

REPRESENTATION OF ARCHITECTURE IN RAJASTHANI MINIATURE PAINTINGS

Premadasan M.K, Research Scholar, Dept of Fine Arts, Himalayan Garhwal University, Uttarakhand

Dr. Sudha Jain, Professor, Dept of Fine Arts, Himalayan Garhwal University, Uttarakhand

ABSTRACT

The Rajasthani miniature paintings resembled palm leaf manuscript greatly in their early stages of development. Many art historians believe that Rajasthani miniature paintings were first created as manuscripts. In Rajasthan, it is customary to depict architectural forms in paintings. Old religious writings on palm leaf have traces of these artwork. Later, it was reproduced on paper, and miniature paintings gradually gained popularity. At that time, building was portrayed in a crude way that was stylised to fit the format of the painting. Architectural arrangements were shown from the front or the side, much like section drawings. The early tiny paintings lack the hint of a third dimension. Large numbers of paintings depicting architecture can be found in Rajasthani miniatures. The previous paintings' styles demonstrate how Rajasthani heritage sprang from Western India's Jain culture and later blended with Mughal style. Throughout this period of growth, Rajasthani paintings underwent a continual cycle of change. It's possible to think of this as a synthesis of Persian and Indian design. The "sons of kings" known as the Rajputs founded kingdoms in Rajasthan, also known as "the place of kings," in western India. The majority of Rajasthan's kings were Hindus. The Rajputs were leaders in fending off the invaders and safeguarding the surviving customs of traditional Hindu culture at their courts when Muslims began to rule northern India. The Mughals, who reigned from the middle of the 18th century till today, significantly changed the cultural tradition of the Rajput courts. The Rajput kings who spent protracted periods of struggle at the Mughal court unavoidably adopted many of its practises and aesthetics, including a preference for the realism and delicate finish of Mughal art. Even many Mughal-trained artists were invited into the Rajput courts, where they helped to create a blend of Persian art with distinctive local traditions. Early Western Indian paintings had a particular way of depicting architecture; later, the merging of Mughal style gave rise to a new style.

KEY WORDS: Rajputs, Architectural, religious, Rajasthan

INTRODUCTION

Rajasthani miniature paintings typically featured secular or religious themes as their subjects. Any subject used architectural settings frequently, demonstrating the artists' love of depicting architecture in paintings. In every region of Rajasthan, painters were highly fond of depicting architecture in paintings. Perhaps the kings also encouraged court artists to create works that depicted the surrounding architecture. The evidence may be found practically everywhere in Rajasthan. The practise, however, extended beyond Rajasthan to neighbouring areas like Malwa, Uttar Pradesh, Deccan, and even Pahari paintings, which likewise exclusively employ architecture.

The Ragamala series of paintings include numerous representations of architecture. Ragamala, which means "garland of ragas" in Sanskrit, refers to a collection of artworks that show many ragas, or musical sounds. Since colour, mood, hue, delight, beauty, music, and other concepts are all denoted by the word raga, Rajasthani miniature paintings frequently reflect these moods. However, many modern traditional artists have provided an explanation for the use of building in these works. Architecture eventually developed to be a crucial component of miniature paintings that display a diversity of styles and characteristics. Kanhaiya Lal Verma, a miniature painter, remarks.

-It is quite obvious that the painters of Rajasthan include architecture in their paintings because; the surrounding he lives is full of architecture and it is interesting as a subject. A person grows up in such environment will psychologically express the same what he has experienced from his childhood.

There are paintings with religious and secular subjects that also feature architecture in addition to Ragamala. The façade of buildings, Jharokha windows, balconies, roof tops, verandas, arched gates, stairs, etc. are depicted in these. The portrayal of an existent structure may not always be

present in an architectural image. Sometimes artists will use their imagination in this way, applying it to the painting's mood. In addition to the use of narrative or topic, court scenes that are connected to a specific time, such as festival celebrations, the king viewing animal fights, or other events occurring within the palace area reflected through paintings. These paintings are solely illustrations of the palace architecture. These are crucial records of royal actions in particular areas. The Rajput kings who lived with the Mughals for a long time unsurprisingly acquired many of their traditions and styles, including the art of painting. Rajasthan court painters were inspired by the minute details and naturalism of Mughal paintings. By the late 17th century, paintings from Jodhpur, Bikaner, Kota, Amber, Kishangarh, and Jaipur showed a strong Mughal influence. Comments from Andrew Topsfield:

A number of Muslim artists are known to have had strong ties to the Mughal school by the late 17th century. Bikaner is the least Rajput-like of the Rajasthani School thanks to its cool colour scheme, delicate drawing, and restrained attitude. The court of Amber maintained close relations with the Mughal dynasty till being relocated by Sawai Jai Singh to the new Jaipur in 1727.

A strategy of expressive distortion was used at Kishangarh to adapt the same sensual and more weary late Mughal style for lyrical depictions of Krishna and Radha's love in palace and pastoral settings. Strong initial Mughal influences were much more extensively integrated and adapted to native Rajput modes of expression at the neighbouring courts of Bundi and Kotah, in south-east Rajasthan, during the 17th and 18th centuries. The architectural arrangements took on a fresh vitality in the 18th-century painting from Udaipur, which demonstrates outline purity and a grasp of three-dimensional structures. There were other paintings created at that time, such as the 1767 image of Maharana Ari Singh with his women in Jagmandir in Udaipur, which Andrew Topsfield notes:



Figure-1 Pleasure palace at Pichola lake, painting from the court of Maharana Ari Singh, 1730-40, Udaipur

-In this, the most spectacular painting of his reign, Ari Singh is seen six times in all, promenading of sporting with his ladies and female attendants among the courtyards and gardens of Jagmandir. The most southerly and the oldest of the lake palace of the Pichola, Jagmandir was favourite pleasure resort of the Maharanas.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RAJASTHANI MINIATURE PAINTINGS

The history of Rajasthani paintings' beginnings is still mysterious and only partially known. The historical context behind Rajasthan painting's inception and the specifics of its real establishment are not well known. It was believed that the Mughal era was when Rajasthan painting culture and its use of architecture began. However, numerous researchers have recently established that the architectural representation in the paintings is very old and may be seen as a continuation of the Jain writings and the Ajanta paintings. In 1947, Herman Goetz, for instance, wrote

-Instead of judging Rajput art on its own merit, its traditional Hindu religiosity and literary background were accepted as an unquestioned evidence that it had to be regarded as a continuation of classic and high Medieval Hindu art.

Some Western academics claim that during the Mughal era, numerous princely realms had a flourishing of the Rajasthani style of painting and architectural depictions. Since the Rajasthani court became the new home of the Mughal court painters. These artists added Mughal influences, particularly in the form of architecture, to Rajasthani paintings. However, other academics believe that it simply developed as a result of Mughal painting and thrived throughout Akbar's rule. However, since researchers and academics have revealed the history of the 11th–12th century and its beyond, which indicates a continuing practise of showing architectural settings in Indian paintings, the opinions of these viewpoints have been shown to be less solid. Ananda Coomaraswamy portrayed the continuation of the traditional Indian culture as it is seen in Rajput art. He declared:

-It is interesting to recognize in Rajput paintings a great variety of motifs, compositions, and formulae that occur commonly in much older Indian works or corresponds to the phraseology of classical rhetoric.²⁷

With their attention to precise detail and naturalistic painting styles, the Mughals have improved the prevailing tradition, nonetheless. Every region of Rajasthan may be seen to have a Mughal influence in the works from the 16th to the 18th centuries, particularly in the paintings that depict buildings. According to Andrew Topsfield

-Many Rajput chiefs of the time spent much of his life in the Mughal service, attending the emperor's court or campaigning in distant provinces. He would thus have adopted Mughal fashions of various kinds, including a taste for portraiture and the depiction of court life. Here the Raja listens to female musicians performing on a carpeted garden terrace with water-courses and fountains.

It is important to comprehend how the tradition of miniature paintings developed in Rajasthan before talking about how architecture is portrayed in Rajasthani miniature paintings. Dr. Coomaraswamy has reimagined the existence of Rajasthani art. He was the first to distinguish between Mughal art and Rajasthani paintings. His opinions are extremely important to this research, particularly the dates. His research papers, which shed light on its history, were given by Dr. Herman Goetz. Indian art & Letters, Vol. 1, by Herman Goetz. Additionally, Karl Khandelwal covered the history and evolution of Rajasthani paintings.

The Western Indian painting tradition's earliest iteration was mentioned by Tibetan historian Tara Nath. He mentions Maru Pradesh (Marwar) in the seventh century, but no artwork from this era are still in existence. Gujarat was once the name of the entire province, therefore it stands to reason that this is where painting developed and flourished. The visual Kalpa-Sutra, written by Bhadrabhanu Swami in V.S. 1216, is the first example of miniature paintings that were created as manuscripts. It is the oldest Indian artistic text that is still in existence.

Later versions of the Kalpa- Sutra display an image of architecture in keeping with this design. Western India has produced two copies of Bal-Gopal Stuti and one each of Geet-Govind around the year 1450. These paintings feature depictions of architectural components. These are also referred to as the first depictions of Lord Krishna, and they contain the earliest traces of early Rajasthani painting.

The architecture typically appears as a painting's background. Buildings' superstructures, as seen in the details and figures, are constructed beneath two or more ornate pillars. The Jain faith was where text first began to appear in paintings, and Rajasthani paintings afterwards carried on this tradition. The general arrangement, the use of colour, and the portrayal reveal the Apabhramsha, or Jain, text style.



Figure-2: Ramkali Ragini, 1575, Gujarat

After the original art and traditions of the Ajanta-Ellora and Jain manuscript paintings were combined, Rajasthan gradually experienced a period of expansion in painting, iconography, and building from the 12th to the 15th centuries. The contrast between Gujarati and Rajasthani paintings is not immediately apparent. Many areas in Rajasthan have undergone changes over the years. The legendarily talented artist Mandan moved from Gujarat to this country during the reign of Maharana Kumbha, according to historical sources.

Early paintings from Rajasthani regions have been analysed, and it was discovered that they portrayed architecture similarly to Gujarati manuscripts. The majority of these paintings were inspired by Jain literature. Buildings and architectural features occupy significant painting space but are only employed as background or ornamental elements, resembling Jain paintings. Interior and outdoors are shown combined in the painting's setting along with a flat, liner character horizontal ground. The walls and floors of the structure make no reference to a third dimension, and the pillars supporting the turret kiosk on the roof are drawn vertically with ornate moulding and patterns. The architectural area's background can occasionally be filled with a darker colour. Nature is also represented by elements like mountains, trees, rivers, and people in dramatic stances and gestures. To distinguish between the subject and the background, colours are crucial. The representations of building, however, used less colours, such as Indian red and yellow ocher, etc.



Figure-3: Ragini Sarang, Manuscript, probably South Mewar, 1575, collection: Bharat Kala Bhawan



Figure-4: Chowripanchasika, early 16th century, Mewar, Rajasthan



Figure-5: An illustration from Bhagawat Puran, probably Mewar, Early 1600 c.

Chowripanchasika and Bhagwat-Puran, two visual texts, present several examples of architectural configurations. Nevertheless, while being secular and sacred manuscripts, both illustrations share a commonality in the background architectural arrangements. In both manuscripts, the superstructure of the building is triangular, and the pillars and under-parapet design are nearly identical. It's interesting to note how these paintings reflect the influence of Islamic architecture. Architectural frames are depicted with both the interior and exterior, as well as turrets (kiosks) perched on parapets or eaves.

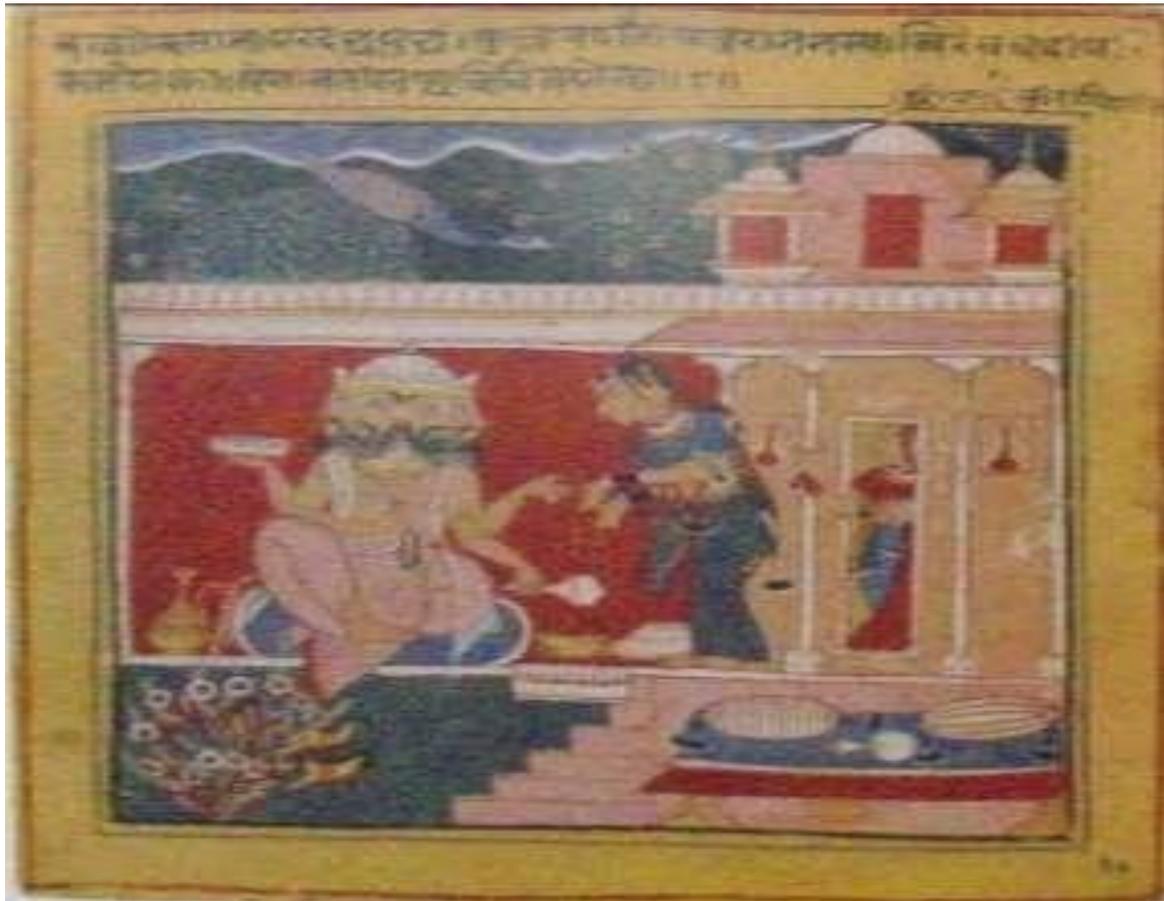


Figure-6: Khambati Ragini from Chawand Ragamala series, 1605. Mewar,

The earliest Mewari miniature paintings ever discovered. The Raga-Mala paintings created by Nasiruddin at Chavand, the seat of Maharana Pratap, are regarded as the first examples of paintings that were completely produced on Rajasthani land and depict architectural arrangements. The Merwar School exhibits traditions from the latter era. These data support the claim that Rajasthan alone is the origin of Rajasthani art. Mewar is the birthplace of miniature painting and a hub for its development. The Rajasthani style was an improved variant of the Apbhransh style, according to Dr. Herman Goetz. The early 16th century and the second half of the 15th century have been chosen as the commencement of the pure Rajasthani style.

BACKGROUND OF ARCHITECTURE IN RAJASTHANI MINIATURE

One of India's provinces, Rajasthan is in the western region of the continent and has a lengthy history of art and architecture. The state was historically located along an ancient trade route connecting India to Western Asian nations. Because of this, the residents of the nearby area were actively engaged in trade. Even common people were inspired to admire art by the surrounding natural beauty. Being skilled builders, the kings of Rajasthan lavished money on buildings other than temples. Even today, the dams, man-made lakes, canals, arched gateways, towers, fortresses, and palaces they erected serve as reminders of their engineering and architectural prowess. The fact that the kings of those times kept artists at their court was a source of pride for them, which prompted artists to produce works based on the notable activities of the rulers, such as hunting, musical performances, festival celebrations, etc. Painting included not just depicting such subjects but also showcasing stunning architecture with intricate detailing. The major themes in Rajasthani miniature paintings were (A) landscape compositions and (B) architectural compositions. In his book, "The Classical Tradition in Rajput Painting," Prapaditya Pal made reference to this issue and stated: "The architectural composition is handled equally skilfully, but the aggressive, geometric outlines and greater urgency, placing emphasis on action. It wouldn't be unreasonable to believe that the series was created by at least two masters, one of whom worked on the building compositions and the other on the landscape compositions. 1

Rajasthan covers a huge geographic area. In terms of the stylization of architecture and paintings, each region of the state has an own personality. These were formed as a regional style that had an impact on neighbouring regions, giving rise to numerous sub-styles. Every location shares the idea of a palace or haveli, but each has its own unique representational style. Miniature paintings display the same originality. The Rajasthani artists were completely free to depict any object in their own unique way. As a result, occasionally the building in paintings does not match what is actually there. The artist Kanhayalal Verma notes that these representations of buildings may not always reflect reality. These paintings occasionally reflect the imagination of the artists who created them.

Artists were free to design buildings however they saw fit. The state was split up into numerous regions, which resulted in the emergence of numerous regional fashions.

Local architectural design is depicted in paintings of these areas. Every region created distinctive façade aedicule patterns and surface design elements. Because it was common practise at the period to interchange creative styles with other regions, numerous hybrid kinds of building structure can be seen side by side.

Mughals had a big impact on Rajasthan's cultural legacy. In many other areas, including lifestyle, architecture, paintings, and more, the Mughal influence may be seen. The Mughal art eventually had a significant impact on Rajasthani painting. According to Andrew Tposfield, the artists mixed Indian emotion with Persian technical finesse in their work. Nearly the whole state of Rajasthan was dominated by the Mughal Empire.

Mughal influence thus had a significant role in Rajasthan's architecture and paintings.

Due to the blending of two different civilizations throughout this time, new developments in depicting architecture have been observed. The representation of architecture in Rajasthani miniature paintings from the 16th to the 18th centuries is the main subject of this study. Because two diverse styles were combined, there is a wide variety of depiction.

- Rajput paintings, a byproduct of long-standing Indian heritage.
- Persian paintings from the Mughal era.

Contrary to what was stated in the previous sentence, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy recognised that Rajasthani miniature painting was indigenous, distinguishing it from Mughal art as being a part of the "main stream" of Indian art, which he connected to the old classical art of Ajanta. Ancient Indian painting includes the Rajasthani style of painting. Dr. Coomaraswamy recognised the persistence of classical Indian heritage as it is depicted in Rajasthani paintings.

It's fascinating to see how many different motifs, compositions, and formulae from Rajput paintings correspond to the phraseology of classical rhetoric yet also appear frequently in far older Indian works.

CONCLUSION

Painting, like other visual arts, developed greatly in Rajasthan and became known as Rajasthani miniature painting. The phrase "Rajasthan" conjures up images of a land ruled by kings, complete with hilltop forts and regal palaces, however it may not necessarily conjure up images of art. But in this area, the paintings are also known by a special name: miniatures. Forts, religious and nonreligious tales from antiquated texts, musical notations, the affluent court life of the kings, etc. are the principal subjects of paintings. As a result, Rajasthani artists began to favour the representation of architecture.

After this time, it is clear that the Rajasthani style was influenced by the Mughal style and developed from the Gujarati Aphbransh style. Although the process may have actually started in the ninth or tenth century, a stage of development had already started in the fifteenth century. It's possible that Gujarat and southern Rajasthan saw this comeback (Mewar). Many academics have expressed the opinion that Jain art significantly influenced the development of Hindu-Rajput art. Architecture was incorporated into Indian painting thanks to Jain art. Later, tradition and modernity combined to create Rajasthani style.

It is understood that Rajasthan, alone, is where Rajasthani painting first appeared. It greatly flourished in this state, having been greatly influenced by Jain art traditions. The state's ancient history and topography were significant factors in its growth. In the form of poetry, painting, and architecture, the Rajput's heroic acts and the stamp of their civilization and culture can be seen throughout the entire state. Rajasthan is a sizable region, and numerous autonomous rulers over the various regions have led to the development of numerous styles within the state. Therefore, it is necessary to split the area geographically in accordance with the nature of the research.

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