



## ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Arts

### ROLE OF PAINTING IN REPRESENTATION OF HINDU MYTHOLOGICAL DEITIES

**KEY WORDS:** Hindu, Mythology, Painting, Indian Culture, God, Goddess, Hindu deities, Myth, Aesthetics, Artist, Creativity, Visualization.

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#### ABSTRACT

Painting is a very important part of Indian culture and history. The visual representation in form of painting has spread many messages around the world. The visualization of Hindu God and Goddess is represented through painting in a very aesthetic way. In Hindu Mythology, there are several deities having an individual story of their own. Each deity has experiences, which act as a learning to every Hindu in the society. During that period, there was no photography, hence all the visualization of our ancestors were recorded in form of paintings by different kind of artists. In mythology, the word "myth" exists, which indirectly portrays that the events of mythology may be imaginary, but the belief of people towards these stories give a positive message to the society. The examples of the victory of good over the evil, the value of persistence etc. are taught through the Hindu mythology. Each and every element in the painting portraying the Hindu deities have a strong meaning for the viewers. A strong visualization of these characters, plots and situations are able to create a positive vibe, which is helpful to the society.

#### INTRODUCTION

No one in the world, who exists today have ever seen God in their entire life. Artists create a visualization of the deities in form of drawings, illustration and paintings etc. and people believe in them. Paintings create magic in the mind of people by creating a beautiful imagery of fascination. The paintings includes many elements like nature, costume and animals etc. which add a charm to the portrayal of a deity.

universe by the Lord. In Image no. 2, the painter has tried to demonstrate the life of lord Vishnu, who took an *avatar* as Krishna and lived a normal life as a human being. The deities also live the life of a normal human being and have desires accordingly. The relationship between Krishna and Radha is displayed as a normal relationship between a boy and a girl, who are dedicated to each other in pure love as compared to the two swans in the river in the background.



**Image 1: Creative Painting - Ardhanarishwar**

Artists who use painting as an inspiration for displaying their artwork create a scenery of nature along with the god and goddesses. Nature includes the elements of sky, sun, clouds, trees, bushes, rivers, plants, flowers, stones etc. These elements of nature, add more charm to the portrayal of Hindu deities. It looks like a complete composition of a beautiful

#### 2. Nature



**Image 2: Painting of Lord Krishna with Radha**

Source: [www.indiamart.com/niteshmetal-handicraft](http://www.indiamart.com/niteshmetal-handicraft)

#### 3. Costume



**Image 3: Lord Rama**

Source: [www.pixels.com](http://www.pixels.com)

The imagination of costumes for the Hindu deities by the artists also make paintings look pleasing. A good and attractive dress has always been an attraction for every human being. The design of dress includes the fabric used in it, the border designs and the silk effects in it makes it more gorgeous. Many Hindu men and women try to imitate the dress pattern of god for themselves as well as their children in festive occasions. People like to dress their children like a deity in various cultural programs. These paintings are an inspiration to the people in all forms and it has been continuing from generations. As people pass on their property to their next generation and they try to develop and grow it and make it better, similarly the artists pass on their visualization to the next generation and the new generation artists use various modes to improvise the ideas and mode of art. *Roti, Kapada and Makan* is considered as the most important part of human life. Hence *Kapada*, the cloth/dress of any deity resembles much importance in the life of people. Even though people do not dress exactly like them today, but in the old generation people used to adopt that kind of dressing in their normal life.

#### 4. Ornamentals



**Image 4: Lord Ganesha**  
Source: [www.amazon.in](http://www.amazon.in)

Most of the Indians of Hindu origin have a craze for jewelry and ornaments. There is a belief that if a Hindu women wears Gold jewelry, it brings wealth and prosperity in a family. It is not only about gold and silver, any kind of artificial ornaments are also used by people who belong to a little lower economical standard. Most of the deities displayed by the artists in their painting wear ample of jewelry and that too of various kind of designs. Different artists of different place decorate their deities according to their own culture and origin. The style of ornaments vary from place to place i.e. the ornaments of Lord Ganesha created by an artists of Rajasthan will differ from the design created by the south Indians. The

ornaments includes the *mukuta*, necklace, bracelets and many others. Without ornaments, the deities too look dull, hence they are decorated with the best ornamental designs by the artists.

#### 5. Motifs



**Image 5: Goddess Lakshmi, Lord Ganesha and Goddess Saraswati**

Source: [www.amazon.in](http://www.amazon.in)

Motifs play a big role in the paintings of deities of Hindu religion. Every element used in the representation of deity becomes a motif and a unique symbol in the society. Motifs include Lotus, *Kalasha*, *Shanka*, Mace etc. The ingredients that the deity is surrounded around is chosen with a good observation by the artists. It is seen that the worship of God is done according to the arrangement displayed in the paintings. People buy materials for *Puja* and most of them represent the way a God is worshipped.

#### 6. Weapons



**Image 6: Goddess Kali with weapons**

Source: [www.rgyan.com](http://www.rgyan.com)

God is considered as the creator of the Universe in different religion and each religion have their own deities. This kind of feeling is created by the artist in their paintings where they show that the deities are very powerful with different kind of *astras* in their possession. Each deity have some specific weapons which they use to demolish the demons. Extreme power comes with a responsibility. The deities are considered to be having the responsibility of protecting this world from evil sources and maintain a balance. Hence, the Hindu deities are equipped with various kinds of weapons to deal with the evil sources. In Image 6, it can be seen that Goddess Kali is equipped with different weapons in her eight hands. This symbolizes that God has the supreme power and people feel protected under the belief of God.

#### 7. Animals



**Image 7: Different deities with their animal vahans**

Source: [www.indiadinivine.org](http://www.indiadinivine.org)

Animals have a big role in the Hindu Mythology. Few deities in Hindu religion use animals as their *vahan* i.e. carrier. For example, as shown in the paintings, it can be seen that Elephant named *Airawat* is the carrier of Indra, Mouse as the carrier of Lord Ganesha, Tiger as the carrier of Lordess Durga, *Seshnag* as the bed of Lord Vishnu, Snake in the neck of Lord Shiva etc. Similarly there are many other animals, who have been used in the Hindu mythology by the artists. Animals and Birds also form the eco-system of the Universe and the deities have given them equal importance as given to human beings.

### 8. Positioning and Mode of Paintings

The paintings of Hindu mythological deities are placed in different places. The paintings can be seen in temples, homes of people, in the entrance of office, in the place of worship etc. These paintings are treated with much respect and worshipped daily by the Hindu people. The paintings also act as a source of revenue for the artists, who earn their livelihood through it. Paintings are done using water color, poster color, oil color, acrylic color etc. depending upon the source of the artist. The durability and price of the paintings depend upon the mode of input like canvas, color, time taken to complete a painting etc. The paintings of Hindu mythological deities are not only a belief of people, but also acts as a complete eco-system of the creator to the receiver by benefitting everyone associated with it. Paintings of deities in different places bring a positive wave in the surrounding areas and people feel safe around the places where these paintings are placed.



Image 8: Placement of Lord Ganesha Painting

[www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

The placement of paintings of Hindu deities is not only limited to place of worship. It has taken its place in form of paintings in different places like Drawing room, Office room, Entrance of Home or Office etc. Paintings of Indian mythological deities are also placed and exhibited in different art galleries.

### 9. CONCLUSION

Indian paintings demonstrate Hindu mythology deities according to their ideologies that aesthetically pleases the people. A painting is the mirror of the mood and perception of an artist. People connect to their belief of God through these paintings. Every Hindu house has got a place for the paintings as well as idols of God. The posture of God in different paintings also add a sense of great visualization. The confident posture of a deity gives confidence to people that they are under the safe roof of the God whom they worship.

This belief arises due to the presentation of deities by painting artists. Hence, Indian painting plays a big role in representation of Hindu Mythological deities, which acts as a lifeline for Hindu people. The painting artist form a backbone in creating the visualization of the creator of Universe in the Hindu religion. The day of a Hindu begins with worship and ends with the same. The power of paintings is a great source for inspiration as well as a mirror of real life in a beautiful and aesthetical way.

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