokul, Vrinadavan and Nandgram. The naming ceremony of Krishna was done secretly by the Gargacharya the Priest of Yadav’s (pl. 11a).

During his childhood in Gokul, he used to steal the butter and curd, went for swimming with milkmaids, stole the clothes of bathing girls in the river, hold Mount Goverdhan, due to which Indra and Surabhi (celestial cow) came to bless him. He brought his father safe from Varun’s abode, his melody of flute used to enchant the animals and Gopies. He began a sportive dance with the Gopis, in which Krishna stationed himself between every two Gopis, who used to think that Krishna was only beside her. The most favourite Gopi of Krishna was Radha. Due to Krishna’s grace a Gandharva regained his former form, which because of curse had to be born as a snake. He killed his uncle Kansa and became the king of Mathura. On Rukmini’s request he abducted her and married her and was bestowed by son Pradejumna (incarnation of Kamadev).

Krishna legend is mentioned in the Purana, Harivamsa, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata Purana etc. Medieval works also have mentioned about Krishna, out of which Geet Govinda of 12th century by Jayadeva and Surasagara of Suradasa of 16th century are worth mentioning. The poet Surdasa narrates the greatness of Krishna as:

"Once he measured the earth in mere three steps, now he is stopped at the edge of his very house." Then he steals butter and butter milk from earthen pots of cowherdesses of Braj. When he grows up, he turns into a great lover. He falls in love with Radha. There is a curious strangness in the spectacle of the supreme lord who appears in the world to overthrow all evils, dallying with a young girl. This is the divine play, the sport of dalliance, the, playful activity, termed Lila. With his Lila Krishna is often called Mohana. Krishna is the dark one, this name is also elaborated into Ghanashyama, Dark as a cloud". He is shyama, bluish as the devotee knows, of course because Vishnu is shyama and that is the colour of infinity of space.

The quality of the descriptive poetry and lyrical quality raised it to the realm of high art. These works provided the painter with guidelines which have been
faithfully followed. Almost all the schools of Indian art have depicted Krishna as a theme. Krishna found a special place in Rajasthani and Pahari miniatures. Krishna theme has also fascinated the Kotah artists and inspired them to depict paintings on this theme. I would like to mention that Maharao Bhim Singh II Introduced Vallabha Cult in Kotah, due to which we find numerous paintings painted on this theme in Kotah style. Bhim Singh assumed himself as a servant of Krishna and converted the name of Kotah to Nandgaon. He also introduced the Garuda as an emblem of Kotah. Various scenes from his childhood, like quelling of demons, Bala Lila and adult hood, Rasamandala of Kotah (pl.50) etc. have been painted by the Kotah artist.

The walls of Kotah Palaces are decorated with Krishna Lila themes. In Raj Mahal, we find a total freeze in the interior chamber dedicated to Krishna. On the outer wall of Raj Mahal, also we find an interesting depiction of Putna Vadha. The story regarding Putna tells that she assumed the form of a beautiful damsel and went to the Krishna and took him in her lap and gave him her poisoned milk. But the mighty lord Krishna sucked the life out of her. In the paintings the child Krishna is shown playing on the upper part of Putna who has again converted into her real furious form. Entire internal chamber of Chattar Mahal is devoted to Krishna, depicting Krishna and Balarama being Received by their Parents, Vastraharna, Kalia Daman, Premature indulgence, Raas Lila with Gopis, Goverdhan Dharan, Krishna as a King etc.

Among miniatures based on Krishna Lila theme Rasamandala (celestial dance by Krishna and milkmaids (50)) is worth mentioning. This beautiful picture shows Krishna and Radha seated on a hexagonal throne in an erotic pose, surrounded by the Gopis, who are dancing hand in hand forming a circle. This whole scene is staged on a red circle outlined by white. Outside this circle, we find the depiction of musicians, different trees, and architectural form, through its window a lady is peeping. A sun and two flying carts in which Vishnu and Lakshmi are shown seated, who are sprinkling white flowers on the divine couple of earth i.e. Radha and Krishna. Radha and Krishna again appear on the foreground peeping each other from the sides of trees. In another work Vastraharna –Lila (pl.53), Krishna is shown hiding the milkmaid clothing. In this picture the artist Shaikh Taju has enjoyed in characterization of blushingly charming gestures of young ladies subjected to Krishna’s playfulness.
Another picture of c. A.D.1700 in which Krishna and Balarama are shown giving audience is an interesting one. In this painting of Kotah, two helmeted figures are shown seated in the pavilion; one dark and other fair are identified in the inscription above as Krishna and Balarama. This painting depicts the typical Rajput court scene. The impact of Mughal naturalism is visible in this painting. The picture contains graphic expressiveness and has a decorative flair in it. The shading with zigzag lines has added a greater depth in composition. There is conventional treatment of trees. Drawing of Horses, shading style shows the Mughal impact.

Krishna has also been depicted in the Nayak- Nayika-Bheda Paintings. A leaf from the Rasika Priya series of c. A.D. 1720 depicts Krishna knocking at the Palace of Radha. Krishna is shown wearing Vaijantimala and a mukut decorated with lotus bud. He is shown standing outside the Palace of Radha. His gestures suggesting that he is knocking at the door. Palace turrets are same as found in Bundi paintings. The black night sky is depicted with snake like flashes of lightening, which mirrors the anxiety of the lovers.

Another leaf from Kotah Rasikapriya series, Krishna’s Message to Radha (pl.61) of c.A.D 1725-20 depicts Krishna lying on a bed and waiting for Radha in a terrace pavilion.

Another leaf from Bihari Satsai (pl.62) shows him standing in front of a lady instructing him to go home or giving Radha’s message to Krishna. Here, he is shown wearing yellow dhoti and black shawl. His crown is decorated with Peacock feathers and he is also wearing Khadaon (Sandals). In both these paintings he is figured as slim blue coloured man.

A page from Bihari Satsai of ca A.D.1800 preserved at Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benars depict Krishna conversing with an old lady, who seems to be telling him that Radha is waiting for him from a long time. Here, he is shown wearing a different styled crown and a transparent robe with shash (a cloth tied on waist like a belt).

Rukmani Parinaya series of Rao Madho Singh Trust Museum, Kotah also depicts scenes from life of Krishna. In a leaf from this series, Krishna is depicted on his charriot about to abduct Rukmani. He is shown in blue colour wearing yellow robe and golden mukut and a golden aura with rays have been depicted around his head. His charriot is driven by two heavily decorated Horses.
Baramasa series also depicted *Krishna* as *Nayaka* as can be seen in (pls.63, 64, 65 66, 67). In all these paintings he is shown seated or standing with *Radha* in a palace pavillion or in garden.

We also find *Krishna* in the Ragamala series as can be seen in Raga Hindola (pl.69), in which blue coloured divine figure of *Krishna* is shown seated with *Radha* on a swing.

*Krishna* is also depicted in the festival themes such as *Holi Lila* (pl.40a). A short figure of *Krishna* is shown wearing *Valfantimala* and *mormukut* and throwing *gulal* and scented coloured water on his beloved *Radha* and her friends.

Other beautiful paintings depict *Krishna* as *Lila Hava* (pl.52) and *Krishna Lila* (pl.51). Murals of the *Bada Mahal* also depicted *Krishna* being blessed by celestial beings. In one mural, Maharao Kishore Singh is shown standing in the *seva* of divine couple with folded hands (pl.54).

Various scenes of *Krishna*’s childhood have also been seen in the *Bala Lila* (pl.58) , a folio from *Bhagavata Purana*, in which *Krishna* is covering the eyes of his friends with his hands, *Krishna* being suckled by Yashodha, *Krishna* stealing butter and slaying of bull demon by *Krishna* have been depicted.

Kotah painters have also depicted *Krishna* in the form of *Nav Nidhis* or nine Swaroop of *Krishna* as mentioned by *Vallabha Cult*. We find many paintings in which Kotah rulers are shown in the *Sewa* of *Brijnath ji* and *Shrinath ji*. Painted miniatures of *Brijnathji* and *Shrinath ji* are also studded on the wall of the exterior chamber of *Baba Mahal*, Kotah, above the entrance door.

**iv. The Ramayana**

Kotah artist have painted the events related to *Ramayana*. The oldest Sanskrit epic *Ramayana* was composed by sage Valmiki around the 5th century B.C. Ramayana is based on the seventh incarnation of *Vishnu* called *Rama*. Lord *Rama* the son of *Dashratha*, who was born by the blessings of *Agni*. He was married to lovely daughter of king Janaka in a *Swayamvar* by breaking the bow of *Shiva*. He had to go for exile for fourteen years, accompanied by his consort *Sita* and his brother *Lakshmana*. People of Ayodhya celebrated their return with great zest and rejoiced by decorating Ayodhya by earthen lamps. Till now in India their return is celebrated in the form of *Diwali*. 

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Themes such as *Dushera Festival*, *Diwali*, *Battle of Rama and Ravana*, *Raj Tilak of Lord Rama* have been painted by Kotah artists. At Kotah, *Dushera* is celebrated for ten days, and it is believed that during 9th day of *Dushera* celebration, which is called *Durga Ashtami*, rulers of Kotah used to give sacrifice of Buffalo or Goat\(^7\). This scene has been faithfully rendered by Kotah artists in their paintings as can be seen in the paintings *Maharao Ram Singh II hunting Buffalo* (pl.90). Another painting *Procession of Maharao Ram Singh II to Dushera Ground* (pl.99) depicts him going to the *Dushera* ground to burn the effigy of Ravana to commemorate the victory of Rama.

Kotah painters also have painted the festival of *Diwali* in the *Baramasa Paintings*. *The Month of Kartik*\(^8\) depicts *Diwali* celebrations. This festival is celebrated to commemorate the return of *Rama, Laxmana* and *Sita* from exile. The whole Palace has been shown decorated with earthen lamps. In the *Month of Kartik* ladies are depicted playing with fire works, whole atmosphere seems to be illuminated. Another picture in the *Bada Mahal*, Kotah also represents the same festival as can be seen in *Nauka Vihar* (pl.98).

Another painting depicts a scene from the story of *Ramayana* is a battle scene which shows *The Battle of Rama and Lakshmana with the Demon Ravana*, painted by Kotah Master in c.A.D. 1700 (pl.55a).

**v. The Bhagavata Purana**

*Puranas* are the sacred texts of the *Hindus*. It reveals the philosophy in simpler form which can be easily understood. There is in total 18 *Puranas* such as, *The Vishnu Purana*, *the Shiva Purana*, *the Garuda Purana*, *Narada purana*, *the Bhagavata Purana*, *the Agni Purana and the Brahma Purana* etc. All these *Puranas* are important for the study of Indian mythology.

*Bhagvata Purana* deals with the story of *Lord Krishna*: an incarnation of *Lord Vishnu*. It mainly teaches that the devotion is the only way to salvation. It was written by *Maharishi* (Sage) *Ved Vyas*. *Bhagvata Purana* Consists of 18,000 *verses*\(^9\). The conversation between king Parikshit and Sage Sukhdev (Shukadeva) is written in the form of *verses*. In this *Purana*, sage Shukadeva narrates the life and works of *Shri Krishna* to King Parikshit\(^10\).
The Childhood of *Krishna* has been described by Ved Vyas which was adventurous and heroic. The extraordinary powers (might) exhibited by *Lord Krishna* reveals that he was not an ordinary child, but the lord himself\textsuperscript{21}. *Shrimad Bhagavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of *Vedic* knowledge in a simplified manner.

*Bhagavata* has left a lasting impression on Indian life. A number of works like, songs, sculptures and paintings are inspired by *Bhagavata Purana*. All important dance schools, *Bharatanatyama, Kathaka, Kathakali, Manipuri*, and *Odissi* have adopted themes from *Bhagavata Purana*. A number of paintings from Rajasthani and Pahari schools have been painted on this theme.

In Kotah both murals and miniatures based on the *Bhagavata Purana* have been painted. We find some beautiful paintings of *Rasamandala, Vastraharna, Goverdhan Dharan, Krishna Enchanting Animals and Gopis with the Musical tune of his Flute, Naming of Krishna and Rukmani Parinaya* etc. are painted in the inner room walls of the *Chattar Mahal* of Kotah. In Rukmani Parinaya depiction of Chatar Mahal, Ganesha is shown as the charioteer of *Krishna* and *Rukmani*\textsuperscript{22}. They appear to have been drawn during Maharao Umed Singh I period (1770-1819), but have repainted by artists in late 18th century\textsuperscript{23}. *Sheesh Mahal* also known as *Raj Mahal* of Kotah fort exhibits many episodes of *Bhagavata Purana* on its walls like *Putna Vadha, Killing of Serpent Kalia, Ras, Goverdhan Dharan* etc. Even in *Sheesh Mahal, Ganesha* is depicted as Krishna’s Charioteer\textsuperscript{24}.

Few sets of miniatures based on the *Bhagavata Purana* have been painted in Bundi- Kotah styles which are now in collection of the Government Museum, Kotah. First set which has 20 loose folios, was painted by master of Elephants.

We have five remarkably illustrated leaves of this set which are published and depict *Krishna quelling the snake Kalia, Krishna Slays the Elephant Kuvalayapida, Naming of Krishna by Gargacharya, Davanala Swallowing the Forest fire, and Govind Indra Stuti* etc.

Among these, *Davanala Swallowing of Forest Fire*\textsuperscript{25} is a beautiful depiction. Once *Krishna*, Balarama and cowherds were busy in playing, their cows and calves went into the forest. When they noticed that their cows are not nearby, all of them went in search for cows, but even after a long search they did not find them. They followed the track marked by the hoofs of the cattle. When they reached in a dense forest the demon *Pralamba* caused a strong wind to blow resulting in forest fire,
Cowherds and Cows being frightened sought the help of Krishna. Krishna asked them to close their eyes and drank up the fire by his month and Pralamba was killed by Balarama. This painting is divided into two registers. In the first register Krishna, Balarama, Cowherd boys and Cattle are shown surrounded by the fire. Cowherd boys have covered their eyes with hands by the instruction of Krishna who is shown drinking the fire. In the second register Krishna and Balarama are shown conversing with each other where as Cattle and Cowherd boys are shown standing. Beautiful depiction of trees is there in this register.

Govind Indra Stuti is another beautiful painting relates to the childhood life Krishna. The people of Vraja used to sacrifice Cattle in the honour of Indra and used to worship the mountain Goverdhan to pay respect to Indra. Krishna questioned the utility of such sacrifices. He assumed the transidental form and ate all the articles of adoration saying, I am the mountain and cowherds started worshiping Krishna. When Indra came to know that his worship had been stopped at Krishna’s advice. He sent Samvartata to pour incessant water for the destruction. The whole braja was in deluge. Everyone in Gokul went to Krishna for help. Krishna lifted the mount Goverdhan with the ease as person holds umbrella and saved everyone. Indra and Surabhi came to him and bowed him and also addressed him as father of Universe. Surabhi: a celestial cow, praised him as foremost of yogis and soul of universe. Indra and Surabhi bathed him with water of Ganges, drawn by the trunk of Airavata and milk of Surabhi and conferred him the title of Govinda. Tumbura, Narada and the vidyadharas, Gandharvas and Siddhas sang his glory while the celestial damsels danced. Painting depicting this story is divided into two registers. In first register the Brahmans and people of vraj have come to Nanda to plan for the sacrifice and worship of Mount Goverdhan and Indra. In second or middle register, Surabhi (a celestial cow) Indra and Narada are shown standing in front of Indra. The Elephant Airavata is the symbol of Indra’s presence. In the foreground three men are shown singing his glory and a celestial dancer is dancing.

Another painting depicts the Naming Ceremony of Krishna by Gargachary (pl.11a). It is believed that naming ceremony of Krishna and Balarama was done secretly without any pomp and show. According to belief only family members and Gargacharya are depicted in the painting. In the second register which is very intelligibly divided by the wall, Nand and Yashodha are shown to see off to Gargacharya.
All these paintings have a little impact of Mewar, as can be seen in cattle trees and composition. Female resembles the Mewar paintings of c.A.D 1660. Little Mughal impact is also visible in the costumes. But in spite of a little impact of Mewar and Mughal, these paintings depict characteristics typical to Bundi Kotah style like dwarf figures etc. This set was the property of Maharao’s of Kotah but now it is preserved in the collection of Government Museum, Kotah. Some of the paintings of this set are unfinished due to unknown reasons. A manuscript on the Bhagavata Purana of Government Museum, Kotah also contains paintings painted by Kanhaiya Brahmin in A.D 1759. The size of the folios is 42cm x17.5 cm and painted on both sides. There are approximately 4000 illustrations. Out of which some have flowered borders and some have plain yellow borders. The figures of these paintings are painted in typical Kotah style. Round faces, big eyes and dwarf figures etc. are the main features of these paintings. The painting commentary is based on Vallabha Sampraday’s explanation to the Bhagavat Purana.

A leaf from this manuscript depicts Krishna as the titular deity of Brijnathji of Vallabha Sampraday, who is being worshiped by Maharao Durjan Sal, both seated on the golden throne engraved with stones, placed on a decorative floor. A chauri bearer is shown standing behind Brijnathji and an attendant holding marshal is standing behind Durjan Sal. Border is painted red with black outline. The garment of the chauri bearer interestingly protrudes out on the border.

Another leaf from this manuscript depicts Krishna, Balrama and cowherd boys with cattle in the forest. Krishna is shown wearing a Mormukut and Vaijantimala. All of them are depicted wearing short dhotis which look like nikkar. A halo only at the back of Krishna’s head is depicted. High horizon with reddish sky has been painted. Lot of trees in the background has been painted. Fan like trees found in Bundi paintings have also been painted here.

Bada Mahal, Kotah also shows a beautiful depiction of Bala Lila (pl.58). Stylistically this painting belongs to the time period of Rao Ram Singh II (1828-86), having dwarf figures, tapered eyes and white architecture.
vi. Rukmani Parinaya

*Rukmani Parinaya* means abduction of Rukmani. *Rukmani* was the first wife of *Krishna* and was queen of *Krishna* at his city of Dwarka. She was the daughter of Bhishmaka, the king of Vidarbha. *Rukmani* was the most beautiful princess on the Earth. She had an elder brother named Rukmi, who was a friend of evil king, Kans (uncle of Krishna), who was killed by *Krishna*.

*Rukmani* had heard about the virtue, character, charm and greatness of *Krishna*. She fell in love with *Krishna* after hearing all about *Krishna* and longed for him. Rukmani’s parents were interested to marry her to *Krishna*. But Rukmi, her brother, strongly opposed and changed Bhishmaka’s mind. Actually her brother was an ambitions prince and he did not want to earn the wrath of Emperor Jarasandha. So he proposed that she be married to his friend Shishupala, the prince of Chedi.

Rukmani heard the conversation between her brother and father. She was horrified and immediately sent *Brahmana Sunanda* to deliver a letter to *Krishna*. In which, she wrote *Krishna* to come to Vidarbha and kidnap her to avoid a battle where her relatives may be killed. She also added that if *Krishna* refused to comply she would commit suicide. After receiving the message in Dwarka, *Krishna* immediately set out for Vibdarbha with Balarama.

At the palace *Rukmani* got ready for her marriage with Shishupala. She went to shrine to pray *Goddess Parvati* that *Krishna* would arrive and wed her. As she stepped out of the shrine, *Krishna* swept her into his chariot with him. When they were riding off, Shishupala noticed them. All of Jarasandha’s forces quickly started chasing them. Balarama stopped most of them but Rukmi caught them up. *Krishna* and Rukmi dueled, in which *Krishna* was victorious. *Rukmani* begged *Krishna* to spare her brother’s life and *Krishna* agreed but as a punishment shaved Rukmi’s head. Few days later at Dwaraka, *Krishna* was married to *Rukmani* with great pomp and show.

Throughout *Puranic* literature, *Krishna* is described as *Avtar of Vishnu*. *Rukmani* is described as an incarnation of *Goddess Lakshmi*. It is believed that they can not be separated. As *Lakshmi* the concert of *Vishnu* is his power or strength, like wise *Rukmini* is *krishna’s* strength. . The version of this story is written by Vishnudas and published by N.P. Joshi and Mukandi Lal in 1973. But a Kotah folio does not follow Vishnudas’s text. This story became a basis for their illustration. The series on
this story was painted in Kotah during c.A.D.1660-70. So that we can say that these are painted by artist’s own imagination.

Abduction of Rukmani, a painting from this series shows Rukmani being abducted by Krishna outside the shrine. Ladies are shown praying in the shrine and canna (a kind of flower) and bananas are depicted in bloom. Painting is divided into two registers. In upper register, Rukmani is shown praying in shrine for Krishna and in lower register; Krishna is about to alop her in his chariot. Men, Women, Horses, Chariot, Elephants and architecture are painted particularly in Kotah style. Other important examples of the same series are Tortoise Supports a Multihooded Snake and Marriage of Vasudeva and Devaki. It is observed that both of these paintings are not based on the story of Rukmani Parinaya as mentioned above.

B. Nayaka -Nayika-Bheda

Nayaka- Nayika Bheda was popular theme of Kotah painters. There are hundred of works on Nayaka- Nayika- Bheda by known and unknown authors, which were illustrated by the painters of Rajasthan, such as, Hitarangiri by Kriparana, Nayika- Bheda by Rahim, Kalpataru by Chintamani, Ras Raj by Matirama and works of poets, such as, Deva Shripati, Tosha and Raghunatha.

Nayaka means the hero and Nayika means the heroine. The study of Nayakas and Nayikas according to their attitude and approach to love is called Nayaka-Nayika Bheda. This gives the description and classification of Nayaka and Nayikas in different situations related to love. It is an important part of Shringar. It is aesthetic exploration of moods, mindsets, distress, temper and conflicts etc. of lovers.

Classification of Nayikas

The classification of Ashta Nayikas or eight states( avasthas of Nayikas in relation to Nayaka was first written in Natyashastra and later elaborated in Dasharupaka of 10th century. Jayadeva, the court poet of Lakshman Asena (1179-1205), in his Gita Govinda described the love of Radha and Krishna in all its stages. Here, Radha was the Nayika and Krishna was the Nayaka. Sahitya Darpana of 14th century also wrote about this subject. Kalidasa in 6th century A.D. in his Meghadootam wrote about three Nayikas.

1. Swakeeya- One’s own women
2. Parkeeya- The other women

He further classified Nayika Swakeeya into three types:
1. Mugdha- Newly married lady
2. Madhya- who is a dept of making love and is not shy.
3. Pragalbha- who is mature and has learnt various types of love making

Some Sanskrit poets have divided Nayikas into four types, as Padmini Chitrini, Sankini and Hastini.
1. Padmini: She is the Nayika who is very beautiful, delicate and clean, cheerful, calm, intelligent, has golden complexion and loves beautiful and clean cloths.
2. Chitrini: The Nayika of artistic nature, who is very graceful and is fond of dancing, music and poetry. She is also fond of perfumes and her lover’s portrait. Her body is well proportionate.
3. Sankini: She has long hair and likes red garments. By nature, she is short tempered, shameless and unhesitating and pinches hard when excited.
4. Hastini: She has a rough voice and thick figure. Her face is fat and feet are large. Her lower lip and eyebrows are also thick.

In the medieval period, poet from Orchha named Keshavdasa wrote Rasikapriya in A.D.1591, has elaborated descriptive note about Nayaka and Nayikas. His Rasikapriya Poetry is divided into 16 chapters and 526 dohas and chaupai. He has mentioned 360 Nayikas in his Rasika priya. He also classified the Astha Nayikas (eight heroines) into the following categories:
1. Svadhinapatika Nayika: The Nayika, who is proud of her husband or beloved’s love, loyalty and care. In miniatures the Nayaka is shown washing or massaging her feet and applying Alta or putting the vermillion mark on her forehead.
2. Utkanthita or Utka Nayika: The one who is away from her lover and is yearning for reunion. In many miniatures, she is shown waiting for him indoor or outdoor.
3. Vasakasajika Nayika: The one who decorates herself and her surroundings to give a warm welcome to her lover. She is depicted in the miniatures as waiting for her lover by the bed, at the door or in the garden or forest.
4. **Abhishandhita Nayika**: She is the one who is repenting her hastiness in quarreling with her lover, which has resulted in their separation. She is depicted in miniatures as quarrelling with her lover or seated at a side after quarrelling.

5. **Khandita Nayika**: She is angry with her lover for causing disappointment and is depicted as reproaching her lover for his lack of faithfulness.

6. **Proshita Patika Nayika**: She is the one who is suffering badly in the absence of her beloved. She is depicted in miniatures as surrounded by maids and refuses to be consoled.

7. **Vipralabdha Nayika**: She is the disappointed heroine. She is shown throwing her jewels as her lover has not turned up at the tryst as he promised.

8. **Abhisarika Nayika**: The one, who boldly goes out to meet her lover and faces the storm, lightning, snakes and other dangers to meet her lover. *Abhisarika* is further classified into two types.
   1. **Krishna Abhisarkia**
   2. **Shukla Abhisarika**

   Rao Madho Singh Museum Trust, Kotah has beautiful miniatures depicting *Abhisarika Nayikas*. The *Nayika* who goes to meet her lover in dark cloud night is called *Krishna Abhisarika Nayika*\(^3\). The *Nayika* who goes to meet her lover in moonlight night is called *Shukla Abhisarika* (pl.60).

### Classification of Nayakas

Keshavdas also has classified *Nayakas* into the following forms.

1. **Anukula**: The one, who is sincere and is loyal to his beloved. His thoughts are clear and he loves only his wife.

2. **Dakshina**: He can be rightly said to be the women’s man. He loves all the women equally, including his wife.

3. **Satha**: The one who is unkind and false. He is sweet in his words but is not at all good at heart. He is the one who is not even afraid of sins.

4. **Dhrishta**: The one, who is very cruel. He abuses and beats his beloved, and if he is caught doing something wrong, he does not admit.
C. Baramasa (The Twelve Months of the Year)

Like Bundi Baramasa Paintings, Kotah Baramasa paintings also have a permanent place in the art world and became very popular from 17th to 19th centuries. These paintings are scattered in the different Art Museums, Art Gallaries and in the private collections in India as well as abroad. These Baramasa pictures are based on the poetry of Keshadvadasa and present a minute study of human moods and sentiments as the twelve months of a year shape them.

The planetary movements have impact on the seasons. The seasons indicate rhythmic life, death and rebirth in a cyclic manner. The seasons have further impact on the moods and behavior and emotions of the people. The earliest reference to the seasons is found in Purusasukta of the Rigveda\(^\text{38}\). Poets like kalidasa in Meghdootam have incorporated seasons in their poetry exhibiting emotions. The Brahma Purana makes a mention of the six seasons\(^\text{39}\). In Chitrasutra of Vishnu Dharmottarpurana, we find the earliest reference which tells about the general rules of depiction of four seasons\(^\text{40}\). Anushasana Parva of the epic Mahabharata makes a reference to the twelve different months and the benefit of fasting in each month\(^\text{41}\). Baramasa poetry was first created in Apabhramsha which describes the seasons of twelve months. It has poetical description of the inner most and intense feelings in love in tune with nature having simple but befitting analogies. Baramasa is also written by Guru Nanak Dev ji in Raga Tukhari\(^\text{42}\). It has religious and spiritual emotions. Guru Arjun Dev has also written Baramasa in Adi Granth in Raga Majh. These two Baramasas along with Baramasas by Sufi poets Bulle Shah and Ali Hyder are very popular. A modern version of a revolutionary Baramasa is written by a famous Punjabi poet Amrita Pritam\(^\text{43}\). It has been observed by Alberuni in c.A.D.1030 that Krishna had a special name in each month begining with Margasirsha as Keshava, Pausha as Narayan, Magha as Madhava, Phalgun as Govinda, Chaitra as Vishnu, Vaisakha as Madhusudana, Jyestha as Trivikrama, Asadha as Yamana, Sravana as Sridhara, Bhadrapada as Hrishikesha, Asvayuja as Padmanabha and karttika as Damodara\(^\text{44}\).

Jain literature has also written about Baramasa but it is different from Hindu Baramasa. Here the mention of Rajimati, the wife of Neminath has been made. She finally becomes an ascetic. Neminatha’s Catus Padika of c.A.D.1269 was the earliest Jain poetry to mention Baramasa\(^\text{45}\). Iconographies of raga are also associated with
the seasons and time. Many *Ragas* and *Raginis* are depicted in different seasons and time.

*Baramasa* is also used in Rajasthani literature like Chanda Bardai uses it in *Prithvi Raj Raso*. It is also mentioned in *Madhavanala-Kamakandala* and *Dholamaru*. *Geet Govinda* explains the sufferings of *Radha* for *Krishna* using *Baramasa*. Baramasa is also mentioned by *Vaishnava Sect* of Chaitany and Bhakti poets like Mira Bai. Many Hindi Poets have made references to *Baramasa*, like Senapati, Deva, Datta and Keshavdas. The verses of *Kavipriya* of Keshavdas became most popular among the painters. Bihari in its *Sat Sai* uses *Ritu’s* to describe the theme of love.

The months of the Hindu Calendar are also associated with the festivals. *Chaitra* (March/April) is associated with Ramnaumi and Nava Durga, *Vaishakha* (April/May) is associated with Baisakhai, Jyestha (May/June) is associated with Vata Savatri, *Asadha* (June/July) with Asadhi and Rath Yatra, *Sravana* (July/August) with Teej, Naga Panchami, *Bhadaon* (August/September) with Janamasthmi, *Gangaur, Asvin* (September/October) is associated with Dushera and Nav Durga, *Karttika* (October/November) with Diwali and Goverdhana puja, *Agahan* (November/December) with Vaikuntha and Ekadasi Ganga Snan, *Pausha* (December/January) with Makar Sankranti, *Magha* (January/February) with Vasant Panchami, *Phalguna* (February/March) is associated with Shivratri and Holi.

The *Bada Mahal*, Kotah has three sets depicting Baramasa paintings of Kotah style. These Baramasa paintings are pasted on the walls of the exterior chamber in the *Bada Mahal*, Kotah. The first set of Kotah style was painted in c. A.D. 1720-30; it seems that these are the clear cut tracings of Bundi Style. *The Month of Chetra* (pl.63) is the important paintings of this series. The inscriptions on the red border (bottom) can clearly be read. The borders of these pictures are outlined with black line inside the red border. The bower painted in this picture is very much similar to the bower painted in the Bundi Rasikapriya set preserved in the National Museum of India, New Delhi. The bower has been decorated with white garlands of Jasmine flowers in both the pictures. A yellow band at the top of the picture gives an unimpressive appearance due to being humid.

Another set in the *Bada Mahal* of Kotah style painted in the same period depicting, beautiful picture of the month of *Aswin* as written on the bottom (red border). This is a very crowded picture as can be seen in *Month of Aswin* (pl.64). An
inscription on the right side of top red border, gives an idea that it was an opening page of this Baramasa series. An inscription in the center on the bottom of the red border *Mas Asoj* identifies that this is the month of *Aswin*. These Baramasa pictures are based on the poetry of the medieval poet Keshavdas.

The third set of Kotah Baramasa is painted in c.A.D.1720-1750 under the patronage of Maharao Durjan Sal (1723-56). *The Month of Aswad* (pl.68) is the fine example of this set. Fourth set of Baramasa was painted in c.A.D.1750-60 by the Kotah artists. *The Month of Jeystha* (pl.65), *The Month of Chaitra* (pl.66) and *The Month of Bhadon* (pl.67) are the fine examples of this set. Inscriptions on the top and the broad red borders are the main features of this set. These are very fine sets of Kotah Baramasa series. The depiction of fountains, lotus pond in the foreground, thick foliage, dhok trees of white stems etc. are the typical Kotah features of this set.

The National Museum of India, New Delhi, has a very fine example based on the Baramasa poetry of Keshavdas, depicting *The Month of Shravan*, painted in the mid 18th century. In this picture, *Radha* and *Krishna* are shown like a royal couple and welcoming the rains from a platform. The painting delineating nature is too crowded to be real. In the middle of the background, a temple peeps from the dense forest. Snake like lightening in the sky, dense forest, depiction of birds on the branches of the trees and in water in the foreground and flowering trees etc. are the features of this painting. Another picture of the same set in National Museum of India, New Delhi depicts *The Month of Paua*. This picture depicts *Radha* covering herself by a shawl and *Krishna* trying to remove this. In the background a couple is shown seated in front of fire to make them warm and the *Sun* is riding a chariot having seven Hoses. Ladies in the mid of the painting are shown keeping fruits in the utensils and birds depicted in foreground seem to be mesmerized at the sight of *Radha* and *Krishna*. Other set depicting *Month of Ashad* (June/July), of the National Museum collection painted in c.A.D.1750, *Radha* or *Nayika* is shown wandering in a dense forest to meet *Krishna*. In the next scene, she is shown seated with her lover in the pavilion of a double storied white building near the lake. Bejeweled *Radha* is shown holding her golden odhni (dupatta), looking straight in the eyes of *Krishna*. In the background, a *yogi* is shown seated in front of his cottage under a mango tree and two disciples are shown seated with folded hands to seek his blessings in the hot *Month of Ashada*. In the foreground a couple is shown resting in a golden pavilion in the lotus pond. The artist has successfully portrayed the poetry of Keshavadasa’s *Baramasa*. The
depiction of the dense forest with fruit laden Mango trees, Cupolas of the building and the yellow top border etc. are the features of this set of Kotah Baramasa.

Besides these Baramasa sets there are also some Baramasa pictures in the Horst.Metzger Collection depicting, The Month of Phalgun painted in late 18th century. This Month of Phalgun depicts spring festival of Holi being celebrated with great fervor. In this symmetrical composition, the artist has depicted Krishna sprinkling gulal on the men and women playing with colours on the ground floor. They are also shown holding gulal and throwing colored water with pichkari. A man playing dafli is also depicted. Ladies are shown wearing lehangas with dotted motif and short choli of full and half sleeves. Few lines of Doha of Keshavadasa’s poetry have been inscribed at the top of the painting. Red border is decorated with white lines. All the figures are shown wearing ornaments whether male or female.

**D. Ragamala**

*Ragamala* word is the combination of two words *Raga* and *Mala*. *Raga* means melody and *Mala* means putting beads or flowers in a sequence. When some *Ragas* are placed in a serial or sequence, it is called *Ragamala*. This sequence or series expresses the state of soul or emotions. When played by an expert also evokes in the listeners, certain images and pictorial associations with his surroundings. *Bharat Natya Shastra* has set down the symbolism of the *Ragas*.

The earliest known *Ragamala* text was written by Narada, named as *Nardevya Shiksha* in 5th century A.D. Matanga also wrote about the concept of *Raga* in *Brhaddesi* in c.A.D 5th to 7th centuries. Again in 8th century, Narada and Dattila wrote about *Ragamala* in *Raga Sagara*. Soranga Deva also wrote about this theme in c.A.D 1210-1247 in his book *Sangita-Ratnakara*. Court poet of Delhi Sultan, Alau-din Khilji (1296-1316) invented *Sitar* and composed several new *Ragas*. *Pancham-Sara- Samhita* written by Narada in c.A.D.1440 contains verses regarding 6 *Ragas* and 36 *Raginis*. *Sangita Darpana* was written by Damodar Mishra in A.D. 1625 (in Sanskrit) and the *Persian Tuhfal al- Hind* commonly recognized feurmat, attributed to Hanuman, Kallinatha, Samesvara and Bharat. Out of these four, only the Hanuman system is the basis of existing sets of *Ragamala*. Meshkarana also wrote about *Ragamala*, which is known as *Meshkarna Ragamala*. The Pahari *Ragamala* paintings are based on *Meshkaran System*, Many new *Ragas* and *Raginis* are composed by
Tansen which is known as Tansen Ragamala. This was translated into Hindi in c.A.D.1549. In the 16th century Narad wrote Cattvarimsaccata Raga- Nirupamam. Ragamanjari and Sangita- Darpana was also written in the period of Akbar and Jahangir in the 16th century. Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur wrote Naurasanama or Kitab-i-Nauras which contains collection of poems in Deccani language. Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhanda compiled Hindustani classical music. He wrote Lakshan-Geet-Sangrh in three parts, which contains compositions descriptive to Ragas. Krumik Pustak Malika published in six parts which is detailed description of all the important Ragas, Swara Malika in Gujrati, Abhinava Raga Manjari in Sanskrit written by Pandit Vishnu Sharma Bhatkhande in early 20th century are the valuable treatise on Ragas of Hindustani music.

In the early sixteenth-century Man-kutihal, written for Man Singh of Gwalior (1487-1516) set the family system of six Ragas, each with five wives and eight sons except Raga Shri which had six wives respectively. The sacred book of the Sikhs, which was compiled by Guru Arjun Dev Ji (1581-1606) in 1604 also mentions six Ragas, each Raga has five wives and eight sons, a total of 84.

The six main ragas are same throughout India. They are Bhairava, Malkouns, Hindola, Deepak, Shree and Megha, but the Raginis associated with them vary according to region. Six are male (parent) Ragas; the thirty Raginis are their wives and the remaining forty-eight are their sons. These are listed as follows:

1. **Raga Bhairava:** Bhairava, the lord of ragas has emanated from the throat of Shiva. It is usually sung before dawn, around sunrise and stars are still visible. Bhairavi, Bangali, Madhu- Madhava, Varari and Saindhavi are the wives of Raga Bhairava. In the paintings, Shiva is shown in his Bhairava form, besmeared with bhabhuyi, with Mundamala in his neck, vina in his hand and attended by his consort Parvati.

2. **Raga Malkouns:** Raga Malkouns is said to be associated with the region of Malwa. It is believed to be emanated from Hari (Vishnu) Kanta. This raga is sung after midnight. In Ragamala paintings Malkouns is frequently portrayed as a heroic lord, with his consort and listening music. The wives or Raginis associated with Malkouns are, Kukubha, Gauri, Todi, Gonakali and Kambhavati. This raga is sung after midnight.
(3) **Raga Dipaka**: Dipaka means lamp or light. **Raga Deepak** is believed to be originated from the eye of *sun*. It is sung in the spring season during night. It is believed to have the miraculous powers of invoking light and heat. Deepaka, lamps and fire are featured in the paintings to symbolize this *raga*. The wives of **Raga Dipak** are Nata, Desi, Kedari Kamodi and Kanada.

(4) **Raga Sri**: **Raga Sri** is named after *goddess Lakshmi* and is associated with the harvest and related festivities. It also symbolizes good fortune. The artists have visualized this *raga* as King and Queen listening music in the court. The wives of **Raga Sri** are Vasanta, Maru, Malsri, Asavari and Bengal. This raga is to be sung at sunset and during rains in winter.

(5) **Raga Hindola**: Hindola means swing. **Hindola** is the raga associated with swing. It also signifies festivity and gaiety associated Shravan. The word Hindola is derived from swing which is used by young couple in the month of Shravan. The Raginis associated with the **Hindola Raga** are Vilaval, Desakh Patmanjari, Lalita and Ram-Kali.

(6) **Raga Megh**: **Raga Megha** is associated with monsoon and deals with the pleasure of love in union. It was personified as a bluish grey coloured god having four hands but later it was given the form of Lord Krishna. It is believed that this melody is to be composed and sung by Mia Tansen during the later part of the night **Gaur or Gujari, Vibhasa, Megh-Mallar, Bhupali, Desakari and Tanka** are the wives of **Raga Megh**.

In **Ragamala** paintings, we often see **Krishna** as the male figure as can be seen in **Raga Hindola** (pl.69) of Bada Maha, Kotah. **Krishna** is shown seated on Hindola. **Raga** and **Raginis** are also associated with Shiva (the third figure of Hindu trinity) as **Raga Bhairava**. **Ragini Bhairavi** is represented as a young woman worshiping the lingam, symbol of Shiva.

In Jain manuscripts, we find the earliest **Ragamala** paintings, but the real growth of **Ragamala** miniatures is from the court of Baz Bahadur of Mandu and Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur.
Rajasthani painters also painted a large number of *Ragamala* miniatures, which are based on the *Narada, Hanuman* and *Painter System*. They used vibrant colours which imbued the paintings with passion. The Kotah artists have also chosen the *Ragamala* as a favourite subject. The Kotah *Ragamala* paintings are based on the classification of painter’s system. Earlier *Ragamala* miniatures of Kotah and Bundi used *Chunar Ragamala* as a model, but later on Kotah adopted its own distinct style, as visible in *Ragini Gaur* (pl.70) and *Raga Hindola* (pl.69).

In Kotah, we find nine sets of *Ragamala* miniatures in series. These are scattered in the different art Museums and art Galleries in India as well as abroad. The first Kotah *Ragamala* series has 36 painting painted in c.A.D. 1660, during the region of Jagat Singh (1653-83). The paintings of this set are scattered in the different art Museums such as Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum, Edwin Binny III, Brook line Massachusetts, The National Museum of India, New Delhi etc. *Mala Raga* belonging to this series is an important example of this set. This painting has broad, burnished red borders, decorative devices. Patterned architectural moldings have also been added in this Kotah *Ragamala*. A light green colour frequently used for architecture is seen at Kotah is popular in both Bundi and Kotah states, recall the changes when compared to Bundi *Ragamala* of c.A.D. 1680.

Another set of Kotah *Ragamala* painted in c.A.D. 1660-70 has 22 paintings. These pictures can be seen in the National museum of India, New Delhi. These paintings are the clear cut tracings of Bundi *Arch Ragamala* (*Chunar Ragamala*), clearly shows the departure of dove eye as can be seen in *Ragini Kukubh. Raga Bhairava* and *Ragini Kukubha* are the important examples of this set. The change is observed only because of the migration of the artist families from Bundi to Kotah in A.D. 1624 when the state of Bundi was divided into two parts Bundi and Kotah, as have already mentioned in the first chapter.

In this set, the artist has shown broad foreheads heavy eyelids and a profuse use of gold for utensils as well as for the costume of the women. Yellow band at the top of the picture appears unimpressive as the previous inscription underneath the yellow colour is clearly visible. Long legged birds, fan shaped trees, lavish use of gold is the specialties of this set. *Raga Bhairava* which is now in the National Museum collection is very much similar to the Bundi *Raga Bhairava* painted in c.A.D. 1610-25.
Little later Ragamala paintings depict *Bilaval Ragini*¹⁴ painted in c. A.D. 1670, under the patronage of Rao Jagat Singh. In this painting a Nayika or the heroine is shown seated on a high back chair with hexagonal shape. She is shown stretching her arms above her head, looking into a circular, mirror, carried by one of her maid. There is another maid who is sitting on the floor painting her feet. On her right, there is another lady who is shown suckling her baby and one lady is shown holding a fly whisk. This beautiful symmetrical composition seems to be a palace scene or harem than a *Ragamala*. It is interesting to note that this is the mixture of *Bilaval Ragini* (typified by the present of mirror) and *Dhanasri Ragini* (Position of the ladies arms above the head).

Rao Macho Singh Trust Museum, Kotah also has a very beautiful painting, *Vasanta Ragini* ⁶⁵ of c A.D. 1675-1700. This is also a symmetrical composition. The blue coloured *Krishna* is shown dancing wearing *Pitamber* and double *Vaijantimala*. Two ladies on his left side are shown playing *daffy* and *maradanga*, and other two ladies on his right side are shown clapping and playing with cymbals respectively. The picture is full of action and movement.

Other *Ragamala* series painted in c.A.D. 1680 under the patronage of Rao Jagat Singh of Kotah. Four pages of this series are in the collection of Sangram Singh Museum of Nawalgarh. ⁶⁶ *Malava Raga* ⁶⁷ belongs to the same set and is preserved in the private collection. More decorative treatment of the vegetation and sky are the main elements of this set.

An outstanding example of a famous dispersed Ragamala is *Raga Deepa*⁶⁸ painted in c.A.D. 1720, now in a private collection is very much similar to *Bundi Arch Ragamala* painted at Chunar having inscription on the yellow top band.

Another *Ragamala* painting is *Pancham Ragini*⁶⁹ from famous dispersed *Ragamala* series painted in c.A.D. 1740. In this picture, shading is no longer indicated by thin parallel lines which actually model the forms but is simply a thick strip of a darker hue, a decorative device.

An excellent *Ragamala* set dated 1766 A.D with 250 illustrations was painted by Dalu at Nandgaon (Kotah) under the patronage of Rao Ghuman Singh of Kotah. This set is now preserved in the Saraswati Bhandar, Udaipur. It is said that this *Ragamala* set was prepared for Maharani Ranawatiji Ji, the wife of Maharao Ghuman Singh of Kotah. ⁷⁰ *Raga Megh Malhar*⁷¹ is one of the important examples of this set. A couplet is written on the red border. Broad polished red border of the pages with
narrow black and silver line to the illustrations and specially the figure types are very much similar to the Bundi style. In the collection of the Bada Mahal Kotah, we find very fine Ragamala paintings of Kotah style painted in c.A.D. 1835-40, under the patronage of Maharao Ram Singh II of Kotah. Raga Hindola (pl.69), Ragini Gaur (pl.70) are the important examples of this set. The paintings have very bright colours, mostly painted outdoors, in the gardens or on the terrace. The important features of these paintings are symmetrical compositions, action pictures, lotus ponds in the foreground, high horizon, oval face, tapered eyes which seems to be elongated, expressive and clear faces, lavish use of gold, snake like lightening in the sky, dramatic sky with curls of gold and white colours etc. are the features of this Ragamala set.

Beside these Kotah style Ragamala sets, Uniara Ragamala is also found in the Bada Mahal, Kotah. Ragini Todi, Asawari Ragini, Vasanta, Kamoda Ragini etc. are the important paintings of uniara painted in c.A.D. 1750-60.

E. Love Legends

i. Dhola Maru

Dhola Maru is a popular love story of Rajasthani literature. This was composed in c.A.D. 1620 in ancient Rajasthani language called Dingal by the poet kallol of Jaisalmer. It is a tale of Poetic imagination interwoven with historical facts taking into account the prevailing social customs and conditions.

Dhola is the young prince of Narwar and Marawani known as Maru is the beautiful young princes of Pungal. Narwar was a large Kingdom in olden days near Ujjain and kingdom of Pungal today lies between the states of Bikaner and Jaisalmer.

Both Dhola and Maru were married in their childhood at Pushkar by their parents. This custom of child marriage was very common in Rajasthan. Dhola grew up as a valiant young man. His father made a political alliance with the neighboring powerful king of Malwa by getting Dhola married a second time to princes Malwani, she was also beautiful and crafty.

When poor Maru came to learn of her earlier childhood marriage to Dhola, her desire and yearning for her dream prince knew no bounds. She told her father to send Dhaddies (a type of Bards) as messengers to Narwar, to s
ing her lovelorn message to Dhola in order to make him aware of her.

*Dhola* didn’t know that he was married in childhood to Maru and when the bards sang out *Maru*’s lovelorn messages, he became aware of his honors and duty as a husband and a love for the legendary beauty of *Maru* was kindled in his heart. *Dhola* tore himself away from the wiles of a jealous and possessive *Malwani* and started his long journey to possess *Maru* and bring her to Marwar. *Malwani* is shown as a proud cunning and crafty wife, who knows of Dhola’s earlier marriage and does everything in her power to stop Dhola to go to *Maru*.

*Dhola* finally reached *Pungal*, after a hazardous desert crossing, carried by a sturdy and faithful Camel. He was welcomed by his in-laws and his beloved *Maru*.

Umar Sumru was another character who wanted to marry *Maru* but was rejected by her parents. He caused many hindrances to *Dhola* to reach *Pungal*. He sent a (bard) Charan who told a lie to *Dhola* that Marawani (Maru) had become an old lady, but Rebarana: a wife of Camel-herder met him and told him the truth.

*Dhola Mounted on Camel* is an outstanding example of Kotah, dated c.A.D. 1762. It is now in the collection of Rajasthan Reserch Institute, Udaipur (pl.71a). In this painting, Rebarana is shown standing in front of *Dhola*. Another important painting depicts *Three Ladies in front of a Camel*, in the same collection, delineating the incident when *Dhola* reaches Pungal. *Marwani* with her friends is shown standing in front of *Dhola* in this miniature. One of the ladies is holding royal insignia suggesting the presence of *Marwani*. In both the miniatures the Camel is shown richly adorned with the typical *Ghorband* tied around its neck and body. Vermillion sky, high horizon, royal insignia etc. are the features of these paintings.

### ii. Madhu Malti

A well known example of Kotah is a fascinating composition of *Madhu- Malti*, depicting typical *Kotah kalam* of the period c.A.D. 1760 to 1775. These beautiful pictures have charm of its own despite its late date. Lotus ponds, ducks swimming in the pond, lush green vegetation, female figures full of expression, high horizon etc. are the typical features of Kotah School of painting as exemplified in *Malti and Jait Mala at Ramsarover* (pl. 72)

Madhu Malti, the love story was composed by Kyastha poet *Chaturbhuj Das Naigam*. *Malti* was the daughter of Raja Chandra Sena of Lalitnagar. *Madhu*
was the son of the minister of Raja Chaturbhej, named Tanan Shah. *Malti* belonged to *Brahmin* caste and *Madhu* was a *Kyastha*. Both used to study together, *Madhu* was very handsome, *Malti* started loving him. But her efforts to attract *Madhu* were in vain. One day she expressed her love to him but *Madhu* refused saying society will not accept it because of caste difference. But *Malti* didn’t give up her hopes. She tried to allure him through various devices. *Madhu* left the school to get away from her. He used to go to *Ramsarovar* for walk. *Malti* followed him there and tried to allure him with incantations with the help of her maid servant Jait Mala. At last she was successful, but they knew that they will not get permission for marriage, so they did *Gandharva* marriage on the banks of *Ramsarovar*. When Raja came to know about marriage he sent his armies to kill Madhu but he with the help of divine powers defeated them. The Raja realized his mistake and came to know that in their previous live Madhu was *Kamadev* and Malti was his wife *Rati*. So he gave his consent to their marriage.

**iii. Madhavanala- Kamakandala**

*Madhavanala* and *Kamakandala* is a love story written in A.D. 1583 by poet Jodh, a court poet of Akbar. It proves that the erotic impact of music is not peculiar to the contemporary young. The story is as follows:

Indignant husbands, fathers, brothers all residents of the city of Pushpavati, Complained to their ruler, Gobind Chand, about the irresistibly amorous effect on women of the Veena played by the charming Madhavnala. The king put their complaint to test. He sent for sixteen girls from the dancing hall attached to the palace. They were shut up in a room and *Madhavanala* was ordered to play his tune. Under its effect, the girls became madly excited. Accordingly, the king exiled this dangerous offender from his kingdom.

*Madhavanala* arrived at Kamavati: Capital of the kingdom of Kamsen, on a day when *Kamakandala*, a favourite dancer of the king, was performing dance at the Palace. The gate keeper did not allow him to enter, so he waited out side and detected a flow in the rhythm of the accompanying music. *Madhavanala* told the gate keeper to inform the king that a particular Tambourine player had an artificial thumb. King Kamsen, finding this to be correct, honoured *Madhavanala* by inviting him inside. He offered him his own seat and gave him valuable gifts. *Kamakandala*, the dancer,
naturally desired to show her best to such a connoisseur of music. So instead of wearing a Choli, she smeared Sandal paste on her breasts.

A bee attracted by the fragrance came there and stung her on the nipple during the performance. Without disturbing her rhythmic dance, she drove away the bee by forcing her breath through her breasts. This extraordinary feat of yogic breath control proficiency was discerned only by Madhavanala. In admiration, he gave her all the presents that the king had given him. Thus annoyed king Kamsen who banished Madhavanala. Forlorn and Sad, he decided to seek the favor of the King Vikramaditya of Ujjain, who was known for his patronage of the afflicted.

Arriving at Ujjain, Madhavanala could not get an audience with king Vikramaditya. He expressed his grief in a Sanskrit Couplet, which he wrote on the walls of Shiva temple, hoping that it might be read by the king. Vikramaditya chanced to read sad verse and was surprised, because in Ujjain no one was unhappy. He sent messenger to locate the unhappier person. Eventually, a woman discovered Madhavanala and brought him before the king Vikramaditya. He sent an ultimatum to Kamsen demanding Kamakandala and threatening a battle as the alternative. Kamsen choose the latter. Bloody action ensued in which Vikramaditya was victorious. Madhavanala was there upon united to Kamakandala. Madhavanala and Kamakandala exchange many tender words in a room decorated with flowers and pictures. Kamakandala showed her skill by playing on musical instruments which pleased Madhavanala so much that he began strumming the Veena. This caused Kamakandala to fall deeply in love with him. In Karl Khandalavala’s Pahari miniature painting, there is an inscribed drawing showing the naked Kamakandala clinging to Madhavanala. Madhavanala engaged himself in amorous sport in the cause of which he showed Kamakandala the intricacies of love making as given by koka. Kamakandala was enraptured by his skill in the art of love and they passed the whole night in enjoyment. On a dark night when monsoon clouds cooled the air, and there was thunder and lightning, Madhavanala and Kamakandala enjoyed making love in a garden pavilion. The love scene is depicted in Kangra painting. Kotah artist has beautifully depicted this love story as seen in the paintings Swooning Lady and Conversation Scene (pl. 11, 71).

Beside the above legends painted in Kotah, we also find the paintings base the on Persian love story such Laila Majnu. Majnu was the son of a chieftain and Laila was also the daughter of a chieftain, but of rival clan. Majnu was madly in love with
Laila. He used to search for her roaming in the desert. While roaming in desert wild animals gathered around him. While roaming to the city, children used to throw stones at him. In paintings, he is usually depicted clad in few cloths and disheveled hair as can be seen in (pls. 28, 28a). We also find paintings on love legend of Baj Bahadur and Roopmati. Paintings based on this theme in Kotah style are preserved in National Museum of India, New Delhi. One painting of this theme is also decorating the wall of the Bada Mahal, Kotah.

F. Portraits

Portraiture is an art of representing a person or animal by drawing, painting, carving, etching or engraving on wall, piece of paper, cloth, wood, metal, stone or any other thing, consisting some details or traits of person’s personality, sometimes with a view of projecting likeness for memory but more often for imparting an aesthetic appeal.

In Indian miniatures, portraits have been made consisting the identical details of person, his physical appearance, personality and spirituality by his actual observation as a model sitting before, or by memory or solely by imagination based on description heard or read or copied from earlier renderings or assimilated from known traditions, conventions and beliefs related to such person’s rank or class.

The artists of Kotah have tried to portray both human and animal portraits. The concept of portraiture in Kotah never speaks about the depiction of an individual only but also tells about its status, rank etc. Sometimes it also tells about its profession like in the portraits of a Dancer Kunwari (pl.46), in which a lady wearing ghungru in her feet suggests that she is a dancing girl. Kotah artist has painted two types of portraits:

I. Single Portraits

II. Group Portraits

While talking about single portraits of Kotah, we find single portraits of the rulers as can be seen in (pls.5, 5a, 5b 5c, 5d, 5e), Dancers (pls.46, 83) and Common man.

The portrait of Maharao Ram Singh I (1696-1707) of c.A.D. 1695-1700 (pl.74) is a beautiful portrait showing him standing in red robes, holding a flower. This is an inscribed portrait; the inscription reads as Maharaja Dhiraj Maharao Raja Ji Shri Shri Shri Ram Singh ji. He is shown as a person having sharp features, thin upturned mustaches, and side beard only. The heavy costume as shown in this
painting is very rare in other Kotah paintings but we can see this type of costume is preserved in the Museum of City Palace, Kotah.

Another portrait of Maharao Bhim Singh I (1707-20) painted in c.A.D.1762-70, is also an inscribed portrait, the inscription reveals, Maharaja Dhiraj Maharao ji Shri Shri Bhim SinghJi (pl.75). He is shown seated on a white mat with green border, against a big white bolster, having curled mustaches and pointed side buns.

The portrait of a Craftsman Making Toy Matchlock of Wood77 is worth mentioning. This portrait was painted by Kotah Master in c.A.D.1730, suggests that the artist has mastery over expression. The craftsman is painted with prominently furrowed (wrinkled) brow. His eyes are sharply in focus on his work. Unlike the expressionless face of the rulers the portrait of this craftsman is fully expressive.

Single portraits have also been depicted on the walls of the Bada Mahal, Kotah. We find portraits of the lady attendants, like a Portrait of a Lady holding Fan (pl.102) is one of them. Another outstanding miniature of Kotah is of Dancer which is studded on the walls of the Bada Mahal (pl.46). She is a court dancer of Maharao Ram Singh II, named as Kunwari. She is also shown in most of the paintings depicting procession scenes (pls.76, 78, 79) and paintings delineating festivals, such as, Gangaur (pl.100). These figures of ladies are having short stature, fair complexion, round faces, upturned eyes and protruding lips. They are shown wearing heavily embroidered dresses and are bejeweled with heavy jewellery.

Portraits of Kotah rulers are also depicted in the gardens or in Harem. The Portrait of Jagat Singh of Kotah in the Garden78, painted in c.A.D. 1675-1700 is among the early attempt of portraiture in Kotah style. This picture shows him seated in a Mughal style garden. He is shown seated on the throne placed on a moon like marble platform set in a lush green, floral garden of Mughal style. In this picture, he is depicted as a slim, tall and dark figure, wearing golden Mukut. He wears a transparent jama and is shown smoking Hukka. This portrait is depicted in the likeness of Jagat Singh, as we study in the history that Jagat Singh was a tall, slim personaeated man having dark complexion. The impact of Mughal is visible in the portraiture, costumes as well as surroundings.

The Portrait of Madho Singh Seated on the Throne (pl.12) depicts him as having fair complexion, pointed nose, small eyes and a bit stout figure. He is wearing a long white transparent robe and beaded Jewellery in ears and neck and bracelets in
his wrists. He is armed with Katar and swords. His green coloured throne outlined with gold is set against green background on the red floor with floral design.

Kotah artists have depicted numerous group portraits in which dominance is given to Kotah rulers only. These group portraits which are painted in Kotah style show historical events painted by the artists own imagination. It is believed that Kotah rulers were very fond of portraiture. They used to keep the artists with them wherever they go, whether it was hunt or meeting. Artists used to sketch the whole location and setting and used to paint on those sketches. In group portraits of Kotah, we also find portraits of rulers in Zanana or Harem. An outstanding example of this kind is a Portrait of Jagat Singh in Harem (pl.73), painted in c.A.D 1675- 1700, pasted on the wall of Bada Mahal, Kotah depicts him standing in harem. In this painting, he looks like a middle aged man standing, holding a Katar and wearing white robe and red embroidered pajamas. His shoes are being wiped by two ladies. Shatru Sal of Kotah with Members of His Court.79 painted in A.D. 1764, now in Kumar Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh collection is a beautiful painting. Here, we find the portraits of some other courtiers of his Darbar which are depicted with some likeness to their physical traits. The portrait of Jhala Zalim Singh can be clearly identified among them.

In a painting of Maharao Ram Singh II Watching Dance Performance (pl.76) in which the Maharao can be identified by his typical facial features as seen in many other inscribed paintings, having a slight curve near the tip of the nose. His figure is made larger than other figures to make it predominant. The portraits of other members also seem to be painted in the likeness.

Maharao Ram Singh II is also shown in Gangaur Festival (pl.100) and sometimes during Hunt (pls.91, 92, 93). Another painting of Kotah is the Equestrian Portrait of Maharao Ram Singh II (pl.30) in which he is shown in the Chak ka Chaunk is identified by the inscription which is written on the picture, is historically important painting.

We also find some portraits of Maharao’s in devotional scenes. These kinds of portraits are painted specially during the reign of Maharao Kishore Singh II. In these pictures Maharao is not depicted as a ruler but as a devotee wearing simple white coloured dhoti and performing Aarti, standing with folded hand or swinging the Hindola.
There are many other paintings in which the portraits of the rulers can be identified by the dated paintings painted at Kotah and the names of rulers are mentioned on the pictures by the artists.

Portraits of the animals in Kotah are more expressive as can be seen in *Durjansal Watches a Lion Family* (pl.85) in which facial expressions of the Lioness is very much expressive.

Another painting, *Elephants Fight* painted by Niju in c.A.D. 1725, now in the State Museum, Lakhnow and *Maharao Durjansal’s Elephant Krishanprasad* painted by sheikh Taju gives a beautiful portrait of *Krishanprasad* and the Panther in his trunks (pl.88a) are very much expressive depictions among the portraiture of animals at Kotah. The depiction of Elephant Hunt at Waterhole (pl. 85a) shows the excellent portraiture of Elephants.

**G. Hunting**

Rajputs being a warrior class was adventurous by nature, therefore even during the time of peace hunting became their favourite pastime. Various methods of hunting were practiced by *Hada* Rajputs of Kotah. It was believed by the rulers that it is their responsibility to save their people from enemies and the beasts. So they not only enjoyed a game but believed that they are on the side of god. The Kotah rulers were very good hunters and were eager to document the precise location and circumstances of each hunts. For this, they commissioned court artists. They also used to reward their painters. Inscription at the back of a painting referred that painter Lacchiram got Rs.251 in cash in A.D. 1831 by Maharao Ram Singh II.

Kotah rulers used to hunt Lions, Tigers, Boar, Wild Bull, Deer etc. For *Hada* Rajputs, to kill a wild Boar was symbol of bravery. It is said that from Boar hunt only one return, the hunter or the hunt. It was an exclusive privilege of the king and others were rarely given a change to hunt.

There was hunting department which included the game keepers, *Shikaris* and beaters etc. All of them were lavishly rewarded after every successful hunt. We find some inscriptions in *Darah Palace* which testifies that all the courtiers, accompanying men, troops were rewarded after a successful lion hunt in A.D. 1849. There were several hunting preserves in Kotah which were chosen by head *shikari*. We came to know about these *rumnas* through the inscriptions on the back of hunting scenes.
painted at Kotah. Ghatoli, Moti ki Paj, Darah, Jora Ki Bard, Raontha, Alnia and several others are the rumnas or shikargahs of Kotah. The king used to decide the kind of hunting he wished to practice. From the miniatures of Kotah, it is evident that Kotah rulers use to chase the hunt from the top of richly harnessed Elephant, surrounded by dignitaries, by nobles and his court guests. The courtiers used to beat the drums to trap the animals as can be seen in the paintings. Frightened by the beaters, the hunts use to come out of the bushes and was shoot (pl.91). This technique was mostly used for Boar hunt.

For Panther hunting, the animal was allured with Goat or Ox because Panthers are high speed animals, shy, fearful and are difficult to get close. These animals (ox or goat etc) act as a shield for hunter and allurement for hunt. A painting in which Maharao Durjan Sal and Brijnathji waiting for a hunt (pl. 88b), they are depicted waiting from behind an ox and a herd of Deer is perching by. It is now in Madho Singh Museum Trust, Kotah and is painted by Kotah Master. Animals like Dog and Cheetahs were reared and trained to help hunters in the game of hunt. A Cheetah is one of the fastest animals on earth. So using them in hunt makes the game of hunting more thrilling. Kotah rulers used to chase hunt on Horse and instruct pet Panthers to help them in hunting as can be seen in Maharao Umed Singh hunting deer (pl.88). Kotah painters have also been painted hidden in treetops or hunting from a machan amidst the thick vegetation where the hunting team by making noise used to drag the animals in the net, where comfortably seated rulers used to shoot them. Maharao Umed Singh I and Nobles shooting Lion in Alnia, dated 1784 (pl.89 b) is a beautiful depiction of this style of hunting, painted by Joshi Hathua.

The Weapons were chosen according to the animal to be killed, rifles, bow and arrows, spear, sword, katar etc. have been used by Kotah rulers for hunting. Artists have remarkably exhibited their skills in rendering beasts in various kinds of hunt. Ladies are also used to hunt in Kotah as can be seen a miniature, Ladies Hunting Tigers of the National Museum of India, New Delhi, where ladies are showing to hunt the Tigers. (pl. 95, 96).

In Kotah hunting scenes the horizon is always very high, so as to leave much room for the representation of big game. Artist has skillfully depicted the landscape with the dense forests. It seems as artists took part in the game and fixed some of the movements of the day on the paper. In these painting we can identify the ruler with
his romantic features and often name of the ruler is written behind the miniature. Animals in these paintings look lively and are vigorous. The hunting scenes of Kotah are matchless.

**H. Genre**

Besides Mythological, Baramasa, Ragamala, Nayaka-Nayika-Bheda, Portraits, Hunting themes, there are also other paintings which are based on the following themes:

1. Festivals
2. Harem

India is a land of festivals. *Dushera, Diwali, Holi, Janamashtami, Gangaur* etc. are celebrated in every nook and corner in Rajasthan. These festivals are also celebrated at Kotah since the patronage of the rulers. Kotah artists were also inspired by the grandeur of these festivals and painted these festivals as celebrated in Kotah with their own imagination.

The festival of *Gangaur* which is dedicated to the goddess *Gauri* (*Parvati*) is celebrated in the month of *Chaitra*, by the ladies for the well being of their husbands. There is a tradition of carrying the clay figurine of goddess *Gauri* to be dispersed in water with a grand procession. These processions find an excellent depiction in Kotah paintings as *Gangaur Festival* (a miniature in the collection of the National Museum of India, New Delhi painted in c.A.D. 1760-70). There is another beautiful miniature of the *Bada Mahal, Maharao Ram Singh II Rewarding a Dancer* (pl.100), in which he is shown giving a reward to a dancer who is performing a dance during Gangaur procession. Another painting of Maharao Shattrusal watching *Gangaur Festival* (pl. 97) seems interesting.

Events of *Dushera* festival which celebrate the victory of Ram over Ravana are also depicted by the Kotah painters. The paintings depicting *Procession of Maharao Ram Singh II Going to Dushera Ground to Burn the Effigy of Ravana and his three brothers* (pl.99) and *Maharao Ram Singh II Hunting Buffalo* (pl.90) etc. are the important paintings painted by Kotah artists in 19th century.

*Diwali*, the festival of lights is celebrated in the month of *Kartik*. The *Nauka Vihar* of the *Bada Mahal, Kotah* (pl.98) is a beautiful painting. There are also other miniatures depicting the popular festivals of Kotah as *Janamashtami festival*
(Krishna’s birthday) in which *Maharao Kishore Singh of Kotah is celebrating Janmashtami* (pl. 97a) and *Holi* (pl.101).

The harem or Zanana apartments, also known as Zanana, derived its name from the Persian word Zan meaning woman. In these apartments only the king or ruler and princes were allowed to enter due to *pardah* system.

Among the harem scene *Lady Yearing for Her Lover*, *Lady Listening Music* (pl.44) and *Maharao Ram Singh Watching Ladies of Harem from a Balcony* (pl.42) are beautiful examples of Kotah. A very interesting miniature shows *Yogi in the Harem* (pl. 43). Yogi as identified with his garment of animal skin seems to be *Shiva* who is shown fainted, being supported by an attendant. Another attendant is rushing towards him and holding probably medicine in her hand is being watched by a princess seated under a red decorative canopy.

*Ladies-Listening Music* (pl.44) is another beautiful work pasted on the walls of the *Bada Mahal, Kotah*, in which ladies are shown wearing Mughal styles dresses and are listening music. It is Interesting to note, here is the depiction of an old lady, who is shown conversing with princess is known as *kutni*.

Toilet scenes are also interesting theme painted in Kotah style. *Toilet* (pl.103) in the National Museum collection and *Toilet* (pl.19) on the walls of *Bada Mahal* are the best examples of this type. The Kotah artist has enjoyed the depiction of female beauty while bathing, wearing, cloths and her hair being combed by attendant, blushing and worshiping *Shiva ling* in the toilet scene of the *Bada Mahal*.

Other than these themes, some other paintings with some erotic touch have also been painted by Kotah artists as *Sambhavi* (pl.104).
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