

Mughal School

7.0 INTRODUCTION :

Mughal evolution of miniature paintings was originated in Persia and continued for about three centuries in India. The tradition of miniature painting went on from one generation to another with fresh touch. The first Mughal emperor of India was Babur who was a man of aesthetic sensibilities. His son Humayun patronized the art of miniature painting and brought a few Persian artists to India. Notable names were Abdus Samad, Mir Sayyid Ali. It was from these artists that Humayun and his son Akbar took lessons in drawing.

The first major works of Mughal miniature were probably begun under Humayun but was completed under Akbar. During his period miniature paintings were lively and realistic and even contain elements of individual portraiture. After Akbar, his son Jahangir became the emperor. In his time Mughal paintings achieved its zenith, both as decorative art and the nature study. Farukh Baigh, Aqa Raja, and Ustad Mansur were main painters during his period. Miniature paintings of the court of Jahangir's son, Shah Jahan show the first sign of decline.

Miniature paintings are small format of paintings which were usually executed with minute details. Paper was carefully burnished and preliminary drawing was made with red ink. Then the paper was coated with thin wash of white pigment. On this surface painting was done with tempera colours. Finally gold was used where necessary and complete painting was again burnished.

7.1 OBJECTIVES:-

After studying this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- explain briefly the background and evolution of Mughal miniature paintings.
- state the names of enlisted Mughal miniature paintings.
- identify the enlisted Mughal miniature paintings from others.
- mention the main characteristics of enlisted miniature paintings.
- describe the method and materials used, place and style of enlisted miniature paintings.
- name the artists of the enlisted paintings.



Bird Catching at Baran

7.2 BIRD CATCHING AT BARAN

Title	-	<i>Bird Catching at Baran</i>
Artist	-	<i>Bhag</i>
Medium	-	<i>Tempra</i>
Period	-	<i>Akbar</i>
Style	-	<i>Miniature</i>
Collection	-	<i>National Museum, New Delhi</i>

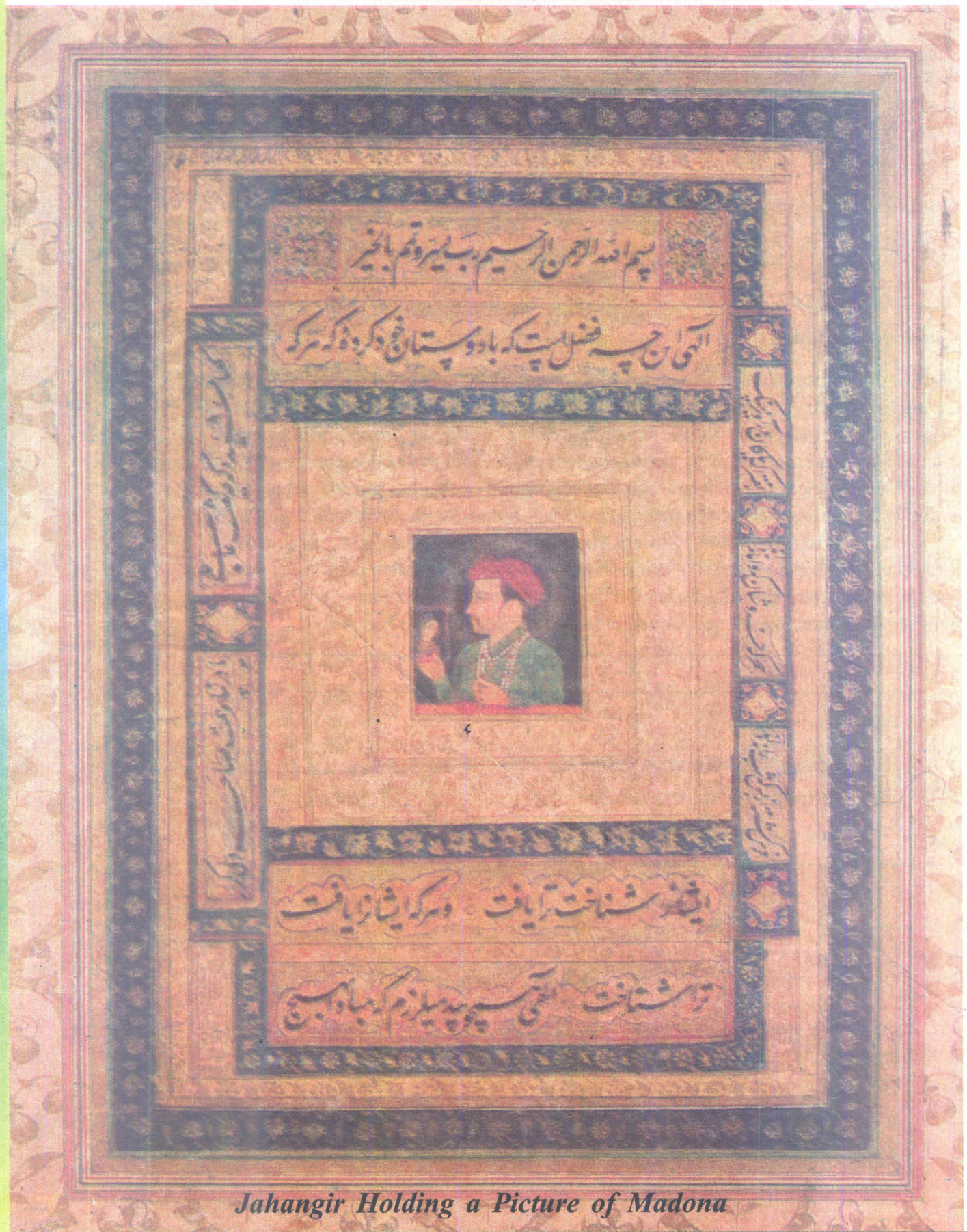
General Description

Manuscripts illustrated by the painters of the court of Akbar were the *Akbar Nama*, the *Razam Nama* (the Persian translation of the Mahabharata), *Anwar-i-Suhayli*, a book of fables and *Babur Nama*. A painting *Bird Catching at Baran* from Babur Nama has special mention. This painting in tempera technique was done on paper by Bhag. The painting is full of natural surroundings. A bird catcher has spread a net under a tree and is hiding behind the tree and covering himself with a red screen. In the foreground a pond is full of lotus flowers where a pair of hoopoes, sarus, snippets, duck and other birds have gathered to drink water. Few birds have fallen prey in the net. Indeed, this is a very beautiful study of birds. The appearance and colour of birds, trees, flowers and mountains are quit natural, which is a specialty of Akbar period.

IN-TEXT QUESTIONS (7.2)

Fill in the blanks:

1. *Razam Nama* was illustrated during the period of _____.
2. Bird catching at *Baran* was done in _____ technique.
3. The name of artist of this painting is _____.



Jahangir Holding a Picture of Madona

7.3 JAHANGIR HOLDING A PICTURE OF MADONA

<i>Title</i>	-	<i>Jahangir holding a picture of Madona</i>
<i>Artist</i>	-	<i>Abul Hasan</i>
<i>Medium</i>	-	<i>Tempera</i>
<i>Style</i>	-	<i>Miniature</i>
<i>Collection</i>	-	<i>National Museum, New Delhi</i>
<i>Period</i>	-	<i>Jahangir</i>

General description

Abul Hasan did portrait of *Jahangir holding a picture of Madona* in 1620. As tempera on paper was common in practice, this painting is also done in same technique. Jahangir is shown holding a picture of Madona and having a close look at it. Jahangir is painted in the centre with decorated borders with scripture on some of it. This painting has an influence of western style. The portrait in profile has prominent nose, big head, soft colours and golden appearance, which is the main characteristics of Jahangir school.

IN TEXT QUESTIONS : (7.3)

Mark (✓) against correct answer of the following questions:

- Jahangir holding the picture of Madona is painted by :
(A) Ustad Mansur (b) Abul Hasan (C) Abdus Samad
- The portrait of Jahangir was done in :
(A) Profile (B) Front (C) Semi-profile.
- The portrait has
(A) Prominent ear (B) Prominent eye (C) Prominent nose



Falcon on a Bird Rest

7.4 FALCON ON A BIRD REST

<i>Title</i>	-	<i>Falcon on a Bird Rest</i>
<i>Artist</i>	-	<i>Ustad Mansur</i>
<i>Medium</i>	-	<i>Tempera</i>
<i>Style</i>	-	<i>Miniature</i>
<i>Time</i>	-	<i>Jehangir</i>
<i>Collection</i>	-	<i>National Museum, New Delhi.</i>

General Description

Ustad Mansur was one of the notable painters in Jehangir court. He was chiefly known for his wonderful studies of bird life but he was also one of the best Mughal portrait painters. There was no doubt the practice of drawing from live model familiar during Jehangir which led to remarkable achievement in portraiture. 'Falcon on a Bird Rest' is a superb example of Ustad Mansur's work. Detailed study of Falcon is easily noticeable in this painting. It seems that this falcon is a tamed bird and painted in tempera technique with realistic details. The falcon is painted in white and brown colours against a contrast yellow background. Its sharp beak and round vigilant eyes are painted in shades of deep yellow ochre. A patch of light blue delineates the feathers on the back of its neck. The bird is fastened with a weight and a string hanging beautifully around its neck. Probably this falcon was a gift from Shah Abbas, the emperor of Iran.

IN TEXT QUESTIONS (7.4)

Mark (✓) against correct answer of the following questions:

- Falcon on a bird rest is a painting in
(A) Realistic style (B) Abstract style (C) Semi realistic style
- The falcon is painted in
(A) Red & blue colours (B) Brown & White colours (C) Brown & Red colours
- Ustad Mansur was chiefly known for his
(A) Landscape study (B) Bird life study (C) Foliage study.
- Practice of drawing from living model was familiar during
(A) Akabr period (B) Jehangir Period (C) Humayun period.



Kabir and Raidas

7.5 KABIR AND RAIDAS

<i>Title</i>	-	<i>'Kabir and Raidas'</i>
<i>Artist</i>	-	<i>Faqir - Ullah</i>
<i>Medium</i>	-	<i>Tempra</i>
<i>Style</i>	-	<i>Miniature</i>
<i>Period</i>	-	<i>Shah Jahan</i>
<i>Collection</i>	-	<i>National Museum, New Delhi .</i>

General description

The period of Shah Jahan was an age of gold. But during his time miniature paintings first shows the sign of decline. The works are perfect but lifeless.

Under Shah Jahan the pattern set under Jahangir was followed in both miniatures and manuscript illustrations. Portraits continued to occupy much of the time of the court painters. There was more feminine touch, an added softness in the drawing of portraits. A new tendencies of naturalism in figure drawing and realistic drapery was developed.

The painting 'Kabir and Raidas' is a documented example of respect given to religious saints by Mughals. Ustad Fakir - Ullah did this tempera painting on paper. He was the head painter of Shah Jahan's Workshop. In a rural background saint Kabir is painted, besides his hut, weaving. The portraits of Kabir and Raidas are realistic study, while the background fades in the mist. Saint Raidas is sitting close by with a *mala* of beads. Both are in deep meditation. There is a divine peace on their faces. This painting brings forth the simple and peaceful life in Indian village. A blue border focuses the painting which is painted in brown shades.

IN TEXT QUESTIONS (7.5)

Circle the correct answer of the followings:

- The border of the painting is painted in
(A) Blue shades (B) Green shades (C) Brown shades
 - 'Kabir and Raidas' was painted by
(A) Fakir - Ullah (B) Nadir (C) Mansoor
 - The period of Shah Jahan was the period of
(A) Bronze (B) Silver (C) Gold
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Marriage Procession of Dara Shikoh



7.6 MARRIAGE PROCESSION OF DARA SHIKOH

<i>Title</i>	:	<i>“Marriage Procession of Dara Shikoh”</i>
<i>Artist</i>	:	<i>Haji Madani</i>
<i>Medium</i>	:	<i>Tempra</i>
<i>Style</i>	:	<i>Miniature</i>
<i>Period</i>	:	<i>Awadh school</i>
<i>Collection</i>	:	<i>National Museum, New Delhi.</i>

General description

Provincial art in Awadh became very powerful under Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula. It reached at its peak under Wajid Ali Shah. While keeping the basic Mughal style, the Awadh school developed a style of its own. There was tremendous emphasis on decoration and colours were softer.

‘Marriage Procession of Dara Shikoh’ was painted by Haji Madani on paper in tempera technique. In this painting Dara Shikoh with his *baratees* is riding on horse back. The prince is leading the procession. There are joyful men, women and young boys who are largely waiting for them. Dara Shikoh is wearing an *angarakha* and a veil of pearls. His father Shah Jahan who is shown with a halo around his head follows him. All the faces are shown either in profile or semi profile. The women are shown riding on elephants in the background. Alongside the drummer are beating their drums sitting on elephants. The dancing, clapping and singing crowds are dressed in bright colourful clothes decorated with gold. Some of the men from both the sides are holding candles. The perspective in the painting is maintained carefully. This painting depicts all flora and fauna.

IN TEXT QUESTIONS (7.6)

Fill in the blanks :

1. Marriage Procession of Dara Shikoh is painted by _____ .
2. Shah Jahan is shown with a _____ around his head.
3. Women are shown riding on _____ .
4. Provincial art reached at its peak under _____ .

7.7 SUMMARY :

The first major works of Mughal miniature were probably begun under Humayun but was completed under Akbar. There were a few Persian artists along with Abdus Samad, Mir Sayyid Ali. During the period of Jehangir, the miniature paintings achieved its zenith both and decorative in study of nature. Farukh Baigh, Aqa Raja, Ustad Mansur were main painters in Jehangir’s studio. Most of the paintings were executed in tempera technique in Shah Jahan’s period. There were tremendous use of gold with lot of decoration keeping the mughal style. The Awadh school developed a style of its own.

7.7 MODEL QUESTIONS:

Give brief description of the following:

1. Write the technique used in miniature painting.
 2. Describe the painting 'Falcon on the bird rest'.
 3. Write the characteristics of Mughal Miniature painting.
 4. Write on any painting done during Shah Jahan's period.
 5. Describe the painting 'Marriage Procession of Dara Shikoh'.
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7.8 ANSWER OF IN TEXT QUESTIONS

- 7.2 (1) Akbar (2) Tempera (3) Bhag
 7.3 (1) B, (2) A, (3) C
 7.4 (1) A, (2) B, (3)B, (4) B
 7.5 (1) C, (2) A, (3) A
 7.6 (1) Hazji Madani (2) halo (3) Elephants (4) Wajid Ali Shah

7.9 GLOSSARY

Persia	- an ancient empire located in west and south west asia.
Tradition	- from generation to generation
Aesthetics	- study of art in relation to the sense of beauty
Patronize	- To support
Realistic	- based on what is real and practical
Portraiture	- Study of the likeness of a person
Zenith	- highest point of state
Decline	- downward movement
Executed	- done
Preliminary	- first step
Pigment	- colour
Tempera	- any paint in which pigment is tempered (mixed) with a water - based binding medium-usually egg yolk.
Madonna	- Virgin Mary
Contrast	- uses of opposite colour
Delineate	- to trace the outline
Manuscript illustration	- hand written book illustration
Naturalism	- technique of rendering a subject as natural appearance
Drapery	- dress
Provincial	- belonging to a particular province (area)
Emphasis	- giving importance
Angarakha	- dress
Halo	- circle or ring around the head of a sacred person
Perspective	- technique of showing volumes and special relationship on a flat surface (paper).