



Representations of Radha and Krishna in Rajasthani Miniature Painting: A Comparative Analysis of the Mewar, Kishangarh, and Bundi Styles

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Abstract

The devotional love of Radha and Krishna forms one of the most enduring aesthetic and spiritual themes in North Indian art, and it found some of its richest visual expression in the courtly workshops of Rajasthan between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. This paper undertakes a comparative study of three regional idioms of Rajasthani miniature painting Mewar, Kishangarh, and Bundi and asks how each reinterpreted the same devotional subject in line with its own political circumstances, theological affiliations, and aesthetic preferences [1], [12], [20]. Drawing on the pictorial conventions, patronage histories, and literary inheritances associated with each school, the paper argues that although the three traditions shared a common textual reservoir of Vaishnava bhakti poetry, each court translated that inheritance into a visibly distinct pictorial language: Mewar's saturated and assertively Rajput courtly idiom, Kishangarh's lyrical and idealised elongation, and Bundi's naturalistic immersion of the divine couple within landscape [4], [8], [11]. A further concern of the paper is the shared institutional context of the Pushti Marg, the devotional path founded by the theologian Vallabhacharya, which linked several Mewar ateliers to the pilgrimage centre of Nathdwara and which has rarely been examined

alongside a direct stylistic comparison of the kind attempted here. The paper concludes that regional variation in the imagery of Radha and Krishna offers a valuable lens for understanding how devotional painting was shaped as much by dynastic identity and local taste as by shared scripture.

Keywords: Radha Krishna, Indian Miniature art, Rajasthani art, Divine art

1. Introduction

Over roughly three centuries, the princely courts of Rajasthan produced one of the most distinctive bodies of devotional painting in South Asia [1]. Within this larger tradition, few subjects recur as insistently as the love of Radha and Krishna, a theme drawn from the

Bhagavata Purana, the Gita Govinda of the twelfth-century poet Jayadeva, and later vernacular compositions such as Keshavdas's Rasikapriya [12]. Yet the visual handling of this shared



subject differed sharply from one court to the next. A Radha painted at Udaipur under the Sisodia rulers of Mewar looks, feels, and behaves quite differently from a Radha painted a century later at Kishangarh under Raja Sawant Singh, and both differ again from the Radha who appears amid the forests and monsoon skies characteristic of Bundi and its sister state, Kota [20].

This paper explores the common textual and theological foundations that influenced the depiction of Radha and Krishna across the three schools. It then delves into the distinct historical trajectories, patronage systems, stylistic elements, and interpretations of Radha and Krishna within each school. By comparing these traditions, it becomes evident that differences in artistic portrayal, colour schemes, and settings correspond to variations in courtly culture, political contexts, and the spiritual inclinations of individual patrons.

The selection of Mewar, Kishangarh, and Bundi for this comparative analysis is purposeful, as each school represents a well-documented and unique approach to the Radha-Krishna theme within the broader Rajasthani painting tradition. While other regional idioms existed, these three schools offer a clear foundation for comparison due to their focus on Krishna, Kishangarh's personal intertwining of divine and romantic love, and Bundi's immersion of the divine couple in natural landscapes. Together, these schools cover a range of geographical, chronological, and

stylistic aspects of Rajasthani art, allowing for a focused examination centred around a common motif.

2. Literature Review

Scholars who have studied Rajasthani miniature painting have long acknowledged that what is commonly called the Rajput school does not represent a single, unified style but rather a grouping of related yet regionally distinct visual traditions [1], [17]. Early cataloguers of Indian painting brought together the workshops of Mewar, Bundi-Kota, Marwar, Kishangarh, Bikaner, and Amber-Jaipur primarily because these workshops shared patrons from Rajput ruling families and a common devotional and literary heritage, while also recognising that each region cultivated its own facial conventions, clothing styles, colour choices, and approach to depicting landscape [12], [20].

Scholarship on Mewar painting has broadly emphasised its early resistance to Mughal naturalism and its roots in the older Gujarati Jain manuscript tradition, an influence that can be seen in the elongated, fish-shaped eyes and angular profiles of its painted figures [7]. Historians who have written about this school also draw attention to the personal religious devotion of Mewar's rulers, and particularly that of Maharana Jagat Singh I, whose support of the arts led painters to portray



Krishna in the manner of a Mewari Rajput nobleman rather than as a distant figure in the Mughal courtly mode [4], [10], [16].

The body of writing on Kishangarh focuses almost entirely on the creative relationship between Raja Sawant Singh, who wrote devotional poetry under the pen name Nagari Das, and his court painter Nihal Chand, whose portraits of the singer Bani Thani have come to represent the school in its entirety [3], [5], [9]. Scholars generally interpret the elongated, dreamlike figures of Kishangarh painting as a deliberate idealisation of both the ruler's beloved and of Radha herself, merging courtly romance with religious devotion within a single pictorial form [8], [21], [23].

Writing on Bundi and its closely related neighbour Kota tends to highlight these schools'

characteristic naturalism, particularly in the depiction of forest settings, monsoon skies, and moving water. Several writers attribute this quality both to the region's genuinely verdant geography and to an early absorption of Deccani pictorial conventions [2], [6], [15]. Broader comparative surveys of Rajasthani painting have generally treated Mewar, Kishangarh, and Bundi as separate subjects, cataloguing regional traits without offering a sustained thematic

comparison built around a single shared subject such as Radha and Krishna [13], [14], [18]. The present paper seeks to address this gap by using the Radha-Krishna theme as a controlled point of comparison across all three schools.

An additional strand of scholarship examines the wider institutional and religious framework within which this painting tradition developed, particularly the growth of the Pushti Marg sect founded by the theologian Vallabhacharya and the devotional culture that gathered around the

image of Srinathji at Nathdwara [1]. Since several Mewar workshops were directly connected to Nathdwara patronage, and since Kishangarh's Sawant Singh was himself affiliated with the

Vallabhacharya tradition, this institutional background helps clarify why the three schools,

despite their clear stylistic differences, remained grounded within a shared devotional world. Existing scholarship, however, rarely brings this common institutional context into direct conversation with a side-by-side stylistic comparison of the kind attempted here, and addressing this is the second aim of the paper.

3. Methodology

This paper follows a qualitative, comparative approach drawn from the discipline of art history. Rather than examining a single painting in isolation, it draws on the broader stylistic conventions documented for each school figural type, colour palette, treatment of architecture and landscape, and characteristic literary sources and considers how these conventions shaped repeated

depictions of Radha and Krishna [1], [20]. Material has been gathered and cross-referenced from published art-historical writing, museum and auction-house records, and craft-history sources related to each of the three schools, so as to identify the consistently and

widely documented features of each idiom rather than depending on any single account [12], [14], [22].

Since comparative claims are only meaningful when made along shared lines of inquiry, the analysis that follows is structured around a consistent set of categories patronage and period,

facial typology, colour palette, treatment of landscape and architecture, and emotional register applied equally to all three schools before being brought together into a single comparative table in Section 8. This structure allows the paper to move beyond a straightforward description of each school in turn and toward a direct account of how the three idioms differ from, and relate to, one another across a shared set of visual and thematic criteria.

4. The Devotional and Literary Roots of Radha-Krishna Imagery

The widespread pictorial focus on Radha and Krishna across the courts of Rajasthan cannot be separated from the broader Vaishnava bhakti movement that spread through North India from roughly the fifteenth century onward. At the heart of this devotional tradition was the idea that

the passionate, at times anguished, love between Radha a cowherd woman of Braj and Krishna, the divine cowherd, offered the most vivid available metaphor for the human soul's longing for union with god [1], [12]. This idea, first elaborated at length in the Sanskrit poem the Gita

Govinda and given extended narrative shape in the tenth canto of the Bhagavata Purana, was further spread through vernacular Braj-bhasha poetry, most notably Keshavdas's Rasikapriya, which catalogued the moods, gestures, and dramatic situations of ideal lovers using Radha and Krishna as its recurring example [8], [20].

Because this literary inheritance was shared across Rajasthan, painters working at Udaipur, Kishangarh, and Bundi all drew upon an overlapping set of scenes: Krishna playing the flute in the forest, the circular Rasa dance performed with the cowherd women, Radha's feigned

displeasure and eventual reconciliation, the lovers' moonlit meetings, and the seasonal

separations described in Baramasa verse [6], [16]. What varied across the three schools was not this shared narrative vocabulary but its visual rendering the facial expressions given to the two lovers, the colours used to surround them, and the landscapes within which their story was set. It is this act of visual translation, rather than the common narrative source, that sets one regional school apart from another, and it is this translation that the remainder of the paper examines school by school [4], [11], [21].

5. The Mewar School

5.1 Historical Development and Patronage

Mewar holds a foundational position in the history of Rajasthani painting. Signs of a distinctive local idiom can be found in illustrated manuscripts from as early as the fifteenth century, though the school did not develop into a fully independent style until the sixteenth century, when its main centre of production was first located at the fortified city of Chittorgarh before shifting to Udaipur, with additional workshops at Nathdwara, Devgarh, and Pratapgarh [7], [10]. Maharana Jagat Singh I ruled Mewar for twenty-four years, a period during which the art of the region reached its highest point. It was under his rule and that of his successors that local artists most fully enriched their craft through sacred depictions of Krishna, Radha, and Rama [4], [16]. This was also the period in which Braj Bhasha literature flourished, bringing the lives and characters of Krishna and Rama closer to wider audiences, while the concurrent rise of the Pushti Marg exercised a deep and enduring influence on the visual arts of the region [1].



Fig. 1: Krishna dances with Radha and the gopis: Gouache on paper, Mewar style (source manuscript, Mewar Krishna-lila series).

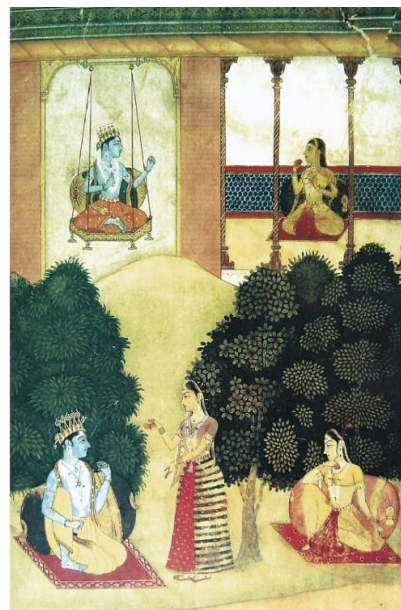


Fig. 2: Krishna on swing: Artist (Nuruddin), gouache on paper (Collection Museum, New Delhi).

5.2 Stylistic Vocabulary

Mewar painting is readily recognisable for its rich, high-contrast palette of vivid reds, ochre yellows, deep blues, and greens, applied with relatively little tonal variation [4], [7]. Figures are given oval faces, prominent noses, and large, almond- or fish-shaped eyes, a

feature carried over from the earlier Gujarati Jain manuscript tradition. Compositions favour flattened, stylised

architecture domed pavilions, turrets, and jharokha windows set against foregrounds filled with decorative flowers and birds, while trees are depicted with only partial naturalism, serving more as ornamental pattern than as closely studied nature [10], [16].



Fig. 3 . Palace interior scene with Radha, Krishna, and attendant women, multi-register composition. Opaque watercolour on paper, Mewar style.

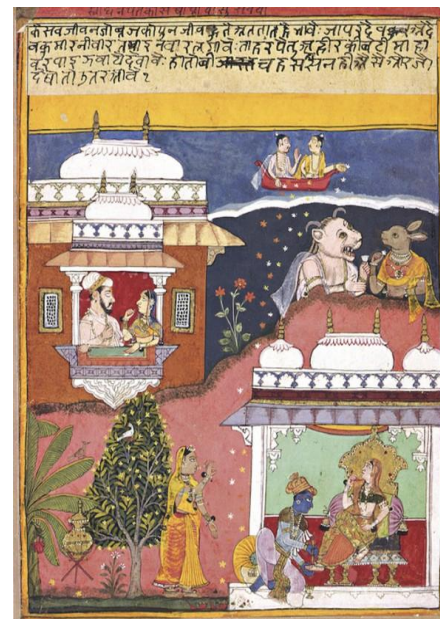


Fig.4: Krishna cleans and adorns Radha's feet. Illustration to the Rasikpriya By Keshavdas Udaipur, Rajasthan, ca. 1660 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Polsky collection).

5.3 Radha and Krishna in the Mewar Idiom

In Mewar painting, Krishna typically appears not as a distant deity but as a Mewari Rajput nobleman, clothed in the fashionable court dress of the period and given a strong, muscular physique quite different from the more refined princes of Mughal portraiture [4], [7]. Radha, by contrast, is conventionally painted at a smaller scale than Krishna, dressed in a flowing ghagra-choli and a translucent odhni; her closeness with Krishna is rendered with a directness that later observers have described as unusually open for its time [16]. Painting series based on the Rasikapriya and on episodes from the Bhagavata Purana allowed Mewar's artists to portray a wide emotional range, yet the underlying visual grammar bright, unmodulated colour, schematic architecture, and Krishna reimagined as a Rajput prince remained notably consistent throughout the school's long history [1], [10].



5.4 Representative Works

Series illustrating the Rasikapriya and the Bhagavata Purana, produced at Chawand and Udaipur in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, remain the most frequently cited examples of the

Mewar idiom, together with Ragamala sets that place Krishna's amorous moods within the personalised emotional states associated with individual musical modes [7], [16]. The painter Sahibdin, who worked at the Udaipur court in the mid-seventeenth century, is often credited with some of the school's most accomplished illustrated manuscripts, including two separate Gita

Govinda folios completed in 1629 and 1635, the second of which contains particularly detailed forest scenes rendered with thick foliage and flowering plants [16]. In the following century, the Nathdwara workshops carried this visual language into a large-scale devotional format through pichwai cloth paintings of Srinathji, demonstrating how thoroughly the Mewar approach to Krishna's image had become woven into the region's broader religious visual culture, well beyond the smaller format of the miniature page [1], [4].

6. The Kishangarh School

6.1 Historical Development and Patronage

The Kishangarh school reached its defining period of maturity comparatively late, during the first half of the eighteenth century, under the patronage of Raja Sawant Singh, who ruled Kishangarh and is equally remembered as a poet writing under the pen name Nagari Das [3], [23]. A devoted follower of Krishna bhakti within the Vallabhacharya tradition, Sawant Singh composed devotional verse celebrating the love of Radha and Krishna, and he appears to have drawn on his own romantic attachment to a court singer known as Bani Thani in shaping the emotional character of the paintings he commissioned [5], [9]. His principal painter, Nihal Chand, is credited with establishing the school's defining visual type and with the celebration.

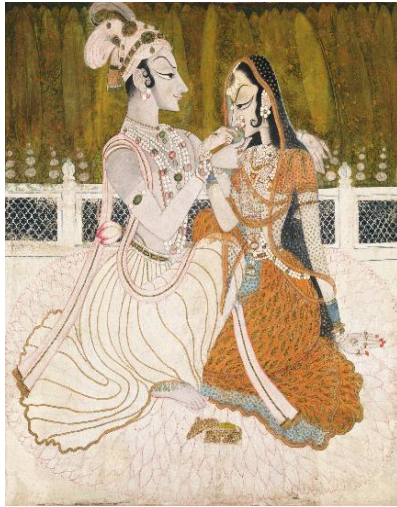


Fig. 5 : Krishna and Radha. Opaque watercolour and gold on cotton, ca. 1750 (Nihal Chand).

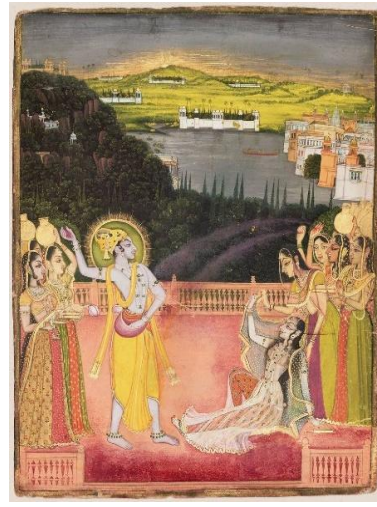


Fig. 6 : Krishna celebrates Holi with Radha and the gopis, ca. 1750–60 (Nihal Chand).

6.2 Stylistic Vocabulary

Kishangarh figures are characterised by an extreme, almost mannered elongation: faces are drawn narrow and tapering, eyebrows arch sharply, eyes extend toward the temples in a lotus-petal shape, and chins come to a delicate point [3], [8]. The colour palette leans toward softer, more atmospheric gradations than Mewar's vivid primaries, and compositions frequently open onto wide, airy landscapes, moonlit gardens, and palace terraces rendered with an unusual sense of depth for a Rajasthani school [21]. The school drew elements from both Bundi painting particularly its rich vegetation and dramatic skies and Mughal portraiture particularly its refined side-profile format while remaining distinct from both through the sheer intensity of its stylisation and the fineness of its brushwork [20].

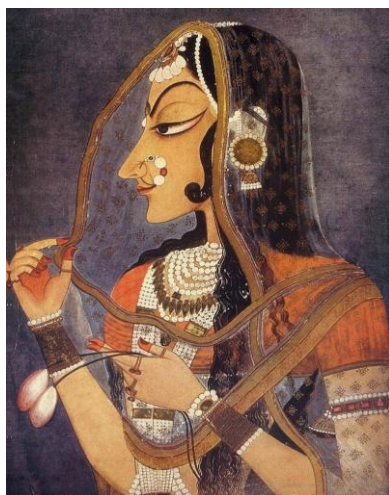


Fig. 7: Bani Thani, Kishangarh miniature, 1705. National Museum, New Delhi.

Fig. 8: Krishna with Radha and gopis, 1705-60. National Museum, New Delhi.

6.3 Radha and Krishna in the Kishangarh Idiom

Because Sawant Singh envisioned himself as Krishna and Bani Thani as Radha, Kishangarh's Radha-Krishna imagery carries an unusually direct autobiographical charge alongside its devotional purpose [5], [9], [19]. Nihal Chand's paintings repeatedly place the divine couple

within tender, intimate garden settings walking together, exchanging glances, or drifting upon the celebrated boat of love inspired by one of Sawant Singh's own poems rendered with a lyrical delicacy that later writers have frequently likened to an idealised, almost otherworldly beauty rather than the robust worldliness of Mewar's Krishna [8], [23]. The result is a Radha and Krishna less rooted in courtly swagger than in refined, poetic longing, consistent with the devotional-romantic sensibility of their royal patron.

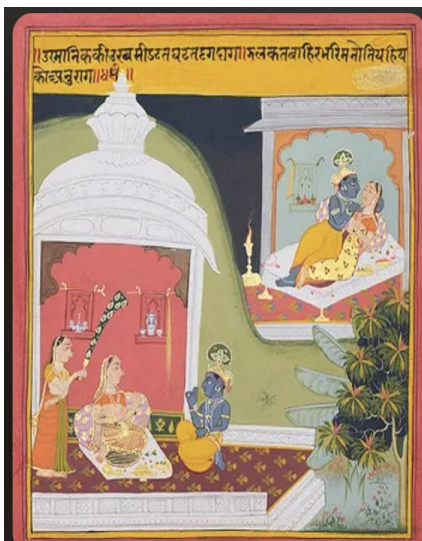


Fig. 9: A page from a Rasikapriya series (Lot 18). Saffronart, Indian Antiques Auction.



Fig. 10 : A page from a Rasikapriya series (Lot 19). Saffronart, Indian Antiques Auction.

6.4 Representative Works

The single portrait of Bani Thani, generally attributed to Nihal Chand or his immediate workshop, remains the most widely reproduced image associated with Kishangarh; it is so frequently compared to a well-known European portrait that it has come to be popularly described as an Indian counterpart to that work [5], [9], [19]. Beyond this portrait, the



school produced an extensive series of narrative Radha-Krishna compositions, including depictions of the couple walking through palace gardens and the well-known composition drawn from Sawant Singh's own poem describing a boat journey shared by the two lovers [3], [21]. Later Kishangarh painters, including Amar Chand, Surajmal, and, under the reign of Kalyan Singh, Ladli Das, continued working within the visual idiom established by Nihal Chand, maintaining its

characteristic elongation and lyrical quality into the closing decades of the eighteenth century, even after the school's most celebrated period of patronage had come to an end [23].

7. The Bundi School

7.1 Historical Development and Patronage

Bundi, together with its closely related neighbour Kota, developed a distinct painting idiom from the late sixteenth century onward, with some of the earliest surviving examples belonging to a

Ragamala series associated with the reign of Rao Bhoj Singh [2], [11]. Successive Bundi rulers were themselves devotees of Krishna, and later court patrons such as Rao Chattr Sal encouraged a substantial body of Krishna-lila and Rasikapriya-based painting alongside the school's other favoured subjects of hunting, court ceremony, and the changing seasons [6], [13]. Bundi's comparatively early and relatively smooth accommodation of Mughal political authority allowed its workshops to absorb aspects of Mughal facial refinement while retaining a strongly regional approach to setting [15], [18].

Stylistic Vocabulary

The single most distinctive feature of Bundi painting is its treatment of landscape: dense,

semi-naturalistic forests, flowering vines, plantain trees, flowing rivers rendered in swirling light strokes against dark water, and dramatic skies streaked with grey, orange, and blue at dawn or dusk [2], [6], [14]. Figures tend toward tall, slender women with narrow waists, pointed noses, receding chins, and almond eyes, painted with a reddish-brown flesh tone, while the school's colour sense favours a controlled richness of greens and blues rather than Mewar's high-key

primaries [11], [22]. Kota, Bundi's sister idiom, shares this landscape sensibility but became particularly known for hunting and wildlife scenes rendered with comparable naturalistic verve [15].

7.2 Radha and Krishna in the Bundi Idiom

Bundi's Radha-Krishna paintings are distinguished less by the physical rendering of the two lovers, which remains relatively close to a generalised regional type, than by the setting within which their love unfolds [13], [14]. Krishna's forest dalliances, his play with the gopis, and the moods of longing and reunion catalogued in the Rasikapriya are staged within landscapes so richly observed that the natural world itself becomes an active participant in the couple's emotional drama thick monsoon foliage standing in for erotic abundance, a darkening sky mirroring the pain of separation described in Baramasa verse [6], [22]. Where Mewar dramatises Radha and Krishna chiefly through courtly bearing, and Kishangarh through idealised physiognomy, Bundi dramatises them chiefly through their immersion within a vividly rendered natural world [2], [11]. A recurrent compositional motif within paintings illustrating the

Rasikapriya shows Krishna approaching Radha together with the go-between who has facilitated their meeting, the open pavilion and empty bed within such scenes serving as an allusion to a passionate encounter between the two lovers [14].

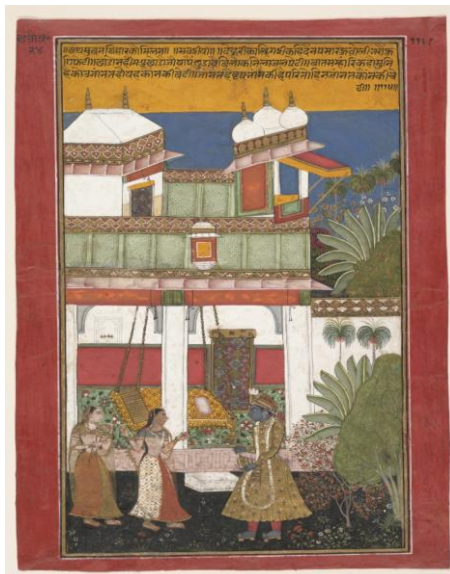


Fig. 11: Krishna and Radha (Rasikapriya illustration). Ink, opaque watercolour, and gold on paper, Bundi school.



Fig. 12: Krishna in the Form of Shri Nathji. Opaque watercolour on paper, Rajasthan (Mewar, Nathdwara) devotional tradition.

7.3 Representative Works

The Chunar Ragamala, associated with the reign of Rao Bhoj Singh in the late sixteenth century, is generally regarded as the foundational example of the Bundi idiom, while a



later, extensively illustrated Rasikapriya series now distributed among several institutions including the National Museum in New Delhi is frequently cited as the school's mature treatment of the Radha-Krishna theme [13], [18]. Wall paintings in the Chitrashala, a group of chambers within Bundi's Garh Palace, carry the same visual vocabulary onto a mural scale, presenting Krishna's

encounters with the gopis and his play along the banks of the Yamuna within continuous painted landscapes rather than isolated miniature folios [2]. In neighbouring Kota, a closely related idiom absorbed Bundi's landscape sensibility while developing its own reputation for hunting scenes and wildlife studies, illustrating how a shared regional style could still accommodate distinct local emphases even between two closely allied courts [15].

8. Comparative Analysis

Read together, the three schools reveal a single devotional subject refracted through three distinct regional sensibilities. Table 1 summarises the principal points of comparison established in the preceding sections.

Feature	Mewar	Kishangarh	Bundi
Period of florescence	16th–18th century	18th century (peak under Sawant Singh, r. 1748–1764)	17th–18th century
Principal patrons	Maharana Jagat Singh I and successors	Raja Sawant Singh (Nagari Das)	Rao Chattar Sal, Rao Bhoj Singh and successors
Dominant literary source	Rasikapriya, Bhagavata Purana, Gita Govinda	Nagari Das's own devotional verse, Gita Govinda	Rasikapriya, Bhagavata Purana
Facial typology	Rounded, oval faces with large, fish-shaped eyes and prominent noses	Extremely elongated faces, arched brows, pointed chin, tapering eyes	Fuller rounded faces, pointed nose, receding chin, almond eyes
Colour palette	Saturated primary hues — red, yellow, ochre, deep blue	Softer pastel gradations combined with jewel tones	Deep greens, indigo, and dramatic tonal skies
Treatment of landscape	Stylised, schematic architecture and semi-naturalistic trees	Vast atmospheric spaces, palace gardens, dreamlike depth	Dense, near-naturalistic forests, rivers and monsoon skies



Emotional register	Robust, courtly, at times frankly sensuous	Lyrical, idealised, tender	Intimate, pastoral, closely tied to the rhythms of nature
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8.1 Divergences

Signature works/artists	Chawand and Nathdwara workshops; Sahibdin	Nihal Chand; Bani Thani portrait type	Chitrashala muralists; Bundi Rasikapriya series
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Despite these differences, the three schools share a common devotional structure. All three draw upon the same core textual sources the Bhagavata Purana, the Gita Govinda, and the

Rasikapriya and all three treat Krishna's love for Radha as simultaneously a human romance and a theological parallel for the soul's longing for the divine [1], [12], [20]. All three schools

also register, to varying degrees, the influence of Mughal painting whether actively resisted, as in early Mewar; selectively absorbed, as in Kishangarh's refined profile format; or blended with Deccani conventions, as in Bundi [7], [15], [18]. This indicates that regional variation in Rajasthani Radha-Krishna imagery operated within, rather than against, a shared devotional and art-historical framework.

8.2 Convergences

Despite these differences, the three schools share a common devotional structure. All three draw upon the same core textual sources the Bhagavata Purana, the Gita Govinda, and the Rasikapriya and all three treat Krishna's love for Radha as simultaneously a human romance and a theological parallel for the soul's longing for the divine [1], [12], [20]. All three schools

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9. Discussion: Regional Identity and Devotional Aesthetics

The comparison developed above suggests that the visual differences among Mewar, Kishangarh, and Bundi painting cannot be accounted for by theology alone, since all three courts drew on essentially the same devotional literature [1], [8]. These differences appear instead to be closely connected to the particular political and personal circumstances of each court's patronage. Mewar's robust, deliberately non-Mughal idiom under Jagat Singh I can be



read as an affirmation of Rajput cultural identity at a time of difficult accommodation with Mughal authority [4], [7], [16]. Kishangarh's idealised, personally inflected Radha-Krishna imagery

reflects the unusually direct fusion of devotion and romance embodied by its poet-patron Sawant Singh and his beloved Bani Thani [5], [9], [23].

Bundi's landscape-centred treatment of the theme reflects both the school's early, comparatively uncomplicated relationship with Mughal authority which allowed its painters to absorb aspects of

Mughal facial naturalism and the genuinely distinctive topography of the Bundi-Kota region, which supplied painters with a repertoire of forests, rivers, and monsoon skies found nowhere else in Rajasthan [2], [6], [15]. Taken together, the three schools demonstrate that devotional painting in Rajasthan served simultaneously as an act of religious expression and as a form of courtly self-presentation, with the shared figure of Krishna's beloved Radha functioning as a remarkably adaptable vehicle for locally specific meanings [11], [13], [20].

It is also worth noting that the three schools were not entirely closed off from one another. Painters, manuscripts, and even individual artists moved between courts, and stylistic borrowing Kishangarh's incorporation of Bundi's landscape sensibility and of Mughal portrait conventions being the clearest case indicates that Rajasthani painting is better understood as a set of overlapping regional dialects within a single visual language than as a collection of wholly

separate traditions [3], [20], [21]. Viewed in this way, the persistent, centuries-long popularity of the Radha-Krishna theme across every Rajput court becomes less a matter of theological requirement and more a matter of shared cultural familiarity: painters across Rajasthan could reasonably assume that any viewer, at any court, would immediately recognise the flute, the peacock feather, the circular Rasa dance, or the pain of seasonal separation — even as the

specific visual grammar used to render those motifs varied considerably from workshop to workshop [1], [12].

10. Conclusion

This paper has examined the treatment of Radha and Krishna across three major Rajasthani painting traditions Mewar, Kishangarh, and Bundi and has argued that, although all three schools inherited a common body of Vaishnava devotional literature, each translated that inheritance into a visibly distinct pictorial language [1], [8], [20]. Mewar's bold, saturated, and self-consciously Rajput idiom presents Krishna as a courtly prince; Kishangarh's elongated, atmospheric romanticism, shaped by the personal devotion of Raja Sawant Singh, presents an

idealised and tender divine couple; and Bundi's densely naturalistic landscapes place Radha and Krishna within a vividly observed regional environment [4], [9], [11]. These differences shed light on a broader characteristic of Rajasthani court painting: a shared scripture and shared narrative

subjects did not give rise to a uniform visual tradition, but rather to a family of related regional idioms, each shaped by its court's particular political circumstances, individual patrons, and local aesthetic sensibility.

11. Scope for Further Research

- A closer iconographic study of specific, securely dated paintings from each school, examined firsthand in museum collections, to test the generalisations offered here against individual works.
- An extended comparison that also incorporates the Kota, Marwar, Jaipur, and Bikaner schools to build a fuller regional map of Rajasthani Radha-Krishna imagery.
- Further investigation of the relationship between Rajasthani miniature conventions and the large-scale Pichwai and Nathdwara devotional painting traditions associated with the Srinathji cult.
- A dedicated study of gender and authorship, examining how court poets, patrons, and painters together shaped the figure of Radha as both devotional icon and idealised beloved.

List of Figures and Image Credits

The figures embedded in this paper are drawn from the source material for this study. Each entry below gives the figure's descriptive title, medium/date where known, the artist (where attributed), and the source through which the image was consulted.

Figure	Title / Description	Medium, Date, Artist	Source
Fig. 1	Krishna dances with Radha and the gopis	Gouache on paper, Mewar style, artist unattributed	Source manuscript accompanying this paper (Mewar school, Krishna-lila series).
Fig. 2	Palace interior scene with Radha, Krishna, and attendant women	Opaque watercolour on paper, Mewar style	Source manuscript accompanying this paper (Mewar school).
Fig. 3	Krishna and Radha in a Bower: page from a dispersed Gita Govinda	Opaque watercolour on paper, ca. 1665	Attributed to Sahibdin, Mewar. Image credit: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Fig. 4	Krishna and Radha	Opaque watercolour and gold on cotton, ca. 1750	Attributed to Nihal Chand, Kishangarh.



Fig. 5	Krishna celebrates Holi with Radha and the gopis	Opaque watercolour, ca. 1750–1760	Attributed to Nihal Chand, Kishangarh.
Fig. 6	Bani Thani	Kishangarh miniature, 1705	National Museum, New Delhi.
Fig. 7	A page from a Rasikapriya series (Lot 18)	Opaque watercolour on paper, Kishangarh	Saffronart, Indian Antiques Auction.
Fig. 8	A page from a Rasikapriya series (Lot 19)	Opaque watercolour on paper, Kishangarh	Saffronart, Indian Antiques Auction.
Fig. 9	Bani Thani as Krishna and Radha	Kishangarh miniature, ca. 1760, commissioned under Raja Sawant Singh	Source manuscript accompanying this paper.
Fig. 10	Krishna and Radha (Rasikapriya illustration)	Ink, opaque watercolour, and gold on paper, Bundi	Rajasthani Kala collection, Bundi school.
Fig. 11	Krishna in the Form of Shri Nathji	Opaque watercolour on paper, Mewar, Nathdwara	India (Rajasthan, Mewar, Nathdwara) devotional tradition.
Fig. 12	Radha and Krishna in the Grove	Paint on paper, Pahari, Kangra, ca. 1780, approx. 5½ in.	Referenced comparatively as an example of the related Pahari idiom.

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