

Mimesis across Empires: Artworks and Networks in India, 1765–1860 (Objects/Histories)

Natasha Eaton

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In Mimesis Across Empires, Natasha Eaton examines the interactions, attachments, and crossings between the visual cultures of the Mughal and British Empires during the formative period of British imperial rule in India. Eaton explores how the aesthetics of Mughal "vernacular" art and British "realist" art mutually informed one another to create a hybrid visual economy. By tracing the exchange of objects and ideas—between Mughal artists and British collectors, British artists and Indian subjects, and Indian elites and British artists—she shows how Mughal artists influenced British conceptions of their art, their empire, and themselves, even as European art gave Indian painters a new visual vocabulary with which to critique colonial politics and aesthetics. By placing her analysis of visual culture in relation to other cultural encounters—ethnographic, legislative, diplomatic—Eaton uncovers deeper intimacies and hostilities between the colonizer and the colonized, linking artistic mimesis to the larger colonial project in India.



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