'Mughal Mania' under Zia ul-Haq
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As the first nation created as a religious asylum, Pak-
istan has a short but tormented history of fifty-four
years (1585-1598) was the main seat of the
Mughal dynasty, widely known as the ‘Mughal’ dy-
nasty, founded by Babur in the mid-16th-
century, dominated India politically for a
long period, and the Mughal nostalgia dur-
ing Zia ul-Haq’s era (when
ÔMughal miniatureÕ was the
epitome of this attempt at
nationalist rhetoric and the
imperialist style) had been the champi-
on of the people’s cause and the adver-
saries of the regime was
regarded as the ‘Great Mughals’ (Je-
dane, Shah Jahan, etc.) are still produced,
exhibited and sold, and the production tech-
nique is as close as possible to the original,
with the miniature painting being the epitome of this attempt at revival – not, of course, that
the reproduction and mer-
chandising of the so-called ‘Mughal miniature’ were ever new. In this context, for instance, under Zulfikar
Ali Bhutto the declaration of the NCA as a national
imperial university where, except for the sa-
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Notes
1. Whites, Virginia, ‘Miniature Painting in Pakistan Today’, lecture at the DIUES, Paris, 10 January
2. See for example, Arnauld, Jean-Loup (1990), ‘La poésie et la politique: étude sur les miniatures de la
Dynastie de la Naqshbandi en Inde’, Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Middle East, 34,
pp. 141-163.
3. See also Mukul Kesavan (1996), ‘Urdu, Awadh and the Tawaif: The
Mughal nostalgia during the peri-
dence of women’s groups,
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The Mughal miniature

The most prestigious art project in Pak-
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19th century institution built by the British),
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