

MODULE – 3

Wall Painting



Notes



2

WARLI PAINTING

Till now, you have gained knowledge about different types of Madhubani folk art. In this lesson, you will learn about Warli wall paintings made by the Warli tribal people. The wall paintings made by the Warli tribal people are called Warli paintings. The tribal people of Dahanu and Talasari townships in Maharashtra state of India have a long tradition of making ritualistic wall paintings. These also include floor paintings made by women on the occasion of birth, death and marriage. The Palaghat chowk made for the worship of Palaghat Devi during marriage ceremony is made only by married women. In a way, these paintings give a beautiful glimpse of the world view, gods, daily life activities, village, environment, flora-fauna and vegetation of the Warli tribal people. In the centre of the painting, a square chowk is made. Sometimes this chowk is made using geometric shapes such as semi-circle; lines cutting each other, scallops or kanguras, dots, etc. Sometimes the border is decorated by repeating motifs such as headgear like maur/basing, etc., worn by the bride and groom during marriage. In the centre of the chowk the figure of Palaghat Devi is made by combining two vertical and adjacent vertex triangle. Sometimes Moon, Sun, comb, flowers, ladder, basing etc., are also painted in the top region of the centre of the chowk. Outside the chowk, other Warli gods such as Bagh Dev, Panch Siriya, Hiroba, Chandra Dev and Surya Dev along with marriage rituals, agricultural activities, dancing youth, marriage procession, flora and fauna etc., are also painted on the top region of the wall. This painting is done as a group activity.

According to archaeologists, the wall paintings of Warli tribal people appear to be an extension of the cave paintings of central India that have been classified as Neolithic rock painting. The characteristic features of cave paintings from this period are white outline, triangular human, figures of flora and fauna and geometric depiction. The figures made in Warli paintings appear as simple but dynamic reflections of cave paintings without detailing. Since last few years, this women dominated art has been taken up by men also as a means of earning a living who are presenting the traditional paintings in a new contemporary form to sell in city markets.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the traditional Warli painting;
- analyse the similarity between cave paintings of the Neolithic period and the Warli tribal paintings;
- create a relationship between ritual and occasional Warli paintings;
- identify materials to make the Warli paintings;
- enlist the various motifs depicted in Warli paintings.

2.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Learner, now you will learn the general description of Warli painting. Warli painting is a tradition of making ritualistic wall paintings among Warli tribal people belonging to Dahanu and Talasari regions of Maharashtra state of India. They include paintings made by women during birth, death and marriage rituals. They consist of Palaghat chowk made for the worship of Palaghat Devi by married women. A characteristic feature of Warli painting is that it gives glimpses of daily life activities, village, environment, flora-fauna, gods-goddesses, etc. of the tribal people. Sometimes this chowk is made using geometric shapes such as semi-circle, lines cutting each other, dots etc. Apart from mainly Moon, Sun, comb, flowers, ladder etc. gods such as Bagh Dev, Panch Siriya, Hiroba, Chandra Dev, Surya Dev and activities of marriage, dancing youth, and marriage procession are also made in the paintings done as a group activity. A characteristic feature of paintings made by Warli tribal people is triangular human figures. Earlier, only women participated in this art, but now men have also taken up this art as a lucrative means of employment.

2.2 TRADITIONAL WARLI MOTIF

We will get to know some important motifs depicted in Warli painting. These are given below:

- **Palaghat Devi chowk:** This is centrally important for marriage ritual paintings. The figure of a Devi (Goddess) is painted in the middle of a square chowk.
- **Panch Siriya:** This is depicted as a five-headed horseman. It may or may not be made in the centre of the chowk. This is a protecting Dev (God).



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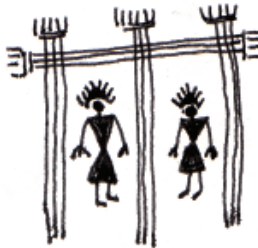
- **Bagh Dev:** This is painted as an image of a tiger on a wooden pole.



- **Chandra-Surya:** They are worshipped as tribal natural forces.



- **Bride and groom riding a horse:** In paintings made for marriage rituals, the groom is shown on horse back or bride and groom standing inside a bandanavar.



- **Crown/Maur:** In marriage paintings, bride and groom are shown wearing head gear called Maur/Sehra a crown for bridegroom.



- **Vegetation:** Palm and other vegetation is shown extensively in Warli paintings.



- **Human figures:** Human figures involved in various activities are an important part of Warli paintings. They are shown dancing, in a marriage procession, running, farming, hunting and other daily activities as men and women.



- **Flora-fauna:** Beautiful depiction of flora and fauna is done in Warli paintings in which peacock, deer, goat, horse, cock, hen, cow, lion, birds, spider, ant, jackal, crane etc. are prominent.



- **Shepherd:** Shepherd taking goats and cows for grazing is an important part of Warli paintings.



- **Tarpa:** This is a musical instrument played by a group of young men and women while doing the Tarpa dance. It is the most popular image in the Warli paintings.



Notes



Notes

- **Tadi picking youth:** The image of a human form climbing a Palm tree to pick Tadi shows an important activity of Warli life.



Fig. 2.1

2.3 MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR WARLI PAINTING

Material required by learner to make Warli painting

- Drawing board
- Pencil
- Fevicol
- Drawing sheet or markin cloth
- Soft round brush of 1, 3 and 7 number
- Warli and brown poster colour and red clay
- Small plastic mug
- Drawing pin
- Eraser
- Scale

2.4 TRADITIONAL METHOD OF WARLI PAINTING

Now let us understand preparing the background or surface for painting.

- Take a drawing sheet or unwashed markin cloth of 14"×20" size.
- Make a border of 1" on all sides of this. In this way, a rectangle of 12"×18" will be obtained on the sheet/cloth.
- Now prepare a thick mixture by mixing red clay in water. Add a little fevicol to it so that when the red clay is applied on the sheet/cloth it does not leave it upon touching.

Warli Painting

- Rub your finger on the prepared surface. If the colour is removed then add some more fevicol to it and red colour.
- To prepare a proper surface for colouring, at least two coats of the red clay mixture are required. Before applying the second coat, it is necessary to check whether the first coat has dried completely.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1

Learner, you have learnt the traditional method of Warli art. Now we will prepare a Warli painting on a paper.

- First, you compose a painting made by Warli tribal people on the occasion of marriage by keeping the Palaghat Devi chowk in the centre on a drawing sheet.
- Firstly, select the motifs of Warli painting related to Palaghat Devi chowk and marriage.

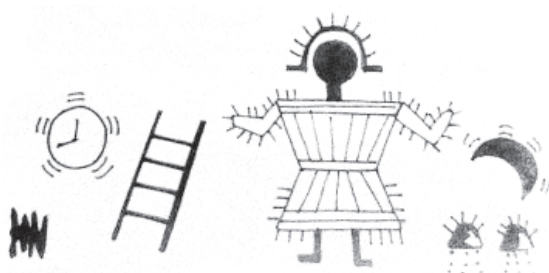


Fig. 2.2

- Keeping the selected motifs in mind, imagine a composition of a painting.
- Specify the place and general shape of all those motifs you want to paint according to your imagination. Use a pencil and take dark brown colour on the prepared surface over the drawing sheet.
- Now make clear sketches of all the shapes to be painted using pencil.

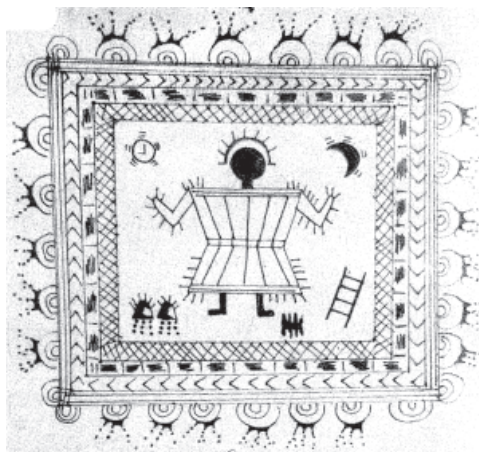


Fig. 2.3

MODULE – 3

Wall Painting



Notes



Notes

- With the help of 1 number brush, outline each shape using white poster colour.

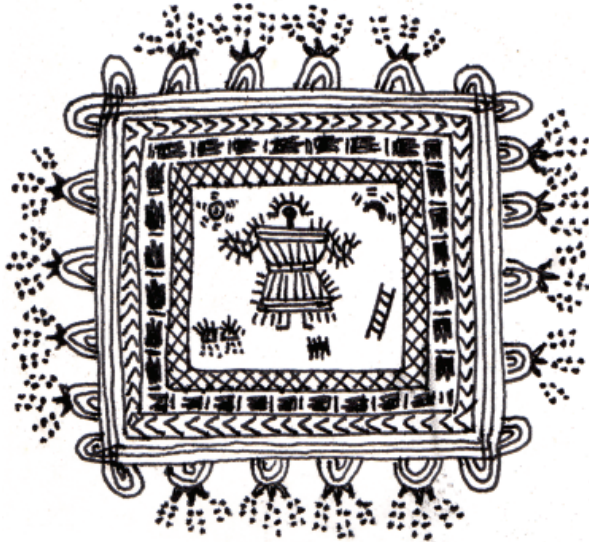


Fig. 2.4

- Thereafter, fill each shape with flat white colour in the middle of the outline using 3 number brush.



Fig. 2.5

- In the end, define the limbs and head of the figures of human and flora-fauna.

The human and animal figures are made by combining two vertical triangles with adjacent vertex. Therefore, these triangles will be vertical while making human figures, whereas they will be horizontal for animal figures.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 2

Now let us draw another Warli painting on the drawing sheet. Compose a Warli painting on cloth scene of picking tadi from a palm tree.

- Select Warli motifs to make a composition on the prepared red clay background on a markin cloth.
- Conceptualize a painting of Warli style in your imagination.
- According to the imagined design, signify the place and shape of the different motifs that are to be painted using pencil on the prepared surface over the cloth.



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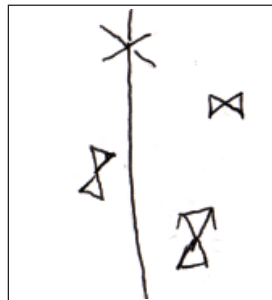


Fig. 2.6

- Sketch each shape using a pencil.

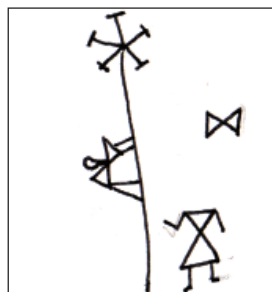


Fig. 2.7

- Outline each shape with the help of 1 number brush and white poster colour.

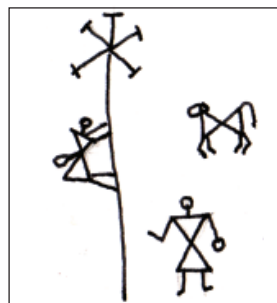


Fig. 2.8



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- Fill in the shapes with flat white colour using 3 number brush.



Fig. 2.9

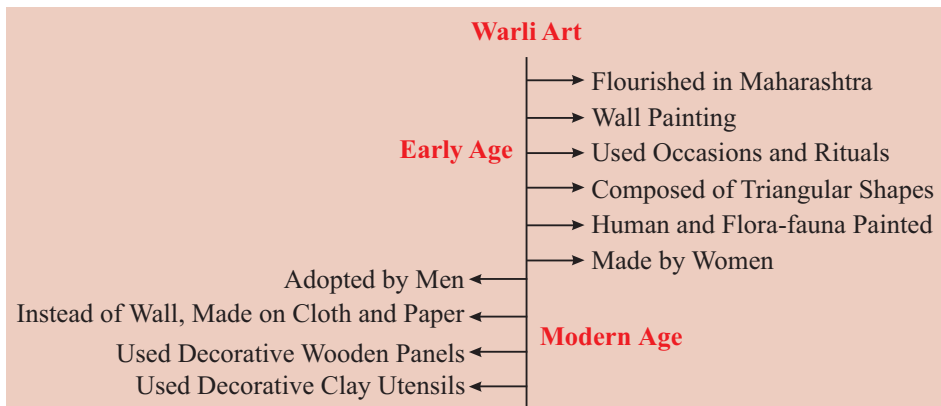
- Finally, define the limbs, head etc. of the figure of humans and flora-fauna. While making the human and animal figures, two triangles of adjacent vertex have to be combined. For human figures, the triangles will be one above the other, whereas for animal figures, they will be facing each other.



Fig. 2.10



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT



Notes



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Describe characteristic features related to the Warli paintings.
2. Sketch the Palaghat Devi chowk made in Warli paintings.
3. Paint the Panch Siriya horseman and Bagh Dev.
4. Sketch the Warli youth picking Tadi from the Palm tree.
5. Make a painting of a group of young Warli men and women doing the Tarpa dance.
6. Make a painting using important motifs from Warli painting.

GLOSSARY

Wall painting	:	painting made on walls
Ritualistic	:	related to procedures of worship
Basing	:	head gear of the bride and groom
Agricultural activities	:	activities related to farming
Employment	:	means of earning a living
Dynamic	:	giving the appearance of movement