

**THE EVOLUTION OF SCENIC REPRESENTATION IN RAJPUTANA AND
MUGHAL MINIATURE PAINTINGS: FORMS, FUNCTIONS, AND SYMBOLISM**

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ABSTRACT

The history of scenic representation of the miniature paintings in Rajputana and the Mughal period reflects a superlative amalgamation of artistry, intercultural communication, and symbolism in the Indian subcontinent during the 16th -19th centuries. This paper examines how the landscape; hills, rivers, architecture, gardens and heavenly settings came to acquire unique visual and conceptual identities in these two traditions. Mughal miniature painting was based on Persian traditions and subsequently European naturalism, with the stress on realism, depth, and close study of nature, frequently with scenery to record imperial life, historical events, and courtly gilded splendour. Rajputana miniature painting, by contrast, was more stylised and expressive, with landscapes serving more as a means of expression, spirituality and poetic stories, especially in such subjects as Ragamala, Baramasa and Krishna-Lila. The formal elements, discussed in the paper, include composition, color, and space structure, as well as the analysis of the functional role of scenery in building a narrative background and an emotional atmosphere. It also emphasizes the way the scenic imagery of Rajputana paintings reflects metaphysical concepts and religious feelings, contrary to the empirical observation and state power in Mughal paintings. The research uses the comparative approach to insist that both traditions use scenic representation as not only a decorative element but an important narration as well as symbolic element that expresses not only the aesthetic philosophies and socio-cultural values of their respective epochs and also as a historical context.

Keywords: Rajputana Miniature Painting, Mughal Miniature Painting, Scenic Representation, Landscape Art, Symbolism, Indian Art History, Visual Culture, Narrative Aesthetics, Persian Influence, Cultural Synthesis.