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**Subject : Fine Art (painting) class : 12<sup>th</sup> science/com**

**Date : 07/06/20 RADHAKISHOR MONDAL**

## **Origins of Mughal miniatures painting**

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**Mughal court painting, as opposed to looser variants of the Mughal style produced in regional courts and cities, drew little from indigenous non-Muslim traditions of painting. These were Hindu and Jain, and earlier Buddhist, and almost entirely religious. They existed mainly in relatively small illustrations to texts, but also mural paintings, and paintings in folk styles on cloth, in particular ones on scrolls made to be displayed by popular singers or reciters of the Hindu epics and other stories, performed by travelling specialists; very few early examples of these last survive.**

**In contrast Mughal painting was "almost entirely secular", although religious figures were sometimes portrayed. Realism, especially in portraits of both people and animals, became a key aim, far more than in Persian painting, let**

**alone the Indian traditions. There was already a Muslim tradition of miniature painting under the Turko-Afghan Sultanate of Delhi which the Mughals overthrew, and like the Mughals, and the very earliest of Central Asian invaders into the subcontinent, patronized foreign culture. These paintings were painted on loose-leaf paper, and were usually placed between decorated wooden covers. Although the first surviving manuscripts are from Mandu in the years either side of 1500, there were very likely earlier ones which are either lost, or perhaps now attributed to southern Persia, as later manuscripts can be hard to distinguish from these by style alone, and some remain the subject of debate among specialists. By the time of the Mughal invasion, the tradition had abandoned the high viewpoint typical of the Persian style, and adopted a more realistic style for animals and plants.**

**No miniatures survive from the reign of the founder of the dynasty, Babur, nor does he mention commissioning any in his memoirs, the *Baburnama*. Copies of this were illustrated by his descendents, Akbar in particular, with many portraits of the many new animals Babur encountered when he invaded India, which are carefully described. However some surviving un-illustrated manuscripts may have been**

**commissioned by him, and he comments on the style of some famous past Persian masters. Some older illustrated manuscripts have his seal on them; the Mughals came from a long line stretching back to Timur and were fully assimilated into Persianate culture, and expected to patronize literature and the arts.**

**The style of the Mughal school developed within the royal atelier. Knowledge was primarily transmitted through familial and apprenticeship relationships, and the system of joint manuscript production which brought multiple artists together for single works. In some cases, senior artists would draw the illustrations in outline, and more junior ones would usually apply the colours, especially for background areas. Where no artist names are inscribed, it is very difficult to trace Imperial Mughal paintings back to specific artists.**

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