ARHA 286  Empire and Erotica: Indian Painting, 1100-1900  
Instructor: P. Wagoner

Fall 2013  
Meets Mon, Wed. 1:10 – 2:30 PM  
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office hours: Wednesdays 2:40 – 5:00; other days and times by prior appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The history of later Indian painting is dominated by two distinct stylistic traditions, one flourishing at the court of the Mughal empire, the other at the courts of the various Rajput dynasties that held sway in regions along the periphery of the Mughal domain. Despite complex historical relationships between the two traditions, modern scholarship has tended to emphasize their separate identities as distinct, isolable schools with mutually opposing stylistic and aesthetic ideals. Mughal painting is often characterized as naturalistic, rational, and political; while contemporary Rajput work is seen as lyrical, erotic, and spiritual in its approach. In this course, we will trace the history of the emergence and interaction of these two traditions of painting, beginning with the pre-Mughal and pre-Rajput traditions current before the 16th century and continuing to the transformation of the Mughal and Rajput traditions through British colonial patronage. The course strikes a balance between the modes of historical survey and thematic enquiry: some of the themes to be examined include the relationship between painting and literature, the structure of patronage and the degree of the patron's influence in shaping style, and the extent to which the Mughal and Rajput styles appropriated formal conventions from 16th-century European prints and paintings.

COURSE SYLLABUS:

9/2 M: “Empire” and “Erotica”: Introduction to overarching themes (01)  
“Empire” & “Erotica” = “Mughal” and “Rajput”?; the interplay of Indic, Persianate, and  
“Firangi” traditions; art of the book; working in the kitab-khana; the materials and  
techniques of Indian painting  
READ: B.N. Goswamy and Caron Smith, “Painting”, in Domains of Wonder: Selected Masterworks  

9/4 W: From “Virtual Sculpture” to linear rhythms: The classical Indic tradition and the rise of the  
medieval idiom, 6th through 14th centuries (02)  
“Chitra” and “Chitrabhasa” in the Ajanta murals; the rise of the medieval idiom at  
Sittannavasal, Lepakshi; characteristics of the early Indic book; Buddhist and Jain  
monastic and mercantile patronage; the “Eastern” & “Western” Indian styles, 11th century  
– 14th century  

9/9 M: “Sultanate Painting” and its impact on the “Western” Indian style in the 15th Century (03)  
Sultanate painting: problems of definition, dating and provenance; the beginnings of  
Persianate influence in W.Indian style; the “loosening” of the W. Indian style in the 15th  
century
9/11 W: The rise of the Erotic mode in the early Sixteenth century (04)
“Fifty Verses of a Love Thief” and the Chaurapanchasika style: the Romance of Laur and
Chanda and the Chandayan style: Nimat Nama, a Sultan’s cookbook
READ: Somadeva Vasudeva, “Aesthetic Sentiment”, “An Example”, “Technical Details”, and

II Early Mughal painting
READ: Guy and Britschgi, Wonder of the Age, pp. 42-70.

*9/16 M: QUIZ; Mughal painting under Humayun (c.1546-1556) and early in the reign of Akbar (1556-
1575 (05)
Humayun’s lost patrimony and the Mughal response to the Safavid style: Imperial synthesis
and imperial empiricism: “Tales of a Parrot” and Akbar’s portrait album: organizing the
imperial atelier (kitab khana): producing the “Adventures of Hamza”
READ: Ellen Smart, “Akbar, Illiterate Genius”, in Kaladarsana: American Studies in the Art of
PAPER #1 assigned (Due Friday, October 4th, by 5:00pm)

9/18 W: Painting and Imperial Ethnography in the 1580s (06)
Translating and illustrating the Hindu epics: the Babar Nama and the beginnings of natural
history painting

9/23 M: Akbar and the invention of history painting, 1582-1597 (07)
Preparing for the millennium: the Tarikh-i Alfi (1581-1593): the two Akbar Namas (1586-7 &
1597): towards a more unified and rational space

9/25 W: The role of the “Europeanism” in Akbari painting (08)
Akbar and the Jesuits; Antwerp printmaking and the Polyglot Bible: “influence” or
“appropriation”?; the assimilation of new techniques
READ: Yael Rice, “The Brush and the Burin: Mogul Encounters with European Engravings”, in
Crossing Cultures: Conflict, Migration, and Convergence: Proceedings of the 32nd
International Congress of the History of Art, ed. Jaynie Anderson, Carlton, Vic. :

III The classical moment: Painting under Jahangir and Shah Jahan
READ: Guy and Britschgi, Wonder of the Age, pp. 71-109.

9/30 M: Style and connoisseurship under Jahangir (r.1605-1627) (9)
Changes in taste under Jahangir: the new aesthetic of unified composition: connoisseurship of
individual painters’ style: the emergence of the muraqqa
READ: Elaine Wright, “An Introduction to the Albums of Jahangir and Shah Jahan”, in Muraqqa: 
Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library, Alexandria, VA: Art Services

10/2 W: “Downsizing” the atelier under Jahangir and the creation of new traditions: Painting, Poetry, and
Music (10)
“Downsizing” and its impact: Imperial, Sub-imperial, and “Popular” levels of Mughal
patronage: Ragamala painting: the Chunar, Chawand, and Laud Ragamalas
STUDY GUIDE for Midterm distributed
10/4 F:  (Not a class day) PAPER #1 DUE BY 5:00PM

10/7 M:  New trends in portraiture under Jahangir: the psychological portrait and the allegorical portrait (11)

*Portraiture and the human condition: recording the Death of 'Inayat Khan; Govardhan’s studies of holy men* The St. Petersburg album: dealing with the Safavid menace; the creation of an “iconographic” manner of painting; Farrukh Beg’s “Old Sufi”


10/9 W: “Wonders of the Age”: natural history paintings for Jahangir (12)

*The “Wonders”* Abu’l Hasan and Ustad Mansur: from squirrels and peacocks to turkeys and zebras: connoisseurship and collecting

➔ 10/9 W - 10/13 Sun:  37th Annual Navaratri Festival: attend one or more concerts/performances and enjoy! For schedule, see:  http://www.wesleyan.edu/cfa/enews/40thanniversary.htm

10/14 M:  Mid-term EXAM

10/16 W:  Meanwhile, in the Deccan: alternatives to Mughal Painting, 1565-1610 (13)

*Celebrating the defeat of Vijayanagara in the Tarikh-i Husain Shahi: Early portraiture at Ahmadnagar: magic, astrology, and kingship in the Nujum al-Ulum; mysticism and portraiture at Bijapur under Ibrahim Adil Shah II*

10/21 M:  NO CLASS (Fall Break)

10/23 W:  The Windsor Castle Padshahnama and the pictorial aesthetic of Shah Jahan (14)

*qarina and composition: the neutral ground in outdoor scenes; appropriating European cartographic conventions; the painter-brothers Balchand and Payag: clarity and chiaroscuro*


PAPER #2 Assigned (due Monday, December 5)


*Shah Jahan’s obsession with his Timurid ancestry; the dynastic portrait: Govardhan, Balchand, and the new romantic portrait*

10/30 W:  Anti-aestheticism under Aurangzeb and the qualities of Later Mughal Painting (16)

*The succession dispute between Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb and the battle of Samugarh: Aurangzeb’s orthodox anti-aestheticism and the dismantling of the kitab-khana; new currents in sub-imperial and “Later Mughal” painting: accentuating the erotic; hyper-chiaroscuro; theatricality*

**IV Rajput Schools, 17th – 19th centuries**


11/4 M:  Toward a taxonomy of Rajput styles (17)

*Rajasthani/Pahari, Early/Late, Mughalizing/non-Mughalizing: the role of the “Village Tradition”: mechanisms of Mughalization*


11/6 W: Rajput pictorial narrative: Jagat Singh’s *Ramayana* (18)

_Hindu epic and the story of Rama; Rajput techniques of pictorial narrative: epic as a link between past and present_

11/11 M: Rajput devotionalism: illustrated manuscripts of the *Bhagavata Purana* (19)

_God, image, and avatara: “remembering” the life of Krishna and the bhakti ideal: different categories of devotion; Krishna and the Gopis as divine allegory; acting as a way of salvation; painting the flavor of bhakti; Krishna Lifts Mt. Govardhan_


11/13 W: The erotic sentiment (*srngara-rasa*) and the Poetics of Rajput painting (20)

*Rasa, dhvani, and alamkara: The erotic sentiment (*srngara-rasa*); Nayaka-nayika paintings: the limits of eroticism: pornography_

11/18 M: Differing modes of Rajput Portraiture (21)

_Raja Sidhi Sen and Shamsher Sen of Mandi: Nainsukh’s portraits of Raja Balwant Singh; Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra: Raja Durjan Sal and Brijnathji: The “Architectural Portrait” at Mewar_


11/20 W: The Fantastic Landscape: paintings from Kota and Marwar (22)

*Natura naturata and natura naturans: the royal tiger hunt at Kota: “Garden and Cosmos” at Marwar_

_V The Legacy of Mughal and Rajput Painting in British India and in Contemporary South Asia_

_READ: Guy and Britschgi, *Wonder of the Age*, pp. 186-201._

11/25 M: “Company” painting (23)

_The British East India Company: painting for the Nabobs: natural history painting transformed by science: painting as “postcard”_

_STUDY GUIDE for Final exam distributed_

11/26-12/1 Thanksgiving Break

12/2 M: Into the 20th century: The continuing relevance of Mughal and Rajput painting (24)

_COPYING and forgery: the rise of a market for Mughal art: painting and the Bengal “renaissance”_

12/4 W: Contemporary painters and the miniature tradition (25)

_Nilima Sheikh, Shahzia Sikander, Saira Wasim_

*12/5 Th: (not a class day) PAPER #2 DUE BY 5:00pm.*

*12/11 W: Final Exam, 9:00 AM – 12:00 noon*
ABOUT THE COURSE


Reading assignments from this book are listed under each chronological unit of the syllabus. Ideally, you should read through each assigned portion by the first day of class for that section. This first reading will serve to acquaint you with the overall content of the portion in question; you are then advised to re-read the relevant parts of that section as we progress through the lectures for that unit.

For those of you looking for a more general narrative survey type text, the following OPTIONAL reading may be recommended: Milo C. Beach, Mughal and Rajput Painting. The New Cambridge History of India, I:3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

This book is expensive ($70.00 new list price), but if you wish to purchase a copy you can probably find decent used ones for about $25.00 from Amazon affiliates. Please note that you are NOT required to purchase this book; a copy is on reserve at the Art Library where it may be consulted as necessary.

2. Additional readings: In addition to this one assigned text, there are a number of shorter required readings (journal articles and book chapters) which are all available as PDFs on the Moodle for the course. These assignments are listed on the syllabus under the days for which they should be read:


3. Reserve Readings/Illustrations: Attached at the end of this syllabus is a list of recommended books that have been placed on reserve in the ART LIBRARY (not at Olin). Most of these volumes are scholarly.
catalogues of exhibitions or museum collections, and include many high quality color reproductions of Indian paintings — both those we will be covering in class, and other related works (many more!) that we will not. The entries in some of these catalogues are excellent sources of detailed information on the works in question. You are strongly advised to spend time browsing through these catalogues, examining and reading up on whatever is of interest to you. One of the paper assignments is designed (in part) to give you a pretext to spend time studying these catalogues.

3. MediaDatabase: In this course, we will be studying a number of works of art which are not illustrated in the assigned text (or which are reproduced there only in BW, or at a very small scale). Accordingly, there is an online mediadatabase, accessible on the web from any computer with an internet connection, which contains about 350 digital images relevant to the course. Most of the images that will be shown in class are also accessible in this digital collection. With the database, it is possible to search for images by cataloguing information (e.g. title, manuscript, artist, date, etc.), by style, or by lecture in which they appear. To access the images on the media database, go to the url: http://mediadb.wesleyan.edu/ Under “Browse”, select “Collections”. Scroll down until you see “ARHA 286”. If you click on the small triangle to the right of this name, the entire collection will open. If instead you click on the collection name itself, a list of lecture numbers will appear, which can be opened individually. In either case, thumbnails of the images you have selected will appear together with brief captions. Click on the thumbnail to get a larger view (and click on the tabs to get still higher resolution images and associated cataloguing information).

4) Graded assignments: There are five graded assignments for the course: two short papers, a quiz, a midterm, and a final.

Both papers are to be no more than five pages in length, must include xeroxed illustrations, which should be numbered (e.g. Fig. 1, Fig. 2, etc.), identified with appropriate captions (in the format: “descriptive title of work”, identity of ms./album in which it occurs, artist(s) if known, date, repository, and source of illustration), and referred to where appropriate in the body of the paper, e.g. “(see fig. 1)”. Please note that all written work submitted is to be printed in a 12 pt. font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and have page numbers inserted. Work that does not adhere to these guidelines will be returned graded but with no comments or suggestions.

The topics and due dates for the papers are as follows (fuller details and instructions will be provided at the time the assignment is given; details may change slightly):

**Paper #1** DUE: Friday, October 4th, by 5:00pm.
Prescribed topic: Mughal painting as an imperial style: For this assignment, you are asked to choose 2 pre-Mughal paintings and 1 Mughal painting from the time of Akbar, and use them as the primary illustrations for an essay explaining the differences between pre-Mughal and Mughal painting, with reference both to stylistic aspects and to the larger purposes served by painting in the two traditions. In particular, you are asked to address the questions of how the Mughal style may be considered an “imperial” style, and how the use of the paintings and the manuscripts in which they appeared served the ends of the imperial state.

**Paper #2** DUE: Thursday, December 5, by 5:00pm.
Three Options:
A) Mughal and Rajput paintings as a window into courtly culture: For this assignment, you are asked to write an essay on wine-drinking as a cultural practice in Mughal/Rajput India. Although the drinking of wine was variously prohibited or discouraged in both Islam and Hinduism, the pictorial evidence offers ample testimony to the frequency of the practice in courtly circles. More importantly, this evidence permits the careful researcher to reconstruct many of the cultural “rules” governing this practice (when, where, how, by whom, with what kinds of implements; in what kinds of social situations; etc. etc.). You will be asked to research the visual evidence relating to these questions by going through collection and exhibition catalogues, identifying paintings that
afford good visual evidence of the practice, and analyzing them in conjunction with several brief readings that will also be distributed with the assignment.

B) For this option, you are asked to reflect on your understanding of Mughal and Rajput painting, and then to exercise your creative historical imagination by writing a dialogue between a Mughal patron and a Rajput patron who are meeting to view paintings together. (The one anachronism allowed is that the two paintings and their patrons will not necessarily be contemporaneous.) Each proudly shows a work he has just commissioned, and the two enter a discussion devoted to critiquing the two works. The critiques will necessarily be a product of your creative imagination, but they should also be historically plausible.

C) Write on a subject of your choosing, subject to my prior approval.

The following criteria are used for grading papers:

**A/A-**: An outstanding paper. Excellent in all or nearly all aspects. The interest of the reader is engaged by the ideas and presentation. Effective organization and writing. Paper marked by originality of ideas.

**B+**: A very good paper. Clear argument, clear writing, good evidence, appropriate response to assignment.

**B/B-**: A good paper. Technically competent, with perhaps a lapse here and there. The thesis is clear, properly limited, and reasonable, and the prose is generally good but not distinguished. Use of evidence is sufficient.

**C+/C-**: A competent piece of work but not yet good. More or less adequately organized along obvious lines. Thesis may be unclear or over-simple. Development is often skimpy. Use of evidence may be inadequate. Monotony of sentence structure is apparent and errors may be sprinkled throughout.

**C-/D/D-**: A piece of work that demonstrates some effort on the author's part but that is too marred by technical problems or flaws in thinking or development of ideas to be considered competent work.

**E/F**: Failing grade. Essay may not respond to assignment. Essay may be far too short. Grammar and style may be careless.


The quizzes and exams will be as follows:

**Quiz**: The quiz (10 minutes) will be given at the start of class on September 16, and will test your ability to recognize and identify paintings in six different pre-Mughal styles. A firm knowledge of these six traditions is necessary for understanding the development of both the early Mughal style and many of the Rajput styles. To study for this quiz, use the MediaDatabase collection “ARHA 286 Quiz Study Set”.

**Midterm**: The Midterm will be given in class on October 14th (full period), and will consist of a section of slide identifications (from a list of key paintings that will be distributed in class well before the exam); a section of short answer/multiple choice/definition of term questions, and one or two slide-comparison essay questions focusing on the changes from Akbari to Jahangiri period style within Mughal painting. You will receive a study guide for the exam approximately one week prior to the exam date.

**Final**: The Final exam will be given during the regularly scheduled final exam period for this course (Saturday, December 11th, 9:00AM to 12 noon) and will be similar in format to the midterm. It will focus primarily (but not exclusively) on the material covered since the mid-term (i.e., last 4 lectures of unit III, and Units IV and V. You will receive a study guide for the exam approximately one week prior to the exam date.
Your overall grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

- Paper 1: 20%
- Paper 2: 20%
- Quiz: 10%
- Midterm: 20%
- Final: 20%

10% will be reserved for evaluation of such factors as attendance, contribution to class discussion, improvement over the course of the semester, etc.

TOTAL: 100%

5) Policy on extensions & rescheduling of exams: There will be no extensions given for any paper, except in the case of a medical or personal emergency supported by a note from your class dean. All papers are due by 5:00 pm on the due date. They may be placed under the door of my office or placed in my mailbox in the Art History Program office (41 Wyllys, Room 318, i.e. the room with all the glass when you turn left at the top of the stairs). If papers are turned in after the due date, your grade will be reduced by one letter grade for each day or fraction of a day that the paper is late (this includes weekend days too). ⇒ There will be no rescheduling of quizzes and exams except in the case of a medical or personal emergency supported by a written note from your class dean. Otherwise, if you are not present for the exam at the scheduled time, your grade for that exam will be 0 (zero).

6) Honor Code and Plagiarism: Please be sure you have read and understood the section in the current Student Handbook describing the Honor Code and Plagiarism. In particular, pay special attention to the section on plagiarism, which describes the acceptable ways of quoting, paraphrasing, and citing the works of others, and acknowledging the ideas of others, and to the section on the Pledge, which reads as follows:

A. The Pledge
The pledge is an affirmation of each student's agreement to adhere to the standards of academic integrity set by Wesleyan's Honor Code. In order to promote constant awareness of the Honor Code, faculty are encouraged to ask students to sign the pledge when submitting any academic exercise for evaluation. The pledges read as follows:

For papers and similar written work:
In accordance with the Honor Code, I affirm that this work is my own and all content taken from other sources has been properly acknowledged.

For tests and other academic exercises:
In accordance with the Honor Code, I affirm that this work has been completed without improper assistance.

Any suspected violations of the honor code will be reported to the Honor Board.

7) Disability Resources: Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible. If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources, located in North College, Room 021, or call 860-685-2332 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.

8) Classroom etiquette:
- please arrive on time
- please turn your cell phone off before you come into the classroom
- please do not get up and leave the room before class is over
- if you bring food or beverages, please take your trash with you when class is over
RESERVE READING LIST


M.S. Randhawa, Basohli Painting. Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, 1959. (ND1002 R3)


