Chapter I
Introduction

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Origin and Development of Mughal Paintings in India
"The Mughal court presents the articulation of artistic activities in the field of painting of a unified and integrated form and style with a sense of purpose and direction based on the themes and tastes of individual Mughal monarchs"
The Mughal art is a combination of the Indo-Persian style which developed in India. It was influenced liberally by the existing Indian Rajput school.

The Mughal school was found by Akbar under whom it developed into a class of its own. It was essentially a product of the Mughal court. In form and content, it happens to be a departure from collective community tradition just as the Mauryan art was more than a millennium and a half before. Though it is not difficult for a discerning pair of eyes, to distinguish an Akbari from a Jahangiri one or the latter from a Shah Jahan painting, but the interesting and most significant factor is the strong common denominator which is constant in form and style from earlier and later ones as well as from those others of contemporary times which originated elsewhere than in the Mughal court.

Mughal artists due to new and more sophisticated techniques, learned both from Persian and European traditions. Pigments too contributed significantly to the distinctiveness of a style. In contrast to pre-Mughal paintings, those of the Mughal and Rajput school reflect an enormous increase in the range of colours.

Portraiture occupied very important position in the Mughal painting. A large number of portraits of the Mughal emperors and the nobilities were executed during the Mughal period.

Akbar was the first Mughal monarch who took a deep interest in the promotion of painting and following the Mongol and Timurid examples, he commissioned the work of illustrating numerous manuscripts.

The artists of Akbar's court were drawn from within the country and also from Iran. The style that developed was the best of the Bihzad school and
pre-Mughal Indian art, amalgamated with European and Chinese influences. Under him, painting appears to have been confined only to manuscript illustration. Several artists were employed at the court to paint the great treasure of Mughal miniature, Abu’l Fazl has given a brief list of only 17 artists. Among the artists, Hindus were greater in number.

Although very little is known about individual artists in Mughal India, there is considerable information about their techniques and methods. Akbar started a “karkhana” to originate a new style of painting. The main purpose was to produce illuminated manuscripts which was an elaborate production, requiring the cooperation of calligraphers, painters, preparators for various accessories such as colour grinder, gold workers, leather workers, book binders and many more. The books to be copied were often long and only by the strictest cooperation among all these different craftsmen and artists—some of whom were certainly Prima Donnas could a beautiful work be produced in time.

Abu’l Fazl tells us that “the works of the painters were laid before Akbar weekly and he used to confer rewards according to the excellence of workmanship”. Akbar had special admiration for the work of Hindu artists, notably Daswanth and Basawan.

Akbar was very fond of the stories of Amir Hamza, an uncle of the prophet. The illustration of these stories, the Hamza-Nama was the first work entrusted to the Persian master Mir Saiyyid Ali called for 1400 pictures in volumes and the task was completed in 15 years. The pictures are in the Persian Safavid style. However in the later works like in the illustrations of the Razm-Nama, Khamsa of Nizami etc, Indian tones can be clearly seen.

Much of the paintings of the Akbari period show a restless energy. The painters reflected the exuberance of their patron, figures are shown in hurried movement and the compositions are crowded. As painting developed, the Mughal atelier lost its purely Persian characteristics and became

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increasingly Indian by the middle of Akbar's reign. By the middle of Akbar's reign, the skies lost their gold and lapis Lazuli tones to break out into brilliant sunset colours.

Early Mughal art is purely masculine. From this it can be presumed that scenes of pleasure and dalliance with the ladies, which abound in later Mughal painting were also imaginary, the women portrayed being not the princesses themselves but the lesser attendants who worked freely in and out of the palaces and whose looks were no mystery to anyone.

The art of painting in its general finish and boldness of execution reached perfection during Akbar's reign. *Mir Saiyyid Ali of Tabriz, Khwaja Abdus Samad, Daswanth and Basawan* were the most renowned artists. Besides these four masters, there were thirteen other first rate painters at Akbar's court, mostly Hindus.

The Persian tradition as it had developed particularly under Bihzad in the later years of the 15th century, was notable for its decorative qualities and its lively sense of colour. The miniatures were usually book illustrations and were 2-D. The artists representing the different regions of India had brought with them not only the skill in painting but also their conventions in regard to drawings, use of colour and composition. Akbar had left the painters very much to their own devices. The atelier of Akbar thus created the Mughal style of painting. Certain conventions and types of figures were developed and these principles continued to be followed thereafter. The Mughal paintings now exhibited three-dimensional effects in contrast to the 2-dimensional Persian ones.

All facts and situations known so far have established beyond doubt that the Mughal painting was essentially a product of the Mughal court, organised and patronized from the beginning to end by the emperors themselves. Themes or subjects were selected by the Imperial masters rather than the artists themselves. "The thematic contents of the paintings reflect the personal tastes and temperaments, preferences, prides, pleasures, fashions and past-time etc

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of the individual imperial patrons". In every sense Mughal painting was a
court art.

In Mughal court painting, what is more interesting and perhaps more
important that a strong common denominator remains throughout to
distinguish the form and style from earlier and later ones. The Mughal
court presents the articulation of artistic activities in the field of painting,
of a unified and integrated form and style with a sense of purpose and
direction. This implication is by and large upheld by an analysis of the
paintings themselves, despite relative variations the style and emphasis on
themes conditioned by the tastes and predilections of individual monarchs
from Akbar to Aurangzeb.

By and large, the narrative-descriptive, dramatic and true to appearance
aim and purpose remain constant throughout, so do the respective
compositional schemes also maintain throughout a common denominator
as does the character of a design and draughtsmanship. It’s therefore, not
very difficult to say for one who is not an expert, to be able to look at a
given painting and say that it does or does not belong to the form and style
of the Mughal court. The stamp of the form and style and the general
character of the exercise is too clear and distinct to be missed.

The Mughal artist ingeniously combined the ancient Ajanta technique of
perspective with that of contemporary western artists. In the multiple
perspectives used on ancient Buddhist frescoes painters tried to suggest
space by depicting figures simultaneously at eye level and from above, the
direct view and the hierarchical perspective, placing figures in their order
of importance and giving a kind of bird’s eye view of the scene. By means
of walls, rocks, cliffs and buildings certain figures were brought into the
foreground and other set in the distance. This form, combined with the
European use of receding background, helped to give Mughal miniatures
their perspective. The drawing of cliffs, buildings and trees was replaced
in the seventeenth century by grouping of minor characters arranged in

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semicircular form, leaving a distinct space for the main figure. In the Ajanta tradition, a thin line of shading encloses the outline of the figures.

This becomes thicker and much prominent as a result of European influence, since colour contrast was frequently used to tend relief, especially in the drawing of the head, which is pushed into prominence by the darker background.

The Mughal miniatures make use of the same device. All the personages in the picture are connected by gesture, facial expression and proper positioning, and a harmonious balance is maintained in the composition.

The striving for harmony resulted in the depiction of individual part of the body from different angles, with the legs and body in profile and the face in semi profile and some times in reverse profile. The features of the face were also often portrayed from different angles.

During Jahangir times the European influence could be seen increasingly in the paintings. The colours were more muted and blended well together. This nationalistic influence can be best seen in the representation of landscapes.

Portraiture reached great heights during Jahangir's reign. The portrait were painted with great care of details and finesse of drawing and modeling.

The important manuscript illustrated during this period are the "Ayar-i-Danish"1 an animal fable book and the "Anwar-i-Suhaili"2.

Babur was the first Mughal emperor who came to India. But it is likely that there were some painters in his entourage; for he had a love of nature and it depiction.

Babur became emperor in 1526 and ruled for four years. His son, Humayun, was ousted from the throne and spent fifteen year in exile. One of these years, 1544, the most memorable in terms of Indian painting, was spent at the court of Shah Tahmasp of Persia. The love of the arts was in

1. Scales of Wisdom.
2. Persian Knight Sotires.
Humayun's blood and he was quite dazzled by the artistic output of the Persian court. He met two distinguished pupil of Bihzad, Khwaja Abdus Samad and Mir Saiyyid Ali, and invited them to India when he regained his throne for only seven months in 1555. It was from these artists that Humayun and his son, Akbar, took lessons in drawing. An atelier was set up in the palace and the serious work of painting began.

The Persian artists were the guiding spirit of the Dastan-i-Amir Hamza, the first of the great series of paintings which gave the Mughal school its name and reputation.

"The foundation of the Mughal empire was laid by Babur in 1556 were he deafeated the pathan king Ibrahim Lodi. He was also accomplished in the art of peace. He was a talented poet in Turki and Persian, and his battles as well as his orgies were humanised by a breath of poetry".

The foundation of Mughal painting are not very clear in the present state of our knowledge. Though Babur was a learned and cultured man, whose appreciation of the art of painting was based on a fine and sophisticated taste and sound knowledge, so far there is no evidence of his founding an atelier of artists.

MUGHAL NOBLE

"Portraiture occupies an important position in the Mughal painting. Numerous Mughal emperors and nobles were painted during the Mughal period".

"Although there is insufficient knowledge about individual artists in Mughal India, there is considerable information about their technique and methods. Akbar started a 'Karkhana' to originate a new style of painting. The main aim of design so was to produce illustrated manuscripts which was an elaborate production, requiring the cooperation of calligraphers, painters, preparations of various accessories. For eg. colour guiders, leather workers etc. The books to be copied were often voluminous and only by the strictest cooperation amongst these different..."
craftsmen and artists. Some of who were unquestionably Prima Donnas could such beautiful works be produced in the stipulated time period”.

Mughal artists were exposed to the sophisticated techniques of Persian and European traditions. Pigments too can contribute significantly to the distinctiveness of a style. In contrast to pre-Mughal paintings, those of the Mughal and Rajput school reflect a great increase in the range of colours. This can be easily confirmed by the numerous Rajput drawings and patterns that have survived. It is also known that European prints and engravings were painstakingly copied during Akbar’s and Jahangir’s time.

Humayun (1530-1556) was the first documental patron of Mughal painting. Humayun was a puzzling and intriguing figure. An inheritor rather a founder, albeit of a flimsy empire he was less Charismatic than his father, more formal and reserved, gentle, and more concerned with protocol. But he was also a gifted general an occasion, as when he defeated Bahadur Shah in Gujarat in 1535.

Humayun’s visit to the Safavi court in 1544 was crucial to art history as it was to the Mughal empire. While there he admired the brilliant painting by Shah Tahmasp’s artists. By luck, Shah Tahmasp’s inspiring patronage of painting was then replaced by more responsible interests and in 1546. Humayun was able to call two Safavi artist to accompany him to India. These were Mir Saiyyid Ali and Abdus Samad, both of whom left Tabriz along with a book binder and a mathematician in the summer of 1548. They first went to Qandahar, where they waited for a year till Humayun battled with Kamsan, until a lull in war enabled Humayun to have them escorted to Kabul. They arrived there in November 1549 were busy until the March to Hindus five year after in November 1554.

Humayun’s choice of Abdus Samad and especially Mir Saiyyid Ali was consistent with the tendencies to naturalism already apparent in Babur’s prose. Of all of Shah Tahmasp’s artists, Mir Saiyyid Ali was the sharpest and most accurate observer, sparing no pains to record the precise shape
and texture of fur or metal or odd bumps of a nose. He was also a brilliant designer of arabesque, who shared his father genius for abstracting figure into slanting ornamental patterns. Unfortunately, the Mir artistic expertise was accompanied by a moody and suspicious temperament.

Less talented, but more flexible and adjusting was Abdus Samad, whose Mughal phase was far longer and more productive. Painting done by him during the Kabul period reveal that he soon began to adapt his safavi style to the escalating mughal desire for accurate portraiture and anecdotal repotoire.

Although its unsigned, damaged and considerably repainted, the House of Timur can be recognised as Abdus Samad’s work at Kabul or in India. The painting is grand in scale, "sumptuous" in colour and a complete reflection of Humayun’s royal taste; this picture is in cotton, is the major monument of early Mughal art. Seemingly, it continued to be highly respected and appreciated since it was brought up-to-date by the addition of portraits of three generations of Humayun’s heirs.

Humayun acquainted himself with the studio of schools of leading artists which flourished there. He saw the paintings of the Persian artists, Aga Mirak, Sultan Muhammad and Muzaffar, pupils of the famous Bihzad. Thus he acquired a taste for paintings. In this way, he came in contact at Tabriz with Mir Saiyyid Ali, and Abdus Samad. They were persuaded by Humayun to join his court in Kabul in 1550 A.D. There he and his son, Akbar, took lessons in drawing and studied generally the art of painting under the two artists. When Humayun finally marched into India, after year of exile, he also brought with him these two distinguished artists.6

Akbar (1556-1605) although, illiterate, Akbar loved books, particularly illustrated ones. His vast library included volumes that would now be catalogued as history, with particular emphasis on his own dynasty including veterinary, anthropology, comparative religions, mathematics, engineering, military strategy, government theology, astronomy and literature. The final
volume of the "Din-i-Akbari" contains sections on the arts, writing and paintings.

The Persian artists were the guiding spirit of the "Dastan-i-Amir Hamza", the first of the great series of paintings which gave the Mughal school its name and reputation. This was produced in the reign of Humayun's son, Akbar. The majority of painters in the atelier were Indians who had been trained in the existing school of painting in India. Even though the masters guided these apprentices to produce works using purely Persian techniques, their basic Indian training soon asserted itself and a synthesis of the two styles emerged in their works, producing a school of painting which has been the subject of unlimited praise by all critics and connoisseurs.

The artists worked together on a sort of assembly line basis, where each developed his own specialty the first outline sketch, the filling in of colour, landscape or facial features. When the picture was finished, the superintendent would write the names of all the painters responsible in it, so the earliest Mughal paintings were far from being anonymous.

The Dastan-i-Amir Hamza, a massive work comprising 1,400 paintings, took fifteen year to complete. It tells of the exploits of the uncle of prophet Mohammed, Amir Hamza, while spreading the Muslim faith and was painted in a series of exceptionally large-sized pictures-22 inches by 28 1/2 inches on cotton cloth. The canvases teem with life, recounting episodes in which Amir Hamza battles against various enemies and evil spirits to complete his mission. The Persian flavour is extremely strong but Indian elements are evident in the shape of faces or the vitality and majesty of an elephant.

Other works that were illustrated in Akbar's reign included the Khamsa of Nizami, a classic of Persian literature, the romantic tale of Laila and Majnu, Shahnamah, the great epic of ancient Persian, "Razm Namah", the Persian translation of the "Akbar Namah", the history of his own rule.

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7. Epic Stories in Persian.
8. Epic tales from Mahabharata in Persian.
According to Abul Fazl, “the work of all painter, are weekly laid before his majesty by the “Darogan”\textsuperscript{10} and the clerks. He then confers rewards according to the excellence of workmanship, or he may increase the monthly salary”. Much progress was made in the commodition required by painters, and the correct prices of such artists were carefully ascertained. The mixing of colour has specially been improved. The pictures thus received a hitherto unknown finish excellent painters are now to be found in India, and master pieces worthy of Bihzad may be placed at the side of the wonderful works of European painters who have attained world wide fame. The miniatures of detail, the general finish and the boldness of execution now observed in pictures are incomparable; even inanimate objects look as if they have life. More than a hundred painters have become famous master of the art, while the number of those who approach perfection is large.

As painting developed in the Mughal ateliers, it lost its purely Persian characteristics and became increasingly Indian. By the middle of Akbar’s reign, the skies lost their gold and tones break out into brilliant sunset colour. The stylized quality of Persian painting is replaced by movement and vigour, and the human figure becomes more and more Indian in feature and expression. Faces came alive showing that there was a close study of individual character traits. Miniatures became records of the emperor’s activities. We see Akbar supervising the submission of a rebel; hunting tigers; receiving the manuscript of the “Ain-i-Akbari”\textsuperscript{11} from Abul Fazl; having a rebel thrown to his death, storming the forts and so on.

“Basawan and Daswanth, Nanha and Bishan Das were some of the most famous painters of Akbar’s court. Among the names mentioned in the Ain-in-Akbari are Kesu, Lal, Mukund, Madhu, and Jagan also gained repute”.\textsuperscript{12}

Akbar followed the Timurid tradition in which manuscript illumination received special attention. But painting at his court was not essentially an art of book-illustration, portraiture was important too. Akbar himself sat for his likeness, and ordered portraits to be made of all his nobles, Abul Fazl

\begin{footnotes}
10. Supervisor.
11. Institutes of Akbar.
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writes that an immense album was thus prepared. Akbar’s interest in actual portrait was an innovation.

Akbar’s great interest in painting is shown not only by his defence of painting against the censure of conservative Muslims, but by the claim that he made for it as a source of revelation of divine wisdom. “One day, says Abul Fazl, at a private party of friends of his majesty, who had conferred on several the pleasure of drawing near him, remarked, these are many that hate painting, but such men I dislike. It appears to me as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognizing God, for a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs, one after the other, must come to feel that he cannot bestow individuality upon his work, and be thus forced to think of God, the giver of life, and will thus increase knowledge. Under the personal care and observation of the emperor, colours obtained a new beauty and pictures received a fresh finish. Most excellent painters are now to be found, and masterpieces, worthy of Bihzad, may be placed at the side of the wonderful works of the European painters who have attained world-wide fame. The freshness of the work, the clarity of lines. The firmness of the hand and other excellent qualities are incomparable, even inanimate object look as if they had life.”

Without Akbar the Mughal empire and its art would be known only to specialists. The empire refounded, he was one of India’s wisest and mightiest rulers, whose energy and inspiration sparked his followers to peak performances. When Humayun died, prince Akbar although not yet fourteen, was already soldiering in the, having been sent to the mountains with an army to expel the ex-king, Sikander Shah Afghan. Buiram Khan, one of his father’s ablest generals, improvised a throne on which the boy began his reign. Later, as regent, Buiram Khan brought stability to the shaky kingdom and enabled the young ruler to grow with some degree of tranquility. Physically dynamic and adventurous in spirit, he baulked at many of the subjects usually taught to the princes, so preferring hunting and wrestling to reading that he remained illiterate. His son Jahangir reminisced that “Akbar always associated with the learned of every creed and religion...and so

much became clear to him through constant intercourse with the learned and wise that no one knew him to be illiterate and he was so well acquainted with the niceties of verse and prose composition that this deficiency was not thought of. Jahangir's lively portraiture was of middle height, but inclined to be tall, he was of the hue of wheat, his eyes and eyebrow were black, and his hands and arms long, on the left side of his nose, he had a fleshy mole, very agreeable in appearance, of the size of half a pea. Those skilled in the science of physiognomy marked this mole a sign of great prosperity and exceeding good fortune. His august voice was very loud, and in speaking and explaining had a particular richness. In his actions and movements he was not like the people of the world, and the glory of god manifested itself in him. Notwithstanding his kingship, his treasures and his buried wealth past computation, his fighting elephants and horses, he never by a hairs breadth placed his foot beyond the base of humility before the throne of god, and never for one moment forgot him. He associated with the good of every race and creed and persuasion, and he was gracious to all in accordance with their condition and understanding. "His courage and boldness were such that he could mount raging, rutting elephants and subdue to obedience murderous elephants which would not allow there females near them."  

A practical visionary, "Akbar was amplified by two mystical experiences. The first took place when he was twenty, in 1562. Like Saint Paul, he was riding a horse that stumbled, although no engulfing flash of light was reported in Abul Fazl's account of the incident. He, the wise and foreseeing one, regarded this as a message from god, and prostrated himself in devotion. A new foundation was laid for divine worship."  

At this time, Akbar took several steps crucial to the success of his empire. He overcame the clique of haram ladies, prohibited the enslavement of Hindu prisoners of war, allowed Hindus to occupy important governmental posts, abolished a tax on pilgrims in 1563, and a year later did away with the Jizya, a poll tax on non-Muslims. In 1562, he also married a Hindu princess, the daughter of Raja Bihari Mal of Amber.

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14. S.C. Welch, Imperial Mughal Painting.
15. Dr. N.L. Mathur, Indian Miniature.
With devious practicality, Akbar appointed Rajputs to high positions; and once they had tasted Mughal power, he controlled them by the carrot and stick policy. He made it impossible for Mughal noblemen, whether Hindu or Muslim, to pass on power and wealth. At death, all lands, gold, elephants, horses etc. reverted to the crown, and only if the emperor approved were the heirs permitted to inherit any part of their estates.

Rajputs and Muslims, however, were not the only members of Akbar's circle, no were all his close associates Indian born. Word spread throughout the Muslim world that Akbar welcomed men of ability to his court. Poets, musicians, soldiers, theologians, painters, merchants and others seeking fortunes were drawn from as far afield as Europe and Africa, Turkey, Iran and Arabia.

The emperor also sought talent at home from all religious groups and ranks of society. He chose Raja Todar Mal, a Hindu of the business caste, as his revenue officer. Raja Birbal, a Brahmin, became one of Akbar's favourite companions, the so-called 'Nauratna'. Known for his wit and poetry, this man of religious background was one of the first to join Akbar's new sect, the Din-i-Ilahi another part of the imperial plan for the unification of India's disparate religious groups.

Akbar's projects were always purposeful, however diverse, all contributed to this grand imperial scheme. The translation into Persian of such Hindu religious works as the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

The most remarkable artistic project from Akbar's reign is the "Hamza Nama", a series of grand pictures on cotton describing the fabulous adventures of Amir Hamza, an uncle of the Prophet.

The paintings are perfect visual equivalents of Akbar's surging spirit during the years when he had taken full control of the government and was advancing his schemes with godlike energy and intelligence. A picture such as Mirdukt's Escape fairly bursts from the page. Water seethes and

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pounds, men dash and the heroine gestures with theatrical bravado. Even the rocks are dynamic, recalling Abul Fazl's claim that "even inanimate objects look like they had life".

An important category of Akbar's paintings are illustrations to delux volumes of the literary classics, of which an early example is "the ape outsmarts thieves" of 1570. Such pictures are invariably assigned to the most admired artists, working unassisted. But while these miniatures can be ranked as the ateliers masterpieces, they are not necessarily the most exciting. Outstanding artists also worked on less refined projects such as the copiously illustrated manuscripts that described not only Mughal history but also its precursors in the Islamic world. Perhaps the earliest surviving manuscript of this sort is a dispersed "Babur Nama" of about 1589, the year when Khan Khanan, one of Akbar's most literary nobles, completed the translation 'Babur Receiving Uzbek and Rajput Envoys in a Garden at Agra' contains one of the most believable portraits of the founding emperor in his favourite garden surroundings, receiving envoys at Agra in 1528 from the Safavids, Uzbeks and Rajputs. As usual under such circumstances at the Mughal court, robes of honor, gold and silver, and richly worked swords and daggers were presented to the guests.

More dramatic and immediate is "Akbar Restains Hawaii" from another dispersed manuscript, the emperor's own copy of Abul Fazl's Akbarnama. As usual in Akbars historical subjects, this magnificent competition was designed by a major artist, in this case Basawan, assisted by a lesser hand, here Chitra. The direction of labour, however was not lightly prescribed, and it is evident that even minor passages of this miniature were fully painted as well as designed by Basawan himself.

Not all of Akbar's pictures illustrated manuscripts. Many were made as independent compositions to be kept in albums. Some were animal studies. One such, among the earliest Mughal animal studies is "Cow and Calf" ascribable on stylistic grounds to Basawan.

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More common at this time, however, were portraits of courtiers and others who interested the emperor. According to Abul Fazl, “His majesty himself sat for his likeness, and also ordered to have the likenesses taken of all the grandees of the realm. An immense album was thus formed, these that have passed away have received a new life, and those who are still alive have immortality promised to them”. A portrait of stout Muslim nobleman with bristling mustachios, craggy profile, and a wrestler’s proportions probably belonged to this album.

“The art of painting in its general finish and boldness of execution reached perfection during Akbar’s reign”. Mir Saiyyid Ali of Tabriz, Khwaja Abdus Samad, Daswanth and Basawan were the most renowned artists. Besides these four masters, there were thirteen other first rate painter at Akbar’s court, mostly Hindus. There were Kesu, Lal, Mukund, Miskin, Farrukh, Madhu, Jagan, Mohesh, Khem Karah, tara etc. Referring to the perfection attained by the painters of Akbar’s court, Abdul Fazl writes: “this is specially true of the Hindus. Their pictures surpass our conception of things”.

Early in Akbar’s reign, the Portuguese, had established trading posts in India and in 1578 A.D. Akbar requested that a delegation of Jesuit fathers from Goa attend on him at Fatehpur Sikri. As gifts for the emperor whom the Jesuit fathers hoped to convert to Christianity, they brought with them illustrated Bibles and other religious pictures. Those were studied with great interest at the Mughal court. Soon effects of this contact were seen in the Mughal miniatures. The court artists learnt about perspective and shading. The Mughal style also absorbed some of the western techniques.

The other important manuscript illustrated during the period of Akbar are the “Gulistan of sadi” dated 1567 A.D. in the British Museum, London, Deval Rani of 1568 A.D., the “Anwar-i-Suhali” dated 1570 A.D. in the school of Oriental and African studies, University of London, another Gulistan of sadi in the Royal asiatic society Library a Diwan of the Poet Amir Shahi in the Bibliothique Nationale, “Diwan-i-Hafiz”, the Tuti-Nama, the Baharistan of Jami dated 1595 A.D. in the Budolian Library, the Darab

22. Akbar’s Court Painters.
25. Poetic Compositions by Persian Poet Hafiz.
Nama in the British Museum, the Tarikh-i-Alf \cite{27} circa 1590 A.D. the Jamial-Tawarikh dated 1596 A.D. in the Gulistan Library in Tehran, a number of the Babur-Nama \cite{28} manuscripts executed in the last decade of the 16th century, the Twarikhe-Khandane-Taimuria in the Khuda Baksh Library, Patna "Akbar-Nama" \cite{29} of circa 1600 A.D. now in the victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Jog Vashisht dated 1602 in the chestes Beatty Library, Dublin. The classical Persian Literature, "Khamsa" \cite{30} and the collections of moral tales by Sadi and Jami were also illustrated. The atelier of Akbar thus created the Mughal style of painting. Certain conventions and types of figures were developed and these principles continued to be followed thereafter.

Jahangir (1605-1627) the son and successor of Akbar showed just as great interest in the art of painting as his father under him, the painting acquired greater charm, refinement and dignity.

Jahangir organised a staff and excellent painters and supervised their work. He was a connoisseur and critic of art and possessed the analytical knowledge of an expert. His power of observation was so great that he could tell the names of individual artists by seeings their paintings.

Many of Akbar's court painters, such as Abu-i-Hasan, Bishandas, Farrukh Beg, Daulat, Anand, Manohar and other continued to work for Jahangir. He was particularly enthusiastic about Abul Hasan the son of the Persian painter, Aka Riza, of Herat. Abul Hasan was engaged by Jahangir while still a prince and he was honoured with the title of "Nadirazamah", \cite{31} because he drew the picture of his accession as the frontispiece to the Jahangir Nama. In 1617 Jahangir selected Bishandas to accompany a mission to Persia to paint the portrait of Shah and the chief men of his state.

Aka Riza or Muhammad Riza painted in the traditional Persian style and this was practised by several other court painters, such as Farrukh Beg, the Kalmak. The two new painters from Samarkand, Md. Nadir, Md. Murad,  

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{27.} History of the World.
\item \textbf{28.} Memories of Babur.
\item \textbf{29.} Historical Events of Akbar's Period.
\item \textbf{30.} Romantic Poems of Laila-Majnu.
\item \textbf{31.} Marvel of the Age.
\end{itemize}
were excellent portrait painters. However Jahangir knowledge of the classical aspect of painting and his zeal for the art, combined with the skill of his court artists, led to the liberation of the Mughal art of painting from the tune age of persian influences and to the growth of art style essentially Indian learning more and more to Hindu traditions.

Under the patronage of Jahangir, the art of portraiture attained great excellence. The portrait were painted by the court with great case, love of detail and fineness of drawing and modelling.

Like his father, Jahangir liked European paintings with religious subjects. Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador, who spent four years 1615-1619 A.D. at the court, had many interesting conversations with the emperor far into the night on painting and art in general.

During this period, European influence manifested itself more and more in painting. The colours were no longer hard and enamel like as in the previous period but were softer and melted harmoniously together. The naturalistic influence is best seen in the representation of landscapes.

The important manuscripts illustrated during this period are: an animal fable book called "Ayas-i-Danish", the leaves of which are now in the Cowasji Jahangir collection, Bombay and the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin and the Anwar-i-Suhaili, another fable book in the British Museum, London, both executed between 1605-10 A.D. some miniatures in the "Gulistan" and "Diwan-i-Hafiz" both in the British museum.

Natural scenes especially hunting scenes and portraits were the favourite of Jahangir's paintings. These were painted with vivid realism. Jahangir was a great lover of nature and ordered such artists as Mansur and Murad to paint beautiful specimen of birds, animal and flowers. Painting of plants, cereepeers, flowers, animals, birds and numerous other natural subjects reached the highest stage of development unusual flowers and rare animals were ordered to be copied or painted by Jahangir.

32. Touchstone of Wisdom.
“During Jahangir’s reign the number of artists had increased beyond the needs of the imperial atelier and Mughal trained painters of inferior merit were driven to seek a livelihood as commercial free lancers without regular patron. The work of such painters is styled as popular Mughal or provincial Mughal painting. This style of painting has all the important characteristics of the imperial painting but is inferior in quality”.

Jahangir’s deep interest in nature gave rise to the “zoological portrait” similarly his love of flowers greatly influenced the use of flower in decorative art and margin painting which flourished at his atelier as a separate branch of painting. Indeed the illuminated margin now became an integral part of painting.

Jahangir seems to have preferred paintings representing contemporary events, experiences, etc. to those illustrating the classics and fables of India and Persia. These also appears to be shift in interest from manuscript illumination to portraiture and album painting. Moreover, the influence of western techniques increased greatly, especially the use of aerial perspective.

Jahangir had portraits made of his nobles which he gathered together in albums. Jahangir sent an artist to Iran especially to prepare portraits of Shah ‘Abbas and his nobles’. He had similarly a number of portraits prepared of Uzbek rulers and nobles.

While copies of European paintings and engravings had already been made under Akbar, the interest in European painting seems to have increased considerably under Jahangir.

Sir Thomas Roe describes how Jahangir had several good copies made of a picture he had presented; the ambassador was hard put to distinguish the original from the copies.

The royal patron found in Mansur an artist to his heart who could faithfully capture for him in line and colour the unusual flora and fauna which so much delighted him.34

33. Related to Animals.
Jahangir painters, who accompanied him everywhere, made drawing of birds and animals which caught the emperor’s eye. In his diary he writes, “although king Babur described in his memoirs the appearance and shape of several animals, he never ordered the painters to make pictures of them. As these animals appeared to me very strange, I both described them and ordered that painters draw them for the Jahangirnamah so that the amazement arising from hearing about them might be increased”. Mansur was the painter who excelled in animal subjects in Jahangir’s time. The emperor’s own knowledge, not only of painting but also of the technical excellence of his painters, was so great that he could tell who had done the eyes, the hands, the landscape, and so on. This was a time of specialization, and as Mansur was the specialist for birds and animals and Farrukh Beg for traditional Persian motifs, so others also had their specialities.

In this reign the multiple signatures of the early reign disappeared and the miniature carried only one signature. In Jahangir’s time, miniatures came to be made for preservation in folios rather than merely as book illustrations. Portraits became increasingly popular and Jahangir presented his portrait to all those he wished to honor. He also started the practice of having his courtiers wear miniatures of himself on a brooch that was attached to the front of the turban, a practice Shah Jahan followed. These are visible in some of the durbar scenes. Equestrian portraits, a purely Indian innovation since they are not found in Persian painting, were painted in great numbers.

The great love of the Mughal for creating gardens gave the painter a chance to study and paint various species of flowers. To these paintings he brings botanical expertise as well as an elevating sense of colour and rhythm. These flower studies were made in large numbers during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

Shah Jahan’s reign (1628–1658) was marked by a dazzling magnificence. The empire was now firmly established and the resources of the whole country were at the disposal of the “Great Mughal”, who could indulge in

35. Emperor Shah Jahan.
his love of opulent display to his heart's content. The artists worked in the
tradition of the earlier reign, but their work is distinguished by far greater
use of gold and colour. The miniatures, showing slightly overelaborate
court scenes, are a reflection of the tastes of the builder of the Taj Mahal,
"the poem in marble".36

Together with the lavishness of the court is the ever present mystic element.
The stark realism of the earlier reign is replaced by scenes of holy men and
portraits that reveal psychological insight, and the profile replaced the
earlier three quarters face. Even the durbar scenes show, with very few
exceptions, rows, of faces in profile.

Shah Jahan's own love was architecture, and the beautiful building of his
time are an index of his taste. Perhaps because his taste extended to the
elaborate, the fabulous stone-encrusted peacock throne, on which the
emperor sat, became legend in his time, but the emperor did not seem to
have taken any particular interest in painting. There is no record of the
frank delight in art that his father found. It was inevitable, therefore, that
from this time Mughal painting should show a definite decline. The
delineation of detail, the fine brushwork and careful drawing are still
present, but an element of stiffness and formalism forms a marked contrast
to the fluid quality of the earlier miniatures.

Most of the works produced at Shahjahan's atelier (1628-1658) consist of
album pictures. The format of Jahangiri paintings, portraiture and margin
painting, still remained in vogue, but there was markedly less innovation.
The miniatures of Shahjahan's reign are characterized by replendent
costumes, arms, and armour, ornamented columns, the abundant use of
gold pigments and bright colours, contrasting strongly with the naturalism
of Jahangiri paintings.

The album of Shahjahan's eldest son Dara Shukoh, has survived. The
miniature representing ascetics and saints, both muslim and Hindu, reflect
his catholic ideas; there are detailed studies too of birds animal and flowers

36. One of the Architectural Wonders of the World.
But there was markedly less innovation. Miniature of Shah Jahan reign are characterized by resplendent costumes, arms and armors, ornamented columns, abundant use of gold pigment and bright colour, contrasting strongly with the naturalism of Jahangir’s paintings. Flower studies were also done in large numbers. Shah Jahan’s first love was architecture and the beautiful buildings of his time are an index of his taste. Perhaps because of his taste extended to the opulent, the fabulous stone-encrusted peacock throne on which the emperor sat, became legend in his time, but the emperor did not appear to have taken any special interest in paintings. There is no record of the frank delight in art that his father found. It was inevitable, therefore that from the age onward, Mughal painting should show definite decline. The delineation of details, the fine brush work and carefully drawing are still present, but an element of stiffness and formalities is a marked contrast to the fluidity of the earlier miniatures.

**Aurangzeb (1658-1707)**, Shah Jahan’s youngest son and the next emperor was a puritan who had very little interest in the art. His philosophy of life did not tolerate frivolity or pleasures of any kind. He appointed a “muhtaseb”.

He prohibited music and sternly discouraged styles of dress which he considered effimeniate. The splendour and luxuries of Shah Jahan’s court were abolished and the palace was stripped of its luxurious trappings. Painting too suffered serverly he regarded its patterns oppose to sacred Islamic tenets. His portrait is painted in battles and seiges, he is shown almost as an old man. While the emperor laid an austere life in which even simple pleasure seem to have no part, his courtier indulged in all types of extravagances. This is reflected in the paintings of this period which is replete with music, drinking and love scenes and through scenes are rather contrived and the figures rigid, they continued to be painted during the succeeding reign also. Technique becomes the looser figures more rigid, lines less restrained and colour more garish as the Mughal empire headed towards decay.

37. Sensor of Morals.
Although Aurangzeb’s portrait with his son and Shaisteh Khan and a hunting scene are among the finest Mughal paintings of their genres and suggest that he had a true feeling for the art, by 1668, when he promulgated restrictive religious ordinances, he virtually closed the royal atelier. As the empire declined the artist too travelled to other areas and sought patronage at other court. Earlier the courts that had alliances with the Mughals either had some Mughal artists working for them or had sent some of their own artists to be trained at the imperial atelier. The less talented artists set up stalls at bazaars and made paintings that had no links with the work ordered by the imperial patrons, often showing a remarkably primitive quality. The outstanding 17th century Mughal artists were Chitarman, Mohammad Nadir of Smirkhand, Mir Mohammad Hasim, Goverdhan, Bhagwati, Mansur, Manohar, Farrukh Beg and Hassan.

All facts and situations in our knowledge so far have established beyond doubt that Mughal paintings were surely a mughal court product, organized and developed from the beginning to the end by the emperor themselves. "The imperial masters selected the themes or subjects. The thematic contents of the paintings are a reflection of the personal tastes, pride, pleasure, preferences, fashion, hobbies, temperament of the individuals kinds. In every sense Mughal painting was a court art".38

The imperial mughal court presents the eloquent articulation of artistics activities in painting of an integrated form and style with a true sense of purpose and direction. The implication has been given credibility by an analysis of the paintings themselves, despite relative variations in styles and emphasis on the topics conditioned by the preferences and predilections of individual kings from Akbar to Aurangzeb. The colour schemes are also maintained with a common denominator as were the draughtmanship and character of design. It is therefore relatively easy for even a layman to be able to view a painting to judge whether its origins lie in the imperial Mughal atelier or not.

Aurangzeb’s indifference to painting might have been partly responsible for the decline that followed Shah Jahan. Nevertheless, the tradition did not come to an end; and the Mughal style largely influenced. Later school of painting such as those of Awadh, Lahore, Delhi, and Patna, it also influenced the hill schools and centres of painting in south India.

**MY FINDING AND CRITICAL EVALUATION**

All facts and situations known so far have established beyond doubt that the Mughal painting was essentially a product of the Mughal Court and that this art was organised and patronized from beginning to end by the emperor themselves. The artists were recruited and works were assigned to them by the emperors. They were paid and rewarded from the state treasury. Materials were obtained and purchased for them from far and near by the manager of the court atelier. It was in the royal library of manuscript and albums that the artists had their workshop.

Themes and subjects were selected by the imperial master rather than the artists themselves. Although the nobles of the imperial court occasionally advised them. The thematic contents of the paintings reflect the personal tastes and temperaments, prides and preferences, fashions, pleasures and pastimes of the individual imperial patterns and their courtly associates. Even in the form and style of the paintings, courtly tastes and preferences become themselves evidence to reveal the compositional scheme of court scenes, colour schemes and choice of colours.

The form and content of Mughal painting certainly is a departure from the collecting community tradition and the primary inspiration came from outside of the land to which the art belonged i.e. from Timurid and Safavid Iran. In Mughal court painting, what is more

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39. Lucknow and Allahabad.
important and more interesting is the fact that a common feature remains throughout to distinguish the form and style from earlier and later ones.

My study and analysis of Mughal painting also point to the fact that the artists had to conform to the common feature of style and form as long as they were in the employment of the imperial court. The more talented artists of the Mughal Court were kept engaged in carrying out the allotted assignments with the help of Junior colleagues. The well known, usual method was for the master artist to lay down the design sketch the outlines and indicate the colours. The junior associates handled the details of inner lines, shades and tonalities, usually more than one copy of an illustrated manuscript was made-one for the royal library and additional ones for gifts to diplomats and favourites.

The Mughal Court presents the articulation of artistic activities in the field of painting of a unified and integrated from and style with a sense of purpose and direction based as the themes and tastes of individual Mughal monarchs from Akbar to Aurangzeb. The narrative descriptive and dramatic aim remain constant throughout. The process of Indianization remained Irano Central Asia during the first two Mughals. From Akbar onwards, the Mughal court retained a strong Indian character, the reasons being obvious i.e. by religious affiliation the Mughal monarchs were Muslims.

They were closely tied to outside of India by social, political and commercial relations. At times of need materialistic, cultural and spiritual, they turned to the people of these areas for help and guidance. Persian alone was recognized as the sole language of the court and it was because of the choice of this language, the whole world of creative imagination of history and romance affected and conditioned the minds of the Mughal monarchs.

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I establish the opinion that though Babur was a learned and cultured man with sophisticated taste, there is no evidence that he actually founded an atelier of artists. Humayun was the first patron of Mughal painting. He acquainted himself with the studio of schools of leading artists. Akbar founded the painting atelier and Mughal school of painting came into existence and the art of painting in its general finish and boldness of execution reached perfection during his reign. Jahangir had a more developed artistic sense and my study confirms that painting under him was an autocratic art in which portraiture dominated with love of detail and fineness of drawing. Shah Jahan's reign was marked by dazzling magnificence and the artists works became more distinguished. The empire declined with Aurangzeb for his fanatism and artists migrated to other princely states and patrons.

It becomes highly identified now that the Hindu and Muslim artists at the Mughal court had 'representation' as the chief aim and concerned with the descriptive themes in a dramatic manner and in their utmost visibility. There is a great and authentic inference through my thesis with evidence of the introduction of elements from contemporary European painting and renaissance periods, Christians myths and legends. In every aspect, Mughal painting was a court art, with a definite character, form and style, with a reflection of the personal tastes, prides, preferences, pleasure, temperament and hobbies of the individual kinds.