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Conservation of Thangka Paintings: A Cultural Heritage from the Himalayan Region

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ABSTRACT: Thangka paintings are religious banners or scroll paintings from Tibet, Nepal and Bhutan. These are generally on cotton cloth. The execution of Thangkas is considered to be an act of meditation and worship. Thangkas depict various aspects of Buddhism. These are regarded as portable icons, an educational tool carried by the monks from place to place in order to illustrate their teaching and awaken the divine spirit among the general population. The author has studied the technique of these paintings and presents the preventive and curative methods to minimize the effect of deterioration so as to preserve them for the future.

BIOGRAPHY: Sri. C.B Gupta was born on 13th March 1943, in the village of Tauru, Gurgaon district, Haryana, India. In addition to B.Sc degree from Punjab Technical University, an LLB degree, and a Diploma in Administration Law, he acquired professional qualifications in preservation and restoration of works and antiquities from ICCROM, Rome and from various institutions and conservation laboratories in Italy, the U.K. and the Netherlands. He was deputed to the Unions Research Institute of Restoration, Moscow (USSR) as an Indian expert. He has traveled widely, visiting various institutions, conservation laboratories, museums, archives and libraries in Brussels, Amsterdam, Geneva, Paris, Moscow, Leningrad, Irewan (USSR), Nepal, Singapore, the USA and Japan. He has published 48 papers in various journals, as well as 8 papers in French on the technique, material and conservation of paintings etc. published by ICCR. He is a Visiting Faculty Member at the National Museum Institute, New Delhi and Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management (Govt. of N.C.T of Delhi), teaching art conservation; Vice-President, Indian Association for the Study of Conservation of Cultural Property (IASC); Life member, Museum Association of India; Member of Indian Heritage Societ; and Member for Eastern Paintings.

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