Chapter - 8

Relevance of Mughal Miniatures in Describing Wild Life
RELEVANCE OF MUGHAL MINIATURES IN DESCRIBING WILD LIFE

Animal and flower painting is as old as the human race. Representation of wild life has been a recognized theme of painting persistently practiced by the artists from the time immemorial. The earliest specimens of finest animal paintings, sometimes in polychrome which are to be found in the cave of Altawira, in Spain and also in France, date back to the cave period of human history. The cave artists were hunters and they were obsessed with the only one subject, that is, the animal world. They depicted those animals which they encountered either in search of food or in self-defense. They are wild horses, cattle, deer, reindeer, bison, mammals, birds and fishes. They are astonishingly vivid and lifelike. Chinese and old Indian art is replete with the drawings of animals, birds, and reptiles which are undoubtedly marvels of workmanship, either relieved or painted. Dragons, and flying ducks which play a characteristic role in the Chinese landscape painting are borrowed by the Muslims unhesitatingly and introduced skillfully in their painting merely to enhance the dramatic effect, tenseness of the setting and decorative brilliance without any mythical or sentimental interpretation.¹

Representation of animals on the walls of the ancient cave temples is not foreign to Indian art tradition. Ancient Indian Art was so maulded on religious sentiments that “the painter at the time of painting has no other mental state than the formative spirit that translates itself externally into pictorial representation. That pre-historic man’s artistic activities in India were limited

to the representation of animals such as rhinoceros and other species from the late stone age has been discovered in the Mahadeo Hills. The sculpture of Bharhut, Sanchi, and Amaravati are replete with representation of wild beasts and jungle life. An explanation of the representation of animals in the stone sculptures of Bharhut and Sanchi can be found in the statement of John Irwin, "while Buddhism in proclaiming the equality of man expressed a new humanism and a strong faith in the brotherhood of man, at the same time its gospel of reincarnation stressed the unity of all life and the identification of man with nature. From his arose the intense feeling for nature and animal life which are found displayed in the Bharhut and Sanchi reliefs where animals and as well as human beings, bring flowers and other offerings in homage to the symbol of the Buddha. In the procession headed by gaily caparisoned elephants and horses; in the ponds teeming with lotuses, waterfowl and lush with here and there a buffalo cooling herself in the water. The treatment everywhere was full of sympathy, kinship and affection and the theme was unique, for its period in the history of Art.²

At Amaravati the delightful studies of animal life reached their climax of perfection, although they were greatly mystical. Behind all the studies of wild life the basic theme is the inspiration of Indian Art by Indian religion and philosophy. Eric Grill has put forward the idealism of Indian Art thus: "There is in all Indian Art a recognition of the fundamental principle that Art has not for its raison d'être the satisfaction of man's desire for material beauty in its surroundings. Such satisfaction was put by the way though attained all the more inevitably in that it was not sought as a means or as an end. It was, as it

². Ibid, p. 3.
must already be, an accident”. The same remark can not be applied to the studies of wild life under the secular minded and luxurious Mughal Emperors. Material beauty, aesthetic feeling and pleasure without any tinge of religious sentiments were an axiomatic truth in case of animal and bird paintings of the Mughals.3

A glance to the bird and animal paintings of the Persians may be of great use in understanding the characteristic features of the bird and animal studies of the Mughal painting. Although not separate studies, drawing of animals was also practiced in Persia from the earliest times. The Maqamat of Hariri dated A.D. 1237, executed by al-wasiti, exhibits truthful pastoral scenes which include horse, camel, ass, goat. In the drawing of a group of camels closely packed and rhythmical in their treatment the artist expresses with amazing clarity all that is camelish. The representation of flying ducks in Chinese origin has already gained ground in the landscape background of Mongol school of painting.4

The representation of elephant which is rarely found in Persian miniature painting is, of course, Indian in character. The finest example of an attempt to blend art with nature is to be found in the sumptuous illustration of Kalila-wa-Dimna copied by Nasr Allah Abul Maali, dating from the second decade of the 15th century, now in the greatest exponents of Muslim illustrative art introduced nature as a background not studied for its own sake but the Kalila-wa-Dimna illustrations mark the departure from such established conventional method of nature painting. The truthful delineation of the animal

3. Ibid, p. 4.
fables are fully demonstrated in the *Kalila-wa-Dimna* illustrations. Nature is here represented as a world of earth, trees, water and flowers on which men and animals are merely tenants.\(^5\)

The only attempt to create a delightfully imaginative non-human and non-animal world is to be found in the Shiraj School of Persian painting, especially the illustration of the Istambul Anthology dated 1399. There is a marked advancement in the treatment of naturalism in the animal drawings, exhibited by Bihzad. The grazing of the horse, the suckling of the colts are realistically portrayed. He is sometimes credited with the introduction of bird studies and animal paintings, although we do not find any independently treated studies of birds or animals. Another illustration by Bihzad depicting Majnu's death in Laila's tent represents animal world such as jackal, lion, panther, gazelle, as the domesticated animals. The drawing of horse was executed with rare purity and grace and delicate charm by Sultan Muhammad when he depicted Khusrau watching Shirin bathing.\(^6\)

With the inception of the Mughal rule in India, painting received a mighty impetus. The greatest contribution of Mughal painting to Indian art was the portrait style. The next important subject of representation in Mughal painting is the study of birds, animals and reptiles, manifesting both the Indian and Persian technique. During the period of Akbar, the precursor of the Mughal school of painting, drawing of animal as separate studies was not in vogue. As Akbar's period was formative, the Indo-Persian artists excelled in the delineation of animals and birds when they illustrated battle scenes or hunting

\(^5\) Ibid, p. 5.  
\(^6\) Ibid, p.6
scenes from a manuscript. As the artists were mostly Hindu trained in the technique of Ajanta frescos, the drawing of animals reflect the traditional Indian art. The crudity and unexpressive moods of the black bears and monkey dated 1570, reproduced by Wilkinson in his, "Mughal Painting" shows that animal art was to make a great progress in the next fifty years. That the artists failed to shake off the stiffness and formality of the old Persian school in the reign of Akbar is provided by an illustration from Iyar-i-Danish reproduced in the "Art & crafts of India and Pakistan, where the most dominant painting technique is decidedly Persian. Although exhibiting realism and modeling, the illustration showing Solomon amidst the beasts of creation is thoroughly Persian in style so far as the composition, colouring and figural representations are concerned. Of course, we find some Indian wild life in the painting. There is an apotheosis portrait of Akbar by Govardhan depicting lion and a heifer under his feet. Although the main emphasis here is on the life like portrait, the painter has admirably succeeded in displaying the tamed attitude of the two antagonistic beasts. Abul Fazl has referred to several Hindu artists, namely, Basawan, the portrait painter, Dasawant, the mural and a miniature painter, Jagan, or Jagannath, the animal painter and many others. There is a faithful representation of a pair of tiny peacocks executed with careful finish and minutest detail and exquisite delicacy which has come down to us from the hands of Jagannath, now in the British Museum, Baburnama.

An early representation of peacock is found on the North Gate at Sanchi, where at the two ends of the middle architrave there are stone sculptures of a pair of peacock set crosswise. There is no wonder that the Hindu artists of

Akbar’s court would look to the ancient art traditions of Sanchi and Ajanta for their inspiration. There is another delightful study of wild buffalo in the British Museum, Baburnama drawn by Sarwan, dating from about A.D. 1600. On looking at the picture one can hardly desist from comparing the picture with the two fighting buffaloes in the cave No. 1 at Ajanta. The two fighting bulls represent the artist’s knowledge of animal form and his power of expressing vigorous action. The humps resemble those of the bullocks drawing the chariot, executed by Abul Hasan in the reign of Jahangir.8

If Akbar was the greatest monarch of Mughal dynasty, it can not be denied that Jahangir was far and away its greatest naturalist. His profuse and engrossing memoirs are a veritable natural history of the animals that came under his notice, and a record of the most searching observations concerning them. It has been rightly said of Jahangir that had he been head of a Natural History Museum he would have been a better and happier man. Besides a passion for justice the outstanding features of his character were his love of nature and his powers of observation.9

Under Jahangir, the greatest patron of Mughal art, Mughal technique of painting strove to a new path in order to liberate independent studies of man and animal from the so-called miniature paintings. In this respect Jahangir can be regarded as the greatest connoisseur of Indian art as he allowed liberal encouragement to the un-settered drawings of nature. Never before in any painting have we come across with the study of an individual bird or animal for its own sake, perfectly manifesting aesthetic beauty without any religious tinge


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than the period of Jahangir with the rendering of nature. Persian technique receded back of coruse, exhibiting the Persian delicately decorative sense. Jahangir's maddening interests in birds, flowers and animals opened a new vista to the Mughal artists. Subjects which under Akbar had only an insignificant place in the pictorial scheme were now depicted with the loving exactness. Birds, flowers and animals were not added in painting merely as accessories to complete the theme of the scene or to decorate the borders of miniatures. They absorbed a whole page, drawing attention to them in its own right. Jahangir's keen appreciation of nature infused his court painters to draw furious birds, animals and unusual trees and flowers. Drawing of birds and animals are less successful in the hands of the Indian painters than the same subjects when isolated. The artists have not that intense feeling for wild non-human life which can identify itself with the world. They do not approach the world as a whole but have an exquisite vision of a particular chosen beauty. Jahangir's passion for field sports was accompanied by a genuine aesthetic taste. He was profoundly affected by the beauty of the natural world and had an artist's eye for the grace of the birds and animals.

Binyon in his "Asiatic Art" has reproduced several studies of wild life. The drawing of ox, mule, and bees dating from the early 17th century exhibits the curious combination of ox and mule engaged in operating the Persian-wheel, introduced through the mobile attitude of the animals.

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10. R.L. Binyon, Court painters of the Grand Mughals, Oxford University Press, 1921, p. 64.
12. Binyon, op.cit., p. 64.
Another illustration depicting a black buck with an attendant, dated 1615, is a charming piece of animal study executed by Manohar.\textsuperscript{13} The animal is drawn in an alerted mood which is expressed by the wagging of his tail, sloth movement and gazing eyes. The buck has an orange red coat on his back powered with a small gold pattern and his horn is cased in similar fashion. A bell hangs at his throat. This is one of the finest genre pictures of the Mughal school. It is undoubtedly a magnificent study of animal life and the coaxing attitude and expression of the groom, as if trying to overcome the hesitation of his well-trained pet is perfect in technique and characterization. On observation an author remarks that “all is dainty, speckles, sumptuous”\textsuperscript{14}.

In the British Museum copy of \textit{Baburnama} there is a curiously interesting illustration in Persian style, representing all the birds, beasts and fishes of creation. A fantastic purple crag of conical shape, rises up in the centre of the skin. A horse chins up the crag, a group of horses is below. A sinuous scaly dragon coils up out of the rocks, on the one side of the rock there are snakes and on the other a tiger, a leopard and cheetahs. There are also elephants and crocodiles. Fishes emerge from water while the sky is swarmed by eagles and herons. This is absolutely a non-human animal world represented in a romantic aspect where real and fabulous creatures are admitted. This romantic scene, a love of wild life is always manifest for their strangeness.\textsuperscript{15}

In Mughal drawing of zoological subjects \textit{Ustad} Mansur holds a legendary position. This celebrated artist began his artistic career in the reign of Akbar. He drew two hunting scenes in the Clarke MS of the \textit{Akbarnama} and

\textsuperscript{13} S.P. Verma, ed.\textit{Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art}, Marg, Bombay, 1999, pl. 8, p.19.
\textsuperscript{14} Hasan, op.cit., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., op.cit., p. 9.
eight exquisite little miniatures in the Waqiat-i-Babri or Baburnama, now preserved in the British Museum. As Mansur was a very young man in Akbar’s time, so his bird studies were not accurate, lively and forceful as those of his latter period under Jahangir. About Ustad Mansur, Jahangir remarks “Ustad Mansur has become such a master in painting that he has the title of Nadir-ul Asr, and in the art of drawing is unique in his generation”. Jahangir too had special interest in rare beautiful animals and frequently ordered his painters who always accompanied him on his journeys and campaigns to depict them.

The Mughal studio was always preoccupied with nature and the animal world and devoted active interest in rendering accurate and lively studies of birds, beasts and flowers. Even in the such early works as the Hamzanama, the Tuti nama, in the school of oriental and African studies, Anwar-i-Suhaili and the Zodiacal and Tilasm MS in Rampur, pictures of birds and animals are painted with great care, accuracy and sympathy. Under Jahangir’s patronage these became even more exacting because he wanted the studies true to life, and no one else but Mansur could fulfill that task so successfully. Soon he became the leading exponent of natural history drawings. A few pictures of birds and animals drawn by Manohar, Pidarath, Inayat, Govardhan, Hashim, Abul Hasan etc., have been found but the combined output of all of them will not be equal to even a small part of Mansur’s production.

A beautiful example of the fine bird and animal studies of Mansur is the remarkable picture of Fowl produced in the Mughal painting by Wilkinson. This charming piece is executed with skilful effective colouring and qualities

of details, exhibiting life and character. Coomaraswamy attributes several animal and bird portraits namely zebra, black and white in appearance, a ram and two ducks to Mansur. Considering the depth of the studies, minuteness of details it is not unfair to attribute these pictures to the skillful hands of Mansur.¹⁸

The drawing of the Shahi falcon is of great interest as it appears to be the same drawing prepared by Ustad Mansur at the command of Jahangir in the fourteenth year of his reign.¹⁹ Jahangir once stated about falcon which came directly from Persia: “What can I write of the beauty and colour of this falcon? There were many black markings on each wing and back and sides. As it was something out of the common, I ordered Ustad Mansur who has the title of Nadir-ul-Asr to paint and preserves its likeness”.²⁰ This refers to falcon on a perch, an exquisite work of the finest finish and most delicate colour. The statement of Jahangir shows that drawing of birds after observation was practiced in order to apply life like appearance to the subject portrayed. This realism is never missed in Mughal art. (plate 33)

The study of the Himalayan cheer pheasant is a new addition to the drawings of the same bird existing in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.²¹ The last mentioned drawing is a reverse copy of the other version; the Victoria and Albert Museum example is signed by Ustad Mansur and Rothschild's drawing is unsigned. The cheer is a long-tailed west Himalayan pheasant, rather like the hen English pheasant to look at. It is buffy-

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¹⁹ Verma, op.cit., pi. 1.
white and rusty brown, barred above and mottled below with black. The long, narrow pointed 'pheasant tail' broadly barred buff and brownish black, the narrow pointed lying down crest, and the bright scarlet patch round the eyes confirm its identity ... keeps is small coveys of five or six on precipitous hillsides on ravines covered with tall grass scrub and oak forest”. This is by Ustad Mansur, who has drawn with utmost skill of a bird painter without avoiding pitiless details, such as, pigtail feathers, etc. This is undoubtedly a unique specimen of bird study.22 (plate 38)

Another example of a most careful and delicate study is evidently from nature, that of a Bengali Florican about which Jahangir leaves the fallowing note: “This is a picture of a bird called Jurz-i-Bur, painted by Ustad Mansur, the most remarkable painter of his time, written by Jahangir Akbar Shah in the year A.D. 1624”. The picture of the Bengal florican is equally interesting.23 Drawn with precise and minute lines and faint touches of colours it nevertheless depicts the bird so accurately that a modern ornithologist would hardly find any difficulty to identify it. It is not possible from the available evidence to identify the picture with any such birds described in the Tuzuk. The picture of a white crane reproduced in Havell’s ‘Indian sculpture and painting’ is a marvel of skilled workmanship and deep insight into wild life. The delicate features of the white plumage and the microscopic details of birds anatomy are drawn with scientific exactitude. Although unsigned it will not be far from truth to attribute this picture to Mansur.24

The painting of Turkey cock by Mansur is the finest example of its kind has not yet been surpassed by any other bird study of the period of Jahangir.\(^\text{25}\) In the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Jahangir has given a description of this bird. Jahangir received among other rare birds and animals from Goa, the Turkey cock from Muqarrab Khan, who had been sent to Goa on a mission. “Among them”, says Jahangir, “were a few animals which excited my curiosity and which I had never seen before... as the animals now before me were of such exquisite rarity, I wrote a description of them and ordered that their pictures should be drawn in the *Jahangirnama* with the view that their actual likeness might afford a greater surprise to the reader than the mere description of them. One of the birds resembled a peahen but was a little larger in size though less than a peacock. His back and feet resembled those of a barn-door fowl. His head, neck and throat changed their colour every minute but then anxious to pair he became a perfect red and seemed to be a beautiful piece of coral. The piece of flesh which is attached to his head looks like the comb of the cock. But the curious part of it was that piece of flesh when he was about to pair, hang down a span long like the trunk of an elephant”.\(^\text{26}\) The picture of the Turkey cock was drawn by Mansur perfectly in the state of pairing as described by Jahangir. (Plate 37)

The illustration of Mayna, now in the Prince of Wales Museum, belonging to the first quarter of the 17\(^{th}\) century is vividly portrayed in a most alerted mood.\(^\text{27}\) This is a true representation of an Indian bird study unlike the turkey cock, whose origin is traced from different sources. Smith regards the

\(^{25}\) Hasan, op.cit., pl. 4, p. 7.
\(^{26}\) *Tuzuk*, op.cit., vol. II, p. 150.
\(^{27}\) Hasan, op.cit., pl. 5, p. 7.
turkey as Chinese rather than Indian. Although peacock is a very familiar object of visit in India, the curious turkey cock is undoubtedly an importation into India through the Portuguese held Goa. Jahangir's keen sense of appreciation of wild life is proved by the illustration of four birds, executed by Iklas. During his summer journey to Kashmir the Emperor Jahangir took immense delight in observing and examining the new birds and flowers. The illustration of four birds invites curiosity from all quarters and betrays the artist's complete control over representing strange birds, sometimes based on hearsay. The upper pair have the outline of a pigeon but the tail and colouring of blue magpies. The lower pair manifest the general appearance of wattled pheasant but the colouring of a manual. All these curious combinations betray the fact that they were not drawn from life but only to mitigate the Emperor's ever-increasing zeal for the rare birds.  

The birds play no less important role than the animals as proved by the innumerable delineations of the different species of the birds. In the painting of the "Chenar tree with squirrels", besides a landscape with Persian animals and forms, such as goats, there are squirrels playing with their moving tails which are decidedly Indian, executed with great compassion and skill by Abul Hasan.  

Mansur is also credited with the representation of the "Himalayan Blue throated Barbet", a marvel of gift in Jahangir's aviary, brought from Kashmir, and the Indian Red wattled Lapwing, both of the period of Jahangir which are masterpieces of animal studies.  

28. Ibid, pl. 6, p. 7.  
30. Verma, op.cit., pl. 4, p. 16.  

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In the field of bird and animal painting Ustad Mansur acquired the role of the legendary hero as painter, recalling Bihzad’s leadership in the promotion of Persian paintings technique, and his name is associated with any unsigned good independent paintings of bird and animal drawing. Some of the finely drawn independent painting of birds and animals which are attributed to him are the “Indian fallow deer and Tibetan Antelope”, executed from living specimens kept in one of the Jahangir’s deer-parks; Nilgai (Blue-bull) standing on a low field an example of sensitive animal drawing.\(^{31}\)

Mansur was really a past master in the art of animal and bird paintings. None excelled him in the “harmonious ordered version” of the living birds with their moods, anatomical structures and colour scheme. This is exhibited in the drawing of “zebra” brought from Abyssinia in 1621. Archer observes “Although no dissectionist, Mansur, seems to have had the same innate understanding of animal physique and power of expressing majesty and strength.\(^{32}\) (plate 39)

An unsigned charming picture having faithful reproduction in their colouring of the plumage is the album of Jahangir in the State Museum of Berlin, “Two Magpies” placed happily in a lucid and appropriate background. “It reminds one of the Dutch specialist painters of the seventeenth century who portrayed subjects from the animal kingdom with equal knowledge, but their paintings are seldom so full of feeling as this one from India”.\(^{33}\)

A novel theme of animation to animal life is introduced by the vividly portrayed animal drawings of “Two fighting camels”: Following the old Indian

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\(^{31}\) Hasan, op.cit., p. 11.

\(^{32}\) Verma, op.cit., pl. p.

\(^{33}\) Shanti Swarup, *Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art*, Taraporevala, Bombay, 1983, pl. 34, p. 28.
traditions of animal fight already noticed in the frescoes of Ajanta, such as “Bull Fight”, the theme is nothing striking but the animals are foreign to Indian painting world and the mobility and vivacity of the fighting animals enhance dramatic effect. There is an amazing mastery over pitiless precision of details. While Khandalavala attributes it to Nauha, Rai Krishnadasa suggests that “tour de force” in animal painting to Manohar.\(^\text{34}\)

A peculiar drawing of “Himalayan wild goat” with spirally twisted horns from Kashmir is executed by Inayat which shows close affinity with the environment and the typical animal qualities of a hideous goat.\(^\text{35}\) (plate 40)

Jahangir notes in the \textit{Tuzuk} that the number of pictures painted by Mansur at his command would exceed 100. Of this large number only a few seem to have survived of which the well known picture of glittering red-tulip like flowers, full blown and bud and a butterfly of many hues in the collection of Sitaram Shahu of Banaras bears his signature.\(^\text{36}\)

The skilled draughtsmanship of the Mughal artists in drawing birds and animal paintings is also revealed in the manuscript illustration of \textit{Anwar-i-Suhaili} dated 1610-11, in the court of Jahangir, now in the British Museum. Executed by ten Hindu and six Muslim artists, the MS is a veritable record of the rich illustrations of animal and bird species in their full bloom, wood and actions, suited to them most. In the picture of the crow in the “assembly of birds”, the artist had exactly brought forward a perfectly jealous atmosphere of election campaign in which the crow is condemning the proposal of the

\(^{34}\) Ibid, pl. 107, p. 50.
\(^{35}\) Ibid, pl. 108, p. 56.
\(^{36}\) Das, op.cit., p. 34.
leadership of owl, which is executed in a wood expressing resentment and excitement. All the birds have received faithful and life-like appearance and potential vitality of their natural characteristics as species of the aviary by the minute accuracy and unmistakable colour scheme of the artist Ustad Husain.\(^{37}\)

There is an exquisitely charming picture of a “Bullock chariot” drawn by Abul Hasan (\textit{Nadir-uz-zaman}). The illustration of bull is nothing new in Indian sculpture and painting. Nandi a milk white bull, the vehicle of Shiva is carved at Mamallapuram. Mehta is of opinion that the body of the bull is drawn after Indian manner, including the hump, bulk, tail, ringing in the legs. Chain in throat, whereas head, horn and facial expression are drawn after Chinese fashion. There is hardly any shadow of doubt that the subject matter is inherently Indian.\(^{38}\)

The Album of Dara Shikoh in the India Office Library is the unique sizes reflecting the highest achievement of Indian draughtsmanship and colouring. In the portraits of men and favourite animals a little shading; executed by a few delicate strokes was dexterously introduced sufficient to suggest solidity and roundness. The illustration of \textit{Dilpasand} or Heart’s Delight, a favourite Charger of Dara Shikoh by an artist named Manohar is remarkable. But the most striking of all is the drawing of a “pair of ducks” in colour. Vincent Smith has reproduced a little marvel of real bird life in its accurate panoramic setting. The side of the pool at the foot of the hillock with flying birds fluttering over the sky is well-fitted in a scene of wild bird life. The close affinity between nature and life, the intimate characterization of the

\(^{38}\) Hasan, op.cit., p. 12.
zoological portraiture, combined with gaudy colour scheme make this picture unique in the realm of bird studies.  

The Mughal art may fairly be described as purely secular, mainly concerned with the pomp and vanity of court life. These animal and bird studies are drawn for exciting admiration and aesthetic pleasure of the patron. They are nothing more than idle amusement; sometimes they are executed as highly finished mechanical decorative designs. They are not studied as objects of veneration or symbols of worship as we notice in the ancient Indian sculptures and paintings. There is hardly any inherent idea behind all these studies of birds and animals. Mughal art is aristocratic in outlook and as a matter of fact in approach. The studies of wild life are frankly material, intended to give early pleasure. The Mughal artist was concerned with the expressions of a visual experience as against “the attitude of the old Indian artist who took much pain to portray realistically his mental concepts”. The Mughal artist followed the path laid down by the Mughal patrons and the European art, which was realistic in reference to an artists’ visual experience. 

Mughal miniatures widely recognized for scientific precision and immaculate accuracy with minutest possible detail reveal the historic pictures of nature history. These make a fine source for the study of flora and fauna with exactitude. Need not to say that great ornithologist like Salim Ali have made extensive use of Mughal miniature to discover an extinct bird “dado” and other species of birds to construct related details. Likewise, Divyabhanusinh Chavda in his book, *The End Of a Trail, Cheetah* (New Delhi, 1999) has

widely noticed Mughal miniatures containing the depiction of *Cheetah*. 
Mention may also be made of A. Rahman and M. A. Alvi who extensively refer to the Mughal paintings of birds, animals, plants and trees in their study *Jahangir the Naturalist*. Above monumental works establish a great relevance of Mughal pictures of flora and fauna. Their historical relevance is still great since numerous plant and animals’ studies yet remain to be identified and described as botanical and zoological studies. In this direction, a study of Mansur’s famous pictures “The Tulip and Butterfly” (Habibganj Collection, Aligarh Muslim University) by S.P. Verma is rewarding. Could we say then that a great challenge lies ahead us in granting Mughal pictures a formal status as an indispensable source of nature history.