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INDIAN ART OF HISTORY

Mughal painting

Mughal painting is a particular style of South Asian, particularly Indian, painting confined to miniatures either as book illustrations or as single works to be kept in albums (muraqqa). It emerged from Persian miniature painting (itself partly of Chinese origin) and developed in the court of the Mughal Empire of the 16th to 18th centuries. The Mughal emperors were Muslims and they are credited with consolidating Islam in South Asia, and spreading Muslim (and particularly Persian) arts and culture as well as the faith.

Mughal painting immediately took a much greater interest in realistic portraiture than was typical of Persian miniatures. Animals and plants were the main subject of many miniatures for albums, and were more realistically depicted. Although many classic works of Persian literature continued to be illustrated, as well as Indian works, the taste of the Mughal emperors for writing memoirs or

diaries, begun by Babur, provided some of the most lavishly decorated texts, such as the Padshahnama genre of official histories. Subjects are rich in variety and include portraits, events and scenes from court life, wild life and hunting scenes, and illustrations of battles. The Persian tradition of richly decorated borders framing the central image (mostly trimmed in the images shown here) was continued, as was a modified form of the Persian convention of an elevated viewpoint.



The Emperor Shah Jahan standing on a globe, with a halo and European-style putti, c. 1618–19 to 1629.

The Mughal painting style later spread to other Indian courts, both Muslim and Hindu, and later

Sikh, and was often used to depict Hindu subjects. This was mostly in northern India. It developed many regional styles in these courts, tending to become bolder but less refined. These are often described as "post-Mughal", "sub-Mughal" or "provincial Mughal". The mingling of foreign Persian and indigenous Indian elements was a continuation of the patronisation of other aspects of foreign culture as initiated by the earlier Turko-Afghan Delhi Sultanate, and the introduction of it into the subcontinent by various Central Asian Turkish dynasties, such as the Ghaznavids

To be continues.....

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