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Book Review: Am. Committee for South Asian Art. (in press)  
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Book Review: Am. Committee for South Asian Art. Spring,  
(1982), No. 17, p. 33.

"Chughtai: Artist of the East," Ethnic Assoc. of Mid Ohio.  
1, No. 5, (1979), p. 9.

Catalogue entieres: Catalogue of the Museum, Columbus Museum  
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Panorama (Pakistan). A U.S. government publication. Twelve  
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## INTRODUCTION AND SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

Abdur Rahman Chughtai (1894-1975), referred to as the "National Artist" of Pakistan, was already fifty-three years old when his birthplace, Lahore, India, became Lahore of Pakistan. Consequently, his watercolor paintings reflect the experiences of an "Indian" living under British rule in an undivided India as well as those of a Muslim belonging to a highly nationalistic Islamic nation after partition of the subcontinent.

During the first two decades of his career (1915-1935), Chughtai's paintings featuring Hindu and Buddhist subject matter were lauded by critics and collected by Indian royalty and wealthy patrons. In 1934, the British government of United India honored Chughtai with the title of Khan Bahadur (Great Leader), a status second only to knighthood. After partition of the subcontinent in 1947, Chughtai's themes became increasingly Islamic and in 1959, the Pakistan government acknowledged his artistic excellence and contribution to the national arts by awarding him Hilal-i-Imtiaz (the Order of the Crescent of Merit).

Since the fall of Mughal and Sikh rule in the 1940s, there had been no continuity in painting as a fine art in India. Chughtai was the only Muslim artist who sought to express his country's cultural and historical roots in a modern perspective. A Hindu painting revivalist movement initiated by Abanindranath Tagore in Bengal, termed the "Bengal School," dominated the art scene from 1895 through the 1930s. Because Chughtai's earliest works reflect the style of that movement, Indian art historians have erroneously classified him as a follower of the Bengal School. Chughtai's fondness for illustrating classical Persian poetry and folk literature emphasized his Islamic heritage and endeared him to his co-religionists. Similarly, his close association with Sir Mohammad Allama Iqbal of Lahore, "the National Poet of Pakistan" and first political activist to lobby for the creation of a separate Islamic nation within the Indo-Muslim subcontinent, inclined public opinion toward regarding Chughtai as an ardent nationalist as well.

Chughtai combined his own personal innovations with earlier traditions in Asian miniature painting to create a new aesthetic which provided an artistic identity for the recently formed Islamic nation. Dr. James Dickey explained

to a Pakistani audience in 1976 why he considered Chughtai one of the greatest Islamic painters: "Painting until Chughtai had occupied the status of a minor art in Islam,... It had never developed beyond the anecdotal and episodic, whereas by Chughtai's brush it became interpretative."<sup>1</sup> Though Chughtai's preeminence among Pakistani painters has never been questioned, a controversy over his modernity has surfaced since the artist's death in 1975.

The trend toward abstraction and non-representational subject matter in Pakistani painting during the 1960s and 1970s swayed a portion of public opinion into regarding the realistic mode of Chughtai's art as non-progressive. "A number of our young painters have adapted the western technique in its entirety. They have turned their backs consciously and deliberately on tradition," wrote Agha Abdul Hamid, who reminded his readers that "painters like Chughtai are of vital importance in the development of our painting, as they are the inheritors of tradition and, by working in it, are widening its scope."<sup>2</sup> Art critics as well as historians in Pakistan, however, cannot effectively perceive Chughtai's modernity because there have been no definitive studies on the iconography of his subject matter or the development of his style. Recent articles and essays exhibit only a vague notion of the message in Chughtai's art and his conscious assimilation or rejection of modern stylistic developments in world art.

Contemporary art historical scholarship (in India, Pakistan and in the west) has dealt little with the period of Chughtai's development and maturity (late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century); consequently, the significance of his contribution to the sister countries has yet to be defined. The development of his style and subject matter reflects an early integration of the two cultures (Hindu and Islamic) and their eventual disassociation. It is imperative to subsequent scholarship that the life and work of India's only major modern Muslim artist be documented and interpreted. This dissertation will provide the first scholarly study, and the only comprehensive examination of his life and work.<sup>3</sup>

#### SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE: INDIAN SCHOLARSHIP ON CHUGHTAI

In Indian art historical literature, particularly post-partition essays, articles, and books, Chughtai is usually grouped with or compared to the Bengal School. A source book on Indian painting, Indian Art Through the Ages, published by the Publications Division of the Government of India (1951), summarily mentions Chughtai under the subheading "Bengal Renaissance" as having acquired certain preferences from Tagore's student. S. N.

Gupta.<sup>4</sup> Ramachandra Rao, who classified Chughtai under the heading "New Horizons" in his 1953 publication, Modern Indian Painting, also noted that his art was "parallel to the basic impulses of the Bengal School..."<sup>5</sup> G. Venkatachalam, Contemporary Indian Painters (1947) and Kashmiri Singh, Introduction and commentary of Chughtai's Indian Paintings (1951), were the rare exceptions whose discussions avoided categorizing the artist.<sup>6</sup> Both were close friends of the artist, but even in these two books illustrations of Chughtai's paintings are early works from the late 1920s and early 1930s that reveal an affinity with the Bengal School in style and subject matter. Jaya Appasamy, a prolific chronicler of twentieth century Indian painting, devoted a chapter to Chughtai in her important book, Abanindranath Tagore and the Art of His Times (1968), indicating the significance of his contribution to the development of Indian art prior to partition, at the same time labeling him as one of the Bengal School proponents.<sup>7</sup>

While the sources referred to above link Chughtai to the popular, Hindu dominated Bengal School movement, they generally acknowledge the individuality of his style and praise his artistic skills. There is, however, evidence of communal prejudice, that, though rarely expressed, may reflect an undercurrent applicable to a portion of the non-Muslim community. A review of Chughtai's Indian Paintings in The Statesman, Delhi, degraded the artist's work by naming artists of the Bengal School who the reviewer felt could have done the themes in a better style.<sup>8</sup> The reviewer wrote that "much of his [Chughtai's] drawing and colour show the influence of the Bengal School at its worst," and added, "Chughtai's colour, indeed, is almost always marred by errors of taste... when it is not in itself wishy-washy."<sup>9</sup> The reviewer for the Hindustan Times, Delhi, ridiculed a statement from the foreword of that book, "Looking at these pictures nobody is likely to be spellbound by their languorous sweetness and by the magic of their composition, except perhaps romantic teenagers who go in for art with a capital A."<sup>10</sup>

In general, Indian critics and art historians do not disparage Chughtai's art, they project him as the Islamic representative of the Bengal School, ignoring his mature style that had already been established before partition. Chughtai's status in Indian scholarship may be explained by extenuating circumstances operative in India up to the time of partition. His earliest paintings (1916-1923) were reproduced in Modern Review, a monthly news-oriented journal published in Calcutta that featured a painting in each issue. Ramenendra Chatterjee, editor of Modern Review and a staunch supporter of Tagore's Bengal School, published a set of six volumes of Indian paintings in 1918-1919. These volumes, entitled Chatterjee's Picture Albums

included a Chughtai painting in each set.<sup>11</sup> Rupam, edited by O.C. Gangoly, a close friend of Abanindranath Tagore, also published Chughtai's paintings in the 1920s and 1930s, reinforcing an association with the Bengal School. Chughtai's paintings were reproduced in Roopa Lekha as well, during that same period.<sup>12</sup> Only in Hyderabad and South India may one find examples of his later work. Finally, partition of the subcontinent restricted the exchange of most commodities (including books and newspapers) between the sister nations and crystalized the Hindu-Muslim estrangement.

#### PAKISTANI SCHOLARSHIP

Sources of information on Chughtai are more abundant in Pakistan than in India (as one would expect), but no comprehensive or scholarly studies have been completed to date. There is in particular, a dearth of stylistic and iconographic literature. Most essays and articles on Chughtai are appreciation and description, with a standard biographical preface. A few exceptions are Agha Abdul Hamid's "Three Phases in the Development of Chughtai's Art" in Pakistan Miscellany (1952)---a short but perceptive essay on the development of style from 1918 to 1939---and Dr. Waheed Quraishi's stylistic and iconographic observations in his essay, "Chughtai and Iqbal."<sup>13</sup>

Observation of the original paintings and photographs of the art work in combination with illustrations and notes from five books on Chughtai's art have been the primary sources for establishing a stylistic chronology. Chughtai published three of these books on his own press [Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928), Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1935), and Chughtai's Paintings (1940)], Chughtai's Indian Paintings (1951) was published in New Delhi and Amle Chughtai (1968) was published in Lahore.<sup>14</sup> Muraqqa-i-Chughtai and Naqsha-i-Chughtai include the divan of Ghalib (collection of poems of the nineteenth century Mughal poet, Mirza Ghalib) and paintings that illustrate various verses of that poet. Muraqqa-i-Chughtai also includes an essay by Chughtai, "Arts and Aesthetics" that reveals some of his personal attitudes about art and provides some historical and biographical data. Chughtai's Paintings is a picture book, useful as a stylistic source---its foreword, introduction, and critical notes are typical, being appreciation and description. Chughtai's Indian Paintings is also a picture book, however, the introduction and critical notes by Professor Kashmira Singh have been helpful in discussing iconography. Amle Chughtai (Illustrations of Iqbal's prose and poetry) provided an excellent source of mature paintings for stylistic comparison and the commentary for each painting contributed to interpreting subject matter and iconography. An anonymous essay entitled "Chughtai,

The Artist" in the preliminaries of Amle Chughtai briefly addressed such topics as the purpose and role of Chughtai's art and the impact of western painting on Chughtai and Pakistani artists in general. The author has rephrased much of what Chughtai wrote in "Individual and the Group," a lengthy essay also included in Amle Chughtai. "Individual and the Group" also provides insights into Chughtai's approach to understanding and illustrating the philosophy of Iqbal, his (Chughtai's) attitudes toward western art, a discourse on his appreciation of the fifth century Ajanta paintings and sculpture and a personal interpretation of ancient Egyptian art.

Of Chughtai's other writing (short stories, poems, art historical essays, notes and articles), I have often referred to his essay, "My Paintings as I See Them," and occasionally to his foreword for Lagan (Tax collector) published in 1941.<sup>15</sup> Both essays expressed artistic concerns---a desire to remain faithful to his Oriental culture and promote his heritage. In the Lagan foreword, Chughtai recounts personal experiences in Europe and in his own country that impressed him deeply and expanded his social and artistic consciousness. Caravan (only two issues were published), a journal of art and literature created and published by Chughtai, his two brothers, and several friends, provided stylistic, iconographic and biographic material for this study.<sup>16</sup>

Biographical data was supplied by Arif Rahman Chughtai, son of the artist and director of the Chughtai Museum Trust (CMT),<sup>17</sup> in interviews, booklets and pamphlets and from an essay by Chughtai's younger brother, Dr. Abdullah Chaghatai---"The Chughtai School of Painting: 1910-1975."<sup>18</sup>

After Chughtai's death in 1975, a series of articles by his supporters and detractors were published in Lahore and Karachi newspapers, bringing to light a controversy over Chughtai's modernity and status in Pakistani painting.<sup>19</sup> These articles are reviewed in Chapter VI, "The Question of Modernism in Chughtai's Art." Jalaluddin Ahmad presaged the controversy by classifying Chughtai as one of the "elder and traditional Pakistani painters of today" in his survey book, Art in Pakistan (1952).<sup>20</sup> Though Ahmad's book is the only textual and illustrated survey on Pakistani art (primarily painting), and he devotes several pages to Chughtai, it serves as a general introduction and has been of limited use in this study aside from the illustrations which provided a terminus ad quem in the stylistic analysis of key paintings.

Two general interest journals, Focus on Pakistan and Pakistan Quarterly, have occasional articles on art and

artists. Jalaluddin Ahmad's article, "Chughtai and his Contemporaries," in Focus on Pakistan (1971) was illustrated with eight color reproductions of Chughtai's paintings and one etching, but the text paraphrased his book Art in Pakistan, so added nothing new or significant.<sup>21</sup> Ahmad projected the attitude that the elder artists were provincial, that "their work and style have not changed very much, and are almost dated..."<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, he made an error in dating, placing the publication of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai at 1927 (a year premature), and ~~assumed incorrectly~~ that Chughtai had lived in Calcutta and studied art there for several years.<sup>23</sup> Amjad Ali, editor of Pakistan Quarterly when he wrote "The Trail of Paint" for that journal (1967), surveyed the social scene involving Pakistani painters, relying on personal interaction and interviews with the artists.<sup>24</sup> Ali's article presented a picture of the artistic atmosphere in Pakistan during the 1950s and 1960s and made note of important exhibitions during that time.

An anthology, Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Shakhsiyat aur Fun ( Personality and Art) (1980), edited by Dr. Wazir Agha, featuring essays by Chughtai's friends and acquaintances, artists and scholars, was not published until after I had left Pakistan, but I was able to have most of the essays translated into English from the original manuscripts.<sup>25</sup> Exhibition catalogues in the collection of the CMT were somewhat helpful in establishing a stylistic chronology and very useful for determining classifications of subject matter and related applications. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for allowing me to photocopy over thirty of these catalogues, in addition to letters preserved by his father from friends, artists, and critics, and other family documents and awards won by Chughtai. Interviews with family members, friends of the artist, art collectors, Pakistani artists, museum directors, scholars and members of the society at large supplemented the printed material for this dissertation.

#### WESTERN SCHOLARSHIP

Until very recently western scholarship has been concerned with the periods of Indo-Muslim art prior to the twentieth century. A few British scholars who had lived in India took an interest in the various movements that began evolving at the turn of the century. E. B. Havell, William G. Archer, Sir John Marshall, Lionel Heath, Percy Brown, James Cousins and Basil Gray were among the Europeans who witnessed the evolution in Indian painting, but only a few like E. B. Havell and James Cousins committed their interest to print. Havell was involved in and, therefore, preoccupied with what he termed the "modern revival of Indian painting" fostered by Abanindranath Tagore.<sup>26</sup>

Havell was writing too early to comment about Chughtai, but James Cousins published a short article, in Studio (1928)---"Chughtai: The Indian Bihzad."<sup>27</sup> Lionel Heath praised Chughtai's paintings shown at the British Empire Exhibition (a brief two sentences) in The British Empire Review (1924).<sup>28</sup> Francis Watson featured Chughtai's painting On the Window Sill as the exemplary illustration for "Indian Painting To-Day," an article for Studio in 1948.<sup>29</sup> However, Watson took the Indian view of Chughtai, describing him as "the Islamic Department of the Revival."<sup>30</sup> In Asia: A Handbook, Philip Rawson referred to Chughtai as "far the best painter of this [the Bengal] school, who opted for Pakistan when partition came."<sup>31</sup>

Basil Gray is the only western scholar, to my knowledge, who has written a discerning essay on Chughtai. I've quoted from Gray's 1978 essay "The Art of Abdur Rahman Chughtai" in Chapter VII, p.346<sup>32</sup> Most American scholars involved in the art of India and Pakistan are aware of Chughtai, but certainly British scholars have an advantage due to their historic association with the Indo-Muslim subcontinent. Nevertheless, little has been written on Chughtai in England and no research has been published on him in this country.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Dr. James Dickey, "Aspects of Chughtai," paper read at First Chughtai Anniversary, Lahore, Pakistan, 1976. This paper has been published under Dickey's Muslim name, Dr. Yakub Zaki, as "Some Aspects of Chughtai's Art," Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art, ed., Dr. Wazir Agha, (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Agha Abdul Hamid, "Chughtai, a Re-evaluation," Contemporary Arts in Pakistan, I, No. 1 (1960), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Because Chughtai's career began and matured before the partition of India in 1947, he has been referred to as an Indian artist. After partition, he was more frequently and consciously designated as a Pakistani artist. This distinction has not been clearly defined in the literature in regard to south Asian artists in general. Consequently, I have used the term "South Asian artists" as a generic reference to nineteenth and twentieth century artists of the subcontinent. My use of the term "Indian artists" has nuances of meaning---apparent in context---suggesting 1) all South Asian artists before partition, 2) artists residing in India after partition, and 3) non-Muslim twentieth century artists.

<sup>4</sup> The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Indian Art Through the Ages (New Delhi: 1951), p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Ramachandra Rao, Modern Indian Painting (Madras: Rachana, 1953), p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> G. Venkatachalam, Contemporary Indian Paintings (Bombay: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1947) and Chughtai's Indian Paintings (New Delhi: Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das, 1951).

<sup>7</sup> Jaya Appasamy, Abanindranath Tagore and the Art of His Times (New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1968). On page 68, Appasamy began her chapter on Chughtai stating, "Abdur Rahman Chughtai is one of the outstanding painters of the Bengal School."

<sup>8</sup> "Indian Painter," review of Chughtai's Indian Paintings in book review section, The Statesman, New Delhi, July 22, 1951.

<sup>9</sup> "Indian Painter"



10 "Introducing An Artist," review of Chughtai's Indian Paintings in book review section, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, August 5, 1951.

11 Ramenendra Chatterjee, editor of Modern Review published six volumes of Indian paintings called Chatterjee's Picture Albums. Volumes 1 through 4 were published in 1918 and volumes 5 and 6 in 1919. These volumes are available in this country in the New York Public Library and Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York. Most of the reproductions in these volumes were paintings by Abanindranath Tagore and his students, but a few examples of Mughal and Rajput miniatures were also included. Arif Chughtai kindly allowed me to photograph all of the paintings in the first three albums and a few paintings from the remaining albums under his care in the CMT.

12 This statement is corroborated by letters from and visits to nearly every major and many minor art museums in India.

13 Agha Abdul Hamid, "Abdul Rehman Chughtai," Pakistan Miscellany (Karachi: Pakistan Publications, 1952), pp. 134-140. In an interview in Karachi, July 1978, Hamid thought he had first written the article in 1934, but couldn't remember if it was published then. It was later edited and published in three Pakistani newspapers under the title "Three Phases in the Development of Chughtai's Art," Dawn, Morning News, and the Pakistan Times, all on Saturday Jan. 17, 1976, in a Chughtai Supplement. Dr. Waheed Quraishi's article "Chughtai and Iqbal" was translated for me by Aziz Butt from the original ms. before it was published in the anthology Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art. It is important to note that this essay as well as all others from the anthology edited by Dr. Wazir Agha, Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art were translated for me by various persons from Urdu to English from original manuscripts before publication; consequently, the page numbers refer to those of the original ms. and will not coincide with those in the published anthology.

14 Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928; rpt. Lahore: Print Printo Press, 1968); Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1935; rpt. Lahore: Print Printo Press, 1967); Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Chughtai's Indian Paintings (1940; rpt. Lahore: Print Printo Press, 1970); Chughtai's Indian Paintings (New Delhi: Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das, 1951); Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Amle Chughtai less commonly referred to as Poet of the East and Chughtai (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, 1968)

15 Abdur Rahman Chughtai, "My paintings as I See Them," Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art, ed., Dr. Wazir Agha, (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980). I am grateful to Mr. Nadim Qasmi for allowing me to have the essays (now part of the Wazir Agha anthology) translated before publication and for recommending Salim ur Rahman as translator. I am grateful to Salim ur Rahman for translating in part and rendering into summary the other part, two of the most lengthy and significant of the anthology essays: "My Paintings as I See Them," by A. R. Chughtai and "The Chughtai School of Art" by Abdullah Chaghatai. Because parts of each of these two essays were rendered into summary from the original manuscript, page numbers were ignored in the translation and as a result I have no page numbers to refer to in the footnotes.

16 M.D. Taseer, ed., Caravan (Lahore: Jahangir Book Club, 1934). I am grateful to Dr. Waheed Quraishi, Government College, Lahore, for making these rare issues of Caravan available to me.

17 The Chughtai Museum Trust (hereafter CMT) is an organization directed by Arif Rahman Chughtai to foster the art of his father, A. R. Chughtai. The CMT is located at No. 4 Garden Town, Lahore, on the premises where Chughtai had hoped to build a museum for his art collection and his own paintings. Arif Rahman Chughtai, Artist of the East: Abdur Rahman Chughtai, a booklet on the artist, mostly biographic (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, Ltd., 1938); Arif Rahman Chughtai, Ancestry of Abdur Rahman Chughtai, a pamphlet with the family tree and supporting documentation (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, Ltd., no date); Arif Rahman Chughtai, Chughtai, a pamphlet on the artist printed in Lahore, no other publication data, and Arif Rahman Chughtai, Nadir Al-Asr Ustad Ahmad mimar Lahauri Shahjahani, Architect of the Taj [Mahal] (Lahore, 1978) no other publication data.

18 Dr. Abdullah Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School of Painting: 1910-1975," trns. for me by Salim ur Rahman in 1978 before publication in Dr. Wazir Agha's anthology, Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980).

19 I am grateful to Mr. Sultan Mahmood of Karachi for giving me copies of the 1975 and 1976 newspaper articles on Chughtai which he had collected. I am also grateful to artist Ali Imam, owner-director of Indus Gallery, Karachi, for providing me with essays and articles on Chughtai.

20 Jalaluddin Ahmad, Art in Pakistan (1954; rpt. Karachi: Pakistan Publications, 1970).

21 Jalaluddin Ahmad, "Chughtai and his

Contemporaries," Focus on Pakistan, I, No. 3 (1971), pp. 28-35.

22 Ahmad, "Chughtai and Contemporaries," p. 28

23 Ahmad, "Chughtai and Contemporaries," pp. 28-35.

24 Amjad Ali, "The Trail of Paint," Pakistan Quarterly, XV, No. 1 and 2 (1967), pp. 229-252.

25 See notes 12 and 14 this chapter.

26 E. B. Havell, "The New Indian School of Painting," Studio, 44 , No. 183, (1908) p. 112.

27 James H. Cousins, "Chughtai: The Indian Bihzad," Studio, 96, No. 424, (1928), pp. 48-51.

28 Lionel Heath, "Punjab," The British empire Review, XXIII, No. 8 (1924), p. 123.

29 Francis Watson, "Indian Painting To-Day," Studio, CXXXV, No. 663 (1948), p. 165.

30 Watson, p. 168.

31 Philip Rawson, "Abanindranath Tagore," Asia: A Handbook, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), Guy Wint, ed., p. 330. A revised edition was issued in 1969, but I have not had access to it.

32 Basil Gray, "The Art of Abdur Rahman Chughtai," Pakistan Times [Lahore], magazine section, Feb. 24, 1978.

## A SURVEY PAINTING IN SOUTH ASIA FROM 1545 to 1950

This chapter is a survey of the major social and political forces that influenced and constituted the artistic environment in South Asia from the time of Mughal domination to the mid twentieth century. Chughtai's romantic predilection that drew him to the Mughal period for artistic inspiration was tempered and diversified by the complex political events and changing social attitudes of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Because regionalism plays a major role in identifying and interpreting India's art activity and because Chughtai was inspired by the past as well as his own time period, I have organized this chapter to accommodate both regional and chronological factors; these include: PAINTING IN INDIA FROM THE MUGHAL PERIOD THROUGH THE PERIOD OF BRITISH EXPANSION (1545-1880); PAINTING IN THE PUNJAB (1799-1950); PAINTING AND POLITICS IN BENGAL (1875-1935); PAINTING IN BOMBAY; THE NEO-EUROPEAN SYNTHESISTS (1934-1950s), A SUBCONTINENTAL TREND.

### PAINTING IN INDIA FROM THE MUGHAL PERIOD THROUGH THE PERIOD OF BRITISH EXPANSION (1545-1880)

With the ascendancy of the Mughals in the sixteenth century as India's ruling elite, the fine arts were revitalized by means of a powerful and wealthy patronage. As a result of his Persian refuge, Humayun, greatly impressed with the excellence of Iranian illustrative manuscript painting, returned to rule in India with two of Shah Abbas' elder ustads (masters). Under the patronage and close supervision of Akbar (Humayun's heir), these two masters, Mir Said Ali and Khawaja Abdus Samad, fathered a school of painting in India that combined native Indian talent with its own foreign incursion. Standards of excellence were demanded and superior artists were generously rewarded.

Akbar's immediate successor, Jahangir, expanded his father's aesthetic concerns. Jahangir encouraged his artists to make copies of European paintings and prints that had been presented to him and his father by foreign missionaries and ambassadors seeking trade concessions, for their respective nations. Consequently, a western influence can be identified in various landscapes and increased modelling and realism in the figurative element of Mughal miniature painting. Though Shah Jahan (son of

Jahangir) was obsessed with his architectural program, painting suffered little during his reign. It was with a return to religious orthodoxy by Aurangzeb that miniature painting of the Great Mughals began to decline. Numerous artists from ateliers of urban India transferred to provincial centers where ruling Rajputs still supported talented painters. It is generally assumed that Mughal artists began filtering into these predominately Hindu principalities before the decline and infused the native tradition with Perso-Mughal stylistics. Another crippling blow to royal patronage which further retarded the production of miniature painting was effected by the British in the mid eighteenth century. With the undisputed rise of British supremacy in Bengal after the Battle of Plassey (1757), the imperialistic "manifest destiny" spread in all directions through the subcontinent.

As a result of British ascendancy in India, western influence in painting made itself felt in a variety of ways during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the second half of the eighteenth century, British residents, both men and women, moved about the country recording scenes of the picturesque to share with their countrymen in India and as mementos to send to their friends and relatives back home. They were amateur artists who made drawings or painted in watercolor.

A more decisive effect on the cumulative influence of western art in India resulted from the presence of professional artists. After Tilly Kelly (the first professional British artist in India) arrived in Madras in 1769, as Mildred and William G. Archer point out, "almost sixty such painters went to India between then and 1820 to stay for a longer or a shorter period according to the number of commissions that each received."<sup>1</sup> According to the Archers, these professional artists made three major contributions to the eventual development of modern painting in India. Some, like Tilly Kelly, were experts in oil painting and thus introduced that medium to the subcontinent in portraits and large-scale historical scenes. A few, like John Smart, made a steady income specializing in miniature portraits on ivory. Others, like the Daniels, made drawings and watercolors that they transferred into engravings, aquatints, or lithographs.<sup>2</sup>

Oil painting was adopted by a number of South Asian artists in the late nineteenth century but (until the mid twentieth century) was never as ubiquitous as tempera or watercolor. A short-lived demand in the first half of the nineteenth century encouraged native artists to emulate miniature portraits on ivory; and printmaking, though never a popular medium, interested a few twentieth century South

Asians, Chughtai included. Among South Asian artists, Chughtai has been the most serious printmaker.

As a consequence of a growing interest in Indian culture and festivals (that British residents were often excluded from), "another kind of art, Indian painting for the British," explains Jaya Appasamy, "grew up around commercial towns which were centres of trade."<sup>3</sup> "Company art" is a generic term applied to Indian painting for the British from approximately 1770 to 1880 that generally featured indigenous festivals, marriages, acts of sati, occupations of the natives, and flora and fauna.<sup>4</sup> Portraits on mica and ivory were popular as well as sets (often portraits of rajas) on vellum and paper. Indians with some ability who wanted to profit from this British patronage learned to paint either by studying under a British artist or copying European works available in India. Though most of their work was not of high aesthetic quality, they were able to evolve a style that, as the Archers explain, "shows how easily Mughal portraiture could be adapted to British ideals, for while there is little that is un-Indian in the drawing, there is also nothing which is markedly un-British."<sup>5</sup>

#### PAINTING IN THE PUNJAB (1799-1950)

While Indian artists were painting picturesque scenes in a syncretistic style catering to British tastes in cities that were commercial centers throughout India, traditional Indian miniature painting was still being practised in western India in the Punjab Hills and isolated courts in Rajasthan. Western India, the western Punjab in particular, was the last outpost of unconquered India during British expansion. The decline and eventual demise of traditional Indian painting in the western Punjab, however, owes less to the British than to the Sikhs.

The Sikhs took control of Lahore for short periods of time in 1757, 1759, and 1761. In 1767 the Punjab came under Sikh control and Lahore was secured from the Afghan invaders. Ranjit Singh inherited the Punjab territory conquests of his father in 1792, and "obtained...the title of Mahraja from the Afghan ruler, Shah Zaman, in 1798."<sup>6</sup> Lahore became his capital in 1799. Between 1811 and 1846 he displaced Pahari aristocracy of the princely kingdoms in the nearby Punjab Hills and native artists had to adapt their style to the new Sikh governors. Attracted by the wealth and power of the Sikh court, many Pahari artists transferred to Lahore, where Sikh nobles commissioned scores of portraits and darbar (court) scenes.

William Archer traced the transformation of Pahari painting to a Sikh idiom in his seminal publication,

Paintings of the Sikhs (1966). He defined three phases: 1) the initial contact in which Pahari painting was appropriated by the Sikhs of the Punjab plains 2) the gradual transformation of the Pahari style adjusting to Sikh social and cultural aesthetics 3) the impact on Sikh painting of European artists who painted at (some patronized by) the Sikh court in Lahore.

While Archer cautions readers that previous studies on Sikh painting are often unfairly disparaging owing to the incomplete state of research and biased attitudes, a recent essay by B.S. Goswamy challenges several of Archer's own assumptions and conclusions.<sup>7</sup> In "A Matter of Taste: Some Notes on the Context of Painting in the Sikh Punjab", Goswamy refutes Archer's premise that portraiture was the primary consideration and contribution of Sikh painting, and he disagrees with Archer's assumption that Ranjit Singh's aversion to being painted due to a blind eye and pock-marked face, adversely affected his attitude toward painting and, therefore, his support of it.<sup>8</sup> Goswamy lists a variety of themes in Sikh painting: in addition to portraiture there are "episodes from Hindu mythology, illustrations of poetic texts, erotic pictures...renderings of the Sikh Gurus, [battle scenes and] it is...likely that there was much else..."<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, "the Maharaja's prejudice against portraits of himself", Goswamy points out, "need not be construed as prejudice against the art of painting itself."<sup>10</sup>

Most important to this study were the European artists, enthusiastically received by Ranjit Singh and his successor Sher Singh. August Theodore Schoefft, the Hungarian born artist who came to Bombay in 1838 and made his way to Lahore in late 1840 or early 1841, was patronized by Sher Singh. Schoefft's large-size oil paintings on canvas were a curiosity for the Sikhs, who admired his dramatic theatrical approach and his technical proficiency, particularly in rendering portrait likenesses. Archer noted that he was conscious of creating a vivid sense of character; was sensitive to detail, texture, and the play of light on bodily posture; and had a flair for composition.<sup>11</sup> According to K.C. Aryan, some of the local painters "gradually started working in the same style."<sup>12</sup>

Among other Europeans who painted Sikh subjects in the period between the 1830s and 1850s, most were not professional artists and none apparently used oils on canvas. Emily Eden and her sister Fanny Parks accompanied their brother Lord Auckland, the Governor General, to the Sikh court in 1838. Both used watercolor and their pencil sketches were reproduced later as lithographs. W.G. Osborne, Auckland's nephew, was part of the group and painted as well. Mrs. Helen MacKenzie, wife of army

officer Colonel Colin Mackenzie, also painted in the Lahore area in 1838. Charles S. Hardinge, ADC to his father, Governor General Lord Hardinge, painted and sketched in the Sikh Punjab from 1844 to 1847. Artist G.T. Vigne must have crossed paths with the Auckland group in Lahore as he was there c.1838; and William Carpenter, most talented of the British painters, was in Lahore and western India c.1852 to 1856. Non-British European artists at the Sikh court included French botanist, V. Jacquemont (there 1829-1832) and the Russian artist, Prince Alexis Soltykoff (1842-43).<sup>13</sup>

Both Archer and Aryan agree that the Europeans had an impact on subsequent Punjab painters, but that impact was limited to attitude, style, and taste. Archer contends that the oil medium and large size as evidenced by Schoefft's paintings, had little appeal for native artists.<sup>14</sup> Local native artists relaxed their diagrammatic poses and settings, attempted three quarter and full face views where strict profile was adhered to before Schoefft's arrival. Copies were made of some European works and large scale portraits were done, but Emily Eden's lithographs were better models for the native artists. Her original drawings and published lithographs, not so large and theatrical as Schoefft's paintings, were much closer to the Indian style and therefore more easily adapted to their own tradition. It was not the size of the format that Punjab artists made bigger, rather, it was the size of the figures in relation to the format. This last stage of Sikh painting appears to have been short-lived, however.<sup>15</sup> There could hardly have been much patronage in and around Lahore after 1856; therefore, artists must have adapted style and technique to suit the new British rulers. In Company Drawings in the India Office Library, Mildred Archer lists nine sets (and numerous unbound leaves) of watercolors on ivory and paper done for the British by artists from Lahore or Amritsar dating from 1838 to 1870.<sup>16</sup>

Bazaar art was available in several media and styles: K.C. Aryan published examples of woodcuts (numerous and popular), pencil drawings, and watercolor and gouache paintings. In style these vary from types similar to Kalighat to westernized Pahari/Sikh style.<sup>17</sup> From Aryan the reader can learn several names of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Lahore and Amritsar artists, but their dates are not secure and only a few of the paintings reproduced are dated.

To my knowledge no serious or scholarly studies have been undertaken or published on Punjab art from the end of the Sikh period (c.1850) to the time of Chughtai (c.1920).<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, in the first decade of the twentieth century several Lahore artists were painting in



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oils using a variety of styles suggesting that transmission from the European encounter was not lost. The use of oil medium may have been reintroduced into Lahore by artists who had been in Bombay. Sri Ram studied at the Madras School of Arts but from 1915 to 1918 worked as a set designer and painter for the Dadbhai Adnesser Theatrical Company in Bombay. He opened a studio in Lahore in 1918 and painted in oil, tempera, and watercolor.<sup>19</sup> Mohammad Abdul Aziz earned a degree in painting from the J.J. School of Art in Bombay before arriving in Lahore c.1920. Hussain Bakhsh (also Buksh, Bux, or Buxe) was also a stage painter who used oil and taught painting in Lahore at the turn of the century. Allah Bux (d.1979) was well-known as an accomplished oil painter in Lahore in the early twentieth century. Syed Hasan Askari (d.1966) painted large portraits in oil in the manner of Ravi Varma. See p. in this chapter. Paintings by Sri Ram as well as several other Lahore/Amritsar artists (Malla Ram, Sobha Singh, and Lahora Singh) are reminiscent of the dramatic, theatrical style of Schoefft.<sup>20</sup> The work of these artists must have been known to Chughtai. According to Abdullah Chughtai, Hussain Buksh and Mohammad Din were friends of his brother. While their type of painting, in style and technique, appears to have had no direct influence on Chughtai's art, Abdullah states that his brother learned a great deal from them when he met with them in Calcutta in 1916.<sup>21</sup>

Certainly the Mayo School of Art, founded in 1875 in Lahore, had some impact on local painters, but it was established to meet the needs of local artisans and craftsmen.<sup>22</sup> The first principal, John Lockwood Kipling, primarily a sculptor but also a competent painter and skilled draftsman, may have inspired and encouraged students who enrolled in drawing courses, but there was no patronage in the Punjab. Even after Chughtai gained recognition and a degree of fame in the 1930s, most of his patrons were rajas, nawabs, or wealthy individuals (both British and Indian) from parts of India outside the western Punjab.

Chughtai enrolled as a student at the Mayo School of Art in 1911 and became an instructor there for a few years in the early 1920s. He was a student and later instructor in photo-lithography and a drawing master (instructor of drawing), but painting may not have been a part of the curriculum until S.N. Gupta joined the staff in 1913.<sup>23</sup> Having been a student of Abanindranath Tagore, Gupta carried Tagore's Bengal School style from Calcutta to Lahore.<sup>24</sup> Gupta's probable effect on the art of Chughtai is treated in the artist's Biography pp. 40-44. Gupta may have also introduced etching to the curriculum, as he had experimented with that medium.

One of the most obvious of western stylistic influences prevalent at the Mayo School of Art from the time of John L. Kipling through the 1920s was the European New Arts and Crafts movement and Art Nouveau. The forms of these movements blended easily with Islamic geometric and floral designs that had long been part of the repertoire of Muslim artists in the Punjab. In addition to new forces introduced via the Mayo School of Art, several descendants of the Mughal and Pahari miniature painting tradition were active in Lahore until 1978. Haji Mohammed Sharif learned the art of Mughal painting from his father, Basharat Ullah, "one of the famous court painters."<sup>25</sup> Haji Sharif (1889-1978) taught Mughal and Pahari style at the Mayo School of Art from 1945 to 1966. Sheikh Shujaullah is also said to have inherited the art of Mughal painting from his ancestors, but his works are closer to the Pahari miniature tradition.<sup>26</sup> After partition (1947), Shujaullah taught for three years in the Fine Arts Department of Punjab University in Lahore and then transferred to the National College of Art (Mayo School of Art) where he was still teaching in 1975. Bashir Ahmad (b.1953), one of his youngest and more talented students, is dedicated to perpetuating the miniature tradition.

The Lahore Museum (opened 1864) adjoining the Mayo School of Art, housed one of the country's best collections of Punjab Hills miniature paintings as well as numerous examples of Mughal and Sikh miniatures and Gandharan art. In addition to these attractions, other artifacts in the museum must have had a great influence on Chughtai and his contemporaries.

During the early 1920s, parts of the Punjab were placed under martial law by the British due to political violence in Lahore and Amritsar. These political and social upheavals do not seem to have had an effect on Chughtai's art, whereas a literary renaissance centered in Lahore in the late 1920s and 1930s contributed to Chughtai's artistic expression both in terms of his literary and his painterly interests.<sup>27</sup>

Exhibition catalogues of the 1920s and 1930s from Lahore and other parts of South Asia suggest that Chughtai and his brother, A.R. Ashgar, and their associates, Inayat Ullah, Mohammad Husain Qadri, and Abdul Rehman Ejaz dominated the art scene in Lahore. Allah Bux, Samanendranath Gupta, and Roop Krishna, who were not part of the Chughtai group also competed in local and national exhibitions. British residents from Lahore and throughout India painted and competed in these same shows. Certainly the work of these foreign artists had some impact on native artists, but to date no studies have been done.

In 1929 Bhabesh Chandra Sanyal, who had studied in the western manner under Percy Brown at the Calcutta Art School, settled in Lahore. Within a short time he became vice principal at the Mayo School of Art and must have provided a reaffirmation of the original government school outlook, fostering western methods and techniques. He left the Mayo School of Art after a short time there and in 1936 established his own studio called the Lahore School of Fine Arts "in the most fashionable part of Lahore."<sup>28</sup> According to Dinkar Kowshik, "Poets, actors, musicians, and professors thronged his studio and discussed the intellectual controversies of the day...The studio was a great success and became the centre of many cultural activities and produced some outstanding artists."<sup>29</sup> Sanyal chose India as his country after Partition and moved to New Delhi in 1947.

If Sanyal had any influence on Chughtai's outlook or his work, there is no evidence to suggest it. Sanyal, however, was greatly influenced by the newcomer, Amrita Sher Gil. Sher Gil was in Lahore and Simla in the late 1930s and was known to local artists as the outspoken, Bohemian-style lady who criticized the art of the Bengal School, other artists, and movements as well. See NEO-EUROPEAN SYNTHESISTS in this chapter. Apparently Chughtai was on friendly terms with Sher Gil, but her style does not appear to have influenced his work.

Before the partition of India in 1947, communication and travel between the Punjab (that part that is now in Pakistan) and the rest of India were unrestricted, and Chughtai made several trips to Calcutta and other parts of the subcontinent. Partition severed the ties between Pakistan and India with a variety of consequences. Until very recently, natives of either country found it difficult, if not impossible, to secure visas to cross the border they shared. Exchange of commodities and printed material were controlled and mostly prohibited between the two countries. Communal relations between Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims---strained but tolerable before Partition---were irreparably damaged after the devastating riots and great migration of 1947.

On one hand, the consequences seem to have been particularly distressing for Chughtai. According to Frami Brehmshah, an art instructor at Hyderabad Art College who met Chughtai in Hyderabad (Deccan) in 1946, the Lahore artist had negotiated a large sale of paintings in Hyderabad and apparently had delivered them all. A few months later partition divided the country and Chughtai never received the full remuneration owed to him. See chapter V, Technique and Color. In 1950 a book entitled Chughtai's Indian Paintings was published in New Delhi; and

while Chughtai himself had a copy, I came to the conclusion, after search and inquiry, that few (if any) copies of this book had reached Pakistan. Even though the commentary fervently espoused Chughtai's abhorrence for communal prejudice, several reviews of that book from Indian newspapers were obvious in their anti-Muslim attitudes projected onto the Pakistani artist. See chapter VIII, The Need for a Revision of Chughtai's Status in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent.

On the other hand, the creation of Pakistan was a boon for Chughtai. Having been created as an Islamic state, the government and other institutions were eager to promote patriotism and nationalism, thus providing opportunities for Chughtai to apply his talents to projects that gave him public exposure. He created the first postage stamp for the new nation and designed the letterhead and insignia for Pakistan National Television and Pakistan Radio. His book with illustrations linked to the poetry of Iqbal (Pakistan's celebrated poet/philosopher) was given financial assistance by the government and presented to delegates at a subsequent all-Muslim conference in Lahore. In addition, the government purchased some of his paintings to present to diplomats and foreign heads of state who visited the country. In Pakistan, Chughtai is unofficially regarded as their "National Artist".

Notwithstanding his enviable reputation as an artist and his high ranking position among Pakistani painters, Chughtai had detractors who criticized his work as non-progressive and backward looking. Chughtai's stylized but realistic approach to subject matter may have appeared static when contrasted with Zubeida Agha's European influenced "abstract" paintings after she returned to Pakistan from a study abroad. According to Jalaluddin Ahmad, Zubeida Agha introduced the Pakistani public (and painters) to modern abstract painting in a 1949 Karachi exhibition.<sup>30</sup> Four years later she left for a short study in London and France returning again to Pakistan in 1953.

Shakir Ali is credited with bringing Cubism to Lahore in 1952.<sup>31</sup> He was appointed professor of art, and later principal at the National College of Art in Lahore after earning a fine arts degree at the Slade School of Art in London, followed by a year (1949-1950) with Andre Lhote in Paris and a year at the School of Industrial Design in Prague.

The 1950s were a turning point in Pakistani painting. Young artists were looking to Europe and America for artistic inspiration from this time forward. Art councils were established in Lahore and Karachi (and later in the new capital, Islamabad), and the general attitude of the

country and the young art community in particular was to overcome the mentality of docility imposed by British domination and seek new inspiration with an international outlook.

#### PAINTING AND POLITICS IN BENGAL FROM 1896 to 1935

In an attempt to salvage the native arts and crafts and render them competitive with western imports, the British set up a number of government art schools in India. The first school opened in 1850 in Madras, and a government school of industrial art was founded next in Calcutta in 1854. Within its curriculum the Calcutta school offered courses in draftsmanship, perspective, architectural drawing, painting, and lithography.

Instruction methods which solely promoted western technique at these government art schools proved ineffective in creating any enthusiasm in the production or consumption of painting as a fine art. In 1896, E. B. Havell was appointed principal of the Calcutta Art School and Art Gallery, one of those institutions which Havell cynically pointed to as being "established by a benevolent government for the purpose of revealing to Indians the superiority of European art."<sup>32</sup> In order to encourage Indians to paint in an Indian manner, he revised the curriculum, where "the academic methods of European art training were in vogue", abolished drawing from plaster casts, and established an Indian section in the gallery which had previously housed "a wonderfully miscellaneous collection of pictures attributed to various European masters, ancient and modern."<sup>33</sup> This fortuitous appointment of Havell was interrupted by his departure for Europe in 1906, but not before he had appointed Abanindranath Tagore principal in his stead.

During his eight year tenure as principal of the Calcutta School of Art (1906-1915), Tagore initiated a style of painting, adapted and diversified by his students, which Havell referred to in 1908 as a "modern revival of Indian painting."<sup>34</sup> The movement Havell called a modern revival later became more popularly known as the Bengal School. The style of art which characterized the Bengal School was conceived of and developed by Abanindranath Tagore and (with some exceptions) generally reflected his own aesthetic experience. Not only because Tagore was seminal to the evolution of the Bengal School, but also because of his influence on Chughtai, a survey of his painting and its development is warranted.

A majority of Tagore's published paintings are figural representations, realistically rendered in a manner that betray his westernized art training.<sup>35</sup> In 1900 he gave up

his passion for portraiture in oils to study watercolor under the tutelage of his British instructor, Charles Palmer. Even before he began working with Havell, Tagore had been influenced by Mughal miniature painting. Ajit Mukerjee believed that both European and Rajput miniatures were also an influence on Tagore's style but not as obvious as that of the Mughal miniatures.<sup>36</sup> Though Tagore's adaptation of Mughal miniature painting to his own western methods was different from that of Chughtai, Tagore's interest in and use of this art form preceded that of Chughtai by at least fifteen years. Perhaps the most significant influence on Abanindranath's style came from watching two Japanese artists at work. As a result he devised a personal technique so popular with his students that it became the keynote of the Bengal School style. The early Bengal School style was typified by a hazy, monochromatic or multi-hued background that muted the entire painting. Tagore had been inspired to paint washes of clear water over the entire watercolor painting by watching the Japanese artist, Taikwan. This method was later altered by adding a series of diluted color washes over the painting several (or more) times during the painting process.<sup>37</sup> This technique was widely used in the first three decades of the twentieth century by artists all over India, including Chughtai and his associates as well.

The presence of two Japanese artists, Yokoyama Taikwan and Shunsho Hishida, at the Tagore residence in Joresanko was evidence of a strong pan-Asian sentiment prevalent in India and Japan at the turn of the century. As Partha Mitter pointed out, "this 'elective affinity' with Japanese art was no mere stylistic preference, but reflected the conviction that the new nationalist art movement in India needed to draw nourishment not only from past Indian traditions, but from the best in oriental art."<sup>38</sup> The two Japanese artists had been sent to study with Tagore by Okakura Kakuzo, the Japanese intellectual, who espoused the ideal of Asian unity as a measure to check the encroachment of western dominance and completed his book, Ideals of the East while staying with the Tagores.<sup>39</sup>

Whether by design or accident, Tagore and the movement that he fostered became representative of the emerging national consciousness, led by Rabindranath Tagore (the painter's uncle) and other Bengali intellectuals. The nationalist movement coincided with and was augmented by the increasing popularity of the Theosophists under the charismatic leadership of Annie Besant who saw in the ideals of Hinduism a spiritual alternative to the materialist west. India's respected art critic and Tagore's personal friend, Ananda Coomaraswamy, recognized that the new movement was not a true revival of Indian painting, but in spite of its weaknesses and limitations,

it had surmounted almost impenetrable barriers promulgated by nineteenth century reformers "to make India like England."<sup>40</sup> In his 1912 essay "The Modern School of Indian Painting," Coomaraswamy concluded his assessment by making reference to adverse conditions a few years back that are still a hindrance to the realization of Indian art and culture in the present day.<sup>41</sup>

Coomaraswamy's "adverse conditions" elsewhere referred to by him as "destroying tendencies" he believed were due in part "to the non-existence of an educated public wanting or understanding art at all...[a public that] wants only to be amused and interested," but he saw the political sector at fault too as it "wants only to possess and does not think of giving."<sup>42</sup> Underlying this statement was the conflict Partha Mitter terms "archaic vs "modern" and "represented by what could be called westernizers and orientalist [that] made the task of choosing a style all the more difficult for the artist during the first four decades of this century..."<sup>43</sup> Even after Gandhi roused the uneducated masses and intelligentsia alike to support swaraj (complete independence for India) in the early 1920s, there were many moderates in favor of maintaining the status quo.

Gandhi's concept of swaraj, Mitter reminds his readers, "not only implied self-government by Indians, it also meant evolving a truly indigenous culture, stripped of its western moorings".<sup>44</sup> In search of ways to align their work with the art of the past, four of Tagore's students set out with Lady Herringham to copy the Ajanta frescoes in 1910.<sup>45</sup> The Ajanta style and its subject matter subsequently revealed itself in the work of more than a few Bengal School students for several decades after.

While the nationalist movement in India entertained goals ranging from administrative sharing to complete autonomy, a percentage of British residents in India and art minded Englishmen of the mainland with an interest in India were eager to encourage and assist with the development of modern Indian painting. In England there were well-known supporters and detractors of the Bengal School. Havell rallied loudly for, while Roger Fry and William Archer criticized.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, in 1910 The India Society was founded in London "to promote the study and appreciation of Indian art in its widest sense, both ancient and modern."<sup>47</sup> A few years earlier (1907) the Indian Society of Oriental Art (ISOA) had been created in Calcutta and was completely restructured in 1919 by the Marquess of Zetland who had secured a government grant to aid its activities and provide student scholarships. English and Bengali language journals promoted the art of Tagore, among them, Modern Review and Prabasi. Rupam, a

journal dedicated to art, was started in 1920. Sahitya was a Bengali journal that fostered the art of the Academic Realists, a loose federation of artists whose paintings and art philosophy was generally considered to be in opposition to that of the Bengal School. Two of its major exponents, Atul Bose and Hemer Majumdar, published several art journals in Bengal supporting the Academic Realists. The Academic Realists, centered in Bombay, are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

By the time Tagore joined the ISOA as painting instructor in 1915, the Bengal School style had begun to spread across the country. Tagore's students became instructors and principals at schools all over India and carried the Bengal School style and philosophy with them. Abanindranath's older brother Gaganendranath, perfected the overlay wash technique and painted scores of other paintings in the Chinese monochrome technique. So skilled was he with the latter technique that some of his black ink paintings are nearly indistinguishable from Chinese originals.

Bengali artists' enthusiasm for far Eastern painting was rekindled by Nandalal Bose, who accompanied Rabindranath Tagore on a trip to China and Japan in 1924. As instructor of painting at Santiniketan (Rabindranath's school for poets and painters), Bose was in a position to reach many students. Bose was a particularly versatile artist and explored many styles and techniques, contributing to further developments that broadened the scope of painting in Bengal. Jamini Roy (also trained in the Bengal School technique and an accomplished portraitist) evolved a personal idiom in the 1920s, emulating various forms of Bengali folk art. Roy achieved fame and fortune due to a general revival in the interest of folk art as well as to his talent and ingenuity. Most art critics regard his modified folk art style as an original and truly Indian approach for the creation of a new indigenous genre. Partha Mitter analyzed it as "a fine balance between tradition and modernity, between the west and the east, turning to contemporary village art, instead of the romantic past, for inspiration."<sup>48</sup>

By the second half of the 1920s, European art reappeared as a stimulus in Indian painting. As Mitter noted, "both westernizers and orientalist were overtaken by events abroad. Pan-Asianism was on the wane...news about the 'avant garde' western art movements reached India, [and] the Bengal school further weakened."<sup>49</sup>

Gaganendranath was the innovator of experimentation with an international outlook. He sought out new forms of self-expression and in the process separated himself from



the Bengal School. Under the influence of Cubism and Futurism, particularly the Synchronists' style of Delaunay, he created dream-like fantasies with fractured shapes and prisms of light.<sup>50</sup> Rabindranath, best known for receiving the 1913 Nobel Prize for literature, did not begin painting until 1926. Then already a man of sixty-five, he soon received acclaim in Europe for his wash paintings with amorphous shapes depicting faces, birds, and strange creatures.<sup>51</sup> He is credited with introducing the forms, and to some extent the content, of Expressionism and Surrealism.<sup>52</sup> His closest European counterparts are Edvard Munch, Franz Mark, Emile Nolde, and E. L. Kirchner.<sup>53</sup> Philosophically he was akin to Kandinsky, expounding inner expression, and like Klee, drawing under free association or automatism.<sup>54</sup> It may be no coincidence that Rabindranath was affected by the work of Kandinsky and Klee as they were featured in a major Calcutta exhibition of 1922.<sup>55</sup>

#### PAINTING IN BOMBAY : 1857-1940

The Indian center for training artists in the tradition commonly referred to as "Academic Realism" was the Sir J.J. School of Art, more commonly called the Bombay School of Art.<sup>56</sup> While the Bombay School was founded in 1857 as a government response to the generous donation by philanthropist Sir Jamsetji Jeejibhoy, the prototype for its style may be said to be found in the work of Raja Ravi Varma of Kerala (1848-1906). Ravi Varma began his career as an academic portrait painter, patronized by rajahs and other influential dignitaries, who contributed to his remarkable success in India and triumphantly witnessed his participation in the great exhibitions of Vienna in 1873 and Chicago in 1893. Such was the artist's popularity in Bombay and Baroda that Raja Modhava Rau encouraged Varma to have select works oleographed in Europe for distribution in Bombay. According to William Archer, "oleographs began to pour from a press in Bombay and were continuing to do so when he died in 1905."<sup>57</sup> His universal popularity in the nineteenth century as judged by Partha Mitter, "rests on his narration of Hindu Puranic mythology in the language of western illusionistic art..."<sup>58</sup>

Ravi Varma painted in oil on canvas, having "learned his craft", Mitter reports, "from watching the English painters, Theodore Jensen and Frank Brooks at work", and by studying reproductions of European paintings.<sup>59</sup> His dramatic fall from popularity within a decade after his death may be partly attributed to the same evolving nationalistic tendencies that brought Tagore's Bengal School paintings into the limelight. While Varma's realistic oil portraits show a Victorian heaviness, unbecomingly European in India at that time, his

oleographed oil paintings of gods and goddesses were more in the classical vein of David or Ingres and probably appealed to the Bombay Realists. Varma's oleographs have an affinity in style and subject matter with the genre of the Bombay School, particularly their large paintings executed in oil on canvas in the early 1920s.<sup>60</sup> Interior walls of the art school were covered with these paintings of realistic figures representing the seasons, night and dawn, Hindu gods and goddesses, and abstract concepts such as defeat and victory.

The mural painting project was directed by Gladstone Solomon, who was appointed principal of the J.J. School of art in 1919 after the demise of its former principal, John Griffiths. Plans were made to copy the paintings in fresco, the completion of which was to "constitute the first serious effort of modern times to revive the ancient Indian practice of decorating large wall-spaces with figure designs, as at Ajanta and in Ceylon."<sup>61</sup> Though the program at the Bombay Art School emphasized methods patterned after the Royal Academy of Art in England (life drawing, drawing from plaster casts, nature study, perspective drawing and painting in chiaroscuro), Solomon (and his supporters) did not consider his students' art to be any less Indian than the work of the Bengal School artists.<sup>62</sup>

Patronage and encouragement from local leaders and wealthy art collectors enhanced the prestige of the Bombay Art School and made it a viable force in the art milieu of India. Solomon singled out the personal involvement of the governor of Bombay province, Lord Lloyd, and his "wonderful flair for genuine art patronage and work for the Bombay School..."<sup>63</sup> The artistic awareness and visual literacy of Bombay was stressed by Solomon as a city with discerning individuals who contribute to and influence public appreciation of good art (beyond the narrow confines of nationalism). In this regard, Solomon referred to the Tata family art collections that "play their part in art education, for they contain many fine examples from Europe, as well as from Asia, and are very popular with the public."<sup>64</sup>

While the J.J. School of Art in Bombay remained the primary institution that fostered western methods of art education, two of the country's most renowned Academic Realists, Atul Bose and Hemen Majumdar, resided in Calcutta.<sup>65</sup> In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Academic Realists had an ally in the Bengali periodical, Sahitya; thereafter Bose and Majumdar brought out several art journals to foster their art and philosophy. Bose and Majumdar were the recipients of occasional awards in national painting exhibitions even when competing against Tagore or his students, and Majumdar

was particularly well-known for his mildly erotic depictions of Bengali women in wet, clinging, partly transparent saris.

S.G. Thakur Singh, another Academic Realist, whose portraits I consider an extension of the style of Ravi Varma and whose landscapes and architectural subjects are a continuation of late eighteenth and nineteenth century watercolors by British artists resident in India, painted in Bombay and Calcutta before he started his own art school in Amritsar in 1935. Consequently the Academic Realists were scattered over northern India, from Bombay to Amritsar to Calcutta.

#### NEO-EUROPEAN SYNTHESISTS 1934-1950

In 1934 Amrita Sher Gil (1913-1941) initiated a new approach in Indian painting, a synthesis of Indian spirit and subject matter with Post-Impressionist French art. She laid the foundation for the next important phase that I have termed the Neo-European Synthesists. The designation 'Neo-European Synthesists' distinguishes the approach of South Asian artists in the mid 1930s through the 1950s from the Academic Realists. The former regarded twentieth century European painting as their stylistic inspiration, whereas the latter relied mainly on the British art academy tradition as their model. Amrita's childhood and adolescence were divided between residence in Europe and India.<sup>66</sup> Her father came from a leading Sikh family of India and her mother was Hungarian. In spite of her academic training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, she evolved a personal syncretic style that blended elements from Indian miniature painting with nineteenth century French art. Noted for her sympathetic depictions of Indian village life, Sher Gil relied heavily on the bright color patterns, abstracted shapes, and exotic dark bodies taken from the art of Gauguin.<sup>67</sup> She denounced the art of the Bengal School, legitimized the use of oil painting where the Academic Realists had failed, and paved the way for the application of modern European painting to Indian artistic expression. Though during her lifetime she complained she was starving for recognition, ironically, after her death, her influence touched nearly every important Indian artist in the 1940s and 1950s.

The Neo-European Synthesists of the late 1930s, 1940s and 1950s regarded themselves as modern artists of Indian parentage. Since the fervor of nationalism, swaraj, and swadeshi of the first two decades of the twentieth century had abated, and the first world war had ended, Indians had become more cognizant of external events and their unavoidable impact. Consequently, Indian artists were more open to foreign movements. Most felt the need to express

their native identity but there was no agreement as to how. Many chose to use subject matter from typical Indian life as did Sher Gil, others preferred symbols from Tantric art or personal interpretations of Indian literature (ancient and modern). Many continued to rely on Indian miniature painting and folk art as motifs, but nearly all were influenced by foreign styles and technique in the mid 1940s. Cubism and German Expressionism were the most obvious influences, but artists were not limited to these styles.

Throughout India, artists began to leave for Europe as early as the mid 1930s. Chughtai may have been among the first to seek European inspiration in 1932. By his second trip in 1936, others had gone and returned. Many remained abroad for years and some took up permanent residence in Europe and America.

Among the most influential pioneers in Neo-European Synthesisism were Salioz Mukherjee (1908-1961) and Ram Kinkar Vaij (1910-1980). Mukherjee converted to the use of oils in the 1930s and according to S.A. Krishnan, "revived the Indian interest in nature with work that was influenced both by Matisse and by Rajasthani miniatures."<sup>68</sup> Laxmi P. Sihare attributes the first manifestations of abstractionism to Ram Kinkar Vaij in the 1930s, but added that the results remained dismal for over two decades.<sup>69</sup>

#### SUMMARY

While paintings in India and Pakistan in the 1940s and 1950s looked more like an expression of the individual artist, less dependent upon internal national pressures and regional movements, experiments of the past four decades served as a shallow base and a constant reminder. Ravi Varma, whose work and contributions I believe need reassessment, is still generally held in low regard, but he was the first to popularize western style and the oil medium. The same opinion is prevalent regarding the Academic Realists associated with the Bombay school of Art, but their proclivity for European style and techniques and their steadfastness in pursuing foreign influence proved prophetic for the avant garde activity that flourished there in the late 1940s.

Many painters and art historians hail Abanindranath Tagore as the father of modern Indian painting and cite the Bengal School as the seed of a true Indian school of painting that never came into fruition. His brother Gaganendranath and uncle Rabindranath were less influential than Abanindranath as painterly prototypes during their lifetimes. Though lauded as the first truly modern Indian artists by post-partition critics, few painters appear to

have been influenced by either Abanindranath's brother or uncle. Their individualism and the European derivation of their styles may have been too premature for their paintings to greatly influence pre mid twentieth century painters. On the other hand the folk art style of Jamini Roy and the Gauguinesque style native villagers of Amrita Sher Gil were profoundly felt in subsequent paintings in India. Jamini Roy (d. 1952) was an influence on other painters during his own lifetime and Sher Gil's impact was realized just a few years after her death in 1941.

The Punjab had long been considered the last frontier of twentieth century pre-partition India, generally unprogressive and unenlightened. After the Mughal and Pahari miniature traditions in the Punjab gave way to Sikh painting (and that too came to an end in 1850) the western Punjab had no artistic innovation to boast of. The Bengal School style was predominant there until Chughtai matured with a personal style. When India divided in 1947, Pakistani artists were more influenced by their gurus (Shakir Ali and Zubeida Agha) than India's predominantly Hindu painters, but Europe was and is the source for both countries.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Mildred and William G. Archer, Indian Painting for the British 1770-1880 (England: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Archer and Archer, Painting for British p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Appasamy, Tagore and his Times p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Company art also included some three dimensional objects such as ivory chessmen and other small objects. See Archer and Archer, Painting for British p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Archer and Archer, Painting for British, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Archer, Paintings of the Sikhs, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1966), p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> In the Preface of Paintings of the Sikhs, p. xvii, Archer wrote, "Until quite recently, historians of Indian art have tended to adopt a cautious, even at times a caustic attitude to painting of the Sikhs...The purpose of the present book is to correct this false impression." For examples of such attitudes see Archer's annotated bibliography: i.e. B.H. Baden-Powell, Handbook of the Manufactures and Arts of the Punjab (Lahore, 1822) in Archer p.92; S.N. Gupta, "The Sikh School of Painting", Rupam (1922), III, No. 12, 125-128, in Archer p.96; Herman Goetz, "Indian Painting in the Muslim Period", JISOA (1947), XV, No. 1, 40, in Archer p. 99; Mulk Raj Anand "Painting Under the Sikhs", Marg (1954), VII, No. 2, 23-32, in Archer p. 100; Karl Kandalavala, Pahari Miniature Painting (Bombay, 1958), pp. 240, 242-244, in Archer p. 102.

<sup>8</sup> B.N.Goswamy, "A Matter of Taste: Some Notes <sup>on</sup> of the context of Painting in Sikh Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh as Patron of the Arts (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1981), p. 67.

<sup>9</sup> Goswamy, p. 64.

<sup>10</sup> Goswamy, p. 67.

<sup>11</sup> Archer, Paintings of the Sikhs, p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> Aryan, Punjab Painting: 1841-1941 (Patiala: Punjabi University, 1977), p. 18.

13 Drawings and paintings of these artists (often reproduced as lithographs) were mostly published and dispersed in England. Emily Eden's The Princes and Peoples of India (London, 1844) was distributed in the Punjab in 1845, and William Archer believes her lithos were the greatest source of western influence on Sikh painting of the last phase. See Archer, Paintings of the Sikhs, p. 51. Illustrated publications of some of the above artists are: Fanny Parks, Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque, During four-and-twenty years in the East (London, 1850); W.G. Osborne, The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing (London, 1840); Mrs Helen MacKenzie, Illustrations of the Mission, the Camp and the Zenana (London, 1854); C.S. Hardinge, Recollections of India (London, 1847); G.T.Vigne, Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, Iskardo (London, 1852); Alexis Soltykoff, Indian Scenes and Characters (London, 1859); W. Carpenter's paintings may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

14 Archer, Paintings of the Sikhs, p. 49-51.

15 Archer, Paintings of the Sikhs p. 40.

16 Mildred Archer, Company Drawings in the India Office Library (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1972), p. 208-230.

17 For Kalighat type see Aryan, Figs. 31 & 36; for the Pahari/Sikh style see Figs. 34 & 35.

18 Aryan's book proposed to cover Punjab Painting 1841-1941, but his coverage lacks depth and documentation.

19 Aryan, p. 110.

20. See Aryan, for examples of the following artists' works: Sri Ram, Figs. 44 & 45; Malla Ram, Fig. 55; Sobha Singh, Fig. 57; and Lahora Singh, Fig. 58.

21 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School" no pagination.

22 Lionel Heath, "The Mayo School of Arts, Lahore," Indian Arts and Letters, V, No. 1 (1931), p. 14, then principal of the Mayo School of Art, Lahore, remarked that "an Indian art school has no prototype in Europe. Its primary object is to encourage and promote good design, decoration, and construction in all the decorative or applied arts amongst the artisans and craftworkers."

23 Abdullah Chaghatai, A Century of Painting in the Punjab: 1849-1947 (Lahore: Kitab Khana-I-Nauras, 1961), p. 47, states that credit should be given to Mr. Heath (principal of the Mayo School of Art) and Mr. Gupta for

advancing great interest in painting among advanced students but "the art of painting as a regular subject, as it was done in the Bengal and Bombay Schools of Art, could never find its proper place at the Mayo School of Art, Lahore. It was a mere drawing subject for the curriculum of the drawing teacher's course."

24 The Bengal School style may have been reinforced a few years later with the addition of Roop Krishna to the faculty of the Mayo School.

25 Centenary Exhibition Catalogue (1975-1975) The National College of Art, Lahore, profile of Haji Mohammed Sharif, n.p.

26 Centenary Catalogue, profile of Shujauallah, n.p.

27 Abdullah Chughtai in "The Chughtai School," noted that "during the 1920s and 1930s new literary magazines in Urdu began to appear from Lahore...The climate during these decades was highly favorable to literature and the arts." n.p. Salim ur Rahman, who translated Abdullah's article for me, added: "This is true and important. From the 1920s onwards Lahore became one of the major centres of Urdu book publishing in the subcontinent. Most of the new literary movements originated from Lahore. All this literary activity must have influenced Chughtai's work. I personally doubt if he would have painted Ghalib, Iqbal, Khayyam, had he been working elsewhere or had Lahore been otherwise."

28 Dinkar Kowshik, Sanyal: Contemporary Indian Art Series, ed., Jaya Appasamy (New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1967), p. iv, and biography.

29 Kowshik, Sanyal, p. v.

30 Ahmed, Art in Pakistan, 1970 ed. p. 14.

31 Syed Nasir Shamsie, "Shakir Ali", Focus on Pakistan, II, No. 2 (1972), p. 51.

32 E.B. Havell, "The New Indian school of painting", Studio, 1908, p. 108.

33 Havell, p. 108.

34 Havell, p. 112.

35 Mulkul Dey, "Abanindranath Tagore," Visvha Bharati Quarterly, VIII, Part I, May 1942, (Special No. in 2 parts), p. 32, wrote that Abanindranath "took private lessons from Signor Gilhardi an Italian artist (the vice



principal of the Calcutta Government School of Art in 1897) on cast drawing, foliage drawing, pastel and life study. Later, he began to attend the studio of Mr. Charles L. Palmer, who had arrived from London."

36 Ajit Mukerjee, "Chronology of Abanindranath's Paintings," Visvha Bharati Quarterly, VII, Part I, May 1942, (Special No. in 2 parts), p. 126.

37 For a more detailed account see chapter V, Technique and Color

38 Partha Mitter, "Art and Nationalism in India", History Today, XXXII, July 1982, p. 31.

39 Mitter, p. 31.

40 Ananda Coomaraswamy, "The Modern School of Indian Painting", Journal of Indian Art and Industry, XV, No. 120 (1912), pp. 67-68, wrote "Those who are familiar with the nature of the influence of European upon Indian art during the nineteenth century, and the squalid uninspiring and wholly foreign character of Indian education, making Indians strangers in their own country, can only wonder at the possibility of even so much reaction as has taken place during the last ten years. Nor can those fairly judge the work of the Calcutta school, who do not make themselves personally acquainted with its 'ateliers,' and all the young enthusiasm which is there spent in serious effort to find some effective means of escape from a state of aesthetic stagnation far worse than the Early Victorian, with which the English Pre-Raphaelites had to deal."

41 Coomaraswamy, p. 69, declared that "A great responsibility now rests upon the members of the Calcutta Group and upon the public for whom they work. What has been accomplished constitutes, considering the very adverse conditions obtaining in India a few years ago, and to almost the same extent at the present day; but it is not what the world has a right to expect from India."

42 Coomaraswamy, p. 68.

43 Mitter, p. 29.

44 Mitter, p. 29.

45 Those four artists were Asit Kumar Haldar, Naldalal Bose, S.N. Gupta, and Syed Ahmed. Others followed shortly thereafter.

46 Coomaraswamy, "The Modern School of Indian Painting", p. 68, claimed that "In England the severest criticism has

come, not from old fashioned and narrow-minded or academic critics, but from such writers as Mr. Roger Fry..." Also refer to William Archer, India and the Future, 1917 for Archer criticism and S.S. Suryanarayan Sastri, "Indian Art and Culture", Modern Review, XXV, Feb. 1919, pp.163-168.

47 Editor's report, "The Marquess of Zetland's Speech at India House", Indian art and Letters IV, No.2 (1930), p. 75.

48 Mitter, p. 34.

49 Mitter, p. 34.

50 The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Indian Art Through the Ages, colorplate p.52, "Dreamland" by G. Tagore.

51 Indian Art Through the Ages, colorplate p.55 "She" by R. Tagore.

52 Laxmi P. Sihare, Modern Indian Paintings, catalogue for July 1982 exhibition at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D. C. (New Delhi, n.pub., 1982).

53 Marcella Nesom, "The Development of Modern Indian Painting 1900-1941" paper presented at Eleventh Wisconsin Conference on South Asia, Madison, Wis., Nov. 1982.

54 Rabindranath began by inking out errors in his writing and forming designs by combining calligraphy with organic shapes and bird-like forms.

55 The 14th Annual Exhibition catalogue of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1922 also included original works by Johannes Itten, Lionel Fininger, Gerhard Marks, George Muche, Lothar Schreyer, M. Terry, Sofie Korner, Windham Lewis and Andree Karples.

56 Academic Realism is the term used by S.A.Krishnan in "Oriental Modern Movements", Encyclopedia of World Art, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), X, p. 812.

57 William Archer, India and Modern Art, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959), p. 22; other sources cite 1906 as Varma's death date.

58 Mitter, p. 29.

59 Mitter, p. 29.

60 Ratan Parimoo in Studies in Modern Indian Art (New Delhi: Kanak Publications, 1973), p. 17, also noted a similarity between Ravi Varma and certain artists of the Bombay school: "Bombay and its art school remained its chief centre [of European academic style] with Dhurandar nearly aping Ravi Varma."

61 Solomon Gladstone, "Some Notes on the Mural Decorations Painted by the Students in the Sir J J School of Art, Bombay, Under the Personal Direction of the Principal," Modern Review, XXIX, No. 3, (1921), p. 292.

62 Solomon Gladstone, "Modern Art in Western India", Indian Art and Letters n.s. VIII, No. 2 (1934), p.104.

63 Gladstone, "Modern Art," p. 104.

64 Gladstone, "Modern Art," p. 104, noted that the Tata collections had been bequeathed to the Prince of Wales Museum and were therefore available for public viewing.

65 Atul Bose and Satish Simha, another Realist, were instructors at the Government School of Art, Calcutta in 1930, according to a report in the "Government School of Art Exhibition at Calcutta," Modern Review," XLVII, No.2 (1930), p. 228.

66 The first eight years were spent in Europe, from 1921 to 1924 she lived in India, in 1924 she spent a few months studying art in Florence, Italy. Then in 1929, she was sent by her mother to the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris and after five years of training returned to India in 1934.

67 According to William Archer, until 1933 Sher Gil's style was "in every way much closer to Cezanne's than to Gauguin's." However, late in 1933 just before leaving for India, her proclivity toward Gauguin became foremost. India and Modern Art, p. 86.

68 Krishnan, "Oriental Modern Movements," p. 812.

69 Sihare, Modern Indian Painting, n.p.

## BIOGRAPHY OF THE ARTIST

The exact year of birth of Abdur Rahman Chughtai has not been firmly established. The Chughtai Museum Trust<sup>1</sup> accepts September 21, 1899 as Chughtai's birthdate since that was the date his father, Mian Karim Bakhsh, put on his school certificate.<sup>2</sup> A younger brother, Abdullah Chaghatai, born on November 23, 1896, states that his mother used to say that Abdur Rahman was approximately two years, three months his senior.<sup>3</sup> That would put the artist's birthdate near September 21, 1894. He was born in Mohalla Chabuk Sawaran, in the old city of Lahore (now Pakistan).

Chughtai's family was proud of its Persian ancestry and saw themselves as inheritors of a talented and artistic lineage. According to the artist's son, Chughtai's paternal grandfather, Rahim Baksh, was an architect in Lahore, as was his father, Mian Salahuddin Chughtai. Other personalities in the family included poets, mathematicians, artisans, and artists. Mian Karim Bakhsh saw in his four sons the potential to revitalize lost traditions and family pride and hoped that Abdur Rahman would become an architect or an engineer.<sup>4</sup>

Abdur Rahman received his earliest education at the Chiney-Wali Mosque in Lahore, learning to read the Quran. Afterwards, he was sent to the Technical Railway School for his Middle School education.<sup>5</sup> His strong-willed, independent personality became evident before adolescence.<sup>6</sup> According to Abdullah, Abdur Rahman stayed in school up to the seventh class, then suddenly left his studies and fled to Sind where he took refuge with relatives. Abdur Rahman reportedly did not get along with the headmaster and dropped out of the institution without informing his father. His father forcibly returned him to Lahore and monitored his studies. He passed the Middle School exams as a private candidate in 1911. A year before his graduation, Chughtai was united by arranged marriage with Wazir-un-Nisa.<sup>7</sup> According to Arif Chughtai, Wazir-un-Nisa became pregnant soon after the marriage (when only thirteen) and being so young, underwent an abortion. She was prone to poor health thereafter and was never able to conceive again.<sup>8</sup>

During the same period, a pupil of Mian Karim Bakhsh gave young Chughtai a colorbox. Chughtai's "coloured picture" of a minaret from the local mosque convinced the

entire family that his talent lay in drawing and painting.<sup>9</sup> Since painting in the eastern tradition was a hereditary profession, there was little provision for formally studying painting, so Chughtai was taken to his uncle who had been given a hujra (room) as an art studio at the nearby Wazir Khan Mosque. The uncle, Baba Mira Bakhsh, was a naqsha (one who produces the traditional decorative arts of Islam, chiefly calligraphy and arabesque-floral wall decoration), and according to Arif Chughtai, could not have been very enthusiastic having young Chughtai as a pupil.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, this apprenticeship was instrumental in familiarizing Chughtai with Islamic ornamental design and impressing upon him the need for facility and precision in draftsmanship. A number of his paintings employ decorative panels as part of the background in which color and design closely resemble the Mughal style at Wazir Khan Mosque. Much of Chughtai's personal style and artistic predilection can no doubt be traced to his youthful experience at Wazir Khan Mosque.

In October, 1911, he joined the Mayo School of Art as a student in the drawing master's department. He passed the final exams in 1914 and stood second in the Punjab.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, his father died the year before and could not share in the family's pride. With the death of Mian Karim Bakhsh in 1913, financial responsibility for support of the entire family was left to the eldest son at home---Abdur Rahman. There were no savings to fall back upon and young Chughtai was responsible for the family welfare. Consequently, his drawing and painting must have suffered greatly, but he still found time to pursue his favorite hobby, photography. In fact, this hobby did provide some income and was taken most seriously by the young artist. His ability and proficiency in photography would qualify him as more than an amateur.<sup>12</sup>

Some time after his graduation from the Mayo School of Art, Abdur Rahman was appointed drawing master at the Mission School in Gujranwala. Lionel Heath, principal of the Mayo School of Art made the appointment, which paid the sum of thirty-five rupees per month. In 1916 Chughtai returned to Lahore and took a teaching position in the newly-created photo-lithography department of the Mayo School of Art. Apparently, Chughtai was not happy in Gujranwala and requested Heath to reemploy him back in Lahore.<sup>13</sup> During spring holidays of 1916, Chughtai, his brother, and some friends went to Delhi and Agra to visit Mughal monuments. Abdullah recalled that his brother "Observed the monuments very carefully...took many photographs, and made excellent use of his observation while painting scenes of Mughal life."<sup>14</sup>

Shortly thereafter, in the same year, Lionel Heath sent Abdur Rahman to Calcutta to get more training in photo-lithography at the Calcutta Government Press. His stay was short but valuable in that he met some of the foremost artists working in Calcutta.<sup>15</sup> Abdullah reported that Abdur Rahman met Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose and was also introduced to the well-known painter and successful designer of stage scenery for a theatrical company, Ustad Hussain Bakhsh (ustad is an honorary title meaning master) along with two of his equally famous pupils, Ustad Mohammad Din and Ustad Thakar Singh. Hussain Bakhsh, Mohammad Din and Thakar Singh had lived and studied in Lahore, so it is not inconceivable that Chughtai knew them previously in Lahore.<sup>16</sup>

According to a commentary in Amle Chughtai, Samenendranath Gupta, then vice principal of the Mayo School of Art, accompanied Chughtai on the trip to Calcutta.<sup>17</sup> Gupta had studied under Abanindranath Tagore and apparently had close ties with his guru. In the forward to Lagan, Chughtai recounts a visit to the Tagore home.<sup>18</sup> S.N. Gupta, Hussain Bakhsh, and some art students who were going to meet Dr. Tagore forcibly took Chughtai along too. His reluctance to go along seems contradictory to his prior statement of wanting to meet the Bengali artists, (see note 15) but Chughtai does not explain. Neither does he reveal his reason for wanting to keep his identity a secret during this visit to the Tagores.<sup>19</sup> Before Chughtai's identity was revealed, he was introduced (probably as a Lahore artist with a fictitious name) to the Tagores. Tagore is reported then, to have commented about Chughtai: "He's our enlightened friend. We are visualizing the possibilities of promotion of art in the Punjab through Abdur Rahman Chughtai."<sup>20</sup> Chughtai claimed that after his companions gave him away, "Dr. Tagore and his brother Gagin Babu got up and shook hands with me and said, 'you, son of the kabbiwala.'<sup>21</sup>

One can imagine that Tagore's complimentary response to Chughtai as an enlightened friend and capable artist must have irritated S. N. Gupta, who probably saw himself as the promoter of modern art in the Punjab. Already there are hints of a personality clash with Gupta, who Chughtai referred to in his writing as the vice principal of the Art School, Lahore, rather than by name. A comment made by Gupta after leaving the Tagore's suggests a degree of animosity.

After meeting these Bengali artists, when we had all returned, the vice principal, art school, Lahore, displaying his wits and having been impressed by the wealth exposed by that family, said, 'Abdur Rahman, before beginning art, if you

had grown under the shade of that big tree, its shade would have withered you before you could have grown'...I answered very informally, 'the ones who have to grow can sprout even from stones.'<sup>22</sup>

Gupta was referring to the powerful influence of the Tagores, particularly Abanindranath in regard to the current dominance of the Bengal School of Art the latter had fostered. Chughtai's reply was a cynical retort conveying his confidence that nothing could keep him from achieving the fame he felt worthy of.

In 1916 Calcutta was the most westernized and urbane city in India. The Tagores contributed greatly to the sophistication and productivity of the city, but it had a history of progressivism. Chughtai had been so inspired in Calcutta that when he returned to Lahore he immediately sent a painting to Modern Review.<sup>23</sup> It was published that same year (1916) and others were published in succeeding years up through the mid 1920s.<sup>24</sup> Beginning in 1918 Ramanendra Chatterjee, editor of Modern Review, compiled a series of albums containing the best examples of Indian painting.<sup>25</sup> Most of the works in Chatterjee's Picture Albums were by Tagore and his students, but the editor also included a few reproductions from the old Mughal school, as well as Pahari and Rajput miniatures. It was a great honor to have one's painting selected for Chatterjee's Albums, and Chughtai was included in all six volumes. As a result of his work being published in the Calcutta based, pro-Bengal School journal and his visit to Calcutta, Chughtai became associated with the Calcutta movement of Tagore, and the myth arose that he had "moved on to Calcutta and worked there for several years painting in the style of the Bengal School."<sup>26</sup>

Chughtai wanted in no way to be associated with (as a student or follower of ) Tagore or the Bengal School. There is no denying, however, that Abdur Rahman's earliest paintings did indeed closely resemble the moody, hazy, mystical style which became characteristic of the Bengal School. (see Style 1918-1922, pp. 104-105. Chughtai proclaimed that he was the first Muslim painter to begin a career in modern Indian painting.<sup>27</sup> He wrote that the Bengal School completely dominated this field throughout the entire subcontinent; it even enjoyed official patronage and Tagore and his family were eulogized not only in India, but in the west and the far east. Chughtai was probably not incorrect in his conclusion that "under these circumstances no one else had any chance of establishing himself [apart from the Bengal School]."<sup>28</sup>

The stature of Tagore and national respect for the Bengal School were so great that they were frequently identified apart from non-aligned entrants in art show catalogues. This was the case in Lahore at the 1920 Exhibition of British and Indian Arts and Crafts, the catalogue of which listed a special category: "Watercolor Paintings Exhibited by the Indian Society of Oriental Art."<sup>29</sup> Abanindranath Tagore, several of his family members and many of his students were entered in this section. There were two other categories for watercolors: one entitled simply "Watercolors" and another called "Indian Paintings." Lionel Heath was among the British and other foreigners entered under the section "Watercolors,"<sup>30</sup> while Chughtai and Samenendranath Gupta were competing in the section, "Indian Paintings."<sup>31</sup> 40

This exhibition, like many others up to the 1940s made the distinction between the eastern and western styles of painting---particularly applicable in the watercolor medium. It was seldom, if ever applied to the art catalogue heading "Oil Painting," because that medium had not evolved an Indian style. Small watercolors often with numerous wash overlays and delicate linear accents typified the Bengal School style and created the necessity for an art show category which would distinguish their work from the European style watercolors of the British.

Catalogues of various Indian art exhibitions that Chughtai had participated in were sometimes marked by checks and "xs" alongside some of the artists' paintings.<sup>32</sup> In the 1920 Lahore exhibition catalogue, eleven of Chughtai's paintings were marked with an "x" and a check and five of Gupta's paintings were marked by a check. Computations under the prices of Chughtai's paintings indicate he sold these eleven paintings for a total of 1625 rupees with a five rupee deduction as commission for the exhibition sponsor. Both Chughtai and Gupta had sixteen paintings listed in the catalogue. If Gupta's marked paintings indicated his sales, that total would have amounted to 380 rupees, considerably less than that of Chughtai. With Chughtai's local success rivalry between them must have increased. It seems plausible to assume that the Chughtai-Gupta relationship (not friendly and based on little more than mutual tolerance) was aggravated by, if not derived from competition between the two. Abdullah Chughtai wrote that his brother, Abdur Rahman liked Gupta "neither as a man nor as a painter."<sup>33</sup>

Gupta was well-known as one of Tagore's inspired young students. His watercolor classes at the Mayo School of Art may not have been part of the core curriculum, but apparently a number of enthusiastic students joined these classes in the first and second decade of this century.<sup>34</sup>



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According to the National College of Art's centenary catalogue and Abdullah Chaghatai, Abdur Rahman was one of Gupta's painting students.<sup>35</sup> The artist's son, Arif Rahman, however, completely refutes this allegation: "The reference that Chughtai studied under Gupta is absolutely wrong and is kindled by the fanatics of the Bengal School to play down the artist...He had no contact with the art department. Gupta was a proclaimed spokesman (sic) of the Bengal School but...he used to do his washes in private and was not willing to teach his students the techniques he had acquired in Calcutta."<sup>36</sup>

Arif Chughtai also accused the authors of the centenary catalogue of unfair partiality: "The bio-data given under the NCA brochure [the centenary catalogue] is a creation of the Shakir Ali clique, who do not know the ABC of the Mayo School of Arts."<sup>37</sup> Arif further accused Abdullah Chaghatai of being prejudiced in regard to what he wrote about his brother, Abdur Rahman.<sup>38</sup> No doubt personal prejudices (including those of his son, Arif), play a part in much that is written by and about the artist, Chughtai. It is my personal opinion that, considering Chughtai's aversion to being associated with the Bengal School and his avowed dislike for Gupta, it does not seem likely that he would have studied directly under Gupta, unless it was during the time he was a student at the Mayo School (1914-1915).

Gupta, in turn must have been envious of Chughtai's increasing fame. Gupta merited social and artistic prestige because of his position as vice principal at the Mayo School Art and treasurer of the Punjab Fine Arts Society which he helped found together with Lionel Heath.<sup>39</sup> The first exhibition organized by this society was held at the Lahore Museum in 1919/1920. It may have been the same show as the 1920 Exhibition of British and Indian Arts and Crafts just discussed. Abdullah Chaghatai described this exhibition as a very important affair. Around three hundred paintings were shown by artists from all over India, the Tagore's included. "But it was the work of Abdur Rahman Chughtai which impressed everyone, and newspapers published articles praising it."<sup>40</sup> If animosity between Chughtai and Gupta had heretofore been suppressed, it must have been aggravated after this exhibition and was finally manifested four years later in 1924 by an incident which prompted Chughtai to leave his position as instructor at the Mayo School of Arts.

Exhibition catalogues from the archives of the CMT show that Chughtai competed in at least eleven Indian art exhibitions between 1920 and 1924. His paintings were frequently award winners: Simla Fine Arts Society awarded Chughtai fifty rupees for Best Historical or Religious

subject in 1921; at the Mussoorie Fine Art Exhibition he won best picture by an Indian artist in any medium three years in a row, 1921-1923; the Punjab fine Arts Society, Lahore, gave Chughtai Mrs. Casson's Prize for best drawing in 1923; the Bombay Art society presented Chughtai the silver medal for best work in black and white in 1923 and the highly commended award in watercolors; Chughtai won the bronze medal award at Madras Fine Arts Society Exhibition in 1924 and a special prize for best picture in colour in any medium by an artist of the modern Indian school at the same exhibition.<sup>41</sup>

During these four years, Chughtai was employed as head instructor of photo-lithography at the Mayo School, a department created especially for him by heath in 1916.<sup>42</sup> Abdullah Chaghatai points to the year 1924 as the turning point in the artist's career. The British Empire Exhibition held at Wembley, England, in that year was something akin to a world fair. It featured cultural exhibits from every country in the world affiliated with the British Commonwealth.

The British Empire Exhibition will be the chief event of 1924. Never before has an exhibition of such an elaborate scale been prepared, It is costing over £ 10,000,000 to produce.<sup>43</sup>

It even contained an exact replica of the tomb of Tut-an-Khamen at Luxor, prepared "under the direction of the most distinguished Egyptologists of the day."<sup>44</sup> The Fine Arts were displayed categorically according to media, and qualitatively according to a predetermined geographic distribution for each dominion or colony. Gallery CC housed the India and Burma entries which were further divided into four sections: Bengal, Bombay, Punjab and Burma. Only a limited number of paintings from each locale could be accommodated. Regional co-ordinators were put in charge of each of these geographic sectors to screen works and choose a few representatives to accompany the art to Wembley. Lionel heath was appointed chairman of the Punjab section. His was a position of great responsibility, requiring a strong sense of the aesthetic demands of the day as well as a considerable amount of tact, given the competitive spirit among the Punjabi artists.

A series of events which immediately preceded the final selection of paintings for the Wembley Exhibition resulted in Chughtai losing or giving up his job and must have completely severed any relationship with Gupta as well as strained his friendship with Heath. The incident is recorded by Abdullah Chaghatai:

It so happened that in order to paint for the Wembley Exhibition, Abdur Rahman decided to do all his work at home. He pretended that he was ill and obtained medical leave from the Mayo School. He would work all day long at home and to very good purpose also, and in the evenings go to the movies to divert himself. One evening at the cinema he came across his vice principal, Gupta. Gupta at once sent in a report against him, saying that he was not at all ill and went to the movies every evening. Abdur Rahman was officially asked to explain his conduct. It was probably March or April of 1924. Abdur Rahman took no notice of the official accusation and never went to the Mayo School again. Several official queries followed, asking him as to why he had stopped working at the school, but Abdur Rahman ignored them all.

← So the year 1924 was a turning point in Abdur Rahman's career. He could now work as an independent artist. He was also aware that the charges levelled at him were based on Gupta's personal vindictiveness.<sup>45</sup>

There is no additional information which might further explain Chughtai's behavior in this situation or which might provide concrete evidence for Gupta's vindictiveness. Consequently, there is no way of knowing whether Chughtai quit simply for more time to paint or because of friction with Gupta.

The friction that existed between Chughtai and Gupta was extended, by association, to that of two opposing camps. Chughtai had gathered around him some years before, several artist friends and talented relatives in a coalition which he hoped would become known as the "Punjab School."<sup>46</sup> It was Chughtai's conception of the counter part to Calcutta's Bengal School. He and his associates were all Muslims and native Punjabis: Among them were his brother, Abdur Rahim, also known as A. R. Ashgar; a cousin, Jalalludin Chughtai, and friends, Inayat Ullah, Mohammad Husain Qadri and Mian Abdul Rehman Ijaz.

Thus while Heath envisioned a strong united front of artists from the Punjab, there were in reality two groups of artists with opposing backgrounds. Roop Krishna, who had studied directly under Tagore, joined the Mayo School of Art in Lahore in 1923. S.N. Gupta and Roop Krishna were neither Muslim nor natives of the Punjab and the obvious schism put Heath in a very delicate position as judge for the Punjab section of the Wembley Exhibition. Surely Heath did not want to offend Gupta by choosing more paintings

by Chughtai, but Heath was concerned for the latter as well. Apparently Heath was not at all happy about losing the instructional services of Chughtai. Arif Chughtai reported that Heath assured Abdur Rahman that he was not to be fired over the cinema incident. He only wanted an explanation (and perhaps an apology).<sup>47</sup>

As the British principal of the Mayo School, Heath played the role of mediator between the two competing groups of artists. Most of the dramatis personae were in some way connected with the Mayo School. Chughtai was an instructor on "indefinite leave" just prior to the outset of Wembley, Inayat Ullah had graduated from the Mayo School in 1915 and reportedly joined Gupta's watercolor class in 1922, Mohammad Husain Qadri was also an instructor at Mayo School, while Mian Abdul Rehman Ijaz was still a student there.

Heath's selection of paintings for Wembley proved one thing to Chughtai---he could succeed as an independent artist. He had more paintings chosen than anyone else from the Punjab; in fact, he had more paintings go to Wembley than any other artist in India, including Tagore. He was represented at Wembley with eleven paintings. Gupta had six accepted. Fifty years later Abdullah Chaghatai recalled the competitive spirit: "Thanks to Abdur Rahman's work, the Punjab triumphed over others."<sup>48</sup>

An article by Heath (in part below) from the British Empire Review is an example of his attempt to obscure the division between the native Punjabis and the Calcutta artists who relocated in the Punjab, and give the illusion that a unified camaraderie existed.

The Punjab artists, whose works are exhibited in these galleries may be congratulated upon having set a high standard of merit and also upon having formed a very definite and distinct style of their own. One or two of these artists were, I believe, pupils in Tagore's Calcutta School in the past and will not deny the value of their training; but they, with their Punjab contemporaries are showing...a beauty of form...truly Indian in character, and which promise well for the future formation of a strong North Indian school of painting.<sup>49</sup>

In the paragraphs that followed, Heath pointed out individual merits beginning with the "Calcutta artists", probably in deference to the established popularity of the Bengal School. He first acknowledged Gupta as having "three or four paintings which show his composition and colour at their best."<sup>50</sup> Next he mentioned Roop Krishna as

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"another pupil of Tagore, [who] is faithful to his early training. The 'newer' school of thought," continued Heath, "may be said to be represented by a number of works by Mr. M. A. R. Chughtai."<sup>51</sup> Heath did not clarify what he meant by "newer school of thought," but in comparing his own work to that of the Bengal School in this early period, Chughtai wrote:

The Bengal School art represented gods and goddesses, Siva and Pavarti...It was full of pessimism and gloom...Naturally my artistic inclination and views were radically different. My style and subject-matter was different.<sup>52</sup>

The article by Heath continued with brief mention of the paintings by Inayat Ullah, Mohammad Husain Qadri, A. R. Ashgar, and the other painters representing the Punjab.

Muhammad Husain Qadri and Mian Abdul Rehman Ijaz were among those sent to Wembley in 1924. Qadri, who had three paintings accepted, was elected to decorate the Punjab Court at the Wembley Exhibition, while Ijaz, who was a consistent award winner in Indian exhibitions but had no paintings selected for Wembley, was "sent to U.K. and France by the Indian Government for the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley."<sup>53</sup> Gupta went also, acting for Heath in his absence.

It is curious that Chughtai, who had more paintings accepted for exhibition at Wembley than any other artist in the entire subcontinent, was not among those who went. The meager information available does not suggest why Chughtai was not invited. Qadri, eighty-eight years old at the time I conducted an interview with him, could remember very little of those circumstances.<sup>54</sup> Arif Chughtai stated that "Chughtai was not invited to Wembley, nor he had any intentions to go in that year. Conditions at home were not very good."<sup>55</sup>

One of the paintings accepted into the Wembley Exhibition, painted by Inayat Ullah, proved to be a source of irritation to Chughtai a few years later. The Poison Cup (Fig. 1), a watercolor on silk signed by Inayat Ullah, was shown in the British Empire Exhibition and subsequently sold. The Poison Cup was illustrated in Rupam (1925) and in Studio that same year, thus affording Inayat Ullah formidable recognition.<sup>56</sup> According to Arif Chughtai, a relative of Inayat Ullah, the photographer, Attaur Rahman, made fun of Chughtai. "The fun was over such factors as Inayatullah having exceeded Chughtai and so on. Chughtai was hurt by these statements and said that even that work was done under me and now my name is being smeared by these people."<sup>57</sup> Arif further stated that The Poison Cup was

mostly the work of Chughtai and that the lady in the painting was a likeness of Chughtai's wife.<sup>58</sup> A sketch from the CMT (Fig. 2) done by Chughtai, a study for The Poison Cup, substantiates Chughtai's claim of personal involvement in that painting. Arif insisted that Chughtai never spoke openly of the Poison Cup incident. "He was above such petty discussions and matters" according to the son.<sup>59</sup> We can assume then, that his association with Inayat Ullah and the other Lahore artists of his group continued to be friendly, but by the mid 1920s, Chughtai had established other important friendships.

Many of Chughtai's closest friends were literati who had begun to congregate in Lahore. Salim ur Rahman explained why Lahore attracted many intellectuals. "From the 1920s onwards, Lahore became one of the major centers of Urdu book publishing in the subcontinent. Most of the new literary movements originated from Lahore."<sup>60</sup> "The climate during these decades was highly favorable to literature and the arts."<sup>61</sup>

Dr. Allama Iqbal, the leading figure of the subcontinent in twentieth century Persian and Urdu literature, used to sing his verses for large gatherings at schools, colleges, and public meeting halls in Lahore. The Chughtai brothers attended many of these sessions. Iqbal brought to the Indo-Muslim subcontinent complex revolutionary ideas for the reconstruction of Islam, suffused with concepts from western philosophers such as Hegel and Nietzsche.

Iqbal's thoughts "had a great impact on the young generation of that time."<sup>62</sup> Although Abdur Rahman was not formally introduced to Iqbal until about 1924, he had been inspired to draw and paint from Iqbal's verse as early as 1917. (Chughtai's illustrations of Iqbal's verses are discussed in chapter IV, Islamic Ideals). In an address for the International Congress on Iqbal (1977), Arif Chughtai described the first meeting of poet and artist as one characterized "by lively discussion. [And]... Consequently, other discussions followed."<sup>63</sup> One of their meetings was dedicated to the discussion of "Asrar Hayat," a painting by Chughtai which probably illustrated a verse of Iqbal by the same title.<sup>64</sup> This painting had been exhibited at the Lahore Museum in 1922 and was published in Narang-i-Khaiyal in 1924.<sup>65</sup> Arif Chughtai noted that Iqbal was greatly pleased with the illustration and proposed another project which was grander in scale: "I have written a new book entitled Payam-i-Mashriq,<sup>66</sup> it is a rejoinder to Goethe; in it is a poem on the Birth of Adam, utilize your talents in an attempt to illustrate it for publication."<sup>67</sup> Although a number of sketches from Chughtai's series based on Iqbal's theme, the Birth of Adam, were, according to

Arif Chughtai, "much appreciated by the poet," they have<sup>47</sup> never been published.<sup>68</sup> Other collaborations between painter and poet were proposed, but apparently none reached fruition.

Chughtai continued painting from Iqbal's verses, interpreting themes in a personal way, without consultation from the poet. Other sources provided inspiration for subject matter reflecting a growing literary awareness. For the Wembley Exhibition in 1924, he painted Hindu motifs, Dewadasi and The Puja, a Mughal theme, Chand Sultana, a theme from Persian poetry, The Resting Place, a scene from Leila-Majnun (an ancient Arabic legend of love), and others of a more general nature, Pilgrims, Recollections of the Past, Glimpses of Spring, O Baba, what hast thou lost?, Charm of the East, and The End.<sup>69</sup> Two years later (1926) he began to illustrate the ghazals (traditional Persian style poetry) of Mirza Ghalib, a nineteenth century Mughal poet who had just begun to regain popularity in the Indo-Muslim community.

Credit for the inspiration to turn to Ghalib as a source may be due to Mohammad Din Taseer, one of Dr. Iqbal's most promising literature students. Aside from Abdur Rahim, Chughtai's younger brother, Taseer was described as Chughtai's closest friend. Taseer's interest in Chughtai's art was sincere and his criticism was respected. Ghulam Abbas noted that Taseer had made a deep study of western art.<sup>70</sup>

Sometimes Taseer and Chughtai discussed art and literature on a one-to-one basis, but occasionally they were joined by other friends, writers and intellectuals, who also later became nationally known. Taseer, Petrus Bokhari, Colonel Majid Malik, and Ghulam Abbas were the core of that group.<sup>71</sup> Ghulam Abbas described the time and the mood of those meetings:

I first met Abdur Rahman Chughtai in 1924 or 1925...I was sort of unemployed. Taseer...had passed his M.A. and was doing nothing. So now and then we went in the the early afternoon to Chughtai's place in Chabuk Sawaran. He would come down [from his studio upstairs] with unfinished paintings and work on them as he talked with us...We talked about literature and art and also told jokes.<sup>72</sup>

Most importantly, Ghulam Abbas added that "the scheme for publishing Chughtai's first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (Chughtai's Album) was thought up and finalized during these sittings."<sup>73</sup>

Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, first published in 1928, was a delicately embossed, leather-bound divan of Ghalib (collection of verses by the famous Mughal poet), illustrated by Chughtai's paintings. Each painting was captioned with a verse from one of Ghalib's ghazals. Because some of the paintings do not seem to be illustrative of the accompanying verse, several critics have argued that Chughtai did not paint with any particular verse in mind, he merely matched verses to paintings already completed. Others argued that Chughtai was no more than an illustrator, since he simply painted specific verses from Ghalib's ghazals as manuscript illustrators had done before him.<sup>74</sup>

There is truth to what both critics claim. Some of Chughtai's paintings in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai were painted before the idea of illustrating Ghalib was conceived, other paintings in this same book were painted to coincide with its particular verse. Abdurllah Chaghatai explained how this came to be:

In 1926 Taseer came to Chughtai's house and had a look at his paintings. Most of these had nothing to do with Ghalib's poetry, but Taseer kept on reciting different couplets by Ghalib while viewing them, giving the impression that such and such a couplet would do well in association with such and such a painting.<sup>75</sup>

Ghulam Abbas believed that Chughtai then conceived of the idea for a book and Taseer supported it wholeheartedly.<sup>76</sup> Chughtai approached G. Venkatachalam, art critic and author of several books on Contemporary Indian painting, to secure funding for publication of the book. Through his contacts with important art patrons in India, Venkatachalam was able to persuade Her Highness, the maharooni of Cooch Bihar to contribute between ten to fifteen thousand rupees toward production of the book in return for taking possession of a number of the original paintings.<sup>77</sup>

Abdur Rahman, Abdullah, Abdur Rahim and M. D. Taseer consulted Dr. Allama Iqbal and other scholars for the most authentic rendition of Ghalib's poetry. Taseer selected the paintings, finalized the text, read the proofs and requested Dr. Iqbal to write a foreword.<sup>78</sup> They imported expensive paper and created a typeface for printing the text.<sup>79</sup> A London firm, Herbert Read, was selected to block print the paintings and drawings. There was a boxed edition and a deluxe leather-bound volume, the latter sold for one hundred ten rupees and a standard edition for seventeen rupees. Muraqqa had forty-five illustrations, possibly one-third of which were selected by Taseer; the



remaining two-thirds must have been painted specifically for the book between 1926 and 1928.<sup>80</sup>

Dr. Iqbal wrote the foreword, Dr. James H. Cousins contributed the introduction, and Chughtai wrote a ten page commentary in Urdu. Taseer's name was not mentioned anywhere in the book, nor was Venkatachalam's. Ghulam Abbas called the omission of Taseer a very sad aspect of the affair, considering the time and effort Taseer put in on the book. It was a great disappointment to Taseer's friends, Abbas said, adding, "Taseer never complained about it, but he must have felt very hurt."<sup>81</sup> Abbas wrote that their common friends noticed that the relationship between Taseer and Chughtai seemed to cool after publication in 1928.

On May 22, 1932, Abdur Rahman and his brother Abdullah departed from Bombay, destined for England. They boarded the ship "Mongolia" with Abdullah posing as his brother's valet.<sup>82</sup> Immediately upon reaching London he engaged a tutor to "help make Abdur Rahman proficient in English," because, as Abdullah wrote, "he hardly knew any English."<sup>83</sup> According to Abdullah, the attempt was a failure. "I spent a lot of money, but Abdur Rahman was so lacking in self-confidence, the scheme was abandoned."<sup>84</sup>

The next project, also initiated by Abdullah, was only slightly more successful. He invited Lawrence Binyon, Basil Gray, J.W. Wilkinson, and Professor A. Cresswell to tea. He hoped that they would examine Abdur Rahman's work and discuss its merits. None of the distinguished guests had met either Abdur Rahman or Abdullah prior to this invitation, but they were familiar with Abdur Rahman's work through Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. Chughtai had copies sent to Asian Art historians, art patrons, artists, influential individuals, and art journals in Europe, America and India. In 1928 it had been reviewed by Studio (London), Creative Art (New York), La Renaissance (Paris), Color Magazine (London), and Apollo (London). Rupam (Calcutta) reviewed the publication in 1930 and The Artist (London) in 1931.<sup>85</sup> Since A. Cresswell and Lawrence Binyon acknowledged receipt of this book in personal letters to Chughtai in 1932, along with a host of other individuals, it is reasonable to assume that Basil Gray and J.W. Wilkinson had also been sent copies. Abdullah described the result of his preparations:

These gentlemen turned up on time and stayed with me for a long while, but Abdur Rahman was nowhere to be found. He had slipped away. Dr. Binyon saw his line drawings and bought some for the British Museum. They were all very keen to meet Abdur Rahman but had to go away disappointed.<sup>86</sup>

Abdur Rahman was keenly aware of the advantage in making personal contacts, but he preferred to do it by mail and that responsibility had been gladly borne by his other younger brother, Abdur Rahim.<sup>87</sup> In all probability Abdur Rahman felt that his lack of communication skills in English and his habit of maintaining silence in the midst of perspective buyers might have a negative effect on the purpose of the tea which was to discuss the merit of his work with the hope that one or more of the guests would buy a piece or two or act as references to promote his art in the west. It was common knowledge that whenever someone visited Chughtai's studio to view his paintings, the artist said nothing. He refused to talk about his art except to close friends and family. See chapter VII, The Question of Modernism in Chughtai's Art. On occasion he had been known to leave his studio as the viewing of paintings began and let his brother Rahim carry on.

For the painter (the professional part of Chughtai excluding his social being), this trip to Europe served two purposes: To see and study European art first hand in museums and galleries and learn the art of etching. Both tasks he met face on. Chughtai studied etching under private tutelage<sup>88</sup> in London for an undetermined period of time, surely not more than six months since the entire trip was eight months and the brothers visited other European countries before returning to India. While in London, Chughtai bought the complete file of Studio magazine and spent hours in art museums.<sup>89</sup>

Chughtai wanted to publish an illustrated edition of Iqbal's verse, so the two brothers approached Dr. R. A. Nicholson, Professor of Arabic and Persian at Cambridge University, for help in translating portions of Iqbal's verse into English. Although Chughtai could have painted from the Urdu or Persian verses, English was the respected vernacular of the class of people he wished to appeal to with this book. Those who could afford to buy the book and those culturally inclined would be more impressed by an English version, and he could attract a foreign audience as well. Dr. Nicholson refused and excused himself by saying that it was too complicated a job to translate poetry.<sup>90</sup>

Since Abdullah's brief account of this European trip was the primary source of information, the itinerary and details are not clear. He wrote: "from London we came to Paris and traveled by rail to Berlin, Vienna and Venice from where we boarded a ship for Bombay."<sup>91</sup>

In London Abdur Rahman met Elza Hueffner, a German girl, who became his guide and companion, and together they toured Paris. The two became very close and considered the

possibility of marriage. Elza wanted Abdur Rahman to stay in Europe, but Chughtai knew that the East was his home. There were his roots, his life. He suggested that if she would agree to a trial time period for adjustment in Lahore, they could be united there.<sup>92</sup> Although Abdur Rahman was already married (his wife was in Lahore) such a consideration was not beyond the bounds of orthodox Islamic social behavior. He did, in fact, take a second wife some years later. Elza, however, was not prepared to live in the East, so after they parted they communicated by correspondence for several years.

Chughtai returned to his native city at a time when it was experiencing great revolutionary activity in literature. M.H. Askari described the literary climate of the early thirties and defined Chughtai's position within it:

He was active in the literary circles in Lahore at a time when a movement known by the name of Niazman-e-Lahore was at its peak in the early 'thirties.' This was the time when a group of modern, Western educated Urdu writers and poets of Lahore posed a challenge to those who upheld the traditional purity and chastity of Urdu and treated with contempt any effort at taking liberties with the orthodox syntax or grammar of the language.<sup>93</sup>

Most prominent of this group were Professor Ahmed Shah Bokhari, Patras Abdul Majeed Salik, Majeed Malik, Hari Chand Akhtar, Hafeez Jullundri and Mohammad Din Taseer. These were Chughtai's associates and several among them his closest companions. They were the young revolutionaries in Urdu literature and the painter "took pride in associating himself with this movement."<sup>94</sup>

Chughtai's literary fervor of the early 1930s was not the result of a fad. He had a passion for writing as a youth and continued writing and publishing until he died. In a letter to Saleem Akhtar, Chughtai reviewed his own literary accomplishments and aspirations and credited Taseer and his other literary friends for instilling in him the dedication to write:

My friendship with literature had been a craze...that haunted me much before I became an artist. It had a link to my friendship with Dr. Taseer, Petrus Bokhari, Hafiz Jullundri, Sufi Tabassum and Chiragh Hassan Hasrat and my craze turned into madness...Before 1917 I had been writing short stories and plays too...Lagan and Kajal, two collections of short stories were

written and published before partition ...of the short stories and essays which I've written not even one-;forth could appear as published works for the simple reason that I became a slave to my art at the same time...Nagoosh is publishing two collections of my short stories, Nia Mulk-Nia Falk and Hanjan, the work of which is presently interrupted due to my illness.<sup>95</sup>

Chughtai mentions several other short stories written after partition, a long story from 1929, and added that his new collections each contain twenty-one short stories.<sup>96</sup> In addition to fiction, the artist wrote and published non-fiction. House of Taimur, a monograph on Mughal painting, was published in English in 1972, "Painters of Lahore," an article on Behzad, and several essays in Urdu on Islamic architecture were published locally.<sup>97</sup>

The artist read widely with an enthusiasm equal to that of his writing. At their first meeting, Chughtai impressed Saleem Akhtar with the breadth of his reading by commenting on a short story written by the latter concerning homosexuality. To Akhtar's question, "How do you spare time?" Chughtai replied "I cannot paint all the time so most of the time is spent in study."<sup>98</sup> That the reader should not suspect Chughtai had primed himself to meet Akhtar by singling out that author's writing, the latter added, "After a little discussion, I realized that Chughtai had up-to-date knowledge about the writing of every mentionable writer."<sup>99</sup>

Chughtai's involvement in scholarly writing, i.e., art criticism and art history, suggests that he was also knowledgeable in world art. Jalaluddin Ahmad, among others, commented on Chughtai's immense library. In an interview, Ahmad remarked that Chughtai was a voracious reader, kept his huge library up to date, and was aware of what was happening in art and literature.<sup>100</sup> In a dialogue with Agha Hamid (see note 50), Ghulam Abbas pointed out that "we were [in the 1920s and 1930s], all of us, very fond of romantic literature and greatly impressed by Oscar Wilde, Lord Dunsany and Theophile Gautier. Chughtai's own writings were in a similar vein."<sup>101</sup>

Agha Hamid, a close friend and great admirer of Chughtai's art, read much of Chughtai's writing and did not think him able to express himself clearly. Hamid explained that "as a painter, Chughtai's imagination is basically visual and the images and figures which throng his imagination are static."<sup>102</sup> He felt that compared to the figures and images of a poet's mind, which produce dynamic images through the use of words, Chughtai's visual-static predisposition does not transfer easily to words. He

further stated "That's why one gets the feeling of inertia while reading Chughtai's stories." Ghulam Abbas further described Chughtai's imagination as being so fertile that he could "think up strange and bizarre things... but his writings are vastly inferior to his paintings."<sup>104</sup> The majority of opinions affirm that Chughtai was far more talented as a painter than as a writer. Chughtai, on the other hand, professed the utmost confidence in his own writing. He wrote prose poems with great feeling and read them aloud to his circle of close friends. Ghulam Abbas remembered that he said: "If I were not a great painter, I would have become a great writer."<sup>105</sup>

The concern here is not to evaluate the quality of his writing, but merely to note that Chughtai was an intellectually active individual with a broad range of serious artistic pursuits. Considering Chughtai's strong drive to write and publish and his desire to promote other painters in the Punjab School (under his leadership), it's not surprising that he conceived the idea of bringing out a literary-art journal of his own. Abdullah added that the initial impulse was due to the "many bitter experiences while dealing with the publishers and editors of various magazines... Taseer encouraged him and said that with a magazine of their own they would be able to write as they pleased and reproduce whatever paintings they liked."<sup>106</sup>

As a result, the first issue of Caravan was published by the Jahangir Book Club in 1933, edited by Taseer, with Abdur Rahim Chughtai as publisher. It was a group effort, but the question of Abdur Rahman's involvement in the first issue is unclear. Since Chughtai did not arrive back in Lahore until January of 1933, he may have had little to do with planning or publishing the first issue. The editor's notes, which briefly discuss the contents, also paraphrased a letter by Chughtai sent from Europe that suggest he had not returned at the time the journal was in press. The editorial stated that "after staying in England and France, Chughtai is now living in Italy."<sup>107</sup> Within Caravan's 314 pages, Chughtai is represented by two poems, "Sagar" on page 232 and another (I don't have the title) on page 156, and a short story, "Muraqqa." Chughtai's art work is noticeably absent except for a single illustration that accompanied a story co-authored by M.H. Bokhari and Budduddin Badar. In addition, Caravan featured a variety of stories, essays and poems of particular interest to the painter, such as "Behzad" by Abdullah Chaghatai, "Art" by William Blake, "A Perfect Painter" by an anonymous Hindu artist, "Modern Indian Painting" by Mirza Hassan Askari, "Criticism on Painting" by Mian Abdul Rafi, "Art" by Whistler, and notes on painting from the writing of Cezanne.<sup>108</sup>

Caravan was originally conceived as a monthly, but as Arif explained, funds could not be raised, so it was made an annual with a different editor each year.<sup>109</sup> Majid Malik edited the second and final issue in 1934. Imtiaz Ali Taj was to have edited the third issue, but the journal was discontinued due to financial reasons.<sup>110</sup> Chughtai's contributions to the second (1934) issue were more extensive than the first, suggesting he played a role in planning and publishing this issue. Again he was featured in the editorial, probably written by the new editor, Majid Malik. It is Chughtai's literary contributions that Malik addressed first:

Chughtai keeps poetic qualities and imagination as a painter under control with his artistic accomplishment and creates a rare thing out of their combination. But because he has not that firm control in short story writing, he becomes helpless before his imagination and one suspects that imagination is not subservient to Chughtai, rather Chughtai is subservient to his imagination.<sup>111</sup>

Chughtai's art contributions to the current journal were also acknowledged in the editorial: Two paintings, Soz o Sauz (suffer and endure) corresponded to the verses of Iqbal which introduced this issue of Caravan. There were at least four versions of Soz o Sauz and Malik claimed that this one is "the latest and best," then added "But the painter himself is not satisfied with it" since he feels that this painting, which belongs to his previous style, "does not reflect the artistic perfection of which he thinks he is capable now."<sup>112</sup>

Chughtai's's personalized, innovative hashia borders (intricate linear designs which frame the text) were a decorative addition to many pages in the second issue of Caravan (Figs. 4, 5, 6). Chughtai's hashia borders were unique. He used figures in a manner similar to borders of seventeenth century Mughal miniature paintings and placed them upon traditional nagash panels (Fig. 7). Occasionally he varied the style and designed a more traditional hashia motif (Fig. 8). Other borders appear to have no precedence in Persian, Turkish, or Mughal manuscripts (Figs. 9, 10, 11).

In addition to two paintings, an etching and frontispiece by Chughtai, two paintings by Ashgar and one by Inayat Ullah were reproduced in the second and final issue of Caravan. The paintings by Ashgar and Inayat Ullah were identical in style to the work of Abdur Rahman. In fact, Ashgar's landscape entitled Night of Shiraz (Fig. 73), was the exact replica of a small painting in a private

many of the plates are identical in both volumes. Since his style was changing, he may have felt compelled to redo those paintings in the first version which were no longer pleasing to him and include some new paintings. If the remainder of the paintings from the first Naqsha were no longer in his possession, having been sold or otherwise disposed of, he may have chosen those which he could repaint from the original drawings. In this way similitude to the original Naqsha-i-Chughtai would be maintained.

By 1935 Chughtai had achieved considerable success and recognition as an artist. "Now that Abdur Rahman had become famous as a painter, we decided to go on a tour," explained Abdullah. "First we went to Hyderabad, Deccan, then we visited Ajanta. From there we proceeded to Benaras and Calcutta."<sup>115</sup> The route Abdullah has described is highly inefficient in terms of miles and time. A much more efficient plan for a business or pleasure trip would have been either Lahore, Ajanta, Hyderabad, Calcutta, Benaras, Lahore, or Lahore, Benaras, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Ajanta, Lahore. (see maps next page) Even taking into account that time or money were not important considerations for the two, the criss-crossed route seems senseless. There are several plausible explanations. First, it is conceivable the pair had not intended to visit Calcutta, but upon hearing that the Jubilee of Tagore, which included a comprehensive exhibition of the members of the Oriental Art Society, was in progress or about to begin in Calcutta, they added that city to their itinerary. Second, it is possible that Abdullah remembered the order incorrectly when he wrote this reference about the tour forty years later. A third possibility suggests business led the two to Hyderabad first.

Hyderabad state was ruled by the wealthiest Muslim aristocracy in the world, and one well-known to favor the arts. Sir Akbar Hydari, prime minister for the Nizam of Hyderabad, was so impressed with the illustrations in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai he requested copies for some of the government buildings in Hyderabad.<sup>116</sup> Mrs. Mariam Hatim Tyabji, daughter of Sir Akbar Hydari, has an early painting by Chughtai and remembered others in her father's house from about 1918. "We had other Chughtai paintings," she said, "but they are gone now."<sup>117</sup> This is some indication that Chughtai already had official recognition in Hyderabad, and there was an expressed interest in acquiring his art.

Sometime before 1944, a number of Chughtai's paintings had been placed in storage in a Hyderabad art gallery.<sup>118</sup> This trip may have related to the purchase of those paintings. If the Chughtai brothers were carrying paintings with them, it is reasonable they should want to

collection in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The Rawalpindi painting, though unsigned, was presented to the owner with the understanding that it had been painted by Abdur Rahman. The existence of these copies lends further credence to the assumption that Chughtai was attempting to foster the image of a Punjab School of painting under his leadership.

If the Punjab School of painting fell short of national recognition, Chughtai did not. January first, 1934, the Viceroy and Governor General, (Lord Willingdon) on behalf of the government of British India, awarded Chughtai the title of Khan Bahadur (Fig. 12), an honor second only to that of knighthood. It was rumored that Chughtai had been nominated for knighthood, but the announcement was never made public.

Musa Kalim explained why the award was withheld.

In 1934 Lord Halifax, considering the reputation, art, and individuality of Chughtai, had proposed for him the title of Sir. But with the financial position and the condition of his residence at that time, the title of Khan Bahadur was bestowed on him.<sup>113</sup>

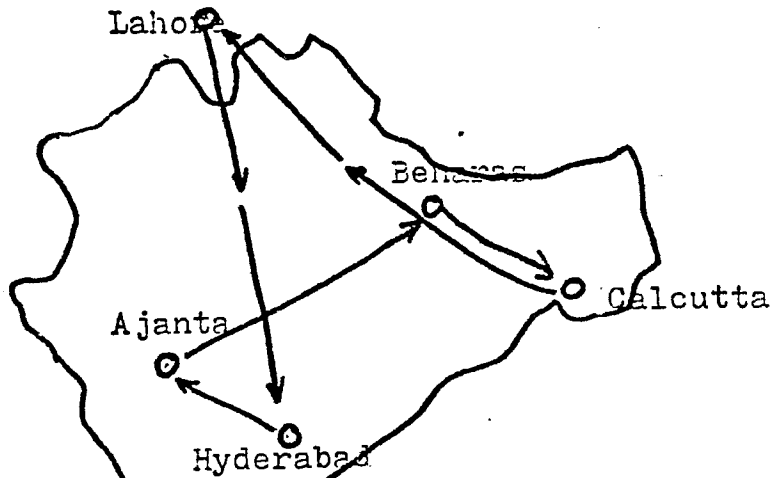
Chughtai must have been greatly disappointed, but his productivity was not inhibited. In that same year (1934), he brought out another illustrated divan of Ghalib, which he titled Naqsha-i-Chughtai (art work of Chughtai). The text was the same as that of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, but the illustrations were different. Naqsha-i-Chughtai was smaller and less lavish than Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. It was less expensive than the latter and reportedly sold out completely. Because of its popularity, Naqsha-i-Chughtai was published again some years later.<sup>114</sup> A later edition (1956) in my possession, aroused my curiosity because four of the paintings were nearly exact copies from the first edition, reworked with barely perceptible changes. The format of my edition (title, text and cover) was the same as that of the original, though some paintings were obviously versions of the earlier works and a few others were completely different.

It is reasonable that Chughtai would have wanted to update this later version with new and modified illustrations, but it is curious that he should also include paintings which were nearly exact copies from the first edition. The copies are so close to the originals that one wonders why he didn't use the original paintings. I can only guess at the reason.

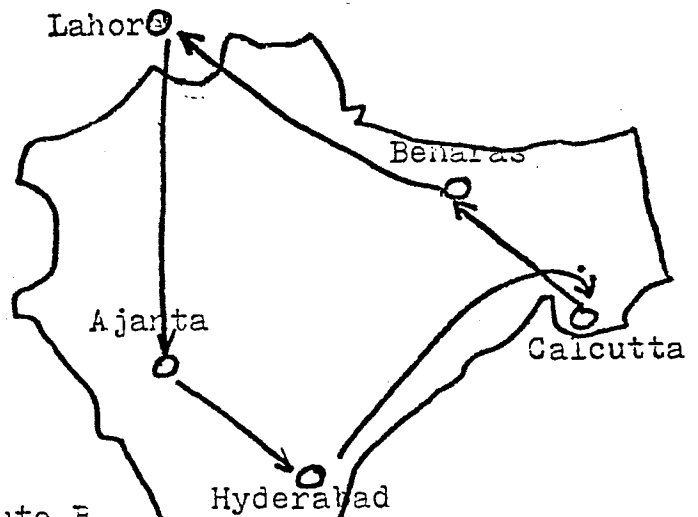
Public demand for Naqsha-i-Chughtai may have been such that Chughtai did not want the later edition to appear radically different from the original version, and indeed



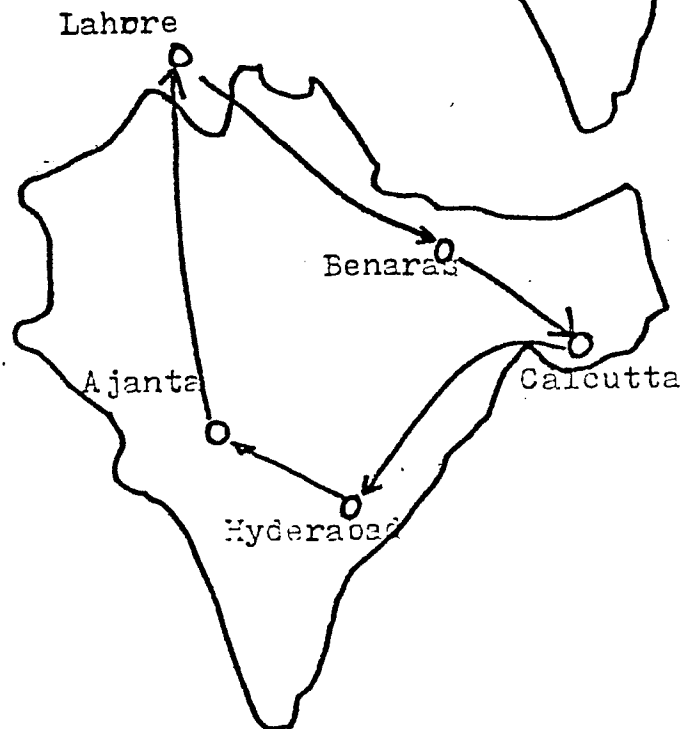
Route actually taken



More efficient route A



More efficient route B



proceed directly to Hyderabad. Even if they were not in possession of the art works, they may have had an official appointment at a specified time. Presently museums in the city of Hyderabad house fifty paintings by Chughtai. The State Archaeological Museum has thirty-six watercolors on permanent display and Salar Jung Museum has fourteen.<sup>119</sup>

According to Abdullah, the two visited Ajanta after leaving Hyderabad. Chughtai was deeply impressed by the sublime beauty of the frescoes in the viharas and chaitya halls of Ajanta. In Amle Chughtai, he expressed his admiration: "If you examine Ajanta and the temples of the far east, you find in them the most rare and invaluable specimens of art. One becomes aware of new horizons in the realm of art upon seeing these places."<sup>120</sup> He attributed the truly superior quality of their artistic expression to the compelling religiosity of the Buddhists. "Those artists, like the Christian artists, projected the greatness of Buddha through the glorification of art and they could not have established such greatness in art without motivation through their religious beliefs. Look at these works from any angle and you will see smiling faces which leads to the conclusion that only strong commitment and belief could create such masterpieces."<sup>121</sup> Chughtai's sympathy for, and understanding of Buddhism is apparent in his appreciation of these frescoes. "What you see is beyond one's prior imagination and it stretches one's knowledge of the history of that art. These caves prove that the objective of Buddha's message was attainment of ahimsa [non-violence], shanti [self-abstinence], and tapas [giving up attachments], in order to realize real peace of life."<sup>122</sup> More specifically, Chughtai speculates with honest affection why the Buddha image is such a powerful icon. "[To obtain inner peace] Buddha meditated on the sorrows and woes of life under the banyan (bodhi) tree and became the savior of humanity. He achieved immortal success in his mission. His smiling lips and dark eyes would keep on giving life and inspiration to his followers for all time."<sup>123</sup>

Chughtai, himself, was artistically inspired by the Buddha image and the didactic frescoes at Ajanta. Although it is difficult to generalize about the stylistic influence of Ajanta upon his work, he did paint a number of motifs focusing on the image of Buddha. One painting in particular, that of Buddhist monks (Fig. 169), seems to emulate the style of Ajanta.

Abdullah did not suggest any reason for visiting Benaras, but their journey must have been arranged so that they would arrive in Calcutta during the Jubilee of Tagore. The art exhibition of the Oriental Art Society held in conjunction with the Jubilee would have been of particular

interest to Abdur Rahman. It was a rare opportunity to see the paintings of the Bengal School artists in one place at one time. Abdullah wrote that Abdur Rahman purchased a painting by Bireswar Sen from the exhibition.<sup>124</sup> Sen's style and composition of the 1920s and 1930s was remarkably similar to that of Abdur Rahman's. His subject matter was not decisively Hindu, unlike most of the other paintings in the Bengal School tradition. His themes were often generic in nature, and the garments of his figures were more typically Muslim than Hindu. Arif Chughtai, however, insisted that "Chughtai never bought a Bishwar Sen in his whole life," and attributed the misinformation to the prejudice of Abdullah. The former added that "Bireswar Sen was a proclaimed follower of the Chughtai School of art and that is why his works look like those of Chughtai."<sup>125</sup> Arif Chughtai confirmed that the artist did attend the Tagore Jubilee and "did buy a work indirectly through Dr. Taseer. The work is a still life of plants and was made by a Bengali girl student."<sup>126</sup>

Shortly after the brothers returned to Lahore, they again prepared to travel. This time, however, they went in opposite directions. Abdullah returned to Hyderabad, Deccan (the purpose was not explained), and mid-year of 1936 Chughtai embarked upon his second trip to Europe.<sup>127</sup> Elsa Hueffner and her sister, Hanna, met Chughtai upon his arrival in Marseilles and accompanied the artist to London. The sisters then "disappear," wrote Arif Chughtai, who surmised that, "Probably she [Elsa Hueffner] loved Chughtai too much to bear the cost of such meetings."<sup>128</sup>

Chughtai's two main goals in returning to Europe were to take further instruction in etching and visit art museums, but he took along some of his paintings, expecting they might be selected for the 179th exhibition (1937) of the Royal Academy of Art in London. Of the eighteen thousand paintings presented for jury "only a few passed muster."<sup>129</sup> Two of Chughtai's paintings, Shah Jahan and A Mughal Princess were accepted for the show. Abdullah wrote that Abdur Rahman was probably the first non-European to be so honored, but unfortunately, due to lack of space, only A Mughal Princess was actually hung at the exhibition.

Chughtai applied for admission to the School of Photo Engraving, London County Council, and was accepted for the term which began 9-4, 1937 and extended until Easter, 1937.<sup>130</sup> Whatever the acceptance standards were for that year, they did not pose a threat to Chughtai's admission, for "Sir Frank Short, famous etcher on the School's board,

saw the drawings of the artist and affirmed that a student of such caliber need no drawing lessons and could join the etching classes then and there."<sup>131</sup>

If Chughtai's enthusiasm, skill, and success in etching could be calibrated to measure the value of the time he spent at the School of Photo Engraving, then every minute must have been precious. Etching rivaled, if not equalled, his attention to painting for several years following his return to Lahore. After he had perfected the techniques of aquatint and etching, he continued making new plates in addition to providing his public with added editions of sold-out prints. He revised, updated, and improved upon his prints, as was also his custom with his watercolors. His aquatints and etchings are widely acclaimed. Some critics believe them to be superior to his watercolor paintings, and there is general acceptance among Indian critics familiar with his talent that he is the most accomplished printmaker in twentieth century India.<sup>132</sup>

Before returning to Lahore, Chughtai visited other cities in Europe. The etchings of Rembrandt so consumed his attention that he made a special trip to Holland to view the master's home and work. In Germany, Chughtai was granted a five minute audience with Adolph Hitler, arranged by Agnes Werner, a German intelligence officer.<sup>133</sup> If the artist divulged the content of their discussion, the information has not been made public.

Abdur Rahman met his brother Abdullah in Paris, where the latter was finishing his dissertation on the Taj Mahal. It was a rare reunion, as Abdullah had separated himself from his immediate relatives in 1935 due to "family circumstances and Abdur Rahman's behavior."<sup>134</sup> Neither of the brothers revealed the factors behind the family split which I believe must have stemmed from basic personality differences.<sup>135</sup> Abdur Rahman had earlier allied himself almost inseparably with Abdur Rahim, his other younger brother, perhaps to the exclusion of Abdullah.

Upon completion of his doctorate at the University of Paris in 1939, Abdullah moved to Poona, India, having accepted a position as instructor at Deccan College. Abdullah did not learn of his brother's second marriage until he returned to Lahore shortly after partition in 1947. He wrote that "during my eight years at Poona we never wrote to each other and I don't know how the fiasco of Abdur Rahman's second marriage was settled."<sup>136</sup> Chughtai's first marriage to Wazir-un-Nissa in 1910 remained a childless union. Abdur Rahman wanted an heir, and with persuasion by his wife, the artist agreed to take a second spouse. In 1938, Chughtai married Khadijah, a girl from Rawalpindi. Friends who had arranged the union

misrepresented the appearance of this girl, knowing that the couple could not see one another face to face until after the ceremony.<sup>137</sup> Chughtai was not pleased with the choice that had been made for him and according to Arif Chughtai "when Chughtai looked at the girl for the first time, he found her too ugly for his aesthetic taste."<sup>138</sup> The marriage was annulled immediately. Arif Chughtai further explained that:

Although the lady was highly educated, she was not beautiful and there were lots of artificial accompaniment to her face. What revolted the artist most was that she had artificial teeth and was cleaning her denture when the artist went to see her. Because Chughtai was a born lover of beauty and revelled in aesthetics, it was too much for him to bear.<sup>139</sup>

In 1937 or 1938, Chughtai and his family moved from Coocha Chabuk Sawaran, a quarter inside the old walled city, to their present home on Ravi Road in Lahore. Arif Chughtai explained that the artist needed a quiet, secluded place to work where he would not be disturbed by gregarious neighbors and curiosity seekers. Chabuk Sawaran was crowded, full of life, noise, and animated activity. There was little privacy within its walls for one who wanted to separate himself from the 'vulgarity' of existence.<sup>140</sup> Ravi Road, outside the old city walls, was not far away but lay in an area free from the noise and intense congestion of Chabuk Sawaran. The family still maintained the old residence, which became the occasional haunt for Abdur Rahman, his brother Rahim, and a few friends. Loneliness and habit drew them back there to socialize and paint even though Chughtai found peace of mind in his second floor studio in the new residence at Ravi Road.

From the mid 1930s on, Chughtai had become so involved in his own artistic activities that he had little time for social amenities. Acquaintances consistently mentioned the inaccessibility of the artist.<sup>141</sup> It is clear that he was a man as much involved with art as humanly possible. Chughtai defined that dedication as love and duty:

I can confidently claim that I am not only inclined towards or interested in art; I am in love with art. I have developed a full artistic consciousness and realized my duty as an artist. I have felt man's acute need for art.<sup>142</sup>

In addition to full concentration on painting, etching, writing short stories, art criticism, and art historical sketches, the artist was designing dust jackets and

illustrations for books. His illustrations for Anarkali by Imtiaz Ali Taj, and Safar by S.A. Rahman, former Chief Justice of Lahore High Court, are two of these.<sup>143</sup> During a 1978 interview, Dr. Ibdad Brelvi remarked that Chughtai designed book covers for most all the well-known Urdu poets.<sup>144</sup> "Everyone who wrote a book in those days," Faiz Ahmad Faiz was quoted, referring to the late 1940s, "had the cover made by Chughtai."<sup>145</sup> He designed jackets for unknown writers as well and apparently never accepted remuneration for them.<sup>146</sup> Chughtai's book covers are as unique and stylized as his paintings and as easily distinguishable; nevertheless, he refused to sign them. "After doing those covers he wouldn't take credit for them or even sign his name," Dr. Brelvi commented emotionally and suggested, "Perhaps that was because he was so very proud of his art, and his painting was his main field."<sup>147</sup> Agha Babur thought that designing dust jackets was 'recreation' for Chughtai, an opinion also held by the artist's son.<sup>148</sup> There may, however, have been a more serious motive, considering Chughtai's intense desire to uphold the Islamic heritage and foster its positive values. In a letter to Saleem Akhtar, he intimated that view: "You know that every cover design of a literary book and magazine has the duty to represent our cultural values."<sup>149</sup>

Chughtai became so well-known and admired as a cover designer that he was invited to design the dust jacket for the memoirs of Jacqueline Kennedy, then wife of John F. Kennedy, President of the United States (Fig. 13), when her book was translated into Urdu.<sup>150</sup> He received a note of appreciation from the first lady for the cover design (Fig. 14).

Toward the middle of the 1930s Chughtai stopped competing in Indian art exhibitions. His art was made available to the public through one-man shows or when he was a guest exhibitor in local and regional exhibitions. Sometimes Chughtai acted as judge or committee person for art shows, local and national, large and small. There was no longer any need for him to compete. His reputation was well-established and he wished to give younger artists a chance to succeed.<sup>151</sup> The energy and expense required for competition was instead directed toward publication of a third book, Chughtai's Paintings. First published in 1935, another version (same title) was available in 1940, and a third edition was put on the market in 1970. There were some variations from one to the next. The last edition, printed by Print Printo Press, Ravi Road, Lahore, was basically a picture-book with forty-one color plates and four black and white reproductions. Unlike Muraqqa-i-Chughtai and Naqsha-i-Chughtai, there was no text, although Dr. James H. Cousin's 1928 Introduction for Muraqqa-i-Chughtai was reprinted verbatim as a Foreword and Mrs.

Siraj-ud-din, a Pakistani cultural and literary figure, wrote an introduction and critical annotations for each plate. Since these were in English, it is apparent that the book was intended for an audience that had no knowledge of Urdu or Persian. All of the plates in the 1970 edition had been published previously; more than half were over ten years old even at the time of the first publication (1935). Twenty-one of the plates had been used in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, eight appeared in Naqsha-i-Chughtai; the remainder had been published in Caravan (1933-34) and other Indian journals. Only two plates were recent paintings, but it was an attractive book and considering the number of reprintings must have been quite popular.

By the mid 1940s, Chughtai had published three books and several reprints of each and he decided to expand his talents to their fullest by making use of the motion picture medium. He wrote a number of movie scripts, and, sometime around 1944, began filming a motion picture of his own creation entitled Butkada (the Idol Worshipper).<sup>152</sup> Since he wanted to be in control of the entire production, he secured financial backing and purchased all the necessary equipment. Abdullah acquired the license.<sup>153</sup>

Cinema production was not new in Lahore. Silent films were made there in the 1920s, and when sound came in the 1930s, the industry expanded and even drew some of the celebrities from Bombay. Writers, painters, and dramatists were attracted by its unlimited possibilities and casually made use of it. The personalities in Pakistani cinema including producers, directors, actors and actresses, were an insular group with financial independence, who often established life-styles that were not in keeping with middle-class Muslim values. Owing to the system of pardah (seclusion of women), very few women were able to work, and not more than a few occupations were culturally acceptable for them. It is not surprising that actresses, who freely showed their faces on the screen and sang and danced for millions of viewers, were perceived as a special class of prostitutes. (See note 159) Actors were similarly regarded as 'free souls' or eccentric individuals.

Chughtai wanted to produce a film which would dispel these prejudices and bring respect to the industry. He sought out reputable, educated people for his movie; he was not interested in hiring professional actors. Majid al-Makky, a relative by marriage and neighbor of the Chughtai family, was the director.<sup>154</sup> Dr. Mohammad Ajmal, presently director of the National Institute of Psychology (1978) and by the mid 1940s already a man of many accomplishments and much respect, was persuaded to play the lead. Dr. Ajmal was at that time employed as instructor of Psychology at Government College in Lahore; he was thoroughly literate

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and articulate but certainly no actor. He was enticed into accepting the lead by the promise that he would receive a sum of money which would allow him to study at Cambridge.

Affectionately, Ajmal recalled that "Abdur Rahman was a man of intense enthusiasms...We filmed almost every day for two months, working very hard."<sup>155</sup> Almost every evening al-Makky, Ajmal, Abdur Rahman, and Abdur Rahim would go to a movie for diversion. Ajmal said they usually saw American films, since native films were too long. Abdur Rahman was enchanted with Betty Grable.<sup>156</sup>

We always took a tonga [horse-drawn cart] to the cinema. Abdur Rahman wanted to sit up front with the tonga wallah [driver], not in the back with Majid, myself, and Abdur Rahim. He was a great talker and talked with his entire body. I would watch them talking. His hands and body expressed his whole being.<sup>157</sup>

Unfortunately, the movie was never completed by Abdur Rahman; it was taken over by another producer. "He [Chughtail] wanted to do it all, but certain difficulties arose that were beyond his control."<sup>158</sup> Ajmal, reluctant to explain the details of the failure or unaware of them himself, hinted to me that the problem concerned the financier and the producer.

Khawaja Shahid Hosain, Managing Director of the National Film Development Corporation, explained that a strong movement of Muslim revivalism in the 1940s fostered by politicians lobbying for the creation of Pakistan, hindered the progress of local cinema, which was approaching the status of social respectability.

The perception of the [cinema] artist as court jester and brothel-keeper once more came to the fore: only writers were partially exempt. While directors like M.A. Ahmad and Shaukat Hussain Rizivi worked and were respected in Bombay, cinema in Lahore in 1947 was a profit-oriented industry, untouched by the social realism in Calcutta films.<sup>159</sup>

An eventual clash between Muslim extremists and the cinema industry, which had catered to the banal tastes of an uneducated audience, resulted in the mass exodus of producers, directors, actors, and technicians to Bombay and Calcutta. Four of the six Lahore studios were burnt or looted and "the small Lahore industry ground to a halt."<sup>160</sup>

The Lahore film industry did eventually recover, but the prevailing circumstances of the mid 1940s surely played



a part in Chughtai's decision to abandon the project. "It's too bad." Ajmal conceded. "It would have been a good film with Chughtai's genius behind it. Abdur Rahman was terribly disappointed."<sup>161</sup>

Chughtai had hoped to produce at least two other movies. One of them, which focused on the Taj Mahal, was to be entitled Daba or Sebrbeen, however, I do not know what was meant by these two titles. The significance of this film was the perspective it adopted, regarding the Taj from an Oriental viewpoint rather than romantic European. Tunda Channa (Cool Shade) was the title of a third script for a Punjabi movie.<sup>162</sup> Although no more is known about the nature or fate of these scripts, it is significant to note that Chughtai was serious about film production.

At about the same time that he was filming Butkada (1944), Chughtai married again, once more at the insistence of his first wife. Kishwar Ara, who belonged to an old Kashmiri household, became his new wife in a ceremony at Amritsar (Fig. 15), about thirty miles from Lahore. A daughter, Mussarat Jehan Ara, was born in 1946, and in 1949 they had a son, whom Chughtai named Arif Rahman. After waiting many years the artist at last had a family of his own, which Arif Chughtai contended "must have had a very profound effect on him."<sup>163</sup> Considering the emphasis placed upon family life by traditional Muslim society, it is understandable that in his joy Chughtai would have given his first-born the name Mussarat which translates to (happiness).<sup>164</sup>

Although Chughtai waited thirty-three years for the personal fulfillment of having children, the following year, 1947, brought fulfillment of a dream for many Indians that was more than ninety years in the making.<sup>165</sup> The independence of Hindustan (and simultaneous partition of the subcontinent) was recognized on August 14, 1947. For the masses, however, the tumultuous results of Indian Independence provided neither a redemption nor a new freedom. A hundred thousand or more Indian Muslims migrated to East and West Pakistan, fearing unfair treatment in India under Hindu majority rule.<sup>166</sup> In a similar manner, Hindus fled from Muslim-dominated East and West Pakistan to India. Unmitigated suffering, death, and destruction were undeniable realities resulting from the political turmoil which affected over four million persons in the subcontinent. Within a few days after the proclamation the old city of Lahore was in flames, and communal riots spread throughout the entire subcontinent.

Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims attacked one another in murderous frenzy, in what Chughtai described in a letter to Basil Gray (dated Oct. 11, 1947) as "a plight in our midst,

the like of which I think was never experienced by any nation during any period of the whole history of mankind."<sup>167</sup> Chughtai was deeply aggrieved by the senseless slaughter of Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims, who had all once been fellow Indians. In the same letter, Chughtai showed a rare outburst of accusation, condemning the National Congress for its "alarming indifference to shameful atrocities that no civilized government would ever tolerate."<sup>168</sup>

My heart is bleeding with pain and sorrow for the fate of my people. While I am writing you this letter, a big column, not of living human beings but a huge caravan of moving skeletons, is passing my door. Almost all of them are in tatters, torn by hunger and suffering. They're coming from the land of fear and death after having seen and experienced unheard of miseries and hardships. What's life if there is nothing else left to be seen? Where is the use of setting up rich treasures of art and culture when we are actually seeing man stooping so low that humanity itself feels ashamed of his deeds?<sup>169</sup>

Chughtai's poignant message carried double meaning. By recording his anger directed toward the Indian government and describing the misery he saw, he vented personal frustration. Concomitantly he justified his reluctance to send paintings to England for an important exhibition sponsored by the Royal Art Society, explaining to Basil Gray:

Owing to the disturbance in the province, it would not be possible for me to get the paintings selected by you framed...It is very sad that your letter reached me so late and under the present circumstances, I don't think it is safe to send them over to you even by air. I am asking for an early passage and if I could manage to get it, I shall definitely bring all of them along with me.<sup>170</sup>

However, it is doubtful that Chughtai had any intention of entering paintings in the Royal Art Society Exhibition that year. He apparently feared that with the chaos of partition and the subcontinent's separation from England, the paintings might never find their way back to Lahore.

A conflict of interests might also have drawn the artist's attention away from the Royal Society Exhibition, since he had just returned from more than a month in Hyderabad, India. A comprehensive exhibition of his paintings had been held there during the summer. Fremi

Brehmenschah, then a student at the Fine Arts College in Hyderabad, went to see his exhibition daily. Miss Brehmenschah became acquainted with Chughtai and met him several times during his stay in Hyderabad to discuss techniques of watercolor painting and art in general. She noted that "he came to my college and demonstrated his wash style for us. He was already very famous here, and his paintings were marked at three thousand rupees each."<sup>171</sup> Jagdish Mittal added that several local artists began copying Chughtai's style after the exhibition, but their enthusiasm was not long-lived.<sup>172</sup> Fremi Brehmenschah remembered that Chughtai was in Hyderabad a month or longer.<sup>173</sup> During that time the government bought many of his paintings, "but then the government changed [partition] and he wasn't properly paid. He was very sad that India had been divided."<sup>174</sup>

In the same year as the Hyderabad exhibition, 1947, the last major art exhibition of united India, the Inter-Asian Art Exhibition, was held in New Delhi.<sup>175</sup> Preparations for this exhibition may have competed with the Royal Art Society Exhibition for Chughtai's attention since he had an important position as one of the vice presidents in the Delhi Exhibition Working Committee. It was to be a prestigious affair---Her Excellency, the Viscountess Wavell (wife of Lord Wavell, Viceroy of India until March 1947) was patroness-in-chief, and Dr. Abanindranath Tagore was president of the Working Committee. Nandalal Bose, D.P. Roy Choudhury, Asit Kumar Haldar, Barada Ukil, J.A. Lalkara, R.M. Raval, Nicholas Roerich, L.M. Sen, and Rathindranath Tagore were also named to the same committee as Chughtai. The thirty-five page catalogue featured eight reproductions. Chughtai's line drawing, The Minstrel, was among those in the catalogue.<sup>176</sup> The Minstrel and another of his works, Raj Nartaki, were on loan for the exhibition from the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.<sup>177</sup> This exhibition probably marked the last co-operative artistic effort among Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh, before partition divided the subcontinent.

Nevertheless, within a few years after partition Pakistan was functioning as a young independent nation, and though it faced innumerable problems, the force of patriotism was strong. Visual manifestation of civic progress was one means employed by the government to further encourage the spirit of nationalism and uplift Pakistan's morale. The first series of Pakistan's own postage stamps were of architectural landmarks, the only exception being a crescent and star motif with leaf pattern in the Saracenic style designed by A.R. Chughtai (Fig. 16).<sup>178</sup> Chughtai produced a number of stamps for Pakistan; many won international postal awards and public acclaim. On request of the new government, he submitted several

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designs for the national flag. However, they were too ornate for the practical-minded committee and consequently rejected.<sup>179</sup> Other designs by the artist were modified and used for Pakistani coins.<sup>180</sup> A crescent and star design by Chughtai was adopted as the official letterhead-insignia by the government. Pakistan Radio and Pakistan Television still use, as of 1978, the insignias he designed for them.

The inauguration of the Pakistan Arts Council of Lahore (1949) commenced with a major showing of Chughtai's art. It was an unusually large show (194 paintings, drawings, etchings, and aquatints). S.A. Rahman, first president of the arts council, explained in the foreword to the catalogue that Chughtai "intended to hold a full exhibition at a later date, in which he wanted to include his latest work," but in response to repeated requests by the committee of the newly-formed arts council, "Chughtai agreed that he should exhibit his paintings at the opening ceremony of the arts council."<sup>181</sup>

M.D. Taseer, whose close friendship with Chughtai had been reestablished after the Muraqqa affair (see p. 49), commented in the introduction to the catalogue: "Never before in our life-time has there been such a display of significant artistic production by one artist."<sup>182</sup> Chughtai's style, subject matter, and technique were succinctly but effectively defined and evaluated by Taseer in his three and a half page introduction. He perceptively recognized one of Chughtai's more important contributions to painting in the Islamic world: "He has left behind the phase of 'illustrativeness' which has been the main weakness of our contemporary arts and is genuinely creative."<sup>183</sup> Finally Taseer concluded that "whichever medium he used [watercolor, brush-line, pencil, etching, or aquatint] he remains what he is, an oriental painter."<sup>184</sup>

Malik Shams seven page essay comprised the remainder of the catalogue. Using generalizations, Shams commended the artist for "achievements that sound like a legend" and for which "Chughtai had to make many sacrifices; to pass through many difficulties; and to face many hardships."<sup>185</sup> Shams attempted to defend Chughtai's conceptual approach to painting because he felt that "some exponents of the modern movement in the art of painting" have over stressed their demand "to free art from the tyranny of anecdotage or story appeal."<sup>186</sup>

So significant are the aesthetic qualities...in the visual concepts and images created by Chughtai that...his pictures can well be appreciated abstractly without knowing their

themes or subjects...Chughtai's pictures...yield 'abstract aesthetic qualities' irrespective of their subjects.<sup>187</sup>

Shams also pointed out that "inaccuracies of Chughtai's anatomy, are the least thing to be bothered about so long as his treatment is artistic."<sup>188</sup> Shams explained that Chughtai has "his own characteristic style of human anatomy...which lends his works Chughtainess and...endows his figures with infinite artistic charm, grace, and dignity."<sup>189</sup> The remainder of his discussion was devoted to style, technique, line, color, and composition in Chughtai's art.

On the one hand, critics labeled Chughtai 'unprogressive' (tied to the tyranny of anecdote or story appeal); on the other hand the public puzzled over Chughtai's innovations in anatomical distortion and abstract composition. Judging from published material of the period, these controversial issues were not limited to discourses between artists and critics, occasionally an uninitiated out-sider voiced a naive opinion with little tact and less understanding. One such example was related by Amjad Ali, a Pakistani journalist, who witnessed an embarrassing incident that would have come as no surprise to Taseer or Shams.

A major exhibition of Chughtai's works sponsored by the government was held in Karachi in 1951. Amjad Ali felt it was the most comprehensive and grand exhibition of his work ever organized and a "unique opportunity to study the work of our greatest artist."<sup>190</sup> The Governor-General, Mr. Ghulam Mohammad, opened the exhibition with a prepared speech and then, throwing aside the paper, he said: "It is time that our artists stop looking backward and digging up the buried past. We want artists to move with the times, interpret the living present, and paint the world around them."<sup>191</sup> Although the Governor-General mentioned no names, everyone present assumed it was directed at the current exhibition, and according to Ali, they were "stunned at this faux pas."<sup>192</sup> Ali thought the artist's brother (Abdur Rahim) would decide to close the exhibition, but he didn't.

As a matter of fact, it was a splendid exhibition. There was endless variety of his work...contemporary subjects like "College Girls"...rural scenes...Shockinglly, there were even a few nudes, (torsos only) exhibited in Pakistan for the first time.<sup>193</sup>

Ali represented those who understood, appreciated, and admired Chughtai's painting, whereas Ghulam Mohammad spoke

for another group who espoused progress merely for the sake of progress and failed to comprehend the qualities in Chughtai's work.

No matter how popular Chughtai's art became, opposition and criticism were ever-present. Categorization of Chughtai's work by well-known critics sometimes led to unquestioned generalizations by the public. Jalaluddin Ahmad, in Pakistan's first hard-bound publication (1954) covering the national art scene, determined that there were "three generations (of Pakistani artists) with certain broad stylistic or thematic affinities."<sup>194</sup> He names an "elder group of traditional painters," including Chughtai and several others.<sup>195</sup> Secondly, there are the young elders, who Ahmad believed formed the link and marked the transition from traditional and academic to modern. His definition of the second group implied that the so-called 'older traditional artists' were so remote that they were not even part of the chain which linked them to the present. Further-more, there were the younger artists, who, in Ahmad's mind, formed the most active and prolific group in Pakistan.<sup>196</sup> No comment could have been farther from the truth. Chughtai and Allah Bux were full-time artists\_\_\_probably the only two artists in Pakistan who did not need to support themselves with salaried jobs, as did most of the younger artists. Chughtai's output up to the time Ahmad published Art in Pakistan (1954) was far greater than that of any other living Pakistani artist.

In 1951 several critics in India were enraged by an Indian publication of Chughtai's paintings. Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das, a New Delhi printing and publishing house, published a volume of paintings---Hindu and Buddhist in theme---entitled Chughtai's Indian Paintings.<sup>197</sup> A lengthy introduction by Kashmira Singh did not avoid the issue of communal prejudice. Singh attempted to supersede existing racial antagonisms by presenting Chughtai as an 'Indian' in the generic sense, irrespective of the artificial boundaries effected by partition. "Though India has been divided, Chughtai remains the artist of India... He transcends all political and territorial limitations...[and] paints the Hindu Gods with the same astonishing vitality as he interprets Omar Khayyam or Sadi or Hafiz."<sup>198</sup> Singh did not deny the artist's Islamic orientation but presented Chughtai from a realistic perspective as one who "has vigorously protested against the sectarianization of his art and has silenced his narrow-minded critics by painting about two hundred pictures on Hindu motifs."<sup>199</sup> Chughtai's prologue for this book carried the same message:

These humble creations are redolent of those good old days, when we were making efforts to live and

dream with brethren of this land. I have painted about 200 pictures of Indian motifs. This background of my art should not be lost sight of.<sup>200</sup>

Singh expressed the personal opinion that paintings in this volume should make Chughtai's attitude obvious and "make it clear to political trouble-makers that he carries a deep impression of the soil that gave him birth."<sup>201</sup>

Dr. Tara Chand, secretary of the Education Ministry, who wrote the foreword for Chughtai's Indian Paintings, did not escape bitter criticism by the Indian press for allying him-self with the Pakistani artist. His short message reviewed Chughtai's previous accomplishments and touched upon the subject matter in the current volume. When Chand referred to these Hindu themes as "new paintings,"<sup>202</sup> a reviewer for the Hindustan Times sarcastically queried, "Did not the doctor check up his facts before he wrote what has been written?"<sup>203</sup> Obviously the Times reviewer assumed the paintings were old since Chughtai had written in the prologue: "Almost all these paintings relate to my early art," but it is not unequivocally stated that the paintings were old. In truth, most were done in the 1920s and 1930s and Chand was mistaken.

More seriously, Dr. Chand was accused of incompetency, who as an educationist-turned-official, "may have academic or bureaucratic abilities [but] is at sea when talking of art."<sup>204</sup> The Hindustan Times reviewer was less concerned with Chand's capabilities as an art critic than with his right as an Indian official to support the work of a Pakistani Muslim artist:

These stylized minor imitations of the Bengal School did not in the first place, deserve to be sponsored by the secretary of the Education Ministry.<sup>205</sup>

The reviewer was unaware or failed to acknowledge that the Education Ministry had in the past sponsored the purchase of Chughtai's paintings, and the present government (under Nehru), considering his work representative of Indian culture and aesthetics, ardently supported the artist by honoring him with a special room at the National Gallery of Art in New Delhi. Only Jamini Roy and one or two other painters had their works displayed in a special room in 1978 when I visited that museum. Ten of fourteen paintings by Chughtai owned by the National Gallery of Art were reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings.<sup>206</sup>

A review by the Statesman of New Delhi was slightly less cynical, but communal antipathy was manifested by the reviewer, who attempted to personally evaluate Chughtai's work by comparing him to Indian artists:

The painter has some sense of design---but "Barkha Rut," for example, would have been done much better by Salioz Mookherjea. A figure study like "Gloomy Radha" need only be placed beside, say, Subho Tagore's illustrations of fairy tales to suffer obviously from comparison.<sup>207</sup>

While the reviewer was suggesting that Indian artists could better handle Hindu subject matter than Chughtai, the latter's work was being copied by artists in India. It has already been mentioned (p. 67) that several artists in Hyderabad were emulating his style, and the present study uncovered three works in Pakistan that are, in my opinion, undoubtedly forgeries of Chughtai's work. (see p. ?) It is not, of course, an honorable act to copy the work of another artist with the intention of selling it as an original, but this action further points to Chughtai's artistic credibility throughout the subcontinent.<sup>208</sup>

Media reviews, such as that of Chughtai's Indian Paintings by the Hindustan Times and the Statesman, may speak to the public but not always for the public. The negative reviews may not be representative of the general reception of this book in India. Apparently, it nearly, if not completely sold out, indicating that it was of interest to many Indians, giving them an opportunity to personally evaluate Chughtai's art. Either as a result of the complete sale of his book in India or an import/export prohibition of printed material between India and Pakistan, Chughtai's Indian Paintings was not generally available in Pakistan. This was unfortunate since Chughtai himself had hoped that the Hindu side of his art should not be lost sight of in Pakistan. Outside of this book there was little opportunity for his countrymen to see his Hindu or Buddhist paintings, since they had mostly been purchased by nawabs and rajas before partition. To the present, Indians are largely unaware of Chughtai's artistic development after partition, just as few Pakistanis realize that Chughtai painted many Hindu and Buddhist subjects. Foreigners, however, were able to enjoy and appreciate Chughtai's paintings without any of the prejudices that might have affected a native audience.

James M. Langley, U.S. Ambassador in Karachi c.1957, was probably one of those foreigners who saw and appreciated the artist's work. Langley invited Chughtai to visit the U.S.A., according to an entry in Arif's booklet, Chughtai: Artist of the East, "to consult with officials



Chughtai acknowledged "The sincerity and the nobility of intention with which our respected and dear President, General Mohammad Ayub Khan has bestowed his attention upon the art and literature of the country" in a 1959 Pakistan Arts Council exhibition catalogue and added that the President had "lent encouragement and lustre to our glorious traditions and to our culture."<sup>217</sup>

The 1959 Chughtai exhibition in Karachi was another inauguration occasion. It was the first show in the Arts Council's new building. Once again Chughtai wrote in the foreword to the catalogue that he was reticent to participate, being unprepared for such a comprehensive exhibition at that time but was persuaded by his friend, Mr. N.M. Khan, president of the Arts Council, to contribute a selection of his works for display.<sup>218</sup>

Chughtai's concern over the homogenization and westernization of cultural tradition imposed upon contemporary non-western societies by modern communication was apparent in Chughtai's foreword. Titles of paintings from this catalogue manifest the artist's desire to project his culture and heritage and to preserve tradition. Paintings such as Prince Salim, Persian Princess, Parvati in the Mountains, Young Tibetan, Punjabi Maiden, The Holy Book, Dance of Darvishes, and Jamila (to name only a few of the one hundred seventy-four paintings and eighty-four etchings/aquatints listed in the catalogue) derive from Islamic history and literature, Hindu and Buddhist religion and mythology, and genre of the subcontinent. Some of these paintings, in addition to many more from the catalogue, appear as published works in Chughtai's magnum opus, Amle Chughtai, a book illustrating the philosophy of Iqbal. Malik Shams, in his essay featured in the Karachi catalogue, chose to discuss several of those paintings which "capture in visible terms the man of Iqbal's concept...and project the message of Iqbal's poetry."<sup>219</sup>

Chughtai's only European one-man show was held at the Commonwealth Institute Art Gallery in London just one year before Amle Chughtai was put on the market. Approximately one-third of the sixty-eight paintings shown in London were themes from the Iqbal volume.<sup>220</sup> Certainly the promotional opportunity offered by these exhibitions (Karachi and London), as a means for gaining support to publish Amle Chughtai, could not have escaped the artist's attention. The book was approximately fifteen years in preparation and finally appeared on the market in 1968 with "at least three lakh (three hundred thousand) rupees having been spent on it's production."<sup>221</sup>

Shortly before 1969 the central government sanctioned a grant of two lakh (two hundred thousand) rupees toward

the publication of this book.<sup>222</sup> The artist, however, did not receive the full sum according to S.A. Rahman, because:

an unbusiness-like delay on the part of Chughtai's bankers who were authorized by him to receive the amount from the government put the grant in jeopardy as there was a change of government in 1969. Efforts were made later on behalf of Chughtai to retrieve the situation but so far as I am aware proved infructuous."<sup>223</sup>

As some consolation the artist received financial aid from the government through the Board for Advancement of Literature, Lahore "to the tune of 50,000 rupees."<sup>224</sup> In return for the money Chughtai provided the government with "an adequate number of copies" of Amle Chughtai.<sup>225</sup> Some were presented to foreign heads of State as the situation warranted, editions were also given to "every Islamic Head of State at the Islamic Summit Conference in Lahore [1972]."<sup>226</sup>

Amle Chughtai more than any other single factor contributed to an international re-evaluation of Chughtai's artistic status. His first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928), had left a lasting impression with connoisseurs of Indian painting, type-casting Chughtai as a romantic who specialized in lyrical illustrations of mid-nineteenth century Mughal poetry. Most of the paintings in Amle Chughtai exhibited Chughtai's artistic maturity in style, technique, and content. The delicate, meticulous detail and Art Nouveau quality of his earlier work were absent in these later paintings. He abandoned the method of successive washes with transparent watercolor, preferring to use a tempera undercoat and localized washes. The romantic themes of Ghalib's poetic ghazals, which were the essence of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai were not typical of Iqbal's poetry; therefore, the content of the paintings in Amle Chughtai was of a different nature. Ghalib's mid-nineteenth century verses expressed the despair of the crumbling Mughal empire, whereas Iqbal, writing in the early twentieth century, projected dynamism and called for action. In one sense, Chughtai modernized his content merely by illustrating a dynamic, contemporary author. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the excellent quality reproductions were far superior to those in Muraqqa. Amle Chughtai was large in size as well as number of pages, and included short explanations in English for each illustration though most of the text was in Urdu.<sup>227</sup> Each page was embellished with an original linear design created by Chughtai.

At the end of the book (the beginning for Urdu readers---it can be read both ways) in a ten page

discourse, entitled "Individual and the Group," Chughtai discussed the purpose of the book, the difficulties in getting it to press, and the general relationship of his paintings to Iqbal's philosophy. He also confronted the issue of modernism in Asian painting. These topics are discussed in chapters IV and VII.

Amle Chughtai was an expensive venture in time and money. Securing funds was a major concern, but even after publication was underway unexpected problems caused delay and added to the cost. At one point the manuscript had to be sent back to Lahore because the printing company in Europe couldn't read the calligraphy. It was stuck in customs for months and a duty was levied because it was printed on imported paper.<sup>228</sup> Two editions were published: a special edition and a deluxe edition limited to 275 copies, the latter numbered and signed by the artist. An elaborate eight page brochure advertising Amle Chughtai listed the retail price as \$315.46 or 1,500 rupees.

A major exhibition of Chughtai's paintings repeating the theme of the book (illustrations of Iqbal's poetry) was held concurrently with the announcement of its publication. Ayub Khan inaugurated the exhibition which was held in Lahore December through January of 1968-1969.

The book, though impressive and well-received, "still had something missing" in the artist's own opinion. He hoped that admirers of Iqbal would appreciate the first edition, which Chughtai designated as only half of the material: "The second edition is underway so that it is better in material and beauty."<sup>229</sup> The second edition of Amle Chughtai has not been published, nor have a number of other books which he had hoped to complete before the Iqbal volume.

The 1950 Chughtai exhibition catalogue for the Arts Council of Lahore (note 181, p.94) advertised (each with a full-page ad) three books by Chughtai, soon to be published. These were to be a bound volume of fifty-seven etchings entitled, A Symphony of the Sumptuous, an illustrated version of Omar Khayyam, and a third book to be entitled The Art of Chughtai. Later, the CMT added to those just mentioned, four more books about Chughtai, said to be "under preparation."<sup>230</sup> These are entitled Kar-i-Chughtai (the Work of Chughtai), Chughtai and His Critics, Chughtai's Contribution to Modern Art, and the Nudes of Chughtai.

The illustrated volume of Omar Khayyam is perhaps the next to be published by CMT. Some of Chughtai's earliest paintings are titled with themes from Omar Khayyam, and he

planned for its publication at least as early as 1933.<sup>231</sup> In Amle Chughtai the artist wrote that just when he'd finished all the illustrations for Omar Khayyam he had to put off publishing it. He felt that he should publish Amle Chughtai first because long ago he had promised Iqbal that he would illustrate his (Iqbal's) works and publish the results.<sup>232</sup>

Without a doubt, it was a fortunate decision, in terms of changing his image from that of a romantic, who painted themes from classical literature, to a twentieth century artist able to respond to contemporary literary sentiment. Abdullah once wrote:

It would have been child's play for Chughtai to illustrate Omar Khayyam. Most of his work has an atmosphere which is not dissimilar to that of the Rubaiyat. In fact, label any of his paintings with any quatrain of Khayyam and the two will fit.<sup>233</sup>

Had Omar Khayyam been published in place of the Iqbal volume, critics would certainly have lauded the beauty, technical skill, and immaculate composition of these works, but would still have regarded them as romantic visions of a past era.<sup>234</sup> Whereas Khayyam's poetry often presented esoteric Sufi concepts, Chughtai's paintings may be appreciated with only the barest knowledge of the Tent Maker's verses. That is not to say that these paintings are devoid of symbolism. Most assuredly they express a complex iconography which has yet to be studied. If and when Omar Khayyam is published, the public will see Chughtai at his best.

Although the artist was extremely ill and disillusioned the last few years of his life, several large, successful exhibitions attested to his enduring popularity. Ali Imam, owner/manager of the Indus Gallery in Karachi, hosted a Chughtai exhibition in April, 1972 which netted 68,000 rupees.<sup>235</sup> However, prejudices and jealousies which had gone hand in hand with the development of his career were never forgotten, and media coverage of the Karachi show was evidence of this. The Morning News review of the exhibition focused on the commercial value of the exhibited works, etchings in particular, while it demeaned the aesthetic worth of his paintings: "The paintings on show are good as well as bad. But the fad is a fad and as long as it is Chughtai it certainly has art value. So all those who go by the name (alone) are advised to rush [to buy]."<sup>236</sup>

To understand the unfriendly reception of the Lahore painter's work in Karachi, it is necessary to survey the

art scene in that cosmopolitan seaport city. Since the early 1950s, Pakistani artists had felt it necessary to migrate to Karachi for patronage and recognition. Karachi became the New York or Paris of Pakistan. Many young artists spent time in Europe or the U.S.A. either studying at well-known institutions, apprenticing with a famous European artist, or otherwise broadening their artistic horizons in the west. As they returned one by one, the art scene became more and more westernized. A majority of them painted with oil on canvas, and their subject matter, though not always non-objective, was usually abstract. Some progressive, cultural enthusiasts bought the 'new art', but most patronized Chughtai too. Chughtai's paintings were extremely popular with the Parsees of Karachi,<sup>237</sup> many of whom owned two or more of his works, and newly married Parsee couples were eager to buy a Chughtai or two themselves.<sup>238</sup> Naturally many of the younger westernized artists resented the older painter's popularity in their territory, and a portion of the Karachi avant-garde sympathized with them. Several reporters of the Karachi cultural scene sided with the young artists too, and their reviews, such as the one just cited, manifested those partialities.

The following year (Oct. 1973), Zubeida Agha featured Chughtai in a one-man show at her gallery in Rawalpindi. "The show was a tremendous success. Chughtai sold 48,000 rupees in paintings and etchings," said Miss Agha, and explained that the exhibition attracted foreigners and diplomats since the capital city, Islamabad, was only fifteen miles from Rawalpindi.<sup>239</sup> Miss Agha also recalled the very first exhibition of her gallery in October of 1961: "Chughtai was delighted when I sent him a handwritten letter in Urdu, asking him to submit paintings to the new gallery for its opening. Ayub Khan inaugurated the opening. The capital was still in Karachi, so there were no foreigners here yet, but people came from all over Pakistan. It, too, was a successful exhibition."<sup>240</sup>

Although he was very ill, Chughtai was still thinking of having another exhibition in Rawalpindi on Pakistan Day in 1975. A few weeks before his death (Jan. 17, 1975) Chughtai wrote to Faiz Ahmad Faiz:

I have not been well for the past two years, but I propose to hold an exhibition of my paintings about Omar Khayyam on March 23, 1975. The government should lend a hand.<sup>241</sup>

Faiz told Nisar Osmani that Chughtai's letter came in response to a communique he sent to the artist. When Faiz learned from Mr. Majid Malik how seriously ill the artist was, he wrote to the Education Ministry in Islamabad

suggesting that something should be done by the government to preserve the artist's own paintings and foreign collection.<sup>242</sup> Osmani reported that Faiz got back a typically bureaucratic answer asking him to first obtain from Chughtai the paintings he had promised and never given to the Government.<sup>243</sup> Faiz informed the ailing artist as requested and received the "long, closely written letter in Urdu" reproduced in part below:

I want a museum to be set up in Lahore for my paintings. It cannot be in a small building, and none of the existing museums will do, for there are not 10 or 12 paintings, but over a thousand, some of which no one has yet seen. I have preserved them for 50 or 60 years. There should be a separate building for them.

Apart from my own paintings, I have a large collection of Iranian, Mughal and Rajput paintings, for which I have been offered lakhs of rupees. The American millionaire Chester Beaty (sic) had wanted to acquire them, and Nehru, in the presence of Ayub Khan, had asked me to sell my Rajput collection to India which would be housed in a separate gallery named after me. Nehru had also told me: 'you know the trouble we have taken to buy your paintings from private persons, and we have housed them in the Museum of Contemporary Art. You know also that contemporary Indian art is incomplete without you.'<sup>244</sup>

Dawn reported that:

The proposal was examined by eminent functionaries of the State, queries were neatly marked on the margins of official notes, questions of price to be paid to the artist were raised, the painter was asked to quote rates and terms, and so and so forth. The file was still moving from one office to another when Chughtai expired.<sup>245</sup>

Arif Chughtai told Saleema Mirza in an interview for Illustrated Weekly that his father first thought of establishing his own museum in 1931 after returning from Europe<sup>246</sup> and successively tried to build one.<sup>247</sup> The museum was to be built in the new suburb of Garden Town, seven miles from the commercial area of Lahore on property purchased by the artist in 1961. Because the location of the family's second home on Ravi Road in the city was no longer the quiet, uncongested area it had once been, Chughtai built a house at the Garden Town site and intended to move there. Unfortunately, unexpected litigation over

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boundary and tenants prevented the family from moving in. Construction of the museum, which would have been part of the complex, was never begun due to the reasons just cited in addition to "lack of financial means and...bureaucratic apathy."<sup>248</sup>

In the same interview, Arif Chughtai was bitter toward those whom he thought could have aided in securing funds for the proposed museum.

Take the UNESCO offer. The director General Amadou Mahtar Mbow offered a short-term consultant to assess our needs and then request member countries for funds for our proposed museum. You know what the Education Secretary [Mr. Abdul Hafeez Pirzada] and the Chairman of the Lahore Museum, Mr. B.A. Qureshi said, 'We do not need to take the begging bowl outside, when we can do it ourselves.' No one cared to remark that the Pakistani begging bowl was without bottom for all things in the world, except art and culture.<sup>249</sup>

While the Secretariat had acted too late to acquire paintings and the collections from the artist prior to his death (unless, of course, the artist flatly turned down their offer), the son was adamant that Chughtai's estate should remain, in its entirety, in family hands. He suspected anyone vaguely tied to or in touch with the government as a manipulator trying to appropriate the works of art. The Federal Minister for Education, Mr. Pirzada, B.A. Qureshi and Faiz Ahmad Faiz were judged, wrongly or rightly, from this point of view.

Chughtai died on January 17, 1975, and was buried in Miani Sahib graveyard in Lahore. Artists, writers and other prominent citizens of Lahore attended the funeral.<sup>250</sup> The family received condolence messages from national leaders, artists, and scholars in Europe and America as well as from other Islamic nations.<sup>251</sup> Every major newspaper in Pakistan eulogized the "renowned artist...of international repute."<sup>252</sup> Several condolence gatherings were held in Karachi. Mr. Musarrat Husain Zuberi chaired a panel of speakers at a condolence gathering held at the Indus Gallery. It was attended by a host of artists, writers, critics, and lovers of fine art. The panel included artists: Nagi, Gulji, Ali Imam; writer, Mr. Zia Jullunduri, and journalists: Dr. Akbar Naqvi and M.H. Askari.<sup>253</sup> Dawn briefly noted the thrust of each speaker's message and outlined a resolution proposed by the audience and speakers that recommended prohibiting the export of

Chughtai's art, placing his work in the National Museum and providing for a country-wide exhibition of his "masterpieces."<sup>254</sup>

Some individuals saw the situation as a time to renew their criticisms of the deceased artist's reputation. Dr. Akbar Naqvi, art critic for The Sun, accused the artist of isolationist tendencies,<sup>255</sup> "narcissistic preoccupation with his excellence," and failure to reckon with a changing world.<sup>256</sup> Another journalist, Hameed Zaman, categorized Chughtai as "the grand old man of his trade, who was either too difficult to copy or too out of context to be relevant," but still acknowledged that he became "a legend in his lifetime and was respected and revered."<sup>257</sup> M.H. Askari, literary critic for the Morning News and one of the panelists at the Indus Gallery condolence gathering, confined his report of that meeting to a discussion on the 'Chughtai controversy.' Had the artist ceased to keep pace with the times? Askari's personal opinion was unclear. His article appears to be an apology, taking its cue from a statement by poet Zia Jullunduri "that a truly great creative artist or writer does not necessarily have to modernize merely to keep up with changing fads and fashions."<sup>248</sup> Askari's convoluted essay rambles and never comes to any firm conclusions. (see chapter VII).

On the other hand, articles such as those by S.A. Rahman, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Ijazul Hasan and others lauded Chughtai, and defended his artistic preeminence and contemporary significance.<sup>259</sup> According to Arif Chughtai, his father devoted the last several years of his life to writing an autobiography "which numbered no less than eight hundred pages [and] Whenever that is published, the public will know Chughtai from his own perspective."<sup>260</sup> This study has traced the life of the artist, his stylistic development, projection of Indo-Muslim culture and history and his artistic status in the subcontinent with an awareness for impartiality that can best be approached by someone outside the artist's family and preferably outside the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. Perhaps when Chughtai's autobiography is published many facets of his life and personality will come to light to supplement the biography presented here. It is hoped that subsequent research on the art of Chughtai will provide more iconographic data because his paintings reveal not only the artist's personal expression, but reflect the atmosphere of changing moods that characterized the first half of the twentieth century in this country. There is much that can be learned about this artist and the literary oeuvre of India/Pakistan through an investigation of Chughtai's dust jackets---a topic I leave for further consideration. Presently this is the only broad and scholarly source on Chughtai and his art.



## FOOTNOTES BIOGRAPHY

1 The Chughtai Museum Trust, hereafter CMT, is a private institution created and directed by Arif Rahman Chughtai, son of the late artist. The CMT does not include a museum per say; it is dedicated to promote the art of Abdur Rahman Chughtai.

2 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p.1.

3 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

4 Chughtai, Artist of the East, p.1; also Musa Kalim, unpublished entitled Chughtai, compiled from autobiographical material supplied by the artist and his brother, Abdur Rahim in 1968. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for providing me with a copy of this essay.

5 Chughtai, Artist of the East, p.1.

6 Musa, Chughtai, p.2, recounted an incident told by Chughtai's mother which described his independent willfulness manifested between the age of three to four years of age: His mother wished to take Abdur Rahman to visit relatives and chose a colorful outfit for him decorated with golden lace and thread. "Looking at the clothes," the mother is quoted as saying, "he expressed his hatred and remarked confidently, "I will not wear them." She left him crying in disappointment and returned to find him of the same determined frame of mind, "repeating his obstinate words which had not abated a bit."

7 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

8 Personal communication with Arif Chughtai, 1978, Lahore.

9 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

10 Chughtai, Artist of the East, p.2.

11 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

12 Interview with Arif Chughtai, March 7, 1978. Arif Chughtai claimed that Abdur Rahman was a serious photographer and was given a number of commissions. The artist recorded nearly all of his own paintings in photographic negatives. I have not seen the negatives, but

I do not doubt their existence. They are in the possession of Arif Chughtai. The artist made reference to his competency in photography in a letter to Saleem Akhtar dated 11-3-71 in Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art, stating that a difficult period around 1917, "due to my domestic and economic conditions, I became a photographer, but left this profession at its height---for art."

13 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School". Arif Chughtai stated that Heath created that position especially for Abdur Rahman. Interview with Arif Chughtai, March 1978, Lahore.

14 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

15 In the foreword to Lagan, p. 59, Chughtai wrote, "In the beginning I had to go to Calcutta for important work. I thought I should meet the Bengali artists who render great services in modern art...The more I got time, the more I met the artists and exchanged ideas with them."

16 Mohammad Din received a diploma from the Mayo School of art in 1900. In 1933 he retired from teaching and designing stage sets and returned to Lahore. Centenary Catalogue, n.p. Thakur Singh entered the V.D.J. Technical Institute in Lahore in 1910 as an engineering student, but found the artistic life of Calcutta much more to his taste. he won a great deal of recognition as a painter both in oil and watercolors and was largely responsible for founding the Indian Academy of Fine Arts in Amritsar in 1935. He was also founder-director of the thakur Singh School of Art, Amritsar. S.G. Thakur Singh (New Delhi: Lalit Kala Academi, 1967), Jaya Appasamy, ed., p.i-ii.

17 Commentary for the painting Temptation in Anle Chughtai. Here the date has been given as 1918, however, 1916 seems more reasonable since Chughtai wrote in "My Paintings," that he sent a painting to Modern Review when he returned from Calcutta and it was published that year (1916).

18 Chughtai, Lagan, (Lahore: Mohan Singh Parydara Publishers, 1941), p. 59.

19 Chughtai, Lagan, p. 59, wrote "I never revealed that I was the artist Chughtai. By seeing my shalwar (baggy pants), cap and open coat, if any Bengali artist considered me to be a Punjabi and asked something about Chughtai, then I would say by shaking my head, that I knew Chughtai very well. He is from our city."

20 Commentary for Temptation

21 Chughtai, Lagan, P. 59.

22 Chughtai, Lagan, p. 59.

23 Modern Review was and is an English vernacular magazine published in Calcutta by Ramenendra Chatterjee with a large circulation in both England and India. Chughtai noted in "My Paintings" that "Modern Review had rendered a great service in building up the Bengal School and in securing a nobel prize for Tagore. So it was very influential at the time."

24 I have not been able to locate the 1916 reproduction in Modern Review. The National Library of Congress in Washington D. C. has the most complete holdings of Modern Review in this country, but they are missing all issues of 1916. However, other examples of Chughtai's paintings reproduced in Modern Review are: My Lamp Goes Out Every Time, XXIII, No. 1 (1918); Type of a Class of Men Aspiring to Leadership, XXV, No. 3 (1918); The Rose and the Wine Cup, XXVI, No. 1 (1919); and Returning from the Dargah, XXXII, No. 5 (1922).

25 See Introduction, note 10, p. 8.

26 Jalaluddin Ahmad, "Chughtai and His Contemporaries," Focus on Pakistan, I, No. 3 (1971), p. 30.

27 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

28 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

29 Exhibition of British and Indian Arts and Crafts, Lahore, 1920, exhibition catalogue, photocopy in my files, original in CMT. The ISOA (Indian Society of Oriental Art) founded in 1907 in Calcutta, supported an art school (among its various activities) which was staffed by Tagore's students. By 1920 it was soundly associated with Tagore and the Bengal School.

30 Judging from the ethnicity of names, only two out of twenty-nine entrants in this category were not European.

31 Chughtai, his close friend, Mohammad Husain Qadri, along with Abdul Rahman Sandivi and S. N. Gupta were the only four to enter under this heading.

32 I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for allowing me to photocopy thirty art exhibition catalogues from the years 1920 to 1961, originals of which are in the CMT. In a letter to this author dated September 26, 1980, Arif Chughtai added that the markings on the catalogues were not all by Abdur Rahim, some had been sent (and marked) by

artists Takur Singh, Mohammed din, Mohammed Alam and other friends of Chughtai who, according to Arif, "was not in the habit of visiting these shows."

33 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

34 Chaghatai, "A Century of Painting," p. 47, explained that "it is unfortunate that the art of painting as a regular subject, as it was done in the Bengal and Bombay Schools of Art, could never find its proper place in the Mayo School of Arts, Lahore. It was a mere drawing subject for curriculum of the Drawing Teachers' course."

35 Centenary Catalogue, p. 7; also Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School." It should be noted that the Mayo School of Arts was renamed in the 1950s to The National College of Art, Lahore, commonly abbreviated and referred to as NCA.

36 Arif Chughtai, letter.

37 Arif Chughtai, letter.

38 Arif Chughtai, letter.

39 According to Abdullah Chaghatai, "A Century of Painting," p. 47, S.N. Gupta's father, Nagendranath Gupta, was editor of The Tribune of Lahore, and in my opinion, this is another reason for S.N. Gupta's position of prestige.

40 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

41 Simla Fine Arts Society, 44th Annual Exhibition, catalogue of Sept. 1921, The Passing of Shah Jahan won best historical or religious subject; Mussoorie Fine Arts Exhibition, Chughtai won best picture by an Indian artist in any medium three years in a row: for Strugglers of the World (Sept. 1-10, 1922), Passing of Shah Jahan (June 1-10, 1922), and Omar and his Saqi (June 4-14, 1923). At the Punjab Fine Art Society, Lahore, 1923, Chughtai won Mrs. Casson's prize for best drawing (25 rupees) with Oh Baba, what has thou lost?; at the Bombay Art Society, 33rd exhibition, Nov. 1923, he won best work in black and white for Oh Baba, what hast thou lost?, at Madras Fine Arts Society, 40th annual exhibition, 1924 Gusain Tusli Das won the bronze medal for Chughtai and Omar Khayyam and his Saqi won the special prize for best picture in colour in any medium by an artist of the modern Indian school.

42 Interview with Arif Chughtai, March 1978, Lahore.

43 British Empire Exhibition, promotional flyer, (Holborn: Fleetway Press, Ltd., 1924)

- 44 British Empire Exhibition flyer
- 45 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"
- 46 Mirza Hasan Askari discussed Chughtai's Punjab School of Painting in Caravan (1933), in an article entitled "Modern Indian Painting", stating on p. 4 that "he [Chughtai] has worthwhile pupils like Mian Mohammad Hussain Qadri, Mian Inayat Ullah, Ijaz and Ashgar."
- 47 Interview with Arif Chughtai, March 1978, Lahore.
- 48 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"
- 49 Lionel Heath, "Punjab," The British Empire Review, XXIII, No. 8 (1924), p. 123; this article was reprinted in Rupam No. 21, Jan. 1925, pp. 13-14.
- 50 Heath, p. 123.
- 51 Heath, p. 123.
- 52 Chughtai, "My Paintings"
- 53 Centenary Catalogue
- 54 Interview with Mohammad H. Qadri, Nov. 1978, Lahore
- 55 Arif Chughtai, letter.
- 56 See "Modern Indian Art at Wembley," Studio, 89, No. 382, Jan 1925, and Rupam, No. 21, Jan 1925, pp. 13-14.
- 57 Arif Chughtai, letter.
- 58 In this same letter Arif wrote that Inayat Ullah was "a poor sketcher and painter and all his works have the hand of Chughtai in it... My father used to acquaint him with art and art techniques..." Arif also added that Inayat Ullah was a great friend of Chughtai and used to spend days in our house at our expense.
- 59 Arif Chughtai, letter.
- 60 Comment written by Salim ur Rahman on a translation he was doing for me, November 10, 1978.
- 61 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"
- 62 Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," address for the International Iqbal congress, New Delhi, October 29-November 6, 1977 (paper was not given and has not been

published), p. i. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for providing me with a copy of this paper.

63 Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 3.

64 The meaning is not perfectly clear. Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 2, wrote: "The culminative (sic) work on Iqbal of this period was "Asrar-Hayat."

65 Narang-i-Khaiyal was an important journal of literature and art published in Lahore. I have not been able to consult this journal for a date, but I do not doubt its existence.

66 Payam-i-Mashriq was published in Lahore in 1923. A. J. Arberry translated it under the title The Tulip of Sinai (London: The Royal India Society, 1947)

67 Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 3.

68 Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 3.

69 The British Empire Exhibition (1924) Wembley, London, exhibition catalogue, (Holborn: Fleetway Press, Ltd, 1924), pp. 102-103.

70 Ghulam Abbas and Agha Abdul Hamid, "Some Reminiscences," a dialogue between the two, Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art, ed. Wazir Agha (Lahore: Majlis-d Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980), p. 1. tran. for me from the original ms. by Salim ur Rahman.

71 N. D. Taseer was a noted intellectual, author, and poet; Petras Bohari was a Majid Malik was a Ghulam Abbas was a respected short story writer.

72 Abbas and Hamid, p. 1.

73 Abbas and Hamid, p. 1.

74 Conversation with editors and writers at Bookmark Publications, Lahore, Nov. 1978

75 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

76 Abbas and Hamid, p. 1.

77 G. Venkatachalam, Contemporary Indian Painters (Bombay: Nalanda Publications, 1947), p. 52. Arif

Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 4, claimed the amount given Chughtai by the Maharooni was five thousand rupees.

78 Abbas and Hamid, p. 1. and Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 5.

79 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 4, wrote: "A small press was acquired and the printing was done there [Chabuk Sawaran] under the most tough conditions...Muraqqa-i-Chughtai was published by the Jahangir Book Club (the publishing house that Chughtai founded for the purpose)." Also Peer Obeidy, "Abdul Rehman Chughtai and his Etchings," The Star (Bombay) April 14, 1946, p. 8, wrote: "Chughtai's excellence in printing was acknowledged when he produced single handed with a tiny press, his own book 'Muraqqa-i-Chughtai' which still forms a landmark in the annals of book production in India."

80 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

81 Abbas and Hamid, p. 2.

82 Abdullah does not explain why he posed as valet: it may have enabled him to go at a reduced fare.

83 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

84 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

85 Arif Chughtai published excerpts from personal thank you letters of various persons (and journal editors) who had received a copy of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, in Chughtai: Artist of the East, pp. 13-20, 27-33. Arif cited person or journal title, city, country and year the letter was received.

86 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

87 Although Rahim continued to paint and exhibit up to the mid 1930s, he functioned as Abdur Rahman's business manager and social director. Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 11, wrote, "Without his brother, the artist was helpless in most practical senses. It was Rahim who handled all the worldly details, as it was him who helped the artist in small matters relating to his art itself."

88 Arif Chughtai believed the tutor was Mr. Smart of the Royal Academy, who, according to Abdur Rahman, knew many secret techniques of the old masters, particularly of Rembrandt and Durer, but wouldn't divulge these techniques to anyone. Smart refused to show Chughtai any of these so-called secrets so Chughtai terminated his services. Interview with Arif Chughtai, March 13, 1978, Lahore.

89 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

90 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School." Nicholson had been Iqbal's instructor when the latter attended Cambridge in 1905-1907 and had published several articles on Iqbal. Nicholson published "The Secrets of the Self: A Muslim Poet's Interpretation of vitalism" in The Quest, July 1920, and "The Message of the East" in Islamica, I, 1925. Both articles, in English, were based on Iqbal's Persian works which had not been translated. Certainly Nicholson was justified in refusing Chughtai's request. It is well-known that translating Persian poetry is no easy task due to double meaning of individual words and levels of interpretation. Nicholson did, however, translate Asrar-i-Khudi [Secrets of the Self], (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, 1944).

91 According to Abdullah, "The Chughtai School," they left from Trieste, Yugoslavia aboard the SS. Conte Verde on Dec. 9, 1932, bound for Bombay.

92 Interview with Arif Chughtai, March 1978, Lahore.

93 M.H. Askari "Chughtai: the conservative Painter was a Nonconformist Writer," Morning News, Jan. 22, 1975, p. 6.

94 Askari, p. 6.

95 Letter from A. R. Chughtai to Saleem Akhtar, 11-3-1971,

96 Letter Chughtai to Akhtar.

97 M. A. Rahman Chughtai, The House of Taimur, (Lahore, Print Printo Press, 1971).

98 Saleem Akhtar, "The Artist of the Orient," p. 4.

99 Akhtar, p. 4.

100 Interview with Jalaluddin Ahmad, dec. 29, 1979, Lahore. The library was apparently at the Ravi Road residence and though I did not see it, I do not doubt its existence. Mirza Adeeb, "The messenger of Art," Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980), p. 19, commented upon entering Chughtai's Ravi Road studio, "There was no place in the room without books and paintings. I then came to know that Mr. Chughtai had a very good library."

101 Abbas and Hamid, p. 3.

102 Abbas and Hamid, p. 5.

103 Abbas and Hamid, p. 5.



104 Abbas and Hamid, p. 3.

105 Abbas and Hamid, p. 3.

106 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

107 M. D. Taseer, ed., Caravan (Lahore: Jahangir Book Club, 1933), p. 5. Arif Chughtai confused the issue even further with a statement in his article "Iqbal and Chughtai," p. 7: "In 1933 Chughtai along with some of his friends decided to bring out a magazine annual by the name of 'Karavan'. Dr. Taseer, master Abdullah and Abdur Rahim, along with the artist went to Dr. Iqbal to request an original Urdu piece for the magazine." Arif's statement implies that Abdur Rahman and Abdullah were back from Europe and were involved in planning the first issue, but this seems contrary to all other evidence.

108 Taseer, Caravan, contents

109 Arif Chughtai, letter.

110 Arif Chughtai, letter.

111 Colonel Majid Malik, ed., Caravan, (Lahore: Jahangir Book Club, 1934), pp. 3-4.

112 Majid Malik, Caravan, p. 9.

113 Musa Kalim, "Chughtai," p. 6.

114 The volume used for this study dated 1956, was purchased in Lahore, November 1978. Both Muraqqa-i-Chughtai and Naqsha-i-Chughtai were reprinted a number of times. I do not know how many times each was reprinted or the dates for most of the reprints.

115 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

116 Personal communication with Arif Chughtai, 1978, Lahore.

117 Interview with Mrs. Mariam Hatim Tyabji, July 29, 1978, Karachi. Mrs. Tyabji added that Chughtai and her father were personally acquainted and Chughtai had presented her father with that painting.

118 Beverley Nichols, Verdict on India, (Lahore: Siddiq Printers, 1944), pp. 112-114.

119 The city of Hyderabad was at one time in possession of approximately sixty-four Chughtai paintings. Seventeen were sent to the Victoria Jubilee Museum in

Vijayawada and two others are in the State Archaeological Museum (Provincial division: Madyha Pradesh) at Mahabubnagar. I saw and photographed all of these in 1978-1979.

120 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 7.

121 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 7.

122 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 7.

123 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 7.

124 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

125 Arif Chughtai, letter.

126 Arif Chughtai, letter.

127 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School" fixed the departure as mid 1936, but it could have been later--- anytime up to late January 1937. It took approximately one month to go from Bombay to Europe and Chughtai began etching classes in London March 9, 1937.

128 Arif Chughtai, letter.

129 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

130 I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for making available to me a copy of Abdur Rahman's registration and admit card from the School of Photo Engraving dated March 9, 1937.

131 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 6.

132 See chapter VI, Etchings.

133 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 6.

134 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

135 Abdullah was not eager to talk to me about Abdur Rahman in 1978. Abdullah is scholarly and eccentric and there may have been personality differences. Furthermore, Abdur Rahman had become inseparable from Abdur Rahim, probably to the exclusion of Abdullah.

136 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

137 In Pakistan, as in most Islamic countries, tradition prescribed that the bride and groom not see one another until after the wedding ceremony. A photograph of

each may be shown and occasionally brief meetings are arranged by more progressive families. Arif Chughtai noted in the letter of Sept. 26, 1980, that the impression and/or photograph of the girl (if one was shown) was not the person Chughtai married.

138 Chughtai, letter.

139 Chughtai, letter.

140 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 11.

141 See chapter VII, The Question of Modernity in Chughtai's Art.

142 Chughtai, "The Future of Art in Pakistan," The Pakistan Times Supplement, August 14, 1949, p. 2.

143 Anarkali is a legendary love story which took place in Lahore: Jahangir (then Prince Salim) fell in love with Anarkali, a dancing girl of his father's court. When Akbar heard of the illicit romance, he had Anarkali buried alive. Anarkali was written as a three act play by Imtiaz Ali Taj and published in Lahore by Mercantile Press, 1932. S.A. Rahman, Safar, (Lahore: Central Senate Tarakhi Urdu, 1964). Safar (Journey) describes the plight of a Muslim family emigrating from eastern India to Pakistan at the time of partition. I am grateful to the late Mr. S. A. Rahman for allowing me to photograph the original illustrations for Safar which were presented to him by the artist and for explaining the theme of the book to me.

144 Interview with Dr. Ibdad Brelvi, professor of Urdu, Oriental College, Lahore, March 29, 1978.

145 Nisar Osmani, "A. R. Chughtai was a progressive artist," an interview with Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Dawn, [Karachi], Feb. 9, 1975, p. 2.

146 Jali, "The Artist of the East," unpublished essay trns. for me by Pervaiz Kazmi, Lahore, confirmed that "Chughtai had been obliging people (often wealthy publishers)...who frequently visited him to get a free cover design..." and Salim Akhtar, "The Artist of the Orient," unpublished essay trns. for me by Pervaiz Kazmi, wrote, "I don't know at what prices Mr. Chughtai sold his paintings...but I certainly know that he never charged for cover designs. Whosoever wrote him a letter he made and sent a cover design."

147 Brelvi interview

148 Interview with Agha Babur, director, Rawalpindi Arts Council, August 27, 1978, Rawalpindi, Pakistan and Interview with Arif Chughtai, February 1978, Lahore.

149 In his essay "The Artist of the East," Salim Akhtar included this statement from an undated letter Chughtai had written him.

150 The note from Mrs. Kennedy was not dated and I have not been able to find any information about the book for which Chughtai designed the cover.

151 Arif Chughtai, Interview, 1978 , Lahore.

152 The filming date of Butkada is not certain. Dr. Mohammad Ajmal, in an interview April 3, 1978, remembered the date to be 1944. Abdullah Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School" however, wrote that he secured the film-making license for Abdur Rahman in 1946.

153 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

154 Majid al-Makky was married to Abdur Rahim's daughter. He was killed in a plane crash in the 1960s and was carrying with him notes and documents on the artist, hoping to use them in a book he was planning to write on Chughtai. Some of the documents were recovered from the crash site and are in possession of al-Makky's wife.

155 Ajmal interview

156 Ajmal interview

157 Ajmal interview

158 Ajmal interview

159 Khawaja Shahid Hosain, "Cinema," Pakistan (London: Stacey International, 1977), p. 246.

160 Hosain, p. 246.

161 Ajmal interview

162 Arif Chughtai interview, 1978, Lahore.

163 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East p. 7.

164 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East p. 7.

165 The earliest and most violent protest manifested as a reaction against imperialism was the Mutiny of 1857 which was squelched by the British and confirmed their

military and political dominance in India. In the ninety years since the Mutiny, the majority of Indians (Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh) had never given up hope that the day of independence would arrive.

166 H. V. Hodson, The Great Divide (London: Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., 1967), p. 418 estimated that about 200,000 Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs had been killed in the communal violence between August and November, 1947, but that the figure of a million was popularly bandied about." Owing to the lack of civil authority and destruction of records, Hodson admitted it was impossible to be sure what the total loss of lives had been.

167 I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for giving me a copy of this letter from Chughtai to Basil Gray, dated Oct. 11, 1947.

168 Letter, Chughtai to Basil Gray.

169 Letter, Chughtai to Basil Gray.

170 Letter, Chughtai to Basil Gray.

171 Interview with Fremi Brehmshah, painting instructor, Fine Arts College, Hyderabad, Jan. 16, 1979, Hyderabad, India.

172 Interview with Jagdish Mittal, Jan. 15, 1978, Hyderabad, India.

173 Brehmshah interview.

174 Brehmshah interview.

175 Inter-Asian Exhibition 1947, New Delhi, All-India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, New Delhi. Photocopy in my files, original in the CMT.

176 The Minstrel illustrated opposite p. 9 in Inter-Asian Art Exhibition catalogue.

177 Inter-Asian Art Exhibition, catalogue, p. 6.

178 "Insignia: Postage Stamps," Pakistan, p. 70.

179 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 7.

180 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 8.

181 S. A. Rahman, Foreword, Chughtai Exhibition, catalogue of paintings, commemorated opening of Pakistan Arts Council, Lahore, Dec. 11, 1949-Jan. 1, 1950, p. 3.

182 M.D. Taseer, Introduction, Chughtai Exhibition, catalogue of paintings, commemorated opening of Pakistan Arts Council, Lahore, Dec. 11, 1949-Jan. 1, 1950, p. 5.

183 Taseer, Introduction, Exhibition, p. 6.

184 Taseer, Introduction, Exhibition, p. 6.

185 Malik Shams, "Chughtai and his Art," Chughtai Exhibition, catalogue of paintings, commemorated opening of Pakistan Arts Council, Lahore, Dec. 11, 1949-Jan. 1, 1950, p. 9.

186 Shams, "Chughtai and," p. 11.

187 Shams, "Chughtai and," p. 11.

188 Shams, "Chughtai and," p. 12.

189 Shams, "Chughtai and," p. 12.

190 S. Amjad Ali, "The Trail of Paint," Pakistan Quarterly, XV, No. 1 & 2, (1967), pp. 234-235.

191 Amjad Ali, p. 235.

192 Amjad Ali, p. 235.

193 Amjad Ali, p. 235.

194 Ahmad, Introduction, Art in Pakistan, pp. 1-2.

195 Chughtai's style, technique and subject matter bear no similarity to those of Allah Bux, Askari, or Fyzee Rahamin, all of whom Ahmad has categorized as the elder group of traditional painters in his book Art in Pakistan, pp. 1-2.

196 It is my contention that Jalaluddin Ahmad did not intend to disparage Chughtai's accomplishments as an artist. Interviews with Mr. Ahmad revealed his great appreciation of Chughtai's work. It cannot, however, be denied that the above cited quote by Ahmad from the Introduction of Art in Pakistan, p. 1, is over simplified, too general, misleading, and incorrect.

197 Chughtai's Indian Paintings (New Delhi: Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das, 1951).

198 Kashmira Singh, Introduction, Chughtai's Indian Paintings, pp. 12-13.

199 Singh, Introduction, pp. 12-13.

200 Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Prologue, Chughtai's Indian Paintings, p. 7.

201 Singh, Introduction, p. 13.

202 Tara Chand, Foreword, Chughtai's Indian Paintings, p. 9.

203 "Introducing An Artist," Hindustan Times (New Delhi), book review, August 5, 1951.

204 "Introducing An Artist"

205 "Introducing An Artist"

206 Those ten paintings are: Holi, Gloomy Radha, Heraman-Tota, The Bond of Love, Nat-Raj, With the Flute, Tapasvi, Dipak, Amrit-Jal, and The Divine Cowherd

207 "Indian Painter," The Statesman (New Delhi), book review, August 5, 1951.

208 The forgery artist obviously invested a good deal of time in perfecting Chughtai's technique since the copy is good, and he must have anticipated that the effort would pay off. He was investing his time and talent gambling on Chughtai's reputation.

209 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 28, an excerpt from Langley's letter to Chughtai, dated 1958.

210 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 28, this communique was titled: Schuyler C. Wallace, Educationist, new York, 1958.

211 Malik Shams, "The Art of Chughtai," Chughtai Exhibition of Paintings, catalogue for exhibition at the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, August 14, 1959, n.p.

212 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 21.

213 I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for allowing me to photograph the original photograph of the awarding of Hilal-i-Imtiaz.

214 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 9.

215 S. A. Rahman, "Abdur Rahman Chughtai, A Synthesis of Beauty and Power," Dawn Magazine, January 26, 1975, p.9

216 Amjad Ali, p. 233. The President's personal appearance at Chughtai's studio, his patronage of Allah

Bux, and sponsorship of cultural awards to the two artists lends further support to Sham's contention that Chughtai was awarded ten thousand rupees by the government in 1958.

217 Chughtai, "A Word From the Artist," Chughtai Exhibition of Paintings, catalogue for exhibition at the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, August 14, 1959, p. 1.

218 Chughtai, "A Word," p. 1.

219 Shams, "The Art of Chughtai," n.p. Shams, then curator of the Central Museum, Lahore, was more perceptive and to the point than in his 1950 Chughtai exhibition catalogue essay.

220 M.A. Rahman Chughtai (Pakistan), catalogue for Commonwealth Institute Art Gallery exhibition, London, Dec. 15, 1966-Jan. 8, 1967. I am grateful to CMT for giving me a copy of this catalogue.

221 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," Amle Chughtai (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, 1968), p. 1, trns. for me by Mr. Razi, Lahore.

222 According to Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 8. "It was in 1968...that Field Marshal Ayub Khan inaugurated the exhibition of those works and gave a cash award to Chughtai of Rs. 2 lakh".

223 Rahman, "Synthesis," p. 9.

224 Rahman, "Synthesis," p. 9.

225 Rahman, "Synthesis," p. 9.

226 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 8.

227 It measures 13 3/4 x 11 inches, has four hundred fifty pages in all, thirty-seven full color plates, twenty-one black and white reproductions and five etchings.

228 Interview with Mrs. Majid Malik, July 31, 1978, Karachi.

229 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 2.

230 Chughtai, a short brochure published by the Chughtai Academy of Arts (CMT) Ravi Road, Lahore, c. 1976

231 Chughtai's desire to publish an illustrated volume of Omar Khayyam was mentioned in Caravan, 1933, p. 5. The editor paraphrased a letter from Chughtai (then in Europe) stating that his primary aim in Europe was to seek help in publishing Omar Khayyam.



232 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 3. Also, the artist referred to this desire in his essay, "My Paintings": "I also want to bring out a special edition of Omar Khayyam. It is ready for the press and would truly represent a marriage of Persian and Moghul art."

233 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School" Abdullah was also critical of Amle Chughtai, stating that the paintings had nothing to do with Iqbal's philosophy.

234 About forty-five of the Omar Khayyam paintings were exhibited at the CMT commemoration ceremony at 4 Garden Town, Lahore, Jan. 17, 1978. In my opinion, these are the best examples of the artist's work that I have seen.

235 Interview with Ali Imam, July 11, 1978, Indus Gallery, Karachi.

236 "Chughtai's Paintings on Display in City," Morning News [Karachi], April 8, 1972.

237 The Parsees are descendants of the Zoroastrians from Persia. They are a wealthy minority in Pakistan, most having settled in Karachi.

238 None of the information on this page is documented as far as I am aware. These statements are based on personal observation and casual conversations with artists and collectors in Karachi.

239 Interview with Miss Zubeida Agha, Aug. 24, 1978, Islamabad. The political capital of Pakistan was first established in Karachi. Rawalpindi functioned as an interim capital preceding the shift to the new city of Islamabad in 1961.

240 Zubeida Agha interview.

241 Osmani, Faiz interview, p. 12.

242 Mr. Majid Malik was one of Chughtai's closest friends and one of the few (if not only) he had agreed to meet in the months before his death.

243 Osmani, Faiz interview, p. 12. I. A. Rehman, "Who cared for Chughtai," Dawn [Karachi], Feb. 3, 1975, also referred to the government proposal stating, "Quite some time ago it was suggested by the Pakistan National Council of the Arts or the ever hopeful Faiz that Chughtai was approaching the end of his life and it would be in the interest of the community and a fitting recognition of the great artist if his collection was acquired during his life-time and placed in a proper gallery or museum."

244 Osmani, Faiz interview, p. 12.

245 Rehman, "Who cared"

246 Apparently Arif Chughtai was confused---his father returned from Europe in 1933.

247 Saleema Mirza "Ours is a Nation Which Forgets," [interview with Arif Chughtai] Illustrated Weekly, I, issue 10, June 22, 1978, p. 15. Also Chughtai wrote essentially the same thing in "My Paintings" noting that "Although one can come across my paintings in practically all the important museums all over the world and also in private collections, I still have a large number of my rare and best paintings with me. Most have never been seen by anyone and I don't want to part with them at any price. They would form part of a museum I want to establish. Besides my own work, Persian, Mughal and Rajput paintings would also be on display. I have a most remarkable collection of these. I also have a rare collection of etchings and engravings by famous European artist like Durer, Rembrandt and Rubens; also Japanese woodcuts by Utamaro and Hokusai."

248 Mirza, "A Nation Forgets," p. 15.

249 Mirza, "A Nation Forgets," p. 17.

250 In "Chughtai laid to rest: death widely condoled," The Sun, Jan. 19, 1975, pp. 1 & 5, it was implied that the funeral and prayer services were well attended: "a largn (sic) number of people drawn from different walks of life offered prayers for the deceased at Miani Sahib mosque. "Prominent among those who attended the funeral were Mr. Justice S. A. Rehman, former Chief Justice of Pakistan: Abdul Asar Hafeez Jullundhari, Mian Amiruddin, Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi, Abadat Barelvi, M. Aslam and Mr. Moyene Nazami." Jali, "Artist of the East," n.p. believed that the funeral should have had official sanction and he condemned certain individuals who were not present. "Those wealthy publishers who had been frequently visiting him to get a free title design were not present at his funeral. Shops were open in the neighbourhood, business was going on and the daily routine was undisturbed...No official representative was seen at his funeral. Alas for the indifference and carelessness of my nation that Chughtai, who was lauded 'master of the day' in London and his paintings captioned 'master-pieces of Eastern Art' in Paris, and who was world renowned---in his own country only a few writers, poets, artists and intellectuals accompanied him to the grave."

251 According to Arif Chughtai in an interview with Saleema Mirza, "A Nation Forgets," p. 17. among those who

sent messages from abroad were Queen Elizabeth, President Walter Scheel, Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, Dr. Henry Kissinger, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, and other individuals of less-known international stature.

252 "Abdur Rahman Chughtai dies: renowned artist," Dawn, Jan. 18, 1975, p. 1.

253 The panel members' names were listed by a staff reporter in "Plea to ban export of Chughtai's paintings," Dawn, Jan. 20, 1975, p. 6.

254 "Plea", p. 6.

255 Naqvi, "Lonely Vigil," The Sun, March 23, 1975, n.p.

256 Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision," The Sun, Jan. 26, 1975, p. 7.

257 Hameed Zaman, "Chughtai---a legend in his lifetime," Morning News, Jan. 18, 1975, p. 4.

258 M. H. Askari, "Chughtai---the conservative painter was a nonconformist writer," Morning News, Jan. 22, 1975, p. 6.

259 S. A. Rahman, "A Synthesis," pp. 9 & 12; Osmani, "A. R. Chughtai was a progressive artist," interview with Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Dawn, Feb. 20, 1975, p. 12; Ijazul Hasan, "Chughtai and Shakir Ali," p. 5.

260 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 9.

## CHRONOLOGY OF CHUGHTAI'S PAINTINGS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF STYLE

Agha Abdul Hamid suggested that Chughtai's art was produced during three major time periods.<sup>1</sup> Although his evaluation was perceptive, he made errors in dating specific events which affected the validity and rationale of his periodization.<sup>2</sup> Hamid designated the first period as 1918 to 1927, the second from 1927 to 1932, and the third from 1932 to 1939 (the date Hamid probably first published the article). Paintings of the first period, according to Hamid, reflected life as wholly romantic and passive. "When a group of people is shown, each one appears to be in a reverie and unconscious of the existence of the others. These pictures remind one of the works of Watteau on the one hand and of the cave paintings of Ajanta on the other."<sup>3</sup>

In terms of style Hamid believed that the main emphasis (in the first period) was on details and the importance of line. We are told that Chughtai never used colors in their pure form but always mixed, because the artist desired to blend the colors and use uniform tones over the entire surface. Hamid remarked that the earlier paintings show immaturity.<sup>4</sup> Of the second period (1927 to 1932) Hamid wrote that by 1927, after the publication of Muraqqa-Chughtai, the artist had become dissatisfied with his work. He felt that his attitudes were too passive and the subject matter too remote from life, so he began to experiment. Hamid was paraphrasing Chughtai's personal account from the journal Caravan (1933). ~~See pp.~~ Chughtai's experimentation and search for new forms of expression led him to an interest in 'Indian subjects'; this view of life had become less romantic and the paintings more realistic, observed Hamid.<sup>5</sup> Apparently confused about the date of Chughtai's trip to Europe, Hamid discussed what he believed to be the indirect influence of that trip on the second period.<sup>6</sup> "He did not alter his technique but modified it. He began to use pure colours and to lay less stress on line,"...and painted more portraits.<sup>7</sup> More directly the visit to Europe made him take a greater interest in painting of the nude, which Hamid added, "was not done by traditional Asian painters."<sup>8</sup>

By the third period (1932 to 1939) Hamid felt the paintings were more alive and fresher than those of the first period. The stress on line and detail disappeared and

there was a noticeable economy of effort. A few lines now expressed what dozens of lines did in his earlier work.

Hamid's article is too brief to be more than a general guide, but apparently no other study has attempted to order or define the course of Chughtai's artistic development. My own study of Chughtai's style is in agreement with many of Hamid's observations but I do not agree with his three-part periodization. I have found that five periods better express the chronological development of Chughtai's style. These are:

1. The First Period: 1918-1922
2. The Second Period: 1923-1927
3. The Third Period: 1928-1934
4. The Fourth Period: 1935-1949
5. The Fifth Period: 1950-1970

There are various problems regarding the paintings (circumstantial and intrinsic) that complicate the process of ordering Chughtai's work. Throughout his career Chughtai reused themes again and again and occasionally reverted to previous styles. He also made copies of his work. There is no clear dividing line between the end of one period and the beginning of another; therefore, it is difficult to point out specific works which begin or end a certain period. Also there is concern among collectors and art critics in Pakistan that some of Chughtai's watercolors may have been done by members of a Chughtai atelier. See pp.???. Since I have no proof this is true, I've not considered it as a factor in formulating this chronology.

Between about 1918 and 1929 it was Chughtai's habit to include the date in a design formed by his signature.<sup>9</sup> See table on next page. Signature and numerals are in Persian script and are difficult to read in reproductions because they are so small. I saw few original paintings with these signature designs since most of his early paintings are dispersed in private, unlocated collections in India. Apparently around 1929, Chughtai discontinued the signature design and began to write his name in standard Persian script. When he made this change he no longer included the date.

Reproductions of Chughtai's paintings in journals and exhibition catalogues have been of some limited use.<sup>10</sup> Chughtai's casual reference in essays and articles to his own development and articles about his development have been used with discretion.<sup>11</sup>

After the publication of Chughtai's Paintings in 1940, it becomes very difficult to securely date or chronologically order Chughtai's work. From 1940 to 1968

## CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNATURES

ca. 1918-1921



Examples:

Fig. 22 The Better Land  
in red, bottom leftFig. 18 Lamp and the Moths  
in red, center leftFig. 19 Two Women  
lower rightFig. 27 Returning From the Dargah  
in red, top leftFig. 29 Jealousy  
in red, top rightFig. 135 Leila-Majnun  
in red, bottom right

Early 1920s

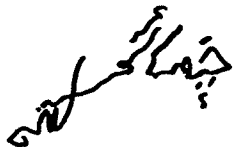


Only two examples found:

Neither illustrated

Two Mughal Ladies, in Salar Jung  
Museum, and Raw Rahwan, in State  
Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad

Mature signature, ca. 1940s

(date uncertain, paintings were sometimes signed years  
after painted on request of buyer or publisher)Examples: Fig. 87 Mother Nursing, Fig. 161 At Toilet, Fig.  
163, Yakshi, Fig. 221 Tulip of Kashmir

ca. 1921-1923



Example:

Fig. 28 Three Women  
Spinning, in red,  
top left

ca. 1923-1928



Example:

Fig. 38 Anarkali  
in red, top left

ca. 1925



Examples:

Fig. 46 The Tutor,  
in red, lower rightFig. 47 Princess of Sahara  
in red, middle leftFig. 39 Persian Idyll,  
in red, lower right

\* known titles are underlined, descriptive titles are not.

ordered by stylistic comparison.<sup>12</sup> Paintings which appear to be the most stylistically advanced I attribute to the period from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s.

### **The First Period: 1918 to 1922**

Chughtai suggested that his career as a professional artist began with the publication of one of his paintings in Modern Review in 1916. I have not been able to locate this reproduction, but since I have a group of paintings which are from no later than 1918, I am able to use 1918 as a firm beginning date for his earliest style.<sup>13</sup>

A colored-line drawing entitled Lamp and the Moths (Fig. 18) from a scrapbook<sup>14</sup> of Chughtai's paintings in the archives of the CMT is signed and dated (either 1915 or 1918) and it remains the only example from this scrapbook with readable numerals.<sup>15</sup> This type of work is more than a simple drawing, as the varied colored lines are drawn with a brush and parts are often washed in. The Persian artist, Rizza-i-Abassi, brought this technique to its zenith in the sixteenth century and stimulated a following that popularized brush drawing and put it on a par with tonal painting. There is little doubt that Chughtai was inspired by the linear mode of Rizza-i-Abassi, but here in its earliest stage he had not developed the expertise in use of calligraphic line that he later exhibited.<sup>16</sup> Facial features are soft and rounded, causing the face to appear fleshy and youthful, but ethnically indistinguishable. Generic faces similar to this exemplify the current trend in Indian painting. Because the composition is simple, unexpressive, and not particularly imaginative, I believe the earlier date of 1915 is more probable than 1918.

An untitled painting of two women (Fig. 19) from a black and white reproduction in the archives of the CMT is signed in the style of the first design, but the date is unreadable. Stylistically this work appears to be less developed than the works published in 1918; therefore, I believe it was done a few years earlier. The figure style and lack of tonal variation from background to foreground contrast with his other paintings of 1918. The visual impact of the two women depends upon highlights on the sari, veil, face, and necklace. It is not unusual to see bare-breasted women, particularly in contemporary painting by other Indian artists, but it is unusual to see small, flat breasts on Chughtai's early female figures. Chughtai's sketch from the CMT of a mother nursing (Fig. 20), dated 1919 is more typical of his full-breasted female form in this period.

Kajri Dance and Music of the Rainy Season in Hindustan (Fig. 21) by Samenendranath Gupta from Chatterjee's

Picture Albums No.3 (1918) is similar to Chughtai's painting of two women and, like the Chughtai painting, is typical of the Bengal School style from about 1915 to 1920.<sup>17</sup> In both Chughtai's and Gupta's examples the figures are more important than the background. A branch and flower petals are the only reference to an environment in Chughtai's painting. The landscape in Gupta's work is only slightly more definitive, including a tree, plant, and vase. The faces and costumes are similar in both paintings and opaque highlights accent each. The foot decoration, common in Indian painting was a convention Chughtai applied to both Muslim and non-Muslim women until about 1930. After that time he reserved this adornment for his non-Muslim women. By about 1926 he began providing his Muslim women with pointed-toed slippers.

The Better Land (Fig. 22) was published in Chatterjee's Picture Albums No.5 in May of 1919, but is clearly dated 1918. It is a night scene of two tombs in a dark landscape barely visible against the blue sky. Yellow highlights sparkle in the distance and reflect on the tombs, thereby defining their contour against the sky. As in Chughtai's other paintings of 1918 to 1920 the composition is homogenized by multiple washes of varied hues. This effect was interpreted by Hamid as the artist's desire to blend the colors and use uniform tones over the entire surface, avoiding color in its pure form.<sup>18</sup>

Chughtai's painting from Chatterjee's Picture Album No. 2, A Flower That is Once Blown Forever Dies (Fig. 23), is typical of the style that was practised by the disciples of Abanindranath Tagore.<sup>19</sup> To a great extent technique dictated the early style of the Bengal School painters and Chughtai's early works appear to utilize that same technique.<sup>20</sup> In this work and others, most of the background and foreground are obscured, while one area of focus is illuminated. Here the upper torso of the girl and the sky are encompassed in an orange glow. White opaque highlights delineating the odhni (head scarf) is a feature of this work seen in other Chughtai paintings and used by artists in the Bengal School.<sup>21</sup>

A Flower Once Blown Forever Dies by Chughtai, Broken String (Fig. 24) by S.N.Gupta in Chatterjee's No. 2, 1918, and My Lamp Goes Out Every Time (Fig. 25) by Charuchandra Roy from Chatterjee's No.3, 1918, all feature a female alone in a muted, ambiguous environment. Each painting imparts a feeling of loneliness and perhaps despair. An area of light illuminates each figure within the amorphous flow of several (often complementary) hues. Both Gupta's and Chughtai's paintings are predominantly blue with an undertone of orange showing through in the transparent area. All three paintings make use of touches of opaque



white to highlight outer contours of the face, hands, arms, and costume. In the females' posture and overall mood these paintings are remarkably similar.

Another feature which suggests that Chughtai's style was closely related to that of the Bengal School is the similarity of figural representation. The costume and hair-styles of these three paintings are Indian, but these are merely eastern touches on a basically western figure style.<sup>22</sup> It is important to remember that the government schools of art set up by the British in the 1850s taught western technique and encouraged their students to draw from plaster casts of classical sculpture.

Chughtai's painting, The Rose and the Wine Cup (Fig. 26), reproduced in Modern Review of July, 1919, and in Chatterjee's No. 4, 1918, shows a clarity of background unlike the previous examples. The dark blue sky contrasts with pink walls and floor which surround the two figures. The entire composition is muted, having been washed with a tint of blue, indicating that Chughtai had not abandoned the overlaid washes. Thin columns (engaged type here) and lintels with decorative brackets was a favorite device Chughtai used for framing figures in his paintings. It appeared as early as 1918 in A Votress, (Fig. 125) reproduced in Modern Review, Sept. 1918, and was gradually modified throughout Chughtai's career.

An untitled drawing of a mother nursing her child (Fig. 20) is dated 1919. The facial features are clearly defined and typical of Chughtai's style from about 1918 to 1920.<sup>23</sup> Ornate jewelry on the head and dangling cords indicate that Chughtai was coming under the stylistic influence of Art Nouveau. Since this is merely a sketch, Chughtai's skill of draftsmanship should not be judged by the unsure line. His drawing improved rapidly and within a few years he exhibited admirable skill and control.<sup>24</sup>

By 1920 Chughtai's work was becoming individualized and more easily distinguished from that of the Bengal School artists.<sup>25</sup> Returning From the Dargah (Fig. 27) was published in Modern Review in November of 1922 but is dated 1920. The background is still misty blue and the figure emerges in a golden haze, but the architecture (like that in The Rose and the Wine Cup) is no longer lost in overlaid washes of transparent color. The woman's costume is Punjabi--an attempt on Chughtai's part to move away from the style of the Bengal School artists, who nearly always portrayed their women wearing a sari.<sup>26</sup> She is tall, but not attenuated or disproportionate as some of his later figures become.

An untitled colored-line drawing of three women spinning (Fig. 28) from the Bharat Kala Bhavan in Varanasi is dated 1921. Compositionally, it is more ambitious than the earlier line drawing, Lamp and the Moths (Fig. 18) of 1915 (or 1918). Delicate calligraphic lines in brown and black define form more precisely and harmoniously than the harsh red and blue lines of figure 1. Touches of opaque white on the face and hands are reminiscent of the highlighting from the paintings in Chatterjee's Picture Albums. The small, thin hands with a finger or two bent back is another Chughtai device repeated in various paintings from 1921 to about 1930. I do not think this stylized hand gesture was influenced by the work of the Bengal School artists. Kishitindranath Mazumdar occasionally exaggerated the bent back hand of a Hindu God in his watercolors, but Chughtai's gesture is quite unique. Neither does this gesture occur in Persian, Mughal, or Rajput miniature painting; consequently, I suggest that Chughtai either created this gesture or was influenced by Hindu and Buddhist sculpture or the frescoes of Ajanta.

Birla Academy of Art and Culture in Calcutta has three early Chughtai paintings. Two are signed and dated, the third is neither signed nor dated. Jealousy (Fig. 29) is clearly dated 1921. Radha-Krishna (Fig. 30) is not signed or dated but being the same style as Jealousy was almost certainly painted in the same year. Anarkali (Fig. 38) is signed and dated 1925.<sup>27</sup> Radha-Krishna and Jealousy both appear to have been washed with tints, but they are much more translucent and light than most of the paintings from 1918 to 1920. A low wall with geometric designs or pierced marble work (seen here) formed part of the background in many paintings from all periods.<sup>28</sup>

The facial features of the girl in Jealousy are nearly identical to those of the mother nursing her child (Fig. 20), and decorative elements such as the lamp and dangling arm band recall the influence of Art Nouveau, but the figure is much more voluptuous and more crisply defined than figures in his earlier paintings. Her hands are not so thin and delicate as those of the three women spinning (Fig. 28), also done in 1921, so apparently Chughtai was in the process of modifying and developing a personal style.

Beginning about 1921, Chughtai developed a stylized convention for facial features in three-quarter view. It is not clear when he modified this convention, but most of the three-quarter view portraits in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (published 1928) made use of it. Son of a Warrior (Fig. 31) from the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi and Charm of the East (Fig. 32), reproduced from Chughtai's Paintings, are good examples of this facial formula.<sup>29</sup> Distinguishing characteristics are the highlighted nose and

chin, and in some (as here), lines of the nose connect with the eyebrows which are generally thin and slightly arched. Eyelids are prominent, appearing to stand out from the eyeball and are accented by a flick of the brush at the inner corner. The slant and cleft of the chin is sometimes accentuated in male figures with a beard.<sup>30</sup> There are other paintings of this period with less stylized faces indicating that Chughtai did not strictly adhere to this style.<sup>31</sup>

#### SUMMARY

Although it can be stressed that Chughtai was in no way a disciple of, or affiliated with, the Bengal School, the similarity of his work from 1918 to 1922 with that movement suggests varying degrees of influence. In response to a persistent tendency among critics to link him to the Bengal School Chughtai replied:<sup>32</sup>

It is a fact that when I began my career in art modern Indian painting was known as the Bengal School...My artistic inclination and views were radically different. My style and subject matter was different...Without any propoganda or outside help my painting changed the direction of that stream which had been dominating the subcontinent art scene.<sup>33</sup>

Even after Chughtai's death, his son continued the argument, but he did not deny the possibility of other influences.<sup>34</sup> "This [early period] is merely a period of discovery and experimentation, and no doubt he learnt and was influenced by many sources..."<sup>35</sup>

The most striking correspondence between Chughtai's work and that of the Bengal School from 1918 and 1922 was the persistence of a hazy mist which pervaded the entire composition. Figures were the primary focus, illumined by the absence of overlaid washes that darkened and obscured the remainder of the painting. Opaque highlights (used by both factions) on and near the figure, strengthened the value contrast. Until about 1920, Chughtai's female figures were in vogue with the then current trend. He used the sari as women's costume, and their facial features were rounded and youthful looking like those painted by S.N. Gupta and Charuchandra Roy.

Returning From the Dargah (1920), however, was a departure from Chughtai's prior work. Punjabi dress replaced the sari, the figure was clearly defined, and the background was no longer lost in hazy obscurity. Stylized facial features personalized his three-quarter view portraits starting in 1921 and distinguished his style from

that of other contemporary Indian artists. From 1921 (if not earlier) his paintings were invariably of a larger scale than those of the Bengal School. A simplified architectural setting (Figs. 26, 27, 30) prefigured the artist's extensive use of local monuments and structural motifs in his later work.

## SECOND PERIOD; 1923-1927

The period between 1923 and 1927 is one of experimentation, manifesting a variety of foreign influences and culminating in a style that became a landmark in the artist's career. The overlaid washes of the earlier Bengal School style have been modified so that the pictorial setting is more pristine and clear. Figures are sometimes dressed in Punjabi style or an imagined oriental costume and some are depicted with Persianized features. Anatomical attenuation (to the extreme in some drawings) appears to have evolved simultaneously with an obvious influence of Art Nouveau. At the same time the irregularities of anatomy were resolved, the characteristics of Art Nouveau were integrated with naqsh, (an Indo-Persian style of decorative art, floral or geometric in design). In 1928 he published Muraqqa-Chughtai featuring stylized figures evolved from his recent experimentation. This book established his fame and many critics still refer to it as the 'Chughtai style'. I call the style associated with this book the 'Muraqqa style'.

Moon at Id (Fig. 33) was published in Modern Review in 1923. The overlaid washes have been abandoned and the background is more developed.<sup>36</sup> The faces are highlighted, and that of the younger woman is similar to the face in Charm of the East of 1921 (Fig. 32). She wears a Punjabi dress like the woman in Returning from the Dargah, dated 1920 (Fig. 27), and there is little innovation outside of the modified technique. However, a series of sketches from the CMT suggest that Chughtai was experimenting with a new figure style and facial features at the time he painted Moon at Id, but had not resolved his experiments sufficiently to present them as finished paintings for public criticism.<sup>37</sup>

A woman seated between two lamps (Fig. 34) has a voluptuous figure like other earlier drawings typified by the mother nursing her child (Fig. 20), but her arms are disproportionately long. Because the other drawings with this body type do not show the Persianized facial features or the awkwardly extended limbs, I believe this example is a transition to the 'Muraqqa style'. Furthermore, the garment (Fig. 34) is unusual. It is not a sari, nor is it traditional Punjabi attire. It seems to be an imaginative combination of fashion from sixteenth century Persian painting and Pahari dress from miniature painting of the Punjab Hills.<sup>38</sup> It is the basis for a more elaborate

costume that appears in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai and other paintings from about 1925 to 1930.<sup>39</sup> The European influence of Art Nouveau is evident in the swirls of smoke, dangling jewelry, and ornate lamp.

Another sketch (Fig. 35) with attenuated anatomy and long arms from the archives of the CMT was probably a study for Dancing Stars (Fig. 36) reproduced in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai and Anarkali.<sup>40</sup> Because the body type of this sketch is thinner than that of the previous example and the costume more complex, I assume it was done slightly later. There are several elements in this sketch, not apparent in Dancing Stars, that suggest Chughtai was familiar with the early work of Aubrey Beardsley. The triangular eye in Chughtai's sketch appears in several of Beardsley's drawings,<sup>41</sup> and the exotic costume is similar to that of Salomé in Beardsley's 1893 drawing of Jokahaan and Salomé.<sup>42</sup>

Mannerist tendencies, awkwardly manipulated in these drawings by exaggerated elongation of the arms, are less noticeable in his paintings of the same period and eventually evolved into more realistic bodily proportions. A frail body and long thin legs were usually hidden by the folds of a sari or long skirt and shawl, but a few paintings such as Expectation (Fig. 37) from Chughtai's scrapbook in the CMT revealed the form (or formlessness) of the legs.<sup>43</sup> Painted about 1924, Expectation is probably the first in a series of at least three paintings that utilize the same composition.<sup>44</sup>

Anarkali (Fig. 38) in the Birla Academy of Art and Culture, signed and dated 1925, is the immediate prototype for the figural style and background setting of the waiting beloveds in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai.<sup>45</sup> The body is attenuated and thin, the facial features are slightly Persianized, but the eyebrows that lend a strong Persian flavor to some of the female faces in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai are covered by a brow band under the dupatta. The close-fitting turban-like character of the dupatta does not conform to the loosely draped style associated with Indian women, past or present. It is a Chughtai innovation probably meant to represent the Mughal tradition in feminine headwear. Embroidery designs on the dupatta and shirt are typically Persian/Mughal, but combined with the dangling tassel, hint at the influence of Art Nouveau. The window with pointed arch behind Anarkali and geometrically decorated wall to her left are Mughal characteristics developed even further in the illustrations in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. Except for the musical instrument and Anarkali's hair (both brown) and her creamy complexion, the entire painting is conceived in tones of blue. Even the white sari and dupatta act as transparent cloth filtering an undercoat of blue.

The Persian Idol (Fig. 39) from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai encompasses many of the characteristics that I have designated as the style that represents that publication. Because Chughtai was illustrating the ghazals (short lyrics based on themes of love) of the nineteenth century Mughal poet, Mirza Ghalib, motifs of expectant lovers and beloveds predominate. Hamid aptly noted that in this period Chughtai's "view of life is wholly romantic and passive. There is an air of dreaminess, almost of unreality, about his figures."<sup>46</sup> As a waiting beloved, The Persian Idol sits on a carpet in front of an arch that opens to a Mughal garden. Cypress entwined by a flowering branch symbolized romance in classical Persian poetry and was commonly depicted in Persian miniature painting. Floral designs and geometric patterns behind the figure reflect the taste of the Mughal period from which so many buildings still remain in Lahore. Chughtai's understanding of the use of linear perspective as practised in the west is illustrated in the arch and the receding lines of the carpet, and his affinity for Art Nouveau is integrated into the costume designs.

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Most obvious among the foreign influences that contributed to Chughtai's style in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai are the swirling, decorative lines of Art Nouveau. Around the Beloved (Fig. 40) could pass as pure design in the vein of Art Nouveau, and the floating snail-like creatures can be seen in Aubrey Beardsley's work.<sup>47</sup> The romantic tenor of Ghalib's poetry complemented the lyric quality of Art Nouveau and provided an ideal vehicle for Chughtai's mode of expression. European Art Nouveau filtered into the subcontinent in the late nineteenth century and permeated the graphic arts. It was particularly prevalent in the art work produced at the Mayo School of Art in Lahore from the turn of the century through the 1920s.<sup>48</sup> Art exhibition catalogue covers featured Indianized versions of Art Nouveau posters. Tagore and the Bengal School artists were less influenced by this imported style, and no other South Asian artist integrated the essence of its characteristics into his work as fully or harmoniously as did Chughtai.<sup>49</sup>

Chughtai's apprenticeship in the art of naqsh with Baba Mira Baksh (see p.37) laid the foundation for a merging of his own decorative predispositions with the curvilinear shapes of Art Nouveau. Using vegetal and arabesque motifs, the naqsh craftsman created non-figurative, often repeating and interlocking patterns for decoration of mosques, mausoleums, prayer rugs, carpets, tents, and other related surfaces. Chughtai excelled in the art of naqsh and made extensive use of this device to enhance the decorative aspect of his compositions during the 'Muraqqa period'. "The Persian Idol" features naqsh designs in the carpet, on the borders of the figure's garment, and on the musical instrument.

Hashia work (decorative linear borders encasing the calligraphic text), commonly found in Turkish and Persian manuscripts, framed every page of Ghalib's divan in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (Fig. 41). These borders are the artist's own design and, conjoined with naqsh work, act as fillers for end leaves and title pages of this book. Dancing Stars (Fig. 36) demonstrates the application of hashia and naqsh to pictorial representation. The artist took the diapered (interlocking) motifs of hashia and naqsh, stretched them into a single band and shaped them to fit in his composition. He surrounded the halo with this device and placed similar designs inside the semi-circles at the feet of his figure. Naqsh work on costumes, a characteristic of the 'Muraqqa period', was used on the skirt border in Dancing Stars. The repeated design---triangular base with a flame or long-stemmed bud pushing up---may be symbolic.

The costume in Dancing Stars" is a combination of fact and fanciful imagination. Pakistanis wear shalwar (loose pants) as everyday attire, but their outfit is not complete without a kameez or kurta (shirt which falls to the knees or below). Chughtai's figure combines shalwar with a skirt and choli (a short-sleeved, high-waisted blouse, sometimes backless, worn with the sari). A choli would never be combined with shalwar in this manner; even in Mughal times the women wore a tunic with their pants. If the choli is meant to be transparent, Chughtai may have based his drawing on a practice that was popular with the zenana (harem) women in the Qajar period in Persia and the Mughal dynasty in India. The turban is no longer worn by Asian women but must have been part of their costume in pre-Mughal and Mughal times, as attested by miniature paintings from those periods.

Emphasis on line, body posture, profile view, and position of the head brings to mind illustrations by Aubrey Beardsley and Mucha. Free-flowing, swirling garments, and dangling accoutrements further reflect the taste of that movement. Chughtai has so completely integrated the decorative linear quality of Islamic hashia and naqsh with that of Art Nouveau that it is nearly impossible to separate these forms.

Another illustration of Ghalib's poetry, From the Balcony (Fig. 42) from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, reinforces Chughtai's stylistic ties with Beardsley's Art Nouveau and points out his fondness for abstraction. Because the artist has simplified the contours and structural elements of the architecture and flattened the composition, certain areas become hard to interpret. It may not be immediately apparent that the tree limbs at the bottom are seen through an open arch, placing the figure into a raised compartment.



The cut-off branches could be mistaken for an abstracted design placed at the bottom to balance the composition. Not infrequently Chughtai intentionally distorted reality or created a visual aberration that defied the logic of our visual world. Multiple view-points in perspective and flattening of the picture plane are technical devices that Chughtai assimilated from his knowledge and study of Persian miniature painting and Japanese prints.

There are many similarities between Chughtai's 'Muraqqa period' works and Persian Qajar painting. Vertical and horizontal bands of interlocking geometric shapes with emphasis on the star consistently frame a window or arch in Qajar paintings. A Girl Playing a Mandolin (Fig. 43) and Fath 'Ali Shah (Fig. 44), from S.J. Falk's Qajar Paintings, are examples which might be compared with a number of Chughtai's paintings in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai.<sup>50</sup> Facial features of the Persian girl with the mandolin are not unlike those of the seated lady in Omar Khayyam (Fig. 45) from a Bombay exhibition catalogue of 1927 entitled Modern Indian Painting. Eyebrows are gently curved, meeting at the center; the nose is small and aqualine; lips are small and pouting. Each face is wide at the temples and tapers like an egg to the chin. Short curls frame the face while longer locks fall behind the shoulders. Each has an adornment in the middle of the forehead and ornate headgear. Many of the Persian women in Falk's book wear transparent blouses and/or low-cut dresses which reveal the breasts, and they sit or stand with a musical instrument or a flask of wine. Although only one Qajar lady is shown with a turban, the turban style such as that of Fath 'Ali Shah could have been a generic prototype in style and design for that in Omar Khayyam.

These similarities could be coincidental. Fath 'Ali Shah sits on a carpet and so do many of Chughtai's figures since that was the custom and is still practised today in Asia. Floor covering like the kalim in (Fig. 39) can still be purchased in the Lahore bazaar. Almost certainly Chughtai was so familiar with Persian painting, Japanese prints, Art Nouveau, and Indian (S)miniatures that he unconsciously borrowed from them all.

#### SUMMARY

The period between 1923 and 1927 is epitomized by the type of paintings in Chughtai's first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. He abandoned overlaid washes, concentrated more on background and drew heavily from the curvilinear, ornate designs of Art Nouveau.<sup>51</sup> Paintings such as Around the Beloved (Fig. 40) reflected the influence of Art Nouveau in general, while From the Balcony (Fig. 42) and Dancing Stars (Fig. 36) suggested the direct influence of Aubrey

Beardsley. A Persian Idol (Fig. 39) incorporated elements of Persian and Mughal design in the architecture, garden, carpet, and musical instrument. The mood is, as Agha Abdul Hamid wrote, "wholly romantic and passive" due in part to the romantic subject matter which Chughtai was illustrating.<sup>52</sup> Most of the womens' costumes reflect the Indian style (a sari and dupatta), but a few wear Punjabi dress, more generally associated with Muslim women. Some faces are generic, others are Persianized in the manner of Persian Miniature painting. Chughtai was quoted in Caravan (1934) to say that had he waited a few more months he would not have published Muragga-i-Chughtai in 1928 because his style had changed and he was no longer satisfied with those illustrations.

### THIRD PERIOD: 1928 to 1934

By the end of the 1920s Chughtai had published a considerable number of colored outline drawings.<sup>53</sup> There are two such drawings in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, The Tutor (Fig. 46) and Princess of the Sahara (Fig. 47). Each bears a triangular signature design of the last phase, No. IV, and in both multi-colored lines define the figures and background. This End (Fig. 48), reproduced in Roopa Lekha No. 3 in 1929, is also a colored outline drawing bearing the same triangular signature design. However, the lines in the drawing are primarily only one color---redish-brown, with the exception of the dead bird, which is a very pale pink. A light, rust-brown wash fills in the contours of the tree, moon, and face of the old man. Although there is little stylistic difference between This End and the two colored outline drawings in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, the ornamental quality is greatly reduced in This End. There are no border designs on the garment of the old man; only a few sporadic diamond shapes dot his shroud. The composition is focused on the facial expression and the hand that holds a dead bird. In comparison to The Tutor and Princess of the Sahara, there are fewer lines in the composition of This End.<sup>54</sup>

A colored line drawing by Chughtai reproduced in Roopa Lekha, No. 10 & 11, 1932, has been attributed to Sarada Ukil and titled Passing of the Day (Fig. 49). A painting in the style of Sarada Ukil (Fig. 50) was published in this same issue with the caption Past Memories by Abdur Rahman Chughtai. It appears obvious to me that either the artists' names or the entire captions were switched in these two paintings (inadvertantly I presume). In order to avoid confusion, I will refer to Chughtai's painting as Passing of the Day and assume that only the artists' names were switched.

Even though it was published in 1932, Passing of the Day is close to the style of This End and was probably painted closer to 1930. There is no signature on Passing of the Day, but when compared with Princess of the Sahara, the similarities are at once apparent. The pose is nearly the same in both, but Passing of the Day is a less detailed composition and, like This End, uses only one color.<sup>55</sup> The decorative touches are still maintained, but the influence of Art Nouveau with its ornate tendencies has diminished, and areas of uninterrupted space are more evenly dispersed throughout the composition. In Passing of the Day the face

is slightly more rounded and the eyebrows less prominent than in Princess of the Sahara. A long waist, high breasts, long thin arms, and delicate hands characterize the anatomy in both paintings.

Recollections (Fig. 51) was among a group of paintings reproduced in Roopa Lekha No. 7 & 8 (1930-1932) that had been exhibited at the Fine Arts Exhibition in New Delhi in 1930.<sup>56</sup> The profile of the face and style of the dress are almost identical to those of the female in the Captive Bird (Fig. 52) from the first edition of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. Both are half-figure portraits, a type of composition Chughtai made little use of until the 1930s, and even then much less frequently than full-figure representations. In keeping with the then current style, the arms are long and thin, but the billowing shawl is unlike the more clinging, heavily draped chaddars in his other paintings. A later version of Recollections (Fig. 53), reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings with the title Gloomy Radha, suggests that Recollections was conceived as a Hindu subject.<sup>57</sup> A similar treatment of the billowing shawl is seen in another Hindu-themed painting by Chughtai of the same date entitled Holi Dance (Fig. 54).

Holi Dance was reproduced in Roopa Lekha No.5 (1930-1932), and was probably the same painting Venkatachalam referred to as Playing Holi in a letter to Chughtai dated July 10, 1930.<sup>58</sup> Although Chughtai painted Hindu themes before 1930, he seemed to have taken a special interest in Hindu and Buddhist subjects about this time.<sup>59</sup> A few details distinguished his "Indian" paintings from other subjects. These paintings nearly always include a lotus in the composition. The male figures, both Hindu and Buddhist, were distinguished by a top-knot of hair upon the head. This stylistic trait was probably derived from representations of the Buddha, which Chughtai applied to his depictions of Hindu heroes as well. In keeping with the Brahmanic tradition, Chughtai portrayed Krishna in Holi Dance with blue-grey skin. Krishna's features are modified only slightly from those of the period (1923-1927). The gently curved Roman nose is not a new characteristic, but the flat plane on its vertical axis is a change.

It is tempting to suggest that Chughtai was aware of the ancient Silpa Sastra canons which likened the brow to a hunter's bow,<sup>60</sup> but classical Persian literature used similar metaphors comparing the brows to a scimitar or to a "bow shooting arrows of glances".<sup>61</sup> These Persian canons were used with regard to the beloved, who until the nineteenth century, was usually a young boy. Radha in Holi Dance has the same profile and attenuated anatomy as other female figures of this period; however, Chughtai seemed generally less reserved with his Hindu women than their

Muslim counterparts. He was more apt to uncover the breasts of Hindu or Buddhist women and seemed to allow them more animated, complex poses than for the Muslim women in his paintings.<sup>62</sup>

Compared to Pahari miniatures of the same theme, the participants are most animated, the poses are more contorted, and the figures are larger and closer to the viewer. Not all of Chughtai's Hindu or Buddhist themes are so lively, however. Some of these paintings closely resemble themes and compositions from the Pahari repertoire. They include such themes as At Toilet, Chaitanya's Wife, The Ragni, Chitralkha, Krishna Instructing Arjuna, and Usha, most of which are discussed in chapter IV, Hindu and Buddhist Legends and Mythology.

A painting from the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, entitled Radha-Krishna (Fig. 55) is almost certainly Sunder Valley described by G. Venkatachalam in Contemporary Indian Painters.<sup>63</sup> This painting from the Salar Jung, reproduced in Chughtai's Paintings under the title Sunder Valley, was also referred to by Venkatachalam as Sunder Valley. Having been reproduced in the first edition of Chughtai's Paintings, it had to have been painted by 1935. Furthermore, Roopa Lekha Nos. 10 & 11 (1932) reported that Chughtai's Sunder Valley won first award at the 1932 Madras Fine Art Society Exhibition.<sup>64</sup>

Stylistically, the figures of Radha in white shawl and red skirt and Krishna with blue skin and yellow dhoti, conform to the anatomy of Chughtai's other figures from about 1930. The figures are tall and slim with long thin arms and graceful, delicate hands. The back of Radha's head, covered by an odhni, is no longer rounded, but rises cone-like. There is some indication that the evolution from a rounded to the more cone-like convention started during the 'Muraqqa period'.<sup>65</sup> This later style is used for his Muslim as well as Hindu/Buddhist figures. One additional change is the feet, which are more expressive than in any previous works. The toes are longer and usually the first toes lift and separate from the others. Krishna lifts the toes of one foot and rests on his heel, giving the feeling of a temporary stance, which adds animation to the pose. Most of Chughtai's earlier figures (post-Bengal School style) are relatively static in pose.

Most dramatic, however, is the influence of Pahari miniature painting from the Punjab Hills, as observed by Venkatachalam.<sup>66</sup> The similarity becomes vividly apparent when compared with A Gathering Storm (Fig. 56) from Mandi, reproduced in Rajput Miniatures from the Collection of Edwin Binney 3rd.<sup>67</sup> It is not hard to see how a background

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like that in the Pahari miniature was adapted to fit in Chughtai's composition, but Chughtai's figures are larger and closer to the viewer than is generally true in painting from the Punjab Hills. I believe his female figures developed independently of the Pahari idiom, although some of his later paintings show varied influences of that style as shown in chapter IV.

The early 1930s was a time of intense activity and diverse interest in subject matter and media for Chughtai.<sup>68</sup> For his friend, Imtiaz Ali Taj, Chughtai provided two paintings to be used as illustrations in Anarkali, the book version of a three-act play written by Taj.<sup>69</sup> He also designed the cover, title page, and divider page. Since the first edition was published in 1932, we can be sure that the illustration entitled Salim-Anarkali (Fig. 57) was done by that date. The dancing girl, Anarkali, with whom Prince Salim fell in love, conforms in body type with the other female figures discussed in this period. Her features, however, are decidedly Persianized as are those of Salim, who wears a turban wound around the Safavid style kula (protruding cap). Anarkali's red shawl is pointed at the top of the head like Radha's shawl in Sunder Valley. The pink and white dress falls nearly to the ankles barely exposing the balloon type shalwar. Salim's Mughal style coat is dark brown and offers a pleasing contrast to the light brown background. Both figures wear the pointed-toed slippers that Chughtai seemed particularly fond of during the 1920s and 1930s<sup>1</sup>. Although a panel of inlaid tile behind the figures and top center breaks the rectangular wall, the painting is not burdened with decorative details. The value contrasts are strong and the colors are sensitively balanced throughout the composition.

Although publication date of The Life and Odes of Ghalib by Abdullah Anwar Beg is given as 1941, Chughtai's three illustrations for that book belong to the period of 1932-1933.<sup>70</sup> The painting of a Persian artist entitled Reverie from The Life and Odes of Ghalib (Fig. 58) is nearly the same in pose, costume, anatomy, and facial features as Prince Salim in Salim-Anarkali (Fig. 57).<sup>71</sup>

In these, and in earlier paintings, Chughtai did not clearly distinguish between his Persian and Mughal figures. Salim was a Mughal, but his turban is early Safavid style, and his slippers are a kind not seen in Mughal miniature painting.<sup>72</sup> The coat could be either Persian or Mughal. The Persian artist (Reverie) also wears a Safavid kula inside the turban, being one of the later Safavid period.

Nevertheless, in pose, posture, and theme Reverie is reflective of miniature painting in sixteenth century

Persia. The round face, like the full moon (a simile in Persian ghazal), eyebrows, and slant of the eyes, closely resemble those in Persian miniatures. However, other aspects betray Chughtai's hand---locks of hair below the turban are not common in Persian painting, and pants beneath the outer garment are tight on the lower leg in Persian painting, whereas here they look like the Pakistani shalwar or miniature paintings from the Deccan. Since Ghalib was a Mughal poet, but his poetry followed classical Persian tradition, Chughtai may have been consciously trying to depict that duality when he painted Reverie. However, I believe that he hadn't yet worked out a separate identity for his Persian and Mughal figures.

A second untitled painting from the Life and Odes of Ghalib (Fig. 59) is noteworthy because it seems to employ the technique of overlaid washes.<sup>73</sup> It must have been intended as a night scene since the figures are set against a dark, dull purple background, and the upper portion of the female blends into the purple atmosphere. The seated figure with an Indian musical instrument and the bottom of the woman's sari are illuminated, having been spared a final blue wash. Perhaps Chughtai returned to this technique because it was an effective method for giving the illusion of evening.

The receding hairline of the female is an unusual feature, but one which is repeated in several paintings in Naqsha-i-Chughtai.<sup>74</sup> Otherwise her Persianized features are like those of the Persian artist in Reverie. Those of her companion are not so refined as others I have chosen to illustrate thus far, but similar male profiles can be seen in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. The third illustration in The Life and Odes of Ghalib conforms to the style under discussion.<sup>75</sup>

An illustration of two women (Fig. 60) for the first issue of Caravan published in 1933 is essentially a colored-in-line drawing.<sup>76</sup> Areas of flat color are contained within black outlines. There is no shading or blending of colors. It appears to be a design created for commercial three color reproduction rather than a 'fine art' watercolor painting. It makes use of orange, brown, and light green, in addition to black and white. Since Caravan was printed on the Chughtai family press, the brother Abdur Rahim must have had to prepare the press for this illustrations himself, since Abdur Rahman was apparently still in Europe. However anticipating this type of reproduction is likely to have influenced Chughtai's approach to painting. After 1933 his compositions gradually moved toward breaking up space into delimited, flat areas of color.

The following year (1934) Chughtai designed the frontispiece for Caravan, a painting of a figure riding a camel (Fig. 61). It is colored in variations of brown, peacock blue, and bright orange which produce an eye-catching contrast to the white shirt and brown bodice. Like the previous example, the colors were probably machine-printed over a black and white master---maybe the one from Chughtai's scrapbook (Fig. 62) that was reproduced elsewhere as a black and white design. The facial features are highly stylized and nearly approximate Chughtai's mature idiom.<sup>77</sup> The rider's gestures are more animated than any previous non-Hindu compositions and the camel is rendered in a rather humorous manner. Although Chughtai concentrated on depicting the human figure, he was equally skillful in portraying animals. Camels, deer, birds, doves, and peacocks were often part of his compositions.

Choosing the visual accompaniment for the 1934 Caravan must have been Chughtai's responsibility, and the wide assortment of visual material that was dispersed among the stories, poetry, and essays reflected his own interests and tastes. Consequently, the photographs and art work reproduced in this journal are significant in contributing to the stylistic chronology and an understanding of his visual influences. A photograph of the tomb of Itamad ud daula in Agra (Fig. 63) with inlaid tile work prominently visible on the encasement wall and a Persian vase (Fig. 64) (both included in the 1934 Caravan) are the kind of documents from which Chughtai drew inspiration for his syncretic designs. A comparison of the inlaid tile work with Chughtai's border designs in Caravan (Fig. 6) show this sort of borrowing. Other reproductions in the 1934 issue could have served as stylistic influence. For example, the cubistic treatment of snow-covered dwellings (Fig. 65) in an anonymous European painting is similar to Chughtai's impression of a Kashmiri village (Fig. 66).<sup>78</sup> Chughtai's interest in Japanese art was represented in this Caravan by two Japanese paintings and also included a print by Ando Hiroshige entitled "Bird in a Cherry Tree" (Fig. 67). Two contemporary Indian paintings and three old Persian miniatures were reproduced in that issue. They are Ragini (Fig. 68) by Inayat Ullah, which could easily be mistaken for a Chughtai work, a painting by Abanindranath Tagore entitled She's Dancing, a Persian painting of three figures in front of a crenelated arch, and a page with separate portraits of three Persian figures.

It is likely that some, if not all the visual materials in Caravan, 1934, belonged to Chughtai. Certainly they reflect his personal interests in world art. Chughtai collected Japanese prints, and Persian miniatures and had an on-going dialogue with Abanindranath Tagore.<sup>79</sup> Song (Fig. 69), a watercolor by A.R. Ashgar (pseudonym of



Chughtai's brother, Abdur Rahim Chughtai) also reproduced in Caravan 1934, has the flavor of a Japanese watercolor and is identical in theme to Hiroshige's Bird in a Cherry Tree. Another painting in Caravan attributed to Ashgar, entitled Night of Shiraz (Fig. 70), is identical to a painting in the collection of M.A. Haq of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, and was presented to the owner with the understanding that it had been painted by Abdur Rahman.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately it is not signed, but it is an indication that the two brothers were in very close collaboration.

Although Chughtai painted a number of landscapes, Night of Shiraz is the only non-figurative painting that I am able to associate with a firm date. The treatment of cypress trees is similar to those in Reverie and the overall scene is very close to an untitled illustration in Naqsha-chughtai that I call Ladies Amid Cypresses (Fig. 71).

In addition to the frontispiece, fly leaves, and border designs, Chughtai contributed two of his own paintings and an etching to the 1934 issue of Caravan. The etching (Fig. 236) is discussed in detail in chapter IV, Etchings. One of the paintings Soz o Sauz (Fig. 72), meaning pathos and passion, displays no new developments in Chughtai's style. The standing figure conforms to the female figure style of Radha in Sunder Valley (Fig. 55) and Ragini in Caravan. The costume of the standing figure is a refined combination of earlier forms. The dress is less segmented and pieced than those drawn in earlier periods and is one that is standardized in many works hereafter. Limbs still remain attenuated, but the graceful curve of the body posture gives the figure a more pleasing appearance, and proportions seem better resolved. Art Nouveau no longer dominates as a decorative device to the extent it did during the mid 1920s.

As in much of his previous work, Chughtai makes use of the western tradition for defining space---the tomb and arch behind it are rendered in terms of linear western perspective. In the same painting he also employs the oriental vision of depth common in Persian and Mughal paintings. It is evident in the floor which deceptively appears to be on a vertical axis because the inlaid tile designs do not decrease in size from foreground to background, and the lightest, brightest area is behind the figures rather than in front. Chughtai was completely conscious of the effect he was creating. He has, in other paintings, combined multiple viewpoints with an equally obvious intent. In "Soz o Sauz" the juxtaposition of eastern and western approaches to spacial definition is subtle, but not accidental.

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Maryan (Fig. 73), the second painting in this Caravan by Chughtai, is a portrait of a village girl whose profile and features are the same as those of the standing figure in Soz o Sauz.<sup>81</sup> Though Maryan resembles the facial style of Kangra miniatures, the face and-shoulders-only composition would be unusual in Pahari painting. This was a stock image that Chughtai used in the 1930s. Until 1934 I found only a few close-up portraits of the female face, but in Naqsha-i-Chughtai there are four.

Naqsha-i-Chughtai, first published in 1934, is another valuable source for establishing a stylistic chronology. The book was reprinted several times and thus some of the paintings were changed in its later editions.<sup>82</sup> Like Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, it provided illustrations for the divan of Ghalib but used a different set of paintings. It introduced new trends, some of which continued, some were short-lived.

Several of the illustrations in Naqsha-i-Chughtai were done in black and white only, and are similar in style to dust-jacket designs--a service Chughtai apparently provided free for any author who asked.<sup>83</sup> A still-life with vases, book and cup (Fig. 74) is that type of illustration, easily adaptable to one or two colors within the heavy definitive outlines. The imagery of the still-life is ambiguous to a greater degree than most of his paintings at this time. What was said of his dust jackets---they were his diversion---might be true of these designs as well.

This still-life has the effect of an optical illusion which might be interpreted in several ways. All of the objects could be displayed on one two-toned surface, or the light surface might be a table and the black area the floor. The upper left hand corner suggests another joining plane, but the upper right hand corner is dark with white wispy lines. Perhaps this was intended to be some object behind the first pot. In the foreground Chughtai has presented contradictions in the logic of western perspective. The book is not at the same level of perspective as the vase and not consistent with the slant of the table. The small cup would have to be viewed from a very high vantage point (or have been propped on its side) to give us so much of an inside view. This sort of ambiguity is not new in Chughtai's work, and it continues to be a device throughout his career. European Cubism seems to have been an influence in this work and more subtly in other works, such as the spacial ambiguity in From the Balcony (Fig. 42).

There are a number of paintings in Naqsha-i-Chughtai that are essentially landscapes, some include small figures or deer. A pastoral scene with six women, Women Amid

Cypresses (Fig. 71) depicts a landscape much like that in Night of Shiraz. More importantly, it clearly seems to be based on the painting, Joy of Life, (1905-1906) (Fig. 75) by the French artist, Henri Matisse. A group of semi-nude ladies relaxing in a landscape at night is an unusual theme in the context of Chughtai's cultural heritage. Societal custom would not encourage and most likely prohibit this type of activity. Even in a group, it is highly unlikely that Muslim women could enjoy this sort of freedom. Consequently I am inclined to believe that Matisse's painting inspired the composition. Although Chughtai treated his landscape quite differently from that in Joy of Life, he may have borrowed the posture of uplifted arms from the standing figure at far left in Matisse's painting. In both paintings the composition revolves around the central group and a secondary point of interest is focused on figures in the lower right (one figure in Chughtai's work). There is no doubt that Chughtai was familiar with European art. He spent nearly a year in Europe (1932) visiting art galleries and museums and while there purchased a complete file of Studio.

An untitled landscape with a deer (Fig. 76) in Naqsha-i-Chughtai repeats the verticality of Night of Shiraz and Women Amid Cypress. In all three paintings a center of interest established a horizontal anchor about one-third of the way up from the bottom of the page. Without the distant white buildings in Night of Shiraz or the line of ladies in Women Amid Cypress, the viewer's eye would be led off the top of the page. The deer, rocks, and shrubs (Fig. 76) perform the same function. Landscapes from a later period, treated in the following chapter are less stark; tree trunks are fatter and more graceful, and branches laden with large leaves bend down from the tree tops and fill in the empty spaces.

Although Chughtai's style was constantly evolving, his paintings were almost always well-composed and harmonious. One painting from Naqsha-i-Chughtai, however, entitled At Toilet (Fig. 77) seems to me inferior in both composition and figural representation. The left figure is stiffly posed, her torso is too large for the small head and thin arms, and her features are harsh. The angularity of the background, divided roughly into three horizontal bands with a small rectangle at the top right is too rigid a setting for the abundance of cloth that sets no pattern but flows in every direction. Superfluous lines saturate the drapery and clutter the compositional pattern. This painting seems so conspicuously out of place, it is curious that it was published. Apparently Chughtai himself was not satisfied with it because a later (1967) edition of Naqsha-i-Chughtai replaces this work with a much improved version (Fig. 78) using the same composition.

Among the close-up portraits in Naqsha-i-Chughtai, two are remarkably advanced. A woman in profile with exposed breasts (Fig. 79) bends in a relaxed pose that gives an arabesque movement to the composition. None of Chughtai's earlier figures filled the composition so completely and rhythmically. Dark and light patterns---hair and drape---undulate across, down and around the painting, keeping the eye directed on the figure. Chughtai tried a similar composition with Recollections, but the figure was stiff and the flowing rhythm was stymied. To my eyes, figure 82 is the more successful composition. The figure is fuller, healthier looking, and the hands are larger---perhaps too large for accurate proportions, but not distracting. The eyes are drawn differently---not the frontal eye like that in "Maryan," but more realistically as a profile eye. The nose turns up at the tip, and the lips are more expressive.

The second close-up (Fig. 80) seems to me even more advanced than the example just cited. A strong feeling of depth is created by the twisting pose and the floating dupatta that nearly encircles the figure. The right hand is partially hidden by the gauzy shawl, while the upper left arm catches the material (an unusual practice) and presses it to her side. The facial features are not much different from the style used in the frontispiece of Caravan in 1934, but the details are easier to see due to the large size of the face and the more frontal view. A strong resemblance to the Buddhist sculpture of Haddah and Fondukistan in present-day Afghanistan, seems to me indicative of a possible influence from that tradition. Bulging eyelids, alternating planes from eyebrow to lids; rendering of the nose and lips are remarkably close to many of the sculptural heads from Haddah.<sup>85</sup> Chughtai's lady lacks the double chin of the Buddhist Gandharan sculpture, but her high hairline is also present in some of the Fondukistan pieces.<sup>86</sup>

In 1951 a book of Chughtai's Hindu and Buddhist paintings was published in India under the title Chughtai's Indian Paintings. Most of the paintings in this book were probably done in the 1930s, but some retain characteristics from the mid 1920s.<sup>87</sup> The Bond of Love (Fig. 81) may have been painted between 1932 and 1934 since the body type and facial features generally correspond to others from that period. While the dangling tassels and overly long arms are reminiscent of an earlier style, the hands are not tiny and frail like those painted before 1932. Radha's features are similar to those of the girl in figure 80, but the difference in poses prevents a more complete comparison. It should also be noted that in the 1930s the faces had begun to take on individual characteristics within Chughtai's stylized canon. Krishna, however, retains the Persianized

## SECOND PERIOD; 1923-1927

The period between 1923 and 1927 is one of experimentation, manifesting a variety of foreign influences and culminating in a style that became a landmark in the artist's career. The overlaid washes of the earlier Bengal School style have been modified so that the pictorial setting is more pristine and clear. Figures are sometimes dressed in Punjabi style or an imagined oriental costume and some are depicted with Persianized features. Anatomical attenuation (to the extreme in some drawings) appears to have evolved simultaneously with an obvious influence of Art Nouveau. At the same time the irregularities of anatomy were resolved, the characteristics of Art Nouveau were integrated with naqsh, (an Indo-Persian style of decorative art, floral or geometric in design). In 1928 he published Muraqqa-Chughtai featuring stylized figures evolved from his recent experimentation. This book established his fame and many critics still refer to it as the 'Chughtai style'. I call the style associated with this book the 'Muraqqa style'.

Moon at Id (Fig. 33) was published in Modern Review in 1923. The overlaid washes have been abandoned and the background is more developed.<sup>36</sup> The faces are highlighted, and that of the younger woman is similar to the face in Charm of the East of 1921 (Fig. 32). She wears a Punjabi dress like the woman in Returning from the Dargah, dated 1920 (Fig. 27), and there is little innovation outside of the modified technique. However, a series of sketches from the CMT suggest that Chughtai was experimenting with a new figure style and facial features at the time he painted Moon at Id, but had not resolved his experiments sufficiently to present them as finished paintings for public criticism.<sup>37</sup>

A woman seated between two lamps (Fig. 34) has a voluptuous figure like other earlier drawings typified by the mother nursing her child (Fig. 20), but her arms are disproportionately long. Because the other drawings with this body type do not show the Persianized facial features or the awkwardly extended limbs, I believe this example is a transition to the 'Muraqqa style'. Furthermore, the garment (Fig. 34) is unusual. It is not a sari, nor is it traditional Punjabi attire. It seems to be an imaginative combination of fashion from sixteenth century Persian painting and Pahari dress from miniature painting of the Punjab Hills.<sup>38</sup> It is the basis for a more elaborate

eyebrows. I consider The Bond of Love the type model circa 1932-1934 for stylistically ordering other paintings in Chughtai's Indian Paintings.<sup>88</sup>

#### SUMMARY

This End (Fig. 48) c.1929 and Passing of the Day (Fig. 49) c.1930 are color-outline drawings representative of Chughtai's progressive move toward greater simplicity and economy of line. Each composition subjugates supporting elements to the central focus of interest. The evidence of Art Nouveau influence is less noticeable. Also in the early 1930s Chughtai painted a quantity of Hindu and Buddhist subjects, generally referred to as "Indian paintings." Although the style of these paintings differs little from his other subjects of the same period, there are some aspects which distinguish them. Active poses, billowing shawls, exposure of the female breast, and a top knot of hair on the male's head are elements seen in paintings such as Recollections (Fig. 51), Holi Dance (Fig. 54), and The Bond of Love (Fig. 81). Generally, however, facial features conform to the stylized idiom applied to Muslim figures as well. Persianized features, specifically curved eyebrows joined at the nose, persist in both Muslim and non-Muslim faces. Krishna's eyebrows in The Bond of Love are of this type. In Sunder Valley (Fig. 55) the influence of Pahari miniature painting is readily apparent in the landscape setting and theme of the painting.

Concurrently with the interest in Hindu and Buddhist subjects, Chughtai painted a number of Persian and Mughal types during this period. Reverie (Fig. 58) depicts a Persian artist in a landscape of cypress. The features and round face, costume, and pose imitate Persian miniature painting of the sixteenth century. Apparently in 1932 Chughtai had not formulated a stylistic distinction between his Persian and Mughal figures. The two figures in Salim-Anarkali (Fig. 57) wear dress which approximates Mughal fashion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but their features are Persian, and Salim's turban is fitted with a Persian Safavid kula.

An untitled painting of two figures in a tree (Fig. 59) is painted with overlaid washes---a technique Chughtai otherwise abandoned around 1932. Being a night scene, the overlaid washes were useful in achieving the desired effect of dark background with partially illuminated figures that blend into the atmosphere. As Chughtai did not hesitate to reuse and update old themes and compositions, he apparently returned to old techniques when the circumstances required.

For the publications of Caravan and Naqsha-i-Chughtai, Chughtai did a number of black and white (line and tonal)

compositions; a few were printed with color. A black and white still-life of vase, book, and cup (Fig. 74) is exemplary of Chughtai's taste for compositional ambiguity, which at this time was more prevalent in his black and white designs than in his color paintings.

In Caravan of 1934, Chughtai's own watercolor painting contributions, Soz o Sauz" (Fig. 72) and Maryan (Fig. 73), offer no new stylistic information, but numerous illustrations in that issue reflect Chughtai's taste and demonstrate the type of art work from which he drew inspiration.

Although Chughtai returned from his first trip to Europe early in 1933, his work does not seem to have been immediately influenced by the experience. There are, however, three paintings in Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1934) that suggest the artist had responded to his European experience. An untitled painting I've titled Women Amid Cypress (Fig. 71) is reminiscent of Joy of Life by Matisse. The theme and composition are similar, and like the figures in Joy of Life, Chughtai's ladies are sketchy rather than carefully painted with the more usual attention to detail. In addition, two paintings (Figs. 79 & 80), each a close up, half-portrait of a woman, are unusual in their concern for three dimensionality and a fuller, more robust body type. On the other hand, an illustration entitled At Toilet (Fig. 77), in the same publication, is an inferior painting, not up to par with the degree of expertise Chughtai otherwise displayed in this book.

#### FOURTH PERIOD 1935 to 1949

Among the many Chughtai sketches in the CMT, a few appear to have been inspired by certain modern European masters. These sketches are not dated and could have been done after his first trip to Europe in 1932, but considering the complex compositions, confident draftsmanship, and expressive quality, it is reasonable to assume they were inspired by his second trip to Europe in 1936. The drawing of a nude standing in a doorway (Fig. 82) is emotionally provocative and mysterious. The hair, long and parted at the back, suggests the figure is a girl whose doll has fallen on the floor in front of her. Apparently the girl's arms are drawn in close to the body in a protective gesture, giving the impression of hiding her female anatomy. The implication of shyness or embarrassment recalls the painting by Edvard Munch entitled Puberty.<sup>89</sup> Although Munch's adolescent faces the viewer, the psychological impact is much the same with Chughtai's girl. A comparison in the handling of space between Chughtai's sketch and Munch's Evening on Karl Johan Street further supports a possible influence. The congregation of evening strollers in the foreground of Munch's painting visually blocks the entrance to Karl Johan Street, and death-like faces psychologically discourage deeper penetration into the ominous distance.<sup>90</sup> Chughtai's sketch also provides a channel of space, but the ambiguity of this space is such that the viewer is held in abeyance and so, it seems, is the girl. There may be a hallway or room to her left, but the toy drum acts to block the entrance. Is she facing a corner partly darkened in shadow, or is it the entry to another compartment? Both the emotional-psychological reaction evoked by this image and the focus on ambiguous space are Munch-like characteristics. Since Chughtai had a German girlfriend (Elsa Hueffner) who accompanied him to France and Germany, it is likely he took notice of Munch's work.<sup>91</sup> Though Munch was of Norwegian origin, the recognition and controversy his work received in Berlin in 1892 encouraged him to settle in Germany. He remained there until 1908 during which time he had begun to exercise a crucial influence on the development of German Expressionist art.<sup>92</sup>

A second drawing of a seated figure with full skirt in a proud, regal pose (Fig. 83) is reminiscent of the portrait of James McNeil Whistler's mother in the painting entitled Arrangement in Gray and Black, No. 1. Certainly Chughtai would have been aware of Whistler's work, since he



is reported to have met Sir William Rothenstein in London and Rothenstein was a close friend of Whistler.<sup>93</sup>

Another sketch (Fig. 84) suggests that Chughtai may have paid particular attention to the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists. A bulky figure slumped at the end of a vacant table reflects the genre of bored, lonely drinkers in the Parisian saloons of the late nineteenth century. In theme and posture, Chughtai's figure might have been influenced by paintings such as L'Absinthe by Edgar Degas.<sup>94</sup> The facial expression and look of detached resignation in Chughtai's sketch are much like those of the drinkers in L'Absinthe and also like that of the maiden behind the counter in Edouard Manet's A Bar at the Folies-Bergere. The viewer is separated from the figure in Chughtai's painting by the table, exactly as Degas had done in L'Absinthe and similarly, Manet, in A Bar at the Folies-Bergere.

This sketch is also similar to Vincent Van Gogh's Potato Eaters both in subject matter and composition. The table, laden for the family meal, is the focus in each work, although Chughtai's sketch is an after-the-meal study. Both Chughtai's sketch and Van Gogh's painting have a strong diagonal axis behind the table. In addition, Chughtai's lonely figure has a slightly Dutch appearance. Her costume is typical of the Chughtai fashion, but it is not very much different from the type of dress associated with the Dutch peasantry as seen in paintings and drawings from the seventeenth through the twentieth century. Furthermore, her head scarf gives this figure a Dutch appearance. Were it slightly fuller it would resemble the bonnets of the women in Potato Eaters. Asian women wear their scarfs loosely over the head, yet pulled close to the forehead covering most of the hair. The head scarf in Chughtai's sketch is pulled back, revealing the hair, and appears to be tied at the neck under the hair in European fashion.

These sketches, more than any of Chughtai's paintings, offer an opportunity for comparison with individual European masters. It is possible that Chughtai may have done these sketches in Europe or shortly after his return, having been much excited by what he saw. However, I believe that aside from a few examples, European and other foreign influence upon his work was much more general and unconscious.<sup>95</sup>

It has been suggested by Ghulam Rasul, Pakistani artist and Exhibitions Curator of the Pakistan National Council of Art, that Chughtai was influenced by eighteenth century Japanese printmakers. Rasul believes that Chughtai may have adapted the twisting poses, receding hairline

(male and female), and luminous color washes from studying the masters of Ukiyo-E, particularly Utamaro and his contemporaries.<sup>96</sup>

Rasul also suggested that Chughtai may have been influenced by Indian movie billboards. He felt that the voluptuous quality in some of Chughtai's female figures was in keeping with the emphasis on large breasts as seen on movie billboards in the 1940s and 1950s. Chughtai was an avid movie-goer and no doubt was keenly aware of the many posters and billboards prominently displayed throughout Lahore advertising the current films. Tracing the movie poster as an influence may be a fruitful area for future research.

While the majority of Chughtai's Hindu and Buddhist paintings were done in the early 1930s and discussed in the preceding period, two works from his book Chughtai's Indian Paintings are later. Behind the Mountains (Fig. 154) may have been influenced by contemporary foreign trends and Amrit Jal (Fig. 85) is an example of the colored outline technique in the highest state of perfection. The two figures in Behind the Mountains are surrounded by a cubistic landscape. It is not the multifaceted cubism of Braque or Picasso, but rather the geometricized approach of Feininger, Demuth, and Delaunay. Furthermore, as opposed to the opaque oil painted surfaces of Picasso and Braque, these three artists made use of watercolor, which must have greatly appealed to Chughtai. In Chughtai's painting the fused reds and blues of the mountains pressing against the yellow and white boxes capped with black roofs are particularly reminiscent of works by Demuth.

Another possible influence for the background could be paintings from the Punjab Hills, but the houses in Behind the Mountains are a more western architectural style than those in Pahari painting. The color scheme and composition of Behind the Mountains are more complex than in most of Chughtai's other paintings. A series of arch shapes recede into the distance. A light brown blanket covering the couple in the foreground forms the nearest arch. Two brown trees arch behind the couple and frame the red mountain and a cluster of houses. The mountains behind the trees are primarily blue so that colors throughout the composition alternate between warm and cool.

Amrit Jal (Fig. 85) is an outline drawing of thin, delicate, pastel lines. In my opinion, Amrit Jal represents Chughtai's zenith in the handling of this technique by focusing on the two figures with detail and line intensity and forcing the background into a harmonious, non-competitive linear accompaniment. By now the anatomy and features are fairly standardized---the

tube-like arms and lack of muscular definition are characteristics common to his outline drawings of this and later periods. Colored outline drawings were a significant part of Chughtai's oeuvre and perhaps as responsible for the Chughtai trademark as his watercolor paintings.

On the Window Sill (Fig. 86) which appeared in Chughtai's Paintings (1940), seems to provide more stylistic evidence of European influence. I assume, since it did not appear in the earlier version of this same book, that this painting was done between 1935 and 1940. Furthermore, I suggest it was painted after 1936 when Chughtai took a second trip to Europe. Richard Rubenfeld suggested that the pose is similar to Degas' Woman With Chrysanthemums and in subject is reminiscent of Goya's Majas on a Balcony.<sup>97</sup> Rubenfeld also noted that the split complementary color scheme (a vibrant blue background and yellow ochre dress) was like that favored by Van Gogh. Chughtai, however, remained content with watercolor washes (playing flat color background against shaded areas of foreground), rather than employing the expressive brush stroke of the Post Impressionists. The thin eyebrows and hairstyle look more European than Asian, and were in vogue during the time Chughtai was in Europe.

Another painting which probably belongs to the same stylistic time category as On the Window Sill is an untitled portrait of a mother nursing her child (Fig. 87), in the collection of Faiz Ahmad Faiz. Large, full breasts, like those in the previous example, may be an honest evaluation of each woman's physical structure rather than an erotic creation by the artist. The frank exposure of the overly large breasts is impersonalized by the vacant expression on the mother's face and the muted color scheme (grey-green background, dull pink blouse and brown skin). The infant appears to have been an afterthought with its pink body nearly lost in the mother's blouse. Once again Chughtai has used complementary hues (green background and pink blouse) as the dominant colors. While the color scheme may be misleading in comparing the nursing mother to the woman On the Window Sill, there are other similarities. Both paintings use a similar pose and greatly simplified background. Each woman also has the slightly extended and lifted, further eye and an upper lip that forms a gentle curve. Furthermore, the hairstyle of the nursing mother also seems more European than Asian, being short and lacking a center part.

#### SUMMARY

Though it is not possible to precisely date the works discussed in this chapter, the period between 1935 and 1949 seems to have been a time when Chughtai responded most

~~seems to have been a time when Chughtai responded most~~ fully to the influences assimilated during his two trips to Europe. Several sketches show stylistic characteristics of individual modern European masters, while his paintings tend to reflect certain schools of western art in a generalized sense.

Three sketches in particular closely resemble the styles of Munch, Van Gogh, and Whistler. A nude sketch of a young girl is close to Munch's painting Puberty in its linear style and in evoking the emotion of self-conscious inhibition. A second sketch seems to have combined the costume and theme of Van Gogh's Potato Eaters with the attitude and composition of lonely drinkers such as those in Degas' L'Absinthe. A third sketch portrays a seated figure that immediately summons to mind the image of Whistler's mother in the painting Arrangement in Grey and Black, No. 1.

One of Chughtai's Hindu-subject paintings, Behind the Mountains includes a cubistic landscape handled more in the manner of Demuth than Picasso. The controlled fusion of transparent hues in the waterbase medium of aquarelle is typical of Demuth as well as Chughtai.

Chughtai's repeated use of a complementary and split-complementary color scheme may have some relationship to Van Gogh's persistent use of this pairing. On the Window Sill and the portrait of a nursing mother both employ a color scheme with near complements. Moreover, in each of these the figure looks more European than Asian in facial features and hairstyle.

The case for foreign influence upon the style in Chughtai's paintings should not, however, be over extended. There can be no doubt that he was influenced by European and Far Eastern art throughout his career, but the mainstream of his art continues to develop in a unique, although syncretic manner.

## FIFTH PERIOD 1950 to 1970

This last period of stylistic development of Chughtai's painting is the most difficult to reconstruct. There is evidence that by mid-century Chughtai had reached maturity in his stylistic development, and that the 1950s was a period of immensely prolific artistic production. Arif Chughtai told me that during the 1950s his father produced a large body of paintings solely to sell, as he needed money to finance the publication of Amle Chughtai.<sup>98</sup> In 1961 Chughtai purchased land in Garden Town, a suburb of Lahore, and built a home there. He intended to build a museum adjacent to his home to house his own paintings and his art collection. Arif Chughtai stated that some years before his father died, the artist became very reluctant to sell his watercolors because he wanted them for this proposed museum. Furthermore, the son remarked that during the last few years of his father's life, Chughtai devoted most of his time to his autobiography. For some unexplained reason, Arif Chughtai would not discuss the length or severity of his father's last illness---according to several reports, Chughtai was very ill for at least two years before he died---in a condition that may have limited his ability to paint.<sup>99</sup>

I am led to believe that after the publication of Amle Chughtai the artist had no need to feel pressed to paint to sell.<sup>100</sup> He was seventy or a few years past, and had over a thousand paintings he had preserved for fifty or sixty years, some of which he stated, no one has yet seen.<sup>101</sup> In a 1972 Karachi exhibition---a one-man showing at the Indus Gallery---there were only thirteen paintings shown with prices varying from 1,800 to 5,000 rupees but a total of forty etchings and aquatints.<sup>102</sup> Apparently he was holding back on selling his paintings and relying more on the sale of his prints. This may have been satisfactory---according to a Morning News review of the exhibition, those who hoped to buy were advised to hurry as most of the etchings displayed sold-out ribbons and paintings were going fast too.<sup>103</sup> Arif Chughtai remarked that Chughtai spent his last few years concentrating on his autobiography and his last efforts at painting were directed toward finishing the Omar Khayyam series.<sup>104</sup> We might assume then that Chughtai sold few if any new paintings after the late 1960s. The artist, himself, wrote in Amle Chughtai that he had wanted to publish Omar Khayyam, but the Iqbal volume took precedence.<sup>105</sup>

Perhaps these factors explain why I was able to find only a few paintings in private collections or in museums that impressed me as being more recent than those reproduced in Amle Chughtai. I base my judgement on comparison with the Omar Khayyam paintings I saw at the Third Death Anniversary Exhibition at the CMT in 1978. At least twenty-five (possibly fifty or more) paintings of the Omar Khayyam theme were featured at this exhibition and are, in my opinion, the finest of all his works.<sup>106</sup> As I mentioned previously, Arif Chughtai did not allow me to photograph any of the paintings in this exhibition. Consequently, the paintings in this section probably range in date from 1950 to about 1970 rather than up to 1975 (the date of Chughtai's death).

In 1950 a Chughtai exhibition of 169 paintings, twelve outline drawings, sixteen etchings and aquatints, and nine pencil drawings was held in Lahore and sponsored by the Pakistan Art Council. The catalogue contained reproductions of five paintings and two etchings.<sup>107</sup> The photocopy that I possess is not sharp enough for a detailed evaluation of the illustrations, but three of the paintings are reproduced elsewhere.<sup>108</sup> However, since these are earlier than 1940, they are of little interest in this chapter. One of the paintings reproduced, however, entitled Al Barmaki, may be a source for the two prominent characteristics---the long neck and bulky body---that appear in a number of illustrations from Chughtai's last illustrated book, Amle Chughtai. The catalogue photocopy of Al Barmaki is not suitable for reproduction and I have no photograph of this work, but the profile pose, long neck, large bulky body, and facial features are nearly identical to those of The Poet in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Cowasjee of Karachi (Fig. 88), and it almost certainly belongs to the same period as Al Barmaki (circa 1950).

The Poet is the ideal Asian-Islamic poet. His small head, long neck and graceful fingers are artistic characteristics and contrast with his bulky torso.<sup>109</sup> The bodily bulk, however, tends to emphasize the delicacy of the small face, long neck, and graceful hand. In this, as in many later paintings, the figure is close to the viewer and nearly fills the entire composition.

It is instructive to compare an earlier version of The Poet from the CMT (Fig. 89) with Cowasjee's version to emphasize the change in Chughtai's style.<sup>110</sup> The long neck and full, broad body are obvious changes. The earlier version is more realistic and less idealized, and the colors are less vibrant. Cowasjee's poet wears a scarlet turban and bright green cloak, and sits in front of a yellow-ochre colored background. The CMT version is

nearly monochromatic---the color of the turban is raw-umber in hue, the coat is burnt-umber colored and the background is light orange, almost ochre. In reference to this later painting and others like it, critics have noted the influence of Modigliani in Chughtai's work.<sup>111</sup>

Several other paintings of this period also seem, at first glance, to reflect Modigliani's penchant for long necks and distorted anatomy. One such example is an untitled work from a reprinted edition of Naqsha-i-Chughtai depicting a man and woman, each with a long neck and sloping shoulders (Fig. 90). The exaggerated attenuation and nearly frontal view of the male make the association with Modigliani even more convincing. I do not doubt that Chughtai was aware of Modigliani's style and certainly he must have admired that artist's work, but it may be a mistake to assume that the long neck and facial distortions in Chughtai's work were borrowed wholesale from Modigliani. Chughtai's stylistic development shows steady movement toward increasing compositional abstraction and figural distortion so that he could have arrived at the Modigliani-like characteristics as part of his own artistic evolution. Furthermore, it is my belief that this couple, and many of Chughtai's other figures, are abstractions of people the artist actually saw or knew personally.<sup>112</sup> They are almost characterizations. The neck of the male is too long to be believable, the ear appears to be molded to the cheek and the shoulders are almost non-existent. The nose of the female is much too long for her to be considered a stereotypical beauty; and although her features are stylized in the Chughtai manner, she has an individuality that sets her apart from the many other Chughtai paintings of the idealized Asian woman. The conical cap worn by the man appears in a number of other paintings---in works I consider to represent Chughtai's mature style.

Al Barmaki, The Poet, and the long-necked couple probably mark the earliest point of maturity in the development of Chughtai's style. While there are qualities and characteristics that make it possible to identify certain paintings as post 1950, Chughtai's mature style continues to be varied and even unpredictable. Within the same period he shifts from tall, thin figures to short, heavy ones. Sometimes the background is plain and simple, setting off the figure(s) with no more than a flat wash of color, or it may include supporting elements germane to the raison de etre of the dramatis personae. His palette changes as frequently as his themes, but nearly every painting has a common feature---it is people-oriented.

Another early mature painting, done circa 1950, showing a short-statured female in soft pastel colors (Fig. 91), differs markedly from the more brilliantly hued

painting of a tall thin lady (Fig. 92) done only a few years later.<sup>113</sup> The earlier work (Fig. 91) was a wedding gift from Chughtai to Mr. and Mrs. Ahmad Khan of Lahore presented to them around 1950.<sup>114</sup> There is no sign of the influence of European masters like Matisse, Van Gogh, or Modigliani in this soft pastel-hued painting of a Mughal lady posed before a cypress garden. The figure and environment look wholly oriental, and the costume, either Mughal or Decanni, shows no evidence of Chughtai's earlier tendency to include Persian characteristics.<sup>115</sup> She wears light pink trousers and bodice, a pale yellow skirt and shawl, and red shoes. The grey wall and ochre-colored floor make the light blue sky seem clear and cool. There is a strong sense of warm versus cool, inside versus out, and uncomplicated romanticism versus symbolic iconography.<sup>116</sup>

The maiden is attractive, but not sensuous. Her full trousers make her appear short and somewhat heavy, but her waist is thin and she could by no means be described as fat. In comparison, the painting owned by Navid Rahman Shazhad, done around 1953, seems to feature a much taller maiden (Fig. 92). The backgrounds are similar, although Mrs. Shazhad's painting is more colorful than the Khan work. A carmen-colored carpet spread on the orange terrace is complemented by green cypress in the background and the green hat, bodice, and skirt of the figure. A cream-colored drape over the dress (of light orange sleeves and skirt border) places the most dramatic value changes on the figure.

Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus Cowasjee's painting of Leila with her camel (Fig. 93) is another example that seems to belong to the period of the early 1950s. This painting can be placed in the same category with the Khan painting since Leila is drawn with short arms and short stature like the Mughal lady. Leila's eyes are longer and slightly flatter than any previous examples (Fig. 94), and a band of shading has been added below the lower lid.<sup>117</sup>

In contrast to Leila (but still of the same time period), a painting in the collection of Benjamine Oehlert entitled Romance depicts a very tall, thin Mughal woman dressed in shades of green, posed against a dark background of browns and ochres (Fig. 95).<sup>118</sup> The figure is especially long from feet to waist like Shazhad's Ameen Ceremony figure (Fig. 92) and was probably painted in the same stylistic mode as the latter. The woman's eyes are more frontal than profile and, being exceedingly elongated, are like those of Leila (Fig. 93). This particular manner of drawing eyes is reminiscent of the exaggerated style of eyes in eighteenth century Kishangarh miniatures and could be an indirect influence.



Further evidence of Chughtai's mature style may be found in Art in Pakistan by Jalaluddin Ahmad, published in 1954, which reproduced six of Chughtai's paintings.<sup>119</sup> One of them, The Ambassador (Fig. 96) was shown later in a Chughtai exhibition at the Arts Council in Karachi in 1959 and purchased from the exhibition by the Art Council for its permanent collection. Probably done in the early 1950s, The Ambassador is typical of an entire genre of paintings that coincided with Chughtai's efforts to illustrate for publication, selected verses from the poetry of Allama Iqbal. Amle Chughtai (Chughtai's illustrations of Iqbal's poetry) which finally appeared on the market in 1968 did not feature the romantic, sentimental, Art Nouveau type paintings of his first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. Many of the Iqbal illustrations were bold, simplified, character sketches, like The Ambassador---a heroic figure in a plain setting with a large bulky body and small head. An unusual feature of this work is the overly large hands. It is possible that the hands were intended to have iconographic meaning since this is the case in other paintings with men who depend on their hands in their professions.<sup>120</sup> The color scheme seems to be based on a monochromatic triad. The background is orange, the coat is scarlet, and the neck scarf is yellow-orange. Even the rolled up paper in the figure's hand has a light orange wash over it.

Little can be said about the development of color in Chughtai's work after the 1920s, since it is rarely consistent and widely divergent. During this period (1950 to 1970) his paintings ranged from contrasting color schemes to nearly monochromatic schemes to undefinable, multi-colored schemes. And as further evidence of his diversity and versatility, Chughtai demonstrated his ability to work without color in a series of tonal paintings that used only black, white, and shades of grey. These tonal paintings may be studied in a book by S.A. Rahman, entitled Safar (Journey), published in 1964. This volume included six black and white illustrations, all by Chughtai.<sup>121</sup> Not only do these paintings reveal Chughtai's ability to create compositions without the use of color and his versatility in handling small sized, as well as larger compositions, but they present a variety of poses, backgrounds, body types, and facial expressions that can be used as a stylistic guide for grouping other paintings.<sup>122</sup> I am dating this group to the early 1960s partly on the basis of style (refer to the following discussion) and partly on the supposition that S.A. Rahman asked Chughtai to illustrate the book after it had been revised, edited, and was ready for press. It would have been unlikely for Mr. Rahman to have had Chughtai illustrate the book before it was edited, chancing that any part could be deleted. Assuming that illustration and publication took no more

than a year each (Safar is only eighty pages and should not have taken long to edit and/or revise), these paintings should date to the early 1960s.

The first illustration in Safar depicts an old man with a staff and raised arm (Fig. 97).<sup>123</sup> The features and manner of rendering the beard reappear almost identically in a number of works from Amle Chughtai. It is most similar to the portrait of a white-bearded man standing beside a young girl (Fig. 98) from a work titled The Green Field in Amle Chughtai. The relationship of the size of the figure to the background is somewhat comparable as well. In Mourning for Baghdad, (Fig. 99) also from Amle Chughtai, the face and beard of the mo'men (religious person) are similar to that of the man in Safar.

In addition, the scale of figure to background is comparable, and the style, and placement of the architecture are similar. Both The Green Field and Mourning for Baghdad impress me, due to clarity of color, lack of sentimentality in subject, and degree of compositional abstraction, as works from the 1950s or 1960s. However, bearded old men were not a new subject for Chughtai, and some of his earlier studies do not differ radically from the Safar characterization of the aging male. Ghalib in Poet's Vision (Fig. 131) and the turbaned old man in Web of Life (both from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai) are pre-1928 paintings which suggest Chughtai's manner of rendering older men's faces did not change as much as his style of depicting youthful faces.

The second Safar illustration is a portrait of Shah Jahan made captive by his son, Aurangzeb, and confined to the premises of Mussaman Burj in Agra fort (Fig. 100).<sup>124</sup> Here he is shown sad and bent, looking out across the Jumna River to the Taj Mahal. The architecture and composition are simple and straightforward; almost diametrically opposed to an early Chughtai composition of Shah Jahan at Mussaman Burj (Fig. 187) entitled The Last Days of Shah Jahan.<sup>125</sup> In the Safar illustration Chughtai ignored the ornate decoration on the columns at Mussaman Burj and the cut-out marble lattice work like that from his own photo of Mussaman Burj (Fig. 188).<sup>126</sup> The composition is based solidly on verticals and horizontals and effectively reduced to a series of shapes in black, white, and grey. The Last Days of Shah Jahan, in comparison, depends upon decorative detail and line, in place of shape. It is faithful to the columnar decoration and the cut marble lattice work in the photo. Moreover, the emphasis on diagonal lines increases the tension within the painting, a feeling that is less (if at all) evident in the Safar Shah Jahan. In these two paintings we are seeing the dramatic change in Chughtai's style from 1921 to about 1964.

In the 1964 reproduction of Shah Jahan, the image of the emperor is stylized and readily identifiable as one of the Great Mughals. The way the turban is wrapped is the most obvious clue, but the profile achieves a degree of success as a likeness of the ruler in accordance with Mughal miniature painting.<sup>127</sup> From other examples I've seen, I would suggest that Chughtai must have intended to reserve this particular turban style for Mughal royalty even though it was popular with all classes of men from the reign of Jahangir through that of Aurangzeb. Turbans like the one worn by the figure with the staff (Fig. 97) which looks like it was twisted up without any prescribed method, or a fuller, more systematically wrapped turban such as that on the figure who gestures with two hands in front of his chest (Fig. 107), point out the basic difference between Chughtai's royal turban style and all others.

In a painting from Amle Chughtai, showing Aurangzeb (Fig. 193), the king wears the royal style turban and a short sleeved smock like that of his father, Shah Jahan, in the Safar illustration. Aurangzeb appears to be slightly more bulky and elongated than Shah Jahan, but the similarities in setting, economy of line, and lack of ornamentation, link the two paintings and suggest that both were painted in the early 1960s.

Because the illustrations for Safar offer the only accountable (though tenuous) date to formulate the continued development of style after the 1950s, the method thus far has used comparative material to build a stronger case for trends of stylistic development and to determine characteristics of style that indicate this particular time period. The next illustration of Safar, however, will be compared with stylistically related works in order to show that paintings which look alike in several respects may be from widely different time periods.

According to S.A. Rahman, the third illustration in Safar (Fig. 101) "shows a Hindu singing a song of the unity of India."<sup>128</sup> The anatomical rendering, dress, and accoutrements of this figure are the complete opposite of Chughtai's "heroic Muslim type" such as The Ambassador. A thin, tubular body with long limber arms and legs characterize this figure and others that may represent a particular stylistic subgroup within Chughtai's repertoire.<sup>129</sup> Chughtai's traditional Muslim males are fully covered and never reveal bare chest, arms, or legs. Among the Chughtai figures stylistically akin to the Hindu of Safar are two Bengalis (Fig. 102, 103), a female laborer (Fig. 105), and a tribal hunter (Fig. 104). Each of these figures is distinguished by conforming to the tubular anatomical style and (except for the female laborer) each

wears a short dhoti exposing thin stylized legs. Masculine adornment is another unusual aspect of this subgroup where even the men wear earrings and necklaces.

It may be that Chughtai intended this style to depict Indians from the eastern part of the subcontinent and tribal or non-traditional Indian groups. Bengalis are often dark-skinned with bone structure that can be differentiated from the generally lighter-skinned Punjabi people of north India thought to be of Aryan ancestry. A dark-skinned boatman (Fig. 102) from a painting entitled Bengal Boats in the collection of Packages Limited has the same body type (as well as profile and features) as the Hindu of Safar.<sup>130</sup> In addition, each wears bracelets, earrings, and several necklaces of a type normally reserved for women.

Three other paintings in the Victoria Jubilee Museum in Vijayawada, India belong to this stylistic group. Mother of the Twin (Fig. 103), a young, dark-skinned figure, assuredly Bengali (in front of a boat like those in Bengal Boats), has the same tubular anatomy and dhoti as the Hindu of Safar and the Bengal boatman. Young Bhil is the portrait of a tribal youth holding an unstrung bow in one hand and leaf in the other (Fig. 104). He conforms in anatomy, dress and use of jewelry to this substyle of non-traditional Indian groups. Bhils are a west central Indian tribe described as primitive and unchanged by contemporary society. They were occasionally a subject in Indian miniature painting. Dasi (Fig. 105), the third painting from the Victoria Jubilee Museum that forms part of this substyle appears to depict a laboring Indian woman. She stands in front of a crude make-shift tent upon a heap of stones and holds a large empty plate (to carry stones and dirt?).<sup>131</sup> She is not dark-skinned but her body type resembles that of the other figures in this discussion and her arms are long and tubular.

We can be fairly certain that the Safar illustration of the Hindu was painted in the early 1960s and with reservations place the painting entitled Bengal Boats to about the same period, primarily because the anatomy, pose, and adornment of the boatman are very close to those of the Hindu in Safar. It should follow then that the three paintings from the Victoria Jubilee Museum in Vijayawada, India, each with figures that conform to this substyle, should also be dated to the early 1960s. However, this last assumption may be erroneous because it may be assumed that Chughtai's paintings in Indian museums were acquired before partition of the subcontinent in 1947. It is, of course, a possibility that some of Chughtai's later works were taken to India after 1947, but I am doubtful of this. Bengal Boats, on the other hand, belongs to a Pakistani

collection ---one which has another Chughtai painting, of a musician (Fig. 221). The musician, though fully clothed and seated, closely resembles the figure style, arm gestures, and profile of the boatman. Primarily due to the implied anatomical contradictions---the figure looks like a male but supports breasts---and secondarily, owing to its bold, yet simplified character, I judge it to be part of the mature period and most probably dating to the early 1960s. Consequently I feel secure with the late dating of Bengal Boats.

If the three Victoria Jubilee Museum paintings date to the late 1930s or early 1940s as I suspect, then let us go back to the early 1930s for another example of this group. Just one example of several is an illustration from Naqshai-Chughtai of Majnun being taunted by the other boys (fig. 106). Majnun has the same body type as the Hindu from Safar, the Bengal boatman, and the others in this group under discussion, but the book this painting came from was published in 1934.

The couple in the fourth illustration of Safar (Fig. 107) contrasts markedly in body type and costume to the Hindu in the previous illustration, but there is no apparent value judgement placed on the social or cultural ambience of either race. Chughtai seems to have approached the emotionally charged subject matter of Rahman's book without any racial bias, sentimentality, or bitterness. His only bias (by his own admission) is an overwhelming oriental consciousness. He committed this feeling to print in Amle-Chughtai and some evidence of this concern for eastern identity might be observed in the use of reverse perspective, which was a technique favored by both the Persians and Indians in miniature painting.<sup>132</sup> In this illustration the female is much larger than the male, though obviously he stands closer to the viewer.

The background, being abstracted and geometricized, is much keeping with other illustrations in this series (Figs. 97, 110) as well as a number of paintings in Amle Chughtai.<sup>133</sup> It has been shown how Chughtai's anatomical abstractions may simply be exaggerations of persons he saw or knew (Fig. 90) [also see ahead (Figs. 108, 111, 114, 117)] and the same is true for these cityscapes of cubist houses massed together (Figs. 107, 110) and the geometric patterns of the open spaces (Figs. 97, 107). Pakistan and north Indian cities and villages often look like Chughtai's impression, particularly when viewed from a short distance.

Safar illustrations five and six, The Handing Over of the Child (Fig. 108) and Refugee With the Child Waiting to Cross the river Sutlej (Fig. 109), carry no new stylistic information but are shown here in order to complete the

series.<sup>134</sup> Another illustration (Fig. 110) was not published in Safar but is part of the group in the collection of Rahman. It was to have been the fifth illustration, The Handing Over of the Child, but Rahman asked Chughtai to do a replacement for it, showing a male receiving the child, so it would be in keeping with the story.<sup>135</sup>

Although Chughtai's mature style was established by the early 1950s, his figures continued to vary. Sometimes certain characteristics are repeated and the hint of a trend or substyle is detectable, but the diversity is so generalized that it probably owes to Chughtai's experiences and comprehensive storehouse of artistic awareness. A survey of his watercolors from the earliest to what appear to be the latest, show varying degrees of abstraction and distortion, but some works that are probably the most recent are the most daring in terms of anatomical irregularities. With this hypothesis as a basis, I suggest that four more untitled works, a girl with a bee on her finger (Fig. 111), two paintings of an apple girl (Figs. 112, 113), and a tall-splayfooted Mughal youth (Fig. 114), were created in the mid or late 1960s.

One of the most curious of female anatomies painted by Chughtai is a work in the collection of Moize Oscar Sheikh of Karachi that I identify as girl with bee on her finger (Fig. 111). It features a girl whose breasts appear to be projecting from the side of her chest rather than from the front. Had the necklace ornament been shifted slightly to the left or the coat junction moved to meet between the breasts, the viewer could accept a three-quarter pose and the breasts would look normal. However, as the painting stands, the breasts constitute an anatomical distortion, further emphasized by the joined locks of hair which encircle only one breast and the lack of any hint that the body twists at the neck away from the head.

Little of this kind of illogical anatomical distortion is evident before the time of this group. While this is not much help in affirming the date, there are characteristics of this work found in other paintings that hint at a 1960s date. The connected braids are an unusual hair style on Chughtai's women, but I found this hairstyle in another painting that fits into this group. An untitled painting, locally referred to as The Apple Girl (of Kashmir or Swat) is almost certainly a late mature painting of the 1960s (Fig. 112). The Apple Girl belongs to the collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Cowasjee of Karachi. The figure is close to the picture plane, nearly fills the compositional space, is cut off below the waist and is framed by limbs of a tree. These characteristics appear in the other paintings of this group and in many of Chughtai's other late mature

paintings. The girl with a bee on her finger is also close to the picture plane, nearly fills the space, is cut off near the waist, and is set off by a band of leaves behind her head.

The third painting from the group of four under discussion is again the theme of an apple girl (Fig. 113), though she was probably intended to represent one of the provinces more northerly than Swat. She wears the type of woolen cap known as chitralli topi (hat from Chitral) and heavy, bulky clothing associated with cool, high-altitude areas like Kashmir, Gilget, Hunza, or Chitral. But Chughtai has certainly exaggerated the bulk. Her firm, trim face, neck, and hands give no indication that she is overweight, and neither does she look pregnant, so the huge torso and breasts are inexplicable outside Chughtai's predilection for distortion. Like the two previous examples this apple girl is placed close to the picture plane, she is cut off below the waist, and she is framed by the apples and a few leaves. Her facial features are of the same genre as the others even though the shape of the face is different.

The fourth and last painting of this group (Fig. 114)---the depiction of a tall young man in Mughal dress with splayed feet---is a mixture of old and new, which makes dating it to the 1960s risky. However, an elucidation of the points for and against this late date may aid in contributing to the readers' overall understanding of Chughtai's stylistic development. Most importantly, the figure is unusual, striking in his excessive elongation and exaggerated posture. The humor evoked by the pose, elongation, and splayed feet appear to be a subtle mockery of the ubiquitous eighteenth and nineteenth century European portrait of the high ranking military officer, emperor, or other patrician type. In particular I am reminded of Goya's mockery of the royal family in his painting entitled Charles IV and His Family.<sup>136</sup>

The tall splayfooted youth belongs to the collection of Mrs. Majid Malik of Karachi and is remarkably similar to a painting in Amle Chughtai entitled Determination (Fig. 115) which also shows a splayfooted individual, with facial features like the fellow in Malik's painting. The backgrounds are similar too. In Determination it is broken up into a horizontal border with evenly spaced cypress trees (instead of plants) and a niche behind the figure's head on the left in place of the potted plant painting at the right.

Malik's painting impresses me as a later, playful version of Determination. However, there are two aspects in Malik's painting which I associate with Chughtai's early work. These are the pointed-toed shoes that I had thought

were exchanged for the shorter rounded-toed type in the mid 1930s and the nagash panel below the flower painting that was a decorative addition to many compositions done during the Muraqqa period (about 1925 to 1930). Fortunately, these two anomalies are rendered ineffectual as determinants since another mature period painting (from the 1950s) has both the turned up toes and the repeating designed nagash work. This picture, The Melody of Life (Fig. 203) from Amle Chughtai depicts a Mughal couple standing in front of an ornate domed niche, the floor is nagash work and the female wears pointed-toed slippers, while her male companion wears the nubbed-toe Mughal style slipper of Chughtai's later paintings.

Although stylized, the faces of Chughtai's men and women are varied and often individualized. Early in 1978 I photographed an untitled painting in the collection of the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad. I have since named that painting Nadra with Jug (Fig. 116) because later in that same year, I met Nadra (Fig. 117), an art student at the National College of Art in Lahore; the living embodiment of the young woman in that painting.<sup>137</sup> When I met Nadra, I showed her the photograph and she told me an interesting story. Nadra explained that some years earlier her family had been on close terms with the Chughtai family. She sometimes visited the Chughtai home with her parents and older sister, Alia, who was much taken with Chughtai's art and usually spent part of the visit chatting with him in the upstairs studio while he painted. Nadra recalled that on one occasion Chughtai responded to someone's remark about his imaginary figures, "Look at my painting and see this girl; now tell me that all my faces are pure fantasy." Chughtai was referring to Nadra's sister and (to my understanding) some painting that resembled Alia. Then Nadra speculated that in all probability Chughtai had reproduced her image, quite possible in this painting. Nadra was thirty-three when I met her and took the photo (Fig. 117). She was around seventeen when her family frequented the Chughtai home. If Chughtai was so inspired that he painted Nadra shortly after first seeing her, then Nadra with a Jug could have been created in 1961. That is not to imply that Chughtai painted from models---he wrote that he did not---but he mentally stored images and faces.

An unpublished outline drawing of a standing female from the CMT combines a face of strong character with realistic anatomical proportions (Fig. 118). Based on Nadra's comments and Chughtai's alleged habit of noticing and mentally filing faces, I would guess that this was a face that greatly impressed the artist (Fig. 119). The height and bulk of the figure seem appropriate for the size of her head; although her left arm looks like it might have



been pulled out-of-socket. Nevertheless, it is evident from this drawing and other paintings done after the 1950s that Chughtai had settled upon a realistic body type which he, by then, used regularly.<sup>138</sup> In this work, and several others of women with faces showing strong character, the body is frequently less distorted. Here, figure and pose complement the face, but unusual features, long downward curving nose, and receding chin, along with the modern western hairstyle and peaked head, are the focal point. It is by no means, however, a prerequisite that the face be unusual for the figure to be naturalistic, as there are a number of paintings that depict unremarkable faces, but still maintain realistic anatomical proportions.<sup>139</sup>

Contrary to what might seem the case, not all of Chughtai's paintings from the 1950s and 1960s included flat or unornamented backgrounds. Often the background provided iconographic accompaniment for the figures as in Under the Apple Tree (Fig. 120). According to the commentary in Amle Chughtai, the large ripe apples hanging from the leafy green trees in the fertile valley of Kashmir provide the necessary setting as a contrast to "this mother who sits daily with her son under the apple tree and sees those apples without having any hope or future. She does not touch those apples because she doesn't know who has the right to enjoy their pleasure."<sup>140</sup> Two apple trees frame the large figure and small child. The green valley of Kashmir spreads behind the seated figures and, far in the distance, meets with blue-grey mountains. Frequently, as here, the background is a landscape, but other paintings include architecture, groups of figures, an elephant, a cannon, a cityscape and other accompaniment.

In addition to using landscape as background for a figural composition, Chughtai painted scenes of pure landscape. I found only seven such examples, but I would guess he painted others. Landscapes provide very little basis for dating on their own merit, and I can do little more than point to the 1950s and 1960s as probably dates of origin for these three landscapes (Figs. 121, 122, 123). My dating is based on stylistic comparison. A landscape like Green Valley with small umbrella-like trees scattered among the strongly receding rolling hills (Fig. 123) finds its counter-part in background paintings of other compositions, some of which have been shown to date from the 1950s and 1960s. Three of these paintings with a background like Green Valley are from Amle Chughtai: The Young Farmer (Fig. 172), The Green Field (Fig. 98), and Under the Apple Tree (Fig. 120). The last two, already discussed in this chapter, have been dated to the 1950s or 1960s.

A painting entitled Landscape (Fig. 121) includes the same type of twisting trunk and individually painted leaves as Under the Apple Tree which would place it in the 1950s or 1960s, particularly since this type of landscape doesn't occur before the 1950s. Landscape (in the possession of the Punjab Art Council, Lahore), depicts two trees placed close to the picture plane. although the landscape behind the trees recedes far into the background, the painting remains flat. Downward bending branches sprout clusters of individually rendered leaves. A flattened picture plane in conjunction with the carefully delineated leaves are characteristics to be found in Persian miniature painting. Twisting tree trunks such as these are not uncommon in Indian miniature painting, particularly in Pahari paintings of the beloved who braves the forests at night in search of her lover.<sup>141</sup> A comparable landscape called Scenery (Fig. 122) by the owner, Mirza Jamil of Karachi, also shows trees in the near foreground, one of which has a twisting trunk and red foliage---each leaf painted separately. Strangely stacked leaf clusters reaching nearly to the top on the right side of the painting are a type of tree seen in Persian miniature painting.<sup>142</sup> There is little depth realized, since the trees block the viewer from entering the faded background.

In comparison, Green Valley (Fig. 123), also in the collection of the Punjab Arts Council, Lahore, depends upon the effect of being drawn back into the painting for its initial impact. At first glance the viewer may not distinguish between the various objects in the landscape. The sweep into the center distance is so strong the eye might not appreciate the diagonal emphasis delineated by a fallen tree in the foreground which helps to push the eye down the road. By the second glance, the viewer realizes the foreground contains a secondary unit with a variety of shapes and objects set apart from the greater scene. A diagonal thrust begins with the standing female on the left, follows downward with a fallen tree and proceeds to and beyond the umbrella-roofed huts onto the road. Landscapes similar to this are often used as background in paintings of this period.<sup>143</sup> Foliage is indicated by variegated washes rather than individual leaves---mushroom and conical-shaped trees being the most common.

It is not altogether inappropriate to end this section with these last three examples of landscape painting, because, though they are not a subject Chughtai was best known for, they are representative of the diversity in subject matter and style that these chapters have attempted to bring to light.

## SUMMARY

The last period of stylistic development (1950 to 1970) is characterized by a greater particularization of individual figures. Exaggeration played a part in giving the characters personal identity. Usually the subject is an idealized visualization of people types. Types may refer to profession, gender role, historical importance or ethnicity. The Poet and The Ambassador are both idealized representations of Islamic heroism in which Chughtai frequently exaggerates the bulk of the body and decreases the size of the head. They represent Chughtai's nascent maturity, evident by the early 1930s.

Outstanding characteristics of his mature style are larger figures, usually close to the picture plane, nearly filling the compositional space with less cluttered backgrounds and sometimes cut off at or near the waist. These paintings from the 1950s and 1960s also display varying degrees of anatomical abstraction and distortion. Some of Chughtai's figures have been compared with Modigliani's long-necked people, like the odd couple from Naqsha-i-Chughtai (Fig. 90), but others are distorted in such a way that is peculiar only to Chughtai's inventiveness. The Girl with a bee on her finger who seems to be growing breasts sideways rather than from the front of her chest (Fig. 111) is one example, and The Apple Girl, a rotund lady with firm extremities (Fig. 113) provide another Chughtai contradiction. Perhaps Chughtai intended a humorous response to these, at least that seems the case for the tall, sickle-bodied, splayfooted fellow in Mughal dress (Fig. 114). On the other hand, his paintings may feature attractive young women, some short and healthy, like the Mughal lady with a peacock feather (Fig. 91) or tall and thin, like the girl in Navid Rahman's Ameen Ceremony painting (Fig. 92).

A series of six black and white illustrations for S.A. Rahman's book, Safar, published in 1964, provides a chronological counter check as a guide for evaluating the approximate date of stylistically related works. It also functioned in pointing out that a group of thin, tubular-bodied individuals [the archetype being the Hindu Singing a Song of the unity of India (Fig. 101)] are not necessarily all from the mature period of the 1960s. Three works from the Victoria Jubilee Museum in India are probably from the late 1930s and another from Naqsha-i-Chughtai had to be painted earlier than 1934 (publication date of the book).

Evidence that Chughtai used faces from persons he had seen or known is presented by the story of Nadra in connection with a painting that looks very much like her. Finally this chapter looked at three landscapes that were

dated to the 1950s and 1960s (based on relative dating). They ended the chapter as a final gesture to recognize Chughtai's diversity as a mature artist. Unfortunately, what I believe to be his best and most recent work---the final paintings of Omar Khayyam---were uncompromisingly declared off limits for my photographic research work.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See note 12, p.9

<sup>2</sup> A synopsis of Hamid's article is presented here without comment since his observations will be discussed in the following pages in my treatment of the development of style.

<sup>3</sup> Hamid, "Chughtai," p.136

<sup>4</sup> Hamid, "Chughtai," p.135

<sup>5</sup> Indian subjects refers to Hindu and Buddhist as opposed to Muslim. Chughtai's book, for example, Chughtai's Indian Paintings, published in India, contains only Hindu and Buddhist subjects, whereas his book entitled simply Chughtai's Paintings, published in Pakistan, includes a mixture of subjects.

<sup>6</sup> Hamid, "Chughtai," p.136, however, was inconsistent with his dates stating: "From 1927 to 1931 [not 1932 as previously stated] when Chughtai went to Europe he was making experiments and trying to find new forms of expression."

<sup>7</sup> Hamid, "Chughtai," pp.136-137

<sup>8</sup> Hamid, "Chughtai," p.137

<sup>9</sup> This was also the habit of many of the Bengal School artists during the first three decades of the twentieth century. It may have been initiated by Abanindranath Tagore after studying with Hishida and Taikan when these two Japanese artists visited Tagore's residence in Calcutta in 1902.

<sup>10</sup> I am grateful to Arif Rahman Chughtai for directing me to various Asian publications which made reference to Chughtai and for allowing me to photocopy a quantity of catalogues from exhibitions in which his father participated. Journals and books have proved useful for determining approximate dates of much of Chughtai's work because they provide reproductions of the works, but exhibition catalogues seldom have reproductions and since Chughtai painted the same themes as many as three or four times with the same title or used the same title for completely different paintings, catalogues have proven to




be an unreliable source of information for discussing style and establishing a chronology.

<sup>11</sup> As an example of conflicting dates, Chughtai mentioned the date of a particular trip to Calcutta as 1918 in Amle Chughtai, but pointed to 1916 as the date for that same trip in his foreword to Lagan. See pp.13-14, Biography.

<sup>12</sup> Art in Pakistan by Jalaluddin Ahmad, published in 1954, reproduced six of Chughtai's paintings and gives some indications of stylistic change from 1940 to 1954.

<sup>13</sup> The National Library of Congress (Washington D.C.) which has the most complete holdings of Modern Review in this country is missing all issues from 1916. Neither is it available in this year elsewhere in the U.S.A., consequently, I have not seen Chughtai's first published painting.

<sup>14</sup> Reproductions of Chughtai's paintings were clipped out of various Indian journals and publications by the artist and his brother, Abdur Rahim, and pasted into a scrapbook. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for allowing me to photograph nearly all of this scrapbook. Unfortunately the publications from which these reproductions were taken and their dates had not been recorded in the scrapbook. Occasionally a title accompanied the picture. I was also able to photograph over eighty original pencil sketches and a few finished drawings. Less than a dozen of his pencil sketches and drawings have been published. Two drawings were included in the first edition of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928) and two others are in Chughtai's Indian Paintings (1951). Only one sketch from the group I photographed was dated---(Fig. 20). Although Arif Chughtai told me in 1978 that there were more than a thousand paintings by his father in the CMT, he would not allow me to photograph any original paintings under his care. Consequently, the original works I did photograph came from private and public collections in Pakistan and India.

<sup>15</sup> The date is written 1911. In Urdu the numeral "5" is  or , while "8" is . Because the numerals are closely underlined it is impossible to tell if the last figure is open at the bottom or closed, therefore to know if it is "5" or "8".

<sup>16</sup> Rizza-i-Abassi, a sixteenth century Persian artist noted for his calligraphic style and colored-line drawings, was mentioned by Chughtai in "My Paintings" and in "Individual and the Group."

<sup>17</sup> See note 21, p.8, for details of Chatterjee's Picture Albums.

18 Hamid, "Chughtai," p. 135

19 Tagore's following was popularly referred to as "the Bengal School" since it began in Calcutta and most of the artists either came from Bengal or moved there to study with Tagore. By the mid 1920s it had spread across the Indian subcontinent.

20 Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision," p. 7, noted that Chughtai "did not learn the technique of colouring from the Moghuls or the Persian or the Rajput masters. As Professor Shakir Ali said in his TV interview on the painter, Chughtai may have learnt it from the Tagores, Abanindranath or Gaganindranath (sic) as well as Nand Lal Bose. It is also possible that he may have taught himself this skill independently but from the same source of inspiration."

21 Among those are: S.N. Gupta, Charuchandra Roy, Nandalal Bose, Jamini Prakash Ganguli, Mrs. Sukhata Rao, Asit Kumar Haldar, Ranada Charan Ukil, Sarada Charan Ukil, Pulin Behari Datta, Surendranath Kar, Gaganendranath Tagore, Abanindranath Tagore, Surendranath Ganguli, Kishitindranath Mazumdar, and Devi Prasad Roy Chaudhury. Examples of their work can be seen in Modern Review, Chatterjee's Picture Albums, Rupam, and Roopa Lekha.

22 Although several of the Bengal School artists were influenced by the style of Ajanta which was manifested in the manner of rendering face and figure, Chughtai was more influenced by the generic style as represented by S. N. Gupta, Bireswar Sen and Charuchandra Roy.

23 Chughtai had no desire to be linked with the Bengal School, either in style, subject matter, or technique. In order to maintain his individuality he refuted in writing any suggestion of his borrowing from Tagore or his disciples. Sustaining his father's position, Arif Rahman Chughtai told me that the faces of Chughtai's women in his early work were inspired by his wife's features, and any similarity to the faces of women in paintings by S.N.Gupta or other paintings by the Bengal School artists was purely coincidental.

24 In "My Paintings" Chughtai wrote: "I have such mastery of drawing that I never use an eraser. The secret of my success is my mastery of drawing. No one can imagine the hard work I have put in, learning to draw."

25 While the Bengal School artists used a small format in keeping with traditional miniature painting, Chughtai worked large. I do not have sizes for his paintings before 1921, but I think they do not vary significantly in size from those beginning 1921. Jealousy from Birla Academy of

Art and Culture in Calcutta, dated 1921, measures 24 x 16 inches, Leila-Majnun from the Salar Jung, c. 1921 (by stylistic comparison) measures 26 1/2 x 18 7/8 inches, and Radha-Krishna, also from Birla Academy, c. 1921, measures 24 x 16 inches.

26 Punjab literally translates "five waters" i.e. five rivers. It refers to the land of the five rivers---the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej, all in Pakistan and includes the city of Lahore.

27 I am grateful to Dr. Archana Roy for providing me with excellent black and white photographs of these three paintings at no charge and reading the signature and dates since that information was too small to read on the photographs.

28 This type of pierced marble work was popular during the Mughal period and there is much of it still in good condition in Lahore. The background from this particular painting, however, was probably based on a photograph of Mussalman Burj taken by Chughtai in 1916.

29 Charm of the East is in the Prince of Wales Museum in Bombay and though I saw the original I was not allowed to photograph it. It was lent by the museum for exhibition at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, England in 1924. Son of a Warrior bears no inscription or date, but stylistically belongs to the period 1921-1922.

30 An example is The Song Offering in the Sri Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery in Mysore and published in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai.

31 An example is Moon at Id reproduced in Modern Review, XXXIII, June, 1923.

32 See Chughtai quote p.38,45. Also Javid Ansari "Chughtai End of a Living Tradition," Sunday Sun, Feb. 9, 1975, noted that "Opinions have been expressed in certain quarters that Chughtai was a disciple of the Bengal School..."

33 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

34 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 3, wrote that "Chughtai received much opposition, particularly from the Bengal School...Here on standing myth may be once for all corrected that Chughtai was perhaps a follower of the Bengal School of Art. Not only do opponents ascribe his development to that but also go ahead in the way out claim that he studied in Calcutta. Nothing could be further away from the truth."



35 Arif Chughtai, Artist of the East, p.3

36 It should be noted that the Bengal School artists did not all paint with overlaid washes. Many used more traditional western methods and their paintings looked like Chughtai's Moon at ID.

37 Only one of these drawings was dated (Fig. 20). Using it as a guideline and other stylistically similar paintings, I have arranged these sketches in a chronological sequence, then picked out the few that are illustrated here to point to significant stylistic changes or trends.

38 Hamid, "Chughtai," p.136, wrote "Though these dresses are of sixteenth century Central Asia, they never seem to have existed anywhere in the world."

39 See Figs. 45, 47, 49, and 61

40 I am grateful to Agha Babur, director of the Rawalpindi Arts Council for bringing the book, Anarkali to my attention and allowing me to photograph Chughtai's illustrations that accompanied the text. According to Agha Babur, "Anarkali, a play in three acts, was written by Syed Imtiaz Ali Taj in 1922 for commercial theater and was very popular in the subcontinent. The first edition was published in 1932, with subsequent editions in 1934, 1937, and 1947." Letter from Agha Babur, May, 1981

41 Aubrey Beardsley: Selected Drawings (New York: Grove Press, 1967), Fig. 3, The Woman in the Moon (1893) and Fig. 15, The Climax (1893).

42 Beardsley: Drawings, Fig. 6, Jokahaan and Salomé.

43 Another example is Lost in Thought in the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, India

44 The second version was published in Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1934) and a different version was reproduced in Chughtai's Paintings (1940) and in a later edition of Naqsha-i-Chughtai.

45 According to the local legend in Lahore, Anarkali was a dancing girl in the Mughal court of Akbar, with whom Prince Salim fell in love.

46 Hamid, "Chughtai," p. 135

47 Appasamy, p.68, wrote of Chughtai's painting that "Sometimes one is reminded of Art Nouveau and of such artists as Beardsley."

48 Mohammad Husain Qadri, a contemporary of Chughtai and student at the Mayo School of Art in Lahore from 1910 to 1915; later a teacher there, vice principal in 1931, and finally principal from 1942 to 1946, showed me some of the art work from the 1920s which was very strongly influenced by Art Nouveau. Interview with M.H. Qadri, September 11, 1978, Lahore.

49 See Appasamy, pp. 34, 104-105.

50 S.J. Falk, Qajar Paintings (London: Southeby Publications, 1972), p. 9, defines Qajar painting as "...the type of art that was produced as a result of the patronage of the Qajar family [1780 to early nineteenth century] and some of their wealthier subjects...a tradition of painting in oils flourished in Persia [under this dynasty] and produced some results which at their best, must be regarded as valid contributions in that field."

51 Chughtai seemed to have returned sporadically to the technique of overlaid washes. There are a few examples which probably date to the early 1930s, i.e., an untitled painting of a man and woman in a tree from the Bharat Kala Bhavan in Varanasi (also reproduced in Naqsha-i-Chughtai.) Lady and Three Deer from the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, and an untitled painting of two birds on a branch, entitled Where the Vine Grows noted by Venkatachalam in Contemporary Indian Painters (Bombay: Nalanda Publications, 1941) now in the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi.

52 Hamid, "Chughtai," p.135

53 See Figs. 28 and 36

54 Hamid, "Chughtai," p.137, noted the change toward greater simplicity and economy of line: "The pictures of the third period [1932 to 1936] are much more fresh and alive than those of the first. The stress on line as well as on detail has disappeared...There is a noticeable economy of effort. Wherein the early period, dozens of lines were used to indicate the folds of drapery, now the whole thing is suggested by a few lines. This has made the picture free from a certain type of formal stiffness which characterized the paintings of the first period."

55 Passing of the Day makes use of the same brown as in This End but the hue varies slightly throughout the composition from red-brown to pinkish-brown and black has been washed over brown lines in the hair.

56 Because the reproduction was small and black and white, it is difficult to see details and impossible to discuss color, however, it is important to consider this painting because of the firm date and subject matter.

57 Gloomy Radha is in the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi.

58 Venkatachalam wrote to Chughtai: "Thanks for sending the pictures. They are so fine, every one of them. I liked most "Gloomy Radha," "Playing Holi," "Glimpse of Spring," "Desert in a Bloom," and "The Black Panther." Most beautiful, of course, is "Gloomy Radha" [probably the painting called "Recollections"]...You will be glad to know that your "Playing Holi" has been awarded the Maharaja's prize of Rs. 100, for the best picture in the exhibition." I am grateful to Arif Rahman for providing me with a copy of this letter from G.Venkatachalam to Chughtai. Holi Dance was also reproduced in Trends of Indian Painting (1961) by Manohar Kaul.

59 Hamid, "Chughtai," p.136 noted that "From 1927 to 1931...he [Chughtai] was becoming more interested in Indian subjects." I believe, however, from stylistic evidence, that most of the Hindu and Buddhist subjects were done during the 1930s.

60 Abanindranath Tagore studied and wrote about the ancient classical artistic traditions including the Silpa Sastra and published several books on the subject. Although Chughtai could not read or understand Bengali, at least one of Tagore's essays was translated into English, and considering the correspondence between the two artists, it is likely that Chughtai was aware of some of the content in Tagore's books. See Appasamy p.27-28.

61 M.D. Rabar, The Cup of Jamshid, (Cape Cod and Hartford: Chaud Stark, Inc., 1974), p.5.

62 Muraqqa-i-Chughtai included several women with exposed breasts, but the women tend to be generic types wearing a sari rather than Punjabi Muslim dress.

63 Venkatachalam, Contemporary Painters, p.57, wrote: "Sunder Valley" is lyrical in its nature and appeal. Youth and beauty stand, shy and romantic, at the threshold of life's joyous adventure. A lovely valley, with undulating hills, tree-covered meadows, rushing rivulets and nestling white villages spread out before them, challenging them to come out of their narrow prison walls of marble palaces and towering terraces, to taste the simple natural pleasures of a free and unfettered life of the wilds.

A far-fetched interpretation, the artist might say to a simple study of Radha and Krishna in one of their pastoral playful moods. This sweet picture is, in its theme, treatment, setting, background and lyrical nature, a little reminiscent of a Kangra miniature."

64 Roopa Lekha, 10 & 11, 1932

65 See Figs. 57, 72, 93, and 95

66 See p.155, note 58.

67 Rajput Miniatures from the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd. Travelling exhibition, originated at Portland Oregon Art Museum, Sept. 24, 1968-Dec. 14, 1969, Fig. 68.

68 Chughtai's major achievements in this period were: Publication of Caravan (1933, 1934) and Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1934), and an intense interest in and production of etching after private tutelage in London in 1932.

69 There were four illustrations for Anarkali in this edition. Two were titled and labeled "Work of Chughtai", the other two were neither signed nor titled, and since they were executed in an entirely different style from that of Chughtai's, I assume they were done by another artist. The other painting by Chughtai was a colored-in version of the outline drawing Dancing Stars from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai. I am most grateful to Mr. Agha Babur, director of the Rawalpindi Arts Council for bringing Anarkali to my attention and allowing me to photograph his personal copy. It is unfortunate, however, that the face of Anarkali on the cover of Mr. Babur's book was badly damaged, as it may have been a useful stylistic tool.

70 Abdullah Anwar Beg, The Life and Odes of Ghalib, (Lahore: Urdu Academy, Lahori Gate, 1941).

71 Venkatachalam reproduced this painting in his book, Contemporary Indian Painters, with the title Reverie and listed as courtesy of the artist. Consequently, one would assume that the artist supplied the title. However, in the Victoria Jubilee Museum, a nearly identical painting by Chughtai (slightly earlier than Reverie) carries the title A Persian Artist. As with other museums in Pakistan and India, the current curators do not know if the names were given by the artist or the museum staff who were employed when the paintings were purchased. Reverie was also reproduced in Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1934).

72 Pointed-toed, turned-up slippers (still worn today in Pakistan and western India) are to be seen in Indian

painting from the Punjab Hills, in Central India, and the Deccan, but not in Persian or Mughal miniature painting.

73 A nearly identical version entitled Omar Khayyam is in the Bharat Kala Bhavan at Benaras Hindu University in Varanasi.

74 See Fig. 80

75 Since the third illustration offers no new information I have excluded it from the discussion.

76 I am grateful to Dr. Waheed Quairashi for allowing me free access to his immense and varied personal library and for allowing me to photograph from his two issues of Caravan. I was not able to find Caravan elsewhere, although I believe there are copies in the CMT.

77 See Figs. 80, 93, 111, and 112

78 This painting is entitled Self Revelation and is reproduced in Amle Chughtai.

79 Communication between Abanindranath Tagore and Chughtai began around 1919 and continued until 1935. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for allowing me to photocopy some of these letters.

80 I am grateful to Mr. M.A. Haq for his gracious assistance in providing me with many details concerning this painting.

81 The use of the word "portrait" does not imply the likeness of a sitter or the use of a model. In "My Paintings," Chughtai wrote that he never used models. He said, however, that his memory was well-trained and he often painted faces that he had seen and remembered.

82 Editions of Naqsha-i-Chughtai are not dated after the first publication. See Biography, p. 55

83 See Biography, pp. 61-12

84 The later version of this painting (Fig. 78) is in the collection of Mr. Gafoor of Karachi.

85 See Benjamin Rowland and Francis Rice, Art in Afghanistan, (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971), (Figs. 110, 112, 114, and 131)

86 Rowland and Rice, (Figs. 153, 154, 159, and 148)

87 In the artist's Foreword to Chughtai's Indian Paintings, p. 7, Chughtai wrote: "Almost all these paintings relate to my early art."

88 Other illustrations reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings that may be dated between 1932 and 1934, following the criteria set by The Bond of Love are as following (with the figure number behind each referring to their location in that book): The Divine Cowherd Plate 26, (Fig. 144); Nat-Raj Plate 6, (Fig. 151); Devadasi Plate 15, and After the Bath Plate 13; Hiraman Tota Plate 8 is closer to the style of Sunder Valley and was probably painted between 1930 and 1932. Vishvamitra Plate 21 has characteristics of paintings done about 1924 and is probably the earliest painting in Chughtai's Indian Paintings. Gloomy Radha Plate 3, (Fig. 53) from the National Gallery of Art in New Delhi, also in Chughtai's Indian Paintings, is probably slightly later than The Bond of Love. Radha's pose is close to that of the girl in (Fig. 83), and the profiles of the two women are similar. The robust body and tube-like fingers common to both, are characteristics that seem to belong to other paintings of 1934. Other examples in Chughtai's Indian Paintings from about 1934 are: Barkha Rut Plate 1, Yasoda Plate 12, Arjuna Plate 16 (Fig. 148), Dipak Plate 17 (Fig. 127), Charm of the Valley Plate 20 (Fig. 143), Chitarlekha Plate 24 (Fig. 146) and Ragni Plate 25 (Fig. 156).

89 See John Canaday, Mainstreams of Modern Art (New York: Hold, 1959), p. 402, Fig. 467

90 For a discussion of the blocked space, see Albert Elsen, Purposes of Art (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972), p.293.

91 See pp. 50-51 for a discussion of the artist's friendship with Elsa Hueffner.

92 H.H. Aranson, History of Modern Art (New York: Harry H. Abrams, 1968), p. 155. Chughtai could not have been ignorant of Munch's fame, artistic contribution, and influence in eastern Europe, particularly since Chughtai was in Germany during a time Munch was especially visible there artistically (1935-1937). Munch's paintings were housed in various museums in Germany and in 1935 his art was exhibited in Hitler's new palace of art in Munich with the best modern painters of Europe. In 1937, he was confronted by a different kind of national attention. On Hitler's recommendation, eighty-two of Munch's paintings were removed from German museums and later sold to provide cash for the Third Reich. But at the same time he was being exhibited widely outside of Germany.

93 Arif Chughtai wrote in Chughtai: Artist of the East, pp.5-6, "In Europe...Chughtai was also able to meet a whole new group of intellectuals, poets, artists, critics and the like. It was in these two repeated visits in 1930 (sic) and 1936 that he met personalities like Sir Lawrence Binyon, Sir William Rothenstein, Sir Frank Short, Sir Campbell Dobson, Sir William Leiwely, Sir John Marshall, J.W. Wilkinson and Basil Gray amongst others." Undoubtedly Chughtai did meet Basil Gray, but whether or not he met the others is uncertain. Abdullah Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School," wrote about a meeting he planned with Dr. Binyon, Basil Gray, Wilkinson and Professor Cresswell. The four guests "...turned up on time and stayed with me for a long time, but Abdur Rahman was nowhere to be found he had slipped away." It is possible Chughtai met one or more of these gentlemen at a later time.

Whistler's Arrangement in Grey and Black, No.1, The Artist's Mother was purchased by the French government in 1891 and placed in the Luxembourg Museum. The acquisition aroused considerable excitement in French artistic circles, influenced several portraits by Toulouse-Lautrec, incited praise from Seurat and various literati in Paris. By the time Chughtai arrived in Paris, Arrangement in Grey and Black, No.1 had almost certainly been transferred to the Louvre, where it is presently housed. Denys Sutton, Nocturne: James McNeill Whistler (Philadelphia and New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1964), p. 122.

94 Aranson, p. 37, Fig. 33.

95 Other foreign influence refers to all non-European painting such as Chinese or Japanese, but excludes Persian, Mughal and Indian.

96 Ghulam Rasul's allegation is wholly tenable considering that Chughtai collected Japanese prints and mentioned, in particular, Utamaro and Hokusai in discussing his collection. Interview with Ghulam Rasul, November 4, 1978. Islamabad.

97 Personal communication with Richard Rubinfeld, specialist in nineteenth and twentieth century European and American art, July 24, 1981.

98 Interview with Arif Chughtai, Feb. 20, 1978, Lahore

99 Interview with Mrs. Majid Malik, July 31, 1978, Karachi, and with Faiz Ahmad Faiz, March 27, 1978, Lahore.

100 For an account of the financial and tactical problems Chughtai faced in publishing Amle Chughtai refer to pp. 73-76.

101 Faiz Ahmad Faiz discussed a letter from Chughtai to this effect. Faiz was quoted by Nisar Osmani in "A.R. Chughtai was a progressive artist," Dawn, Feb. 9, 1975, p. 12.

102 I am grateful to Ali Imam, owner/director of the Indus Gallery for giving me a copy of prices and list of Chughtai's paintings and prints for the April 1972 exhibition.

103 Staff Reporter, "Chughtai's paintings on display in city," Morning News, April 3, 1972.

104 See pp. 74 and 81.

105 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," p.1

106 This exhibition took place January 17, 1978, just a few days after I arrived in Pakistan to begin field work and research. Before that time I had not seen an original Chughtai painting and my understanding of his stylistic development was negligible, so that I had little background and nothing to compare these paintings to. However, I clearly remember how impressed I was by the technical, compositional, and chromatic virtuosity of this group. Arif Chughtai discussed these works briefly during the exhibition, but it was not a situation amenable to my taking notes, so I tried to remember what I could.

107 Chughtai Exhibition: One Hundred & Ninety-four Paintings, Drawings & Etchings, sponsored by the Pakistan Art Council, 68, The Mall, Lahore, Pakistan, December 11 to January 1, 1950. The five paintings reproduced in this catalogue are: Al Barmaki; Pride of the Valley also published in Chughtai's Paintings, 1935; Withered Flower also published in Chughtai's Paintings, 1940; and Mughal Princess. The etchings are Fragrance and Glimps (sic) of Spring.

108 I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for providing me with a photocopy of this catalogue, particularly since it was not available in any public institution. See footnote 104 above for publication of the three paintings.

109 While the small head and bulky body function stylistically, they may also have an iconographic interpretation.

110 I would date the early version from the CMT to the early 1920s because there is an emphasis on line similar to paintings like Charm of the East (Fig. 32) and Son of a Warrior (Fig. 31). The muted color scheme is close to that of Son of a Warrior and both have a vertical highlight



delineating the bridge of the nose. Son of a Warrior and Charm of the East were painted c. 1921.

111 It may be significant to note that the earliest reference I found linking Chughtai's style with that of Modigliani was suggested by M.D. Taseer on page 7 in the catalogue of the 1950 exhibition cited in footnote 104. "His figures are the figures of the Persian and Urdu ghazal. And in this Modigliani is his nearest kin. In this alone they are similar, because this great Italian modern has not the vigour of life, the brilliant colours and vivacity of Chughtai." Jacob Ball-Teshuva, on page 56 in Art Treasures of the United Nations, surmised that his [Chughtai's] anatomical elongations might be an eastern counterpart of Modigliani or Henry Moore."

112 Refer to the story told to me by Nadra, p.144.

113 This painting of a tall female standing on a veranda holding a book under her chin was presented to Navid Rahman Shazhad by Chughtai at the completion of her Ameen (study of the Quran) ceremony about 1953. Since the attractive young lady holds a red book (Chughtai's ubiquitous symbol for the Quran) and stands near a Quran stand, it is probable that this painting was done specifically for the occasion. In this case it would have been painted approximately three years after the wedding gift to Mr. and Mrs. Khan. (See below)

114 Mr. Ahmad Khan married a cousin of Chughtai and the artist gave them this painting as a wedding gift. Most possibly it was painted especially for the new couple and presented around 1950.

115 See the discussion about Reverie, pp. 119-120.

116 The pose is wholly romantic (reminiscent of the early Indian śalabhanjika figures such as those at Bharhut, Sanchi, and others--noted Dr. Susan Huntington) as if the figure is breathing in the cool fresh garden breeze and surveying the distance hoping to catch a glimpse of the returning lover. On the other hand, the dull grey interior is a mysterious contrast to the light airy exterior, and the peacock feather that attracts special notice due to its placement suggests it may have a special meaning.

117 This painting was not titled, but the subject is that of Leila from the Arabic folk story entitled Leila-Majnun.

118 Benjamine Oehlert, American ambassador to Pakistan in the 1950s, apparently purchased several paintings from

Chughtai with the assistance of a third party, just before he ended his ambassadorial term in Pakistan.

119 The six paintings reproduced in Art in Pakistan are: are: Khalifazada, The Ambassador, Sultan and the Saint, Modesty, Fragrance of the Valley, and College Girls. Khalifazada may belong to the collection of the CMT since it was included in the 1978 exhibition of Chughtai's Paintings sponsored by the CMT during Chughtai's Third Death Anniversary Ceremonies at the Chughtai Garden Town Office/Museum. The Ambassador belongs to the Arts Council of Karachi, where I photographed this painting and two Chughtai etchings. The Sultan and the Saint, reproduced in Amle Chughtai, is in the United Nations Collection in New York. There are at least three versions of Modesty. The location of this version is unknown, however, two other versions (nearly identical) are (1) in the State Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad, India, entitled Salma and (2) in the private collection of Mr. M. Hassan of Karachi. A third version which looks like Modesty in Art in Pakistan was published in Focus on Pakistan, I, No. 3, August 1971, p. 30, but entitled Queen of Sheba. Fragrance of the Valley is in the private collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Cowasjee of Karachi. It is one of Chughtai's more frequently published works, having <sup>been</sup> reproduced as Tulip of Kashmir in the 1970 reprinted edition of Chughtai's Paintings and in Pakistani newspapers and several magazine articles that featured the artist. College Girls was also reproduced in Art Treasures of the United Nations since it is part of their permanent collection.

120 The hands of a farmer holding an ear of corn, entitled Son of the Soil are larger than what could be considered the maximum in normal anatomical proportions. The same is true for the poet, Ghani Kashmiri. Both professions depend upon use of the hands, though each in a very different way. Both are reproduced in Amle Chughtai, but their present locations are unknown.

121 The illustrations reproduced here are photographs of the original tonal paintings that Chughtai gave to S.A. Rahman as a token of their friendship. Mr. Rahman has seven of these tonal paintings, but only six were used in his book. Rahman explained that he described each particular scene to Chughtai that was to be illustrated. The fifth illustration was supposed to depict a man receiving a child from a woman, but Chughtai painted two women exchanging a baby (Fig. 110). Because that illustration did not follow the text of Safar, Rahman asked Chughtai to do another showing a man taking the child (Fig. 108). The painting with two women (Fig. 110), being an error, was not reproduced in Safar, but forms part of the original group in the collection of S.A. Rahman.

122 Most of Chughtai's paintings measure about 22 x 26 inches, whereas the illustrations for Safar average about 9 x 11 inches.

123 S.A. Rahman's book concerns the tragedy of the migrations between India and Pakistan after partition in 1947. His story focuses on the plight of a few families who left India destined for West Pakistan. The first illustration depicts a refugee who is making his way to Pakistan. "He is trudging along with staff in hand" stated S.A. Rahman in an interview April 14, 1978 in Lahore.

124 Rahman, Safar

125 The Last Days of Shah Jahan, according to Abdullah Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School," p.3, was purchased (probably in 1922) by Shamsheer Jung Bahadur, the Chief Minister of Nepal. I have not seen the original, but I assume it is in the royal collection in Nepal. The Last Days of Shah Jahan was discussed in Rupam, No. 10, April 1922.

126 This is one of a number of photographs taken by Chughtai on a trip to Delhi and Agra in 1916. See p.6. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for allowing me to photograph the original photograph.

127 See J.V. S. Wilkinson, Mughal Painting, (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1956) Plate 9, Shah Jahan Visiting a Religious Teacher.

128 Rahman, Safar

129 Dr. Susan Huntington noted that the figure must be meant to represent a holy man, being derived from the holy man type, hence the thinness.

130 Packages Limited is a container designing and printing firm based in Lahore which, under the leadership of Babur Ali, has endeavored to foster the growth of twentieth century art in Pakistan by purchasing works of Pakistani artists for display in offices throughout the plant. Babur Ali owns a painting of two doves by Chughtai which forms part of his private collection apart from that of Packages Ltd. Bengal Boats, also reproduced in a folio of Chughtai's paintings by The National Bank of Pakistan in 1968, was there titled Nightfall Over the River.

131 Dasi connotes a female dancer which does not appear to be an appropriate title for this painting. However, it is probable that many (perhaps most) of Chughtai's paintings in Indian museums were given titles by the museum curators or directors without direction from the artist.

132 Chughtai stated in "Individual and the Group," "My attempt to illustrate Iqbal is related to this mania of Easternness of Iqbal. I consider that this sincerity and obsession [with orientalism] is the key note of our individuality...Any artist who portrays his culture and national character can never deny national pride and traditions."

133 Some examples are: Self Revelation (Fig. 66), The Bound of Love (Fig. 205), Babur and Humayun (Fig. 180), and The Glory of Almighty in Amle Chughtai.

134 See note 120, p. 163 for story in brief.

135 See note 121, p.162.

136 For a discussion of Goya's painting of the royal family of Charles IV, see Goya in Perspective, Fred Licht (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1973), p.162.

137 When I photographed this painting in Islamabad, no one seemed to know its title, subsequently I acquired a catalogue for the exhibition of modern Pakistani paintings at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington D. C. in November 1982, Paintings From Pakistan, Khalid Said Butt, ed., Pakistan National Council of Arts and found this painting illustrated with the title Potter's Daughter.

138 See Figs. 112, 170, 174, 175, 182, and 201.

139 Other examples are: Modern Girls (Fig. 216), College Girls (Fig. 217), and most of Chughtai's Mughal women such as Zebunissa, many of which can be seen in Amle Chughtai.

140 Amle Chughtai, commentary for Under the Apple Tree.

141 See Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray, Painting of India (Geneva: Albert Skira, 1963), p. 173, Krishna on the Swing.

142 See Stuart Cary Welch, Persian Painting (New York: George Braziller, 1976), Plate 2, The Court of Gayumarth, Plate 6, The Death of Zahhak, Plate 10, Barbad, the Concealed Musician.

## SUBJECT MATTER AND ICONOGRAPHY

In Chughtai's art, style is often inextricably linked to and sometimes determined by subject matter and iconography. A Kangra-like maiden holding a lotus posed in front of the ubiquitous landscape of Pahari miniatures (Fig. 162), a Persian artist in typical sixteenth to eighteenth century Persian painting three-quarter pose with Safavid kula under a Persian style turban (Fig. 58) or a portrait of Jahangir in Mughal style jama and turbans contemplating a painting in a posture typical of Mughal miniature painting (Fig. 181) are obvious examples of the interrelatedness of style, subject matter and iconography in Chughtai's art.

Yet while various scholars have discussed individual paintings by Chughtai, the majority of their writings are merely descriptions or appreciations of the color, line, and composition and tell little about the subject matter or meaning of the content. Chughtai himself shed little light on the subjects of his individual paintings, although in Amle Chughtai, the artist wrote a one or two page commentary for each illustration.<sup>1</sup> Some of this information is helpful in determining the meaning of the relevant works of art. Unfortunately Chughtai only provided such information in this one book. Kashmira Singh made an occasional reference to iconography in the brief explanatory notes in Chughtai's Indian Paintings and the British Empire Exhibition of 1924 provided a catalogue with annotations for each painting.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise it has been necessary to rely on books of Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu religion, history, and literature, Chughtai's autobiographical writings and interviews with artists and scholars in Pakistan for my analysis of the iconographic content of Chughtai's paintings.

About his earliest subject matter, Chughtai wrote:

Fantastic ideas used to occur to me when I first took up painting...A woman goes to the river to draw water. It so happens that the vessel skips out of her hand and her heart misses a beat. I [also] made two paintings entitled The Evening of Uvudh and The Morning of Benaras. I also painted many others but those did not measure up to the standard I had in my mind and I destroyed them.<sup>3</sup>

Chughtai's quote suggests an interest in genre (a woman drawing water from a river) and implies an emotional interpretation by the artist (her vessel falls and her heart misses a beat). We may infer then, that in his formative period a large part of Chughtai's approach to subject matter involved a personal or emotional reaction to a specific incident in human activities familiar to the artist.

Clearly The Evening of Uvudh and The Morning of Benaras were among the works destroyed by the artist that did not measure up to the standard he had in mind. It is not clear, however, if these two paintings belong to the genre category discussed above or refer to another approach to subject matter. Chughtai does not elaborate upon their content, but the generalized "time, mood, and location" titles were exactly the type of labels used by a majority of Indian and British artists in the 1920s.<sup>4</sup> Since these titles were similar to those of his contemporaries, his subject matter also may have been comparable. We have seen evidence of this in a painting of two women that appears to be earlier than 1918 (Fig. 19) and it has already been shown that Chughtai adapted (but later abandoned) the Bengal School technique.

If Chughtai began with subjects commonly used throughout India in the early twentieth century, he soon became intent upon distinguishing his approach from that of the other Indian artists. He chose themes that were intended to reflect his own unique cultural heritage. For example, the Calcutta artists often portrayed a Hindu woman going to the shrine; Chughtai depicted a Muslim Punjabi woman returning from a dargah (shrine or tomb of a Muslim saint).<sup>5</sup> Ironically, however, some of his most favored and often recurring themes of Islamic subjects had already been done by Abanindranath Tagore and his disciples. At least as early as 1918 Chughtai started painting illustrations from the Rubiyat of Omar Khayyam.<sup>6</sup> Tagore, however, had already painted a series of illustrations from Omar Khayyam between 1906 and 1911.<sup>7</sup> In about 1921, Chughtai painted the Death of Shah Jahan, but almost certainly he had seen the well-published, highly acclaimed painting by Tagore entitled The Passing of Shah Jahan done in 1895. Mughal subjects were not to be the unique contribution of Chughtai to modern Indian art, because Tagore had painted many before Chughtai took up his brush.<sup>8</sup>

There was a theme, however, that none of the other artists (anywhere in South Asia) had ventured to paint, and Chughtai pursued it with a tireless enthusiasm. These were paintings inspired by the verses of Allama Iqbal.

Thereafter my paintings took a new turn. I made Iqbal's poetry my subject matter. I still have the first painting which reflected this new trend. In it a woman is shown going to a holy shrine with an earthen lamp in her hand. It is the dead of night. She is shielding the flame with her hand so that the wind doesn't put it out. Moths are dashing into the flame like things possessed. Another painting entitled Saqi was also greatly appreciated.<sup>9</sup>

Chughtai would have us believe that he began illustrating Iqbal's poetry before 1918. "The idea of illustrating the works of Ghalib and Omar Khayyam hadn't crossed my mind yet."<sup>10</sup> Indeed Ghalib came later, but the verses of Omar Khayyam were a subject of his by 1918. By aligning his earliest art with the poetry of Iqbal, Chughtai was attempting to disassociate himself from the influence of Tagore. However, sorting out the sources of Chughtai's earliest themes is difficult, if not impossible. Chughtai's champion of contemporary Islamic philosophy, Iqbal, owes much of his symbolism to his forerunners, the giants of classical Persian verse like Rumi and Ghalib. Even though Iqbal wrote with a new message for a different age, he used the same similies and metaphors as Ghalib and Omar Khayyam, so it is nearly impossible to trace the original source in many of Chughtai's earliest works.

The Flame and the Moths or The Saqi, mentioned by Chughtai in the previous quote are (as will be shown) universal symbols in Persian and Urdu poetry. To make matters more complex, some Hindu themes have Islamic counterparts. The Hindu devadasi (a temple dancing girl) with a lamp could be painted to look like the Islamic lamp and moth metaphor, and the Hindu version of the waiting beloved, which had its parallel in Chughtai's illustrations of Ghalib, was popular with the Bengal School artists.

Chughtai experimented with a large variety of subject matter in a relatively short time. Referring to the early or mid 1920s, he wrote:

When I turned my attention to the rural life and romances of the Punjab, my creative impulse and artistic capability received a big fillip...Not only was I greatly influenced by Punjabi folk romances but felt deeply attached to them as they formed part of my past and traditions.<sup>11</sup>

From the late 1920s through the 1930s the artist said he "also painted a lot of themes from Hindu mythology."<sup>12</sup> He painted Buddhist subjects too, and considered this subject matter (Hindu and Buddhist) a challenge "to find

out if [he] could do better than them [the artists of the Bengal School]...since their entire work was based on it."<sup>13</sup>

Chughtai's statements were not always objective, particularly when he was writing about the Bengal School or other topics equally sensitive to him because of continuing publicity that categorized him as a follower of the Bengal School or questioned his artistic modernity. By the 1930s he had already published several paintings in the manner of Persian and Mughal miniatures: He wrote:

The Bengal School did not have a single painter who could have made use of Persian and Mughal paintings, I alone made use of my rich heritage.<sup>14</sup>

If considered literally and objectively, this last statement is not valid. As has been shown, Tagore and some of his disciples painted Mughal subjects and a few Persian style works as well.

By the 1950s, portraits of heroes from Islamic history, and particularly those of Mughal royalty, were among his most publicized themes. Of these Chughtai stated:

Muslim painters of the past had not paid any attention to portraits. As for me, heroic and noble figures from my past left such an impression on my mind that I couldn't help doing their portraits.<sup>15</sup>

Closely related to depictions of historic Islamic heroes are a series of paintings of ideals with titles such as Leadership, Modesty, The Bond of Love, and another series of genre paintings that also served as studies of regional types of India and Pakistan, such as The Kashmiri Boy, Young Bhil, and Bengal Boats.<sup>16</sup>

During his long career, Chughtai also painted landscapes, still lifes, and sometimes featured animals in his compositions. These paintings are more difficult to place in terms of a time sequence than compositions with human figures.

Chughtai's last energies may have been concentrated on completing a voluminous series of paintings illustrating the poetry of Omar Khayyam. Although the artist advertised the forthcoming publication of that volume in 1950, it has yet to reach the market. Forty-five of these works were exhibited at the 1978 Chughtai Commemoration ceremonies at the CMT in Lahore; in my opinion they are the finest and,



therefore, I assume the most recent of his immense output. Unfortunately, I was not allowed to photograph any of these paintings.

## PERSIAN AND URDU POETRY: GHALIB AND OMAR KHAYYAM

Persian and Mughal artists had been illustrating literary works centuries before Chughtai published an illustrated Divan-i-Ghalib (collected verse of Ghalib) in 1928.<sup>17</sup> Illustrated Persian manuscripts record everything from histories to scientific treatises; from short stories to poetry. In modern times Edmund Dulac romanticized the exotic east with his illustrations of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and stirred the west's curiosity about Persian poetry. Mughal artists illustrated what the Persians had done, their own histories, and an impressive number of Hindu religious texts. But neither in the past nor up to the time Chughtai started painting "The Rose and The Nightengale" or "The Lady and the Lamp" in the second decade of the twentieth century, had artists consciously transcribed the metaphors of Persian literature into visual counterparts. Chughtai was the first Muslim artist to give visual form to the poetic metaphors that typify Persian/Urdu verse.

Indian artists, on the other hand, in the past and occasionally in the modern movement (Tagore and his contemporaries), painted motifs with strong metaphoric content. Most of the symbolism referred to romance or the absent lover in a way not unrelated to the metaphors of Persian ghazal. A lonely mistress of the Hindu genre diverts her attention to deer or a peacock which represent the absent lover. Pathos and passion in Persian ghazal is epitomized in the metaphor of the rose and the nightingale or the lamp and the moths. This chapter will examine the relationship between Persian verse and painted imagery in some of Chughtai's romantic paintings, and analyze the impact of Hindu metaphoric romantic painting on related themes by Chughtai.

In Chughtai's first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, each illustration is captioned with a verse by the Indo-Muslim poet, Mirza Ghalib.<sup>18</sup> These verses comprise a form of poetry known as ghazal. Themes of love, which predominate in Persian and Urdu ghazal, were consistent with Chughtai's penchant for the romantic and the poetic. Indo-Muslim society, which molded Ghalib's and Chughtai's outlooks, based inter-family development on arranged marriage and gave no license to romantic love. As Mohammad Rahbar explains in his book, Cup of Jamshid:

In a society of veiled and unexposed feminine beauties, with a universal ban on courtship, decent men developed phenomenal powers of sublimation. The cruelties of arranged marriages were borne with good grace and cheer...The lover in the poet played courtship in the freest of fantasies. The growing intimacy with the imaginary sweetheart necessarily consummated and gave to the poet a strange sense of spiritual union.<sup>19</sup>

Consequently, in the tradition of ghazal, the lover is destined to suffer the agonies of rejection. Whereas in actuality the lover/poet would dishonor his beloved by acknowledging his clandestine pursuit of her, he can (in verse) fantasize the expectation of a rendezvous. The Extinguished Flame (Fig. 124) from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai is accompanied by Ghalib's couplet which translates, "She was waiting alone all the night and even the lamp had gone out; only the lamp kept her company and now it's blown out too."<sup>20</sup>

The imagery in The Extinguished Flame complements Ghalib's couplet and evokes the mood of soz o sauz (passion and pathos) that typifies ghazal. Moths, which contribute a relatively small part to the visual impact of this painting, are a much-used literary symbol in ghazal and represent the lover who is fatally attracted to the flames of the lamp. The lamp had gone out, and the moths, consumed by the flame (the beloved), are scattered over her torso.<sup>21</sup> Her bed chamber is undisturbed, the wine flask still full, but in anguish the beloved has fallen beside the lamp in neglect of her appearance. The carefully wrapped sari has pulled away from her body exposing a breast, and locks of hair tumble in disarray. Ghazal convention also compares long black tresses of the beloved to the long dark nights of separation. A verse in translation from the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam clarifies the symbolic imagery and conveys the history of passion and pathos in Islamic poetry.

A lover's heart is a lamp which from the cheek of his sweetheart gets its light. And if it's extinguished from the grief of his disunion it lives again, alright. Yet the qualities of a candle can be mentioned only before a moth, for this meaning can be understood only by those, whose heart has been burnt with love and who have a keen insight.<sup>22</sup>

The theme of the lamp and the moth was ubiquitous in Chughtai's oeuvre throughout the first thirty years of his career. One of his earliest surviving works, Lamp and the Moths (Fig. 18) was an unimaginative later rendering of

that motif.<sup>23</sup> This painting could easily have been mistaken for a devadasi (Hindu temple dancing girl). The devadasi approaching the temple with lamp or candle was a popular theme among Bengal School artists and many devadasi paintings had been published in Indian journals.<sup>24</sup> Since Chughtai's paintings were published in these same journals (Modern Review, Rupam, and Roopa Lekha) the public probably tended to view his lady and lamp themes as Hindu subject matter. Chughtai (who was moving toward a definitive Muslim identity) did not want his lady, lamp and moth compositions to be interpreted as Hindu subject matter. He greatly resented being categorized as a follower of the Bengal School and sought to dispel any association with that movement. It is not clear why he continued to paint such imagery that could not unequivocally be interpreted as Muslim rather than Hindu.

One of Chughtai's lady, lamp and moth paintings which closely resembled the Hindu devadasi theme was selected as the frontispiece for Modern Review in 1918 (Fig. 125). However, Chughtai either refused or neglected to title this painting, but to insure a non-Hindu interpretation he provided the editor, Ramanendra Chatterjee, with an explanatory discourse of his intended message.<sup>25</sup>

The figure in the picture represents some of those men who aspire to be our leaders and are actuated by the mere desire for popularity. They wish that people should gather round them as moths gather round a flame. But as they do not possess the natural gifts and virtues to attract men, they feign those qualities to attract people. This has been represented by a lamp over the head of the figure...The eyes of the figure are covered by the veil of selfishness, symbolizing the fact that the self-styled leaders are blind to the actual situation and real needs of the country. The figure is that of a woman to denote the effeminacy of these aspirants to leadership.<sup>26</sup>

The editor captioned the frontispiece Type of a Class of men Aspiring to Leadership, but the same painting was published in two other journals with two different titles. It appeared in one Indian journal with the title Leader (perhaps an abbreviation of the longer titled) and in another publication as Votress.<sup>27</sup>

In 1968 yet another version of this painting was reproduced in Amle Chughtai with the title Fame (Fig. 126). The commentary accompanying Fame in Amle Chughtai stated that when it was painted in 1924, it was given the name

Leader and depicted the political trends of that era. The commentary further explained that:

A semi-nude woman sits holding a burning lamp in the guise of fame in front of the high doors of a temple. She is determined to fascinate the people by the display of her beauty. She wants to become the goddess of fame and desires people to start worshipping her name in the temple and sacrifice their lives like moths. She also wishes that superstition may prevail and she may trap her worshippers with the charm of her looks so they would not be able to defeat the slavery of the politics of the class-society. Fame is comparing her beauty with her object. Being desirous of fame, display, and praise, this woman seems spellbound with her self-conceit.<sup>28</sup>

Not only are these two commentaries inconsistent with one another, they are inconsistent with my understanding of Chughtai's approach to his art. I had been led to believe from interviews with friends and acquaintances of the artist that, though he was keenly aware of national political events, he was not in the habit of discussing politics and did not outwardly show any great concern for the political situation. Sometime before our discussion of Leader and Fame, I asked Arif Chughtai if his father painted any political subjects. He told me that the only politically-oriented painting he knew of painted by his father was a cotton-spinning composition that reflected Mahatma Gandhi's 1921 Spinning Campaign.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, according to reports from artists and friends and acquaintances of Chughtai, the artist was reluctant to discuss the meaning of his work. He welcomed comments from others but refused to present his own intent and even had the habit of disappearing when prospective buyers were viewing his paintings.<sup>30</sup>

Considering Chughtai's lack of involvement in politics of the subcontinent and his reluctance to discuss his own works, I suspect an ulterior motive for the commentaries of Leader and Fame. Chughtai's motive for the commentaries may have been to dissociate these works from their Hindu counterparts popularized by Abanindranath Tagore and his disciples.<sup>31</sup>

In considering these paintings apart from the commentary, one cannot deny the overwhelmingly Hindu character of each. The bracket ornamentation of the pillars is distinctly Hindu, suggesting the scene takes place in a Hindu temple, and the costume is not typical attire of Muslim women, particularly the revealing choli of

the figure in Fame. When I asked Dr. Waheed Quraishi of Oriental College in Lahore to interpret this painting, he responded:

The painting Fame portrays a devadasi at the threshold of a temple. There is a Hindu arch obscured in a dark atmosphere and a lamp over her head. The contours of the body and the sensuality of the half-exposed breasts are an open challenge to the priests.<sup>32</sup>

I believe Dr. Quraishi's response typifies the interpretation this work evoked from the general public. This was the viewpoint Chughtai wanted to dispel, and his son continued the effort.

Arif Chughtai contended that Leader and Fame were part of a progression of paintings of the same subject inspired by the imagery from Iqbal's poetry. But he did not clearly explain their relationship. "It is a series," Arif Chughtai told me, "where each leads to the next."<sup>33</sup> Referring to Fame, the artist's son added, "She was a leader and a votress; she had received fame and now a veil has come over her eyes."<sup>34</sup> Rather than part of a progression, Fame seems to be an undated version of the earlier painting Leader (Type of a Class of men Aspiring to Leadership or Votress). Due to the variety of titles, the idea of their being a series is understandable, but the two commentaries do not indicate that a progression exists. Neither do the commentaries relate either of these two paintings to the verses of Iqbal; however, Chughtai did relate the "concept" of lamp and moth to the imagery in Iqbal's poetry.<sup>35</sup> Because much of Iqbal's symbolism derived from classical Persian literature, many of Chughtai's paintings could be attributed equally to the inspiration of Iqbal, Ghalib, or Omar Khayyam or any number of other Persian poets.

From the mid 1930s and after, Chughtai's many lamp and moth paintings had become a generalized expression of the forlorn beloved. It is possible that Chughtai may have intended to create a Hindu counterpart for the traditionally Islamic lamp and moth theme. Dipak (Fig. 127), published in Chughtai's Indian Paintings is a Hindu version of that theme evidenced by a demure young woman who wears a see-through choli, holds two lotuses (one in each hand), shows bare skin at the waist and has uncovered her head. In comparison, For Love (Fig. 128), reproduced in Chughtai's Paintings, depicts a traditional Islamic concept of female propriety with head and body fully covered by the long flowing chaddar, and the baggy sleeves indicate she is wearing a dress or kurta (long blouse) rather than a choli.<sup>36</sup> Most importantly Dipak was illustrated in a

publication of Chughtai's Hindu and Buddhist subjects published in India after partition of the subcontinent. Obviously it was meant to be appreciated by a predominantly Hindu audience.

The lovelorn mistress was a major Hindu subject in eighteenth and nineteenth century Indian miniature painting. Raganis and Nayikas pined for their absent lovers on marble verandas attended by sympathetic maid servants or in the garden where they transferred their attentions to a bird or animal, usually a peacock or deer, to assuage their loneliness and alleviate the pain of waiting. Although the theme of passion and pathos was the same for Hindu and Muslim, the iconography differed. The two might be categorized: Hindu woman with peacock or deer as surrogate pines for absent lover: Muslim woman with the lamp and moths symbolizes the suffering beloved. It's not difficult to imagine how Chughtai could have appropriated the lamp and moth symbolism for the Hindu mistress, particularly since Tagore and his disciples had popularized the theme of the devadasi holding a lamp at the temple entrance.

One painting by Chughtai of the theme, Lamp and Moths, stands out as an anomaly. Divine Light in the collection of the Sri Jayachamarajendra Art Gallery in Mysore (Fig. 129) shows two women kneeling before a lamp. Both women are fully draped in the Muslim manner, but the younger woman who supports a sleeping child on her lap, is nude from the waist up and her breasts are exposed. Here is an odd combination of propriety and exposure and a good example of the anomaly that cautions the Chughtai scholar to avoid categorically grouping subjects without considering significant deviations in their meaning.

The Captive Bird from the first edition of Muraqqa-i-Chughtai and The Bulbul, which replaced The Captive Bird in the next edition, are interchangeable, well-known themes in Persian poetry that imply the use of poetic metaphors. The Captive Bird (Fig. 52) depicts a beloved holding a rose that has attracted the full attention of the caged bird. Her beauty is equated to that of the rose, but even more beautiful is she. The famous Mughal poet, Mir, gives us an example of this ubiquitous metaphor. "The cypress and the rose are fine, and both adorn the garden---yet would that the rose had her cheek's beauty, would that the cypress had her poise."<sup>37</sup> The lover may be consumed, like the moth, by the flame of passion, or as the nightingale, helplessly captivated by the beauty of the rose. Referring to the perverted <sup>but</sup> enviable pleasure of the poet as captive, Mir wrote, "The nightingale held pride of place for song, but he is captive now. What wonder, then, if crows and kites should now aspire to sing like him?"<sup>38</sup>

The Bulbul, meaning nightingale (Fig. 130), is the hapless suitor who imagines himself to be a captive bird dangling on a string that ties him to the mistress' finger. The lover knows that even if she cared for him, the Muslim woman could never admit to her true feelings due to the restrictions of that society. Consequently the beloved shunned her suitor and the poet exaggerated her act as a form of torment. The lament of the forlorn poet comprise more metaphors that are generally known by literate Indo-Muslims.<sup>39</sup> Each eyebrow is a bow shooting arrows of glances, <sup>40</sup> eyebrows are curved like the scimitar and equally as dangerous with long eyelashes...like sharp arrows that pierce their lovers to the heart.<sup>41</sup> A hint of scorn on the face of the beloved (Fig. 130) is accepted by the poet and visualized by the artist. After all, as Russell wrote, "If her cruelty destroys him there is no ground for complaint in that. It is the nature of beauty to be cruel, and she can no more help it than the rose can help the nightingale dying of love of her."<sup>42</sup> In the mystic sense the cruel mistress is God, who created good and evil and may afflict even his most faithful servant with pain and suffering and yet whom the true believer, according to the Quran, must love with unquestionable devotion.<sup>43</sup>

Ghalib, Omar Khayyam, and a great many other Persian and Urdu poets were Sufi mystics who couched these metaphysical concepts in secular imagery. Wine developed symbolic implications as the means by which Sufis achieved communion with God, the Supreme Beloved. Because of the close association of the wine and saqi (wine server), the saqi became synonymous with the Supreme Beloved.

Until comparatively recent times the saqi was a handsome male youth, but in the Poet's Vision Chughtai idealizes a female wine server (Fig. 131).<sup>44</sup> Here the artist provided his viewers with an idealized portrait of the poet (Ghalib) himself, in a tall red cap, slumped on the floor behind the saqi. In the verse which accompanies Poet's Vision, Ghalib beseeches the saqi, "I haven't the power to move my hand, but my eyes are alive. Please let the cup and flask remain there." The poet can barely move as he watches the saqi toss away the cup. He is either too old or too inebriated (or both) to drink more of the liquid, but he can still be intoxicated by the beauty of the wine server (or symbolically the beauty of God).

Since the Saqi and the Poet was nearly a universal motif in Persian poetry, Chughtai could paint that theme and attribute the imagery to Omar Khayyam as well as Ghalib. In fact, he could have associated a painting of that imagery with any number of famous Persian or Urdu poets. A painting entitled Omar Khayyam (Fig. 45), from



the exhibition catalogue, Modern Indian Painting, Bombay, 1927 is only one example of the many Saqi and Poet motifs painted by Chughtai. Variations on that theme, such as the saqi standing alone or "Sufi and Saqi", proliferated as well. A painting from the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad entitled Romantic Scene (Fig. 132) depicts a very Persian-looking saqi offering wine to a reluctant young man. Sixteenth and seventeenth century Persian miniature painting included romantic scenes of lovers sharing wine which may be synonymous with the "saqi/Sufi" theme. Seduction scenes in Persian painting usually depicted the male offering wine to a reluctant female, but the reverse (such as Chughtai's example) can be found too.

In Ghalib's ghazals the poet often faces death, both literally and figuratively.<sup>45</sup> Death allows the soul to join God in Sufi metaphysics, or two lovers can meet in heaven beyond the grave. The poet sometimes fantasizes his death in order to bring into the open the passions of his beloved. The Resting Place (Fig. 133) from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai is one of at least three versions of the same theme by Chughtai which shows the beloved mourning at a grave, presumably that of her lover. The accompanying couplet by Ghalib translates: "After my death she wears a black dress, she was burning with love for me. In love one is red, but in death, black as smoke. She's gone black." Although the scene takes place at night, an unseen light source illuminates the face of the beloved. Dr. Yakub Zaki suggested the light might come from a candle or lamp recessed into a niche in the headstone of the tomb.<sup>46</sup> The first two lines of a verse by Omar Khayyam give a poetic and metaphorical explanation of the unexplained illumination.

A lover's heart is a lamp which from the cheek of  
his sweetheart gets its light. And if it's  
extinguished from the grief of his disunion it  
lives again...<sup>47</sup>

When the lamp goes out it emits smoke, the color of the mourner's dress in this painting, but a trace of the lover's "heart-flame" (Omar Khayyam) reflects on his beloved's face. Agha Abdul Hamid noticed a trait of unconscious symbolism in Chughtai's work expressed by the inclusion of opposites within a single painting.<sup>48</sup> Similarly Dr. Zaki noted the disparate qualities of death and new life in The Resting Place, of which he said, "The sinister chatris (fan-shaped flowers) speak of the hideous transmutation of the grave, whilst the new growth which puts forth beside the dead twigs hints at the resurrection."<sup>49</sup>

Few of Chughtai's paintings are as purely symbolic as Life (Fig. 134). Ghalib's verse attached to this work is

equally elusive and metaphoric. "Life is in the spirit and no one can determine how long it will go; where or when it will stop: how deep. Neither my hands on the bridle nor feet in the stirrups." Chughtai visually expressed the thought of this verse by depicting a burning candle in a lotus floating in a body of water near a dead tree. Life is like a burning candle---a probe into uncertainty. Life goes on as long as God wills; like the candle, it can go out with the breath of the wind or a splash from the wave of the sea of life upon which it drifts in the lotus boat. As a rider on a horse with no reins or stirrups, life is under control of some power greater than our own. It flows and sways with the current as does the candle---the cycle of life prevails---birth, growth, death, decay. This is a reaffirmation of the transience and ephemerality of life. The dead tree with no leaves of new life is not in motion; is a symbol of death in contrast to the burning candle.

#### SUMMARY

One of Chughtai's important contributions to Islamic painting was his innovation in rendering Persian/Urdu poetic metaphors into visual parallels. The development of this idiom may have been a result of his familiarity with symbolic Hindu paintings of the same nature. Both Hindu and Islamic literary conventions dramatized the waiting beloved, each with its own symbols for the absent lover. While deer and the peacock served as the absent lover in Hindu miniature painting, moths and the nightingale were the Islamic poetic counterparts. Chughtai appears to have also created a composite imagery that combined the Hindu devadasi theme with the Islamic lady, lamp and moth motif. On the other hand, in the Islamic tradition of Sufism the beloved is equated with God and the metaphors take on a metaphysical significance. Consequently Chughtai's "Sufi and saqi" illustrations are related to Persian and miniature painting rather than Hindu art. Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928) and Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1935) proliferate with metaphoric illustrations selected from particular verses of the text---a divan of Ghalib.

## ISLAMIC LITERATURE AND PUNJABI FOLKTALES

Chughtai's debt to Persian and Mughal miniature painting is manifested in his style and subject matter. It was pointed out in the previous section, that while Persian and Mughal artists illustrated Islamic prose and poetry, they did not extract the metaphors (so integral to that literature) as motifs.<sup>50</sup> Chughtai created an entire genre based on poetic metaphors like "the rose and the nightingale", "the lamp and the moths", and "the Sufi and the saqi". Ghazals, being short couplets, each separate and usually independent of the next, lent themselves to these kinds of particularized motifs.

Just as he contributed a new and unique approach to illustrating Persian and Urdu poetry for his own paintings, Chughtai rejected the type of scenes Persian artists chose when drawing from the same literary sources as they did. Persian artists (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries) were frequently called upon by their royal patrons to illustrate the Persian national epic, the Shah Nama, (the Book of Kings). These highly patterned, brilliantly colored miniatures were often group or action scenes: battles, hunting, durbar; or great personalities such as Bahram Gur slaying the dragon or Rostam fighting a crocodile. Chughtai, in comparison, avoided the group and action scenes, preferring to immortalize his chosen heroes and heroines as idealized portraits. From the Shah Nama he gives us a portrait of the author, Poet Firdose, and two of the characters, Shirin and Khusrau.<sup>51</sup> Related to the Shah Nama type of action scenes are paintings by both Persian and Mughal artists from works like the Bustan of Saadi and the Khamsa of Nizami as well as other romances and histories. Laila-Majnun, one of the selections from the Khamsa of Nizami (five poems of Nizami), was a favorite with the Mughals, the Safavid Persians, Chughtai, and his Islamic artist contemporaries (though few they were). Once again Chughtai's viewpoint is fresh and unique as will be shown in the following discussion.

Romantic tales from the Punjab are short stories, not a long historical narrative like the Shah Nama, but they are similar to romantic vignettes from that comprehensive work. Being part of the greater realm of Islamic literature, these regional romances have much in common with more universal romances like those by Firdosé, Saadi, or Nizami. Laila-Majnun might even be considered a model for these local stories, but most are believed to be based

on true accounts and therefore free of conscious plagiarism. Most were tragedies in the vein of Romeo and Juliet with strong religious overtones that seemed to appeal to Chughtai. They were learned by heart like fairy tales or Mother Goose stories are today in the west, and almost everyone from the Punjab knew and loved these stories. These romances provided subject matter for Chughtai and his contemporaries and a few were appropriated verbatim by Indian (Hindu) miniaturists and the Mughals, but the Persians were either unaware of them or were unimpressed by them.<sup>52</sup>

Persian paintings of romantic themes from the Punjab, so far as I know, have never appeared in publications (if they do exist), but there are hundreds of paintings by Persian artists from the Khamsa of Nizami and a considerable portion of those are of the story Laila-Majnun.<sup>53</sup> The legendary story of Laila-Majnun, popularized by the twelfth century poet, Nizami, is the best known romance among Persians and Indo-Muslims.

Chughtai painted the theme many times throughout his career in a variety of styles and compositions. One of his earliest versions painted about 1921 and now in the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad (Fig. 135), was probably the same painting exhibited at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, England, in 1924. The catalogue for the British Empire Exhibition says of Chughtai's painting Leila and Majnun:

The famous love romance of Leila and Majnun has been a favourite theme throughout the world. Qais was the son of an Arabian chief, handsome, amiable, and a fine poet. Fragments of his verses are still sung with enthusiasm by the Arabs. Leila was the daughter of a neighbouring ruler, and she reciprocated the passion of her devoted lover. Nothing seemed likely to disturb the happiness which their attachment promised. But the avarice of Leila's father destroyed their hopes, and she was commanded to think of Qais no more. In spite of the grief and remonstrances of the unfortunate pair, they were separated. Qais became insane from disappointment and his name was therefore changed to Majnun (the distracted one). He roamed into jungles and deserts in his madness. Seizing an opportunity, Leila went to the jungles to seek her lover, and at last found him thin and lean, seated in despair. On hearing her voice the glow of love reanimated him.<sup>54</sup>

Taking advantage of the hazy, mysterious effects derived from the Bengal School technique of overlaid

washes, this composition focuses a golden light on the pale yellow gown of Leila as if she were a fairy princess. In keeping with so many other paintings done in this technique, the background is a mottled purple, the results of which were achieved by washing blue over red. Majnun catches light on the front of his body---the part that faces Leila, which might be intended to convey the message that he received light from his beloved. A V shaped beam projects onto his forehead, one ray emanating from Leila's eyes, and the other from her hands clasped under her chin. Chughtai's comprehensive skill in craftsmanship is manifested even at this early date in the convincing rendering of Leila's camel. As befitting a chieftain's daughter, ornate trappings drape from the dromedary's back and give the impression of a delicate hilltop castle.

In the early 1930s, Chughtai presented a ragged Majnun as the brunt of society's ridicule (Fig. 106). The story relates that in his madness Majnun neglected his appearance and wasted away. He spoke gibberish---the only intelligible word he uttered was the name, Leila; and other youths of the countryside made fun of him and sometimes threw stones at "the crazy one". A group of boys peers down at the pathetic Majnun, his gangling body echoed by the spindly branches sprouting from the nearby cactus. Several boys appear to hold stones, ready to be tossed at the figure below.

Another painting of Majnun alone in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, India, depicts the youth sitting on a hill of stone overlooking the desert (Fig. 136). His uplifted arm gives the impression he is conversing with someone or something, but Chughtai does not reveal who it is, leaving the viewer to imagine who it might be. Perhaps he is meant to be conversing with his beloved, Leila, or with God. They may be one and the same. Nizami's story, Laila-Majnun is one of many love stories that is also interpreted from a religious point of view. Annemarie Schimmel explained: "Then there is Majnun...the lover who yearns for his beloved Laila and yet, after years of longing, realizes that Laila is within himself, that the beloved is not distinct from himself but is the very core of his heart."<sup>55</sup> The beloved is, of course, God.

A companion piece, also in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, entitled Laila demonstrates the heroine's despair and loneliness by means of pose and composition (Fig. 137). Her head is bowed and she is alone in the desert except for her camel. Both this painting and its companion, Majnun, convey a sense of alienation, but in spite of the suffering both characters endure, and there is a feeling of peacefulness in the pale-hued, quiet surroundings.

A fifth painting, in the collection of Mrs. Cyrus Cowasjee of Karachi, shows Leila standing in front of her camel with outstretched arms, suggesting she has just found Majnun after their long separation (Fig. 93). In comparison to the preceding example (Fig. 137), the colors are more vibrant and varied. Leila is gaily dressed in a bright yellow blouse and shawl and a red skirt. Desert sand has been replaced by a blanket of green that fades to a neutral shade as it recedes in the distance. Leila is not alone, but there are many versions of Nizami's famous story, which could account for the variation.

An unmistakable deviation from traditional representations of the story is a sixth painting entitled The Desert in love (Fig. 138) from Amle Chughtai. Like every other illustration in this volume it is accompanied by a verse of Dr. Allama Iqbal:.

See that in the desert Laila's camel has become decrepit. Let us kindle new desires in Qais. Qais. How is it that thy inner flame has gone out, while Laila yet retains the same graceful airs of youth?<sup>56</sup>

While this painting is indeed unorthodox as a representation of Leila-Majnun, it is so because it reflects the eccentric whims of the artist, rather than the message of the poet. That is not to say the poetry of Iqbal is provincial or anything less than creative, only that the painting has an iconography of its own, independent of the verse. One of Iqbal's well-known works, "Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam," by title alone conveys the basic message of his philosophy.<sup>57</sup> Iqbal wanted to stimulate into action the apathetic brotherhood of what he believed to be a stagnating Islam.<sup>58</sup> In light of this, his verse above may be taken to mean that the vehicle of Islam, i.e. the contemporary approach and dedication to and belief in Islam, like Leila's camel, had become outdated and ineffectual or lifeless and impotent. Leila, the beloved, is God (The Beloved, omnipotent and omniscient without change) but the lovers, i.e. Muslims or lovers of God, have lost their faith or their energy to keep on the religious path of Islam.

In my opinion, Chughtai's illustration is predominantly romantic, partly religious, but not politically or religiously activist as is Iqbal's verse. Iqbal used familiar literature as metaphor to reach the people, but still he was understood only by the intellectual minority. On the other hand, Chughtai may have used metaphor, but only as a means to strengthen the meaning already inherent within the painting. For example,

in the The Desert in Love, Leila found Qais. She represents the romantic side of Chughtai's nature--- dressed in red like the traditional Pakistani bride; even her howdah is draped in red symbolic of the bridal suite. Qais now looks like the mendicant with begging bowl in hand and followed by a curving trail of recumbent deer. Several versions tell us that he addressed the shy antelopes, each with the name of his Leila. According to professor, Aziz Butt, deer are symbols of wandering in the sense of seeking liberty from custom and tradition.<sup>59</sup> They are also symbols of youth and beauty---the eye of a beautiful woman is compared in both Persian and Indian poetry to the eye of a doe. In an early painting in the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, Chughtai depicts a bedouin woman walking in the desert preceded by three deer on a leash. Furthermore, according to Schuyler Cammann, the Persian word for gazelle or fawn, ahu, also means vice or sin, so that the motif of predators chasing, attacking or overcoming these small creatures represents the conquest of sin or achieving ultimate deliverance.<sup>60</sup>

Is it possible then, that the string of deer represent all the dejected lovers who were driven out to the desert for a life of endless wandering?<sup>61</sup> And if so, does it mean they have gained freedom from the duties and frustrations of an unencumbered existence? In other words---have they found the Beloved within themselves, and found the means to overcome sin or achieve ultimate deliverance?

While the story of Leila and Majnun was brought to the Punjab by Muslims from the west, A. B. Rajput explained that legends and tales form the bulk of Pakistan's popular literature and reflect the geographic and cultural unity of Pakistan regardless of their varied regional provenance.

Running into myriads...[folk stories] wed poetry to fiction and imagination with facts, presenting a thoroughly realistic impression...They are primarily literary works but their treatment is thoroughly popular so that people know them by heart and their parts have become folk songs.<sup>62</sup>

Khurshid notes that there are five major folk romances in the Punjab: Heer Ranjha, Sassi Punnu, Sohini Mahinwal, Mirza Sahiban and Puran Bhagat.<sup>63</sup> Rajput and Khurshid agree that Heer Ranjha is the most popular and "has been put into verse by many Punjabi poets."<sup>64</sup>

According to art exhibition catalogues in the archives of the CMT, Chughtai painted a variety of themes from Hir Ranjha throughout his career. There are titles such as Hir and Ranjha, Ranjha at the Fair, Ranjha with Flute, Hir and Sehti, and Hir-Saida.<sup>65</sup> However, I have been able to

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identify only one painting of this theme. An untitled outline drawing from the CMT of a youth riding on the neck of a cow can only be Ranjha (Fig. 139). Two characteristics identify the youth as Ranjha: the flute placed to his lips and his association with cows. A synopsis of the story of Hir and Ranjha is given by Khurshid below:

It is the love story of Heer, the daughter of Chuchak, and Ranjha, the youngest son of a neighbouring tribal chief. The other brothers grew jealous of him and on the death of their father they turned him out. After much wandering he reached the river Chenab, across which he persuaded a boat-man to row him. This barge belonged to Heer who found him asleep in it. They fell in love at once, and Heer got Ranjha work as a cowherd on her father's farm. Her father discovered their romance, banished Ranjha and forced Heer to marry Saida, chief of Rangpur. Later Ranjha visited Rangpur as a yogi, and with the help of Sehti, the sister of Saida, ran away with his beloved. But Ranjha was captured and exiled. When soon after a fire broke out in Rangpur, Heer was allowed to go with Ranjha, as people attributed the misfortune to their sorrow. Heer went back to her parents at Jhang to make preparations for their marriage. While preparations for the wedding were going on her father and uncle told her that Ranjha had been murdered and they also poisoned her. On arrival at Jhang, Ranjha learnt the bitter truth and overwhelmed with sorrow he fell dead on the grave of his beloved.<sup>66</sup>

This outline drawing of Ranjha, however, is a novel one. Ranjha's status as a cowherd for Hir's father is a significant part of the story, but Kurshid left out an important detail. Ranjha, like the Hindu god, Krishna, was never without his flute.<sup>67</sup> It was part of his identity, and he frequently entertained Hir with his sweet music during their meetings on the banks of the Chenab. Ranjha's impish face set upon a spindly body, precariously balanced on the neck of a curly horned cow is an imaginative presentation with a touch of humor. Little boys are quite at home on the backs of huge black water buffalo in villages all over Pakistan, but a full grown man riding a cow (or even a bull) is not customary. Apparently Chughtai's other paintings on this theme (from the catalogue lists) were depictions of the two lovers entitled simply Hir and Ranjha, a scene with Hir and her sister-in-law, entitled Hir and Sehti, and probably a painting of Hir and her husband by arrangement, Saida, entitled Hir-

Saida. Unfortunately, I have not found any of these paintings, nor have I been able to identify any other untitled paintings as themes from Hir-Ranjha.

No less surprising is the scarcity of extant paintings by Chughtai based on the Punjabi romance of Sohini and Mahinwal. The title Sohini appears several times in the exhibition catalogues but Sohini at the River Chenab (Fig. 140) from the Lahore Museum is the only painting I've been able to positively identify as representing this theme.<sup>68</sup> The popularity of the tragic romance of Sohini and Mahinwal was not limited to the plains of the Punjab nor to the sentiments of the twentieth century. The existence of at least two eighteenth century miniature paintings based on this story indicates that it had been a subject for illustration in various parts of India for at least one hundred fifty years.<sup>69</sup>

Catalogue entries from the 1920s indicate that Sohini was also a theme of several of Chughtai's compatriots.<sup>70</sup> Since the Chenab River runs its course less than seventy-five miles west of Lahore until it joins the mighty and famous Indus River, the life-blood of Pakistan, it is not hard to understand why this particular story was so significant to the people of the land of the five rivers.<sup>71</sup> Being a Punjabi himself, Khurshid describes the story of Sohini and Mahinwal as Chughtai must have known it.

Sohni was the beautiful daughter of Tulla, a potter of Gujrat, a town on the northern bank of the Chenab. A handsome young merchant of Budhara, passing through Gujrat, fell in love with her. He visited the house of the potter daily on the pretext of buying pottery and in a short time was reduced to poverty. Then he became a servant in Tulla's house. Pleased with his work and appearance, Tulla appointed him a grazier of buffaloes. One day Mahinwal told Sohni that he loved her, and she found that she loved him too. But their love was soon discovered, Mahinwal was dismissed and Sohni married to a neighbour's son, but she continued secretly to meet Mahinwal who sat as a faqir on the opposite bank of the Chenab, and every night used to swim across the river to meet her. Once, because of a wound, Mahinwal could not come for many days, so Sohini crossed the river with the help of an empty earthen jar which she hid on her return. Sohini's sister-in-law replaced her jar by an unbaked one, so that one night when Sohni entered the river, the jar dissolved. She cried loudly for Mahinwal who jumped into the river from the other bank, but before he could reach

her she had drowned. Mahinwal allowed himself to be drowned to join his beloved in the other world.<sup>72</sup>

Chughtai's painting (Fig. 140) shows Sohini with a pot (although it is unclear if it is fired or green) at the bank of the river Chenab. She holds the pot high up on her shoulder and looks down into the dark blue river beside her. The lack of forward motion, and the ambiguous emotional expression seem to tie this painting to a statement Chughtai made when, according to Nadra, "He was painting Sohini with a pitcher, and he said, look at her face, see the dilemma, she knows it's not baked but she can't decide to go or not."<sup>73</sup> Nadra, who is an extremely opinionated and perceptive individual, conveyed Chughtai's statement about Sohini as one of several examples to point out that "Chughtai was obsessed with tragedy and melancholy--the sadder the better; nothing had a truly happy ending."<sup>74</sup> Annemarie Schimmel attributes the misfortunes encountered by the heroines in these tragic romances to the influence of religious mysticism.

The soul is represented in all these poems [Sassi Punnu, Yusuf Zulaikha, Sohni Mahinwal, Saiful Muluk and Omar Marvi] as a loving woman, true to the Indian tradition, and her trials and tribulations on her way towards God, her lost beloved, are dramatically described.<sup>75</sup>

Sassie Punnu is another popular Punjabi romance in which two unfortunate youths lose their lives for love of one another. This title appears only once in the catalogues from the CMT and no other titles are variations of the two names such as were found for Hir Ranjha.<sup>76</sup> It is my opinion, however, that a painting entitled End of the Day (Fig. 141) in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad is a depiction of the heartbroken Punnu, who after escaping from his brothers in the deserts of Thal, returns to search for his beloved, only to find her sandy grave.<sup>77</sup>

Adam Jan, the King of Banbhore, was told by the astrologers that his newly born daughter Sassi would meet her death in a desert after a love affair. So the king, acting on the advice of his ministers, placed the child in a big box, along with several diamonds, her dowry, some milk, a note containing her full account, and threw the box in a river. Atta, a childless washerman, found the box, opened it, and adopted the baby, building a palatial house with her wealth. When she grew up she fell in love with the portrait of Punnu, a prince of Kicham, and managed to meet

him, and they fell in love. His father, enraged at the scandal, sent his other sons to bring Punnu back, and at a party they made Sassi and Punnu drink so much that they became unconscious. The brothers took Punnu away on a camel. When Sassi woke up, she pursued Punnu into the deserts of Thal, but unable to stand the scorching heat, she died and was buried by a shepherd.

On the way to Kicham, Punnu, having regained consciousness, crossed swords with his brothers, and escaped on a camel. Noticing a fresh grave on the way he asked the shepherd about it, and on learning the story he wept bitterly. The grave opened and Punnu was laid to eternal rest along with Sassi.<sup>78</sup>

It could be argued that the figure in End of the Day represents Majnun, particularly since he is shirtless and haggard, but Majnun roamed on foot---so obviously a camel, richly bedecked and laden with goods, could not belong to him. If it belongs to Leila, where is she? The setting and iconography almost certainly point to Punnu. First, the background in the painting is desert, a requisite uncompromisingly associated with the story, which takes place in Sind, a land of desert. Punnu crossed swords with his brothers and escaped on a camel, according to Khurshid. This would account for his haggard appearance and the presence of the camel. Punnu was the prince of Kicham, so he would be expected to have a camel handsomely equipped with all the necessities. If he were merely a lost traveler, thirsty and hungry, Chughtai wouldn't have included the river and the bulging load on the camel's back. The sprawling figure in End of the Day must be Punnu who has just learned of Sassi's death from the shepherd who buried her in the desert sand.

Punjabi folk romances provided Chughtai an ideal subject matter. They are truly representative of the cultural heritage of Pakistan and western India, and familiar to a larger portion of the people than classical or Urdu poetry. The paintings could be appreciated as visual representations of the oral and written episodes or scrutinized for a metaphysical message. To each of these paintings Chughtai added some element of mystery or humor. Majnun is shown sitting alone on a mound in the desert, yet his arm is raised in a conversational attitude. Who is he talking to? Why is there a ribbon of deer behind Majnun in The Desert in Love, and what do they represent? Does Sohini carry the unfired pot? Chughtai's paintings of Islamic literature and local folk tales are more than simple illustrations, these paintings demand the viewers' full attention and stimulate speculation and inquiry. They provide the stimulus but do not always provide the answer.

## HINDU AND BUDDHIST LEGENDS AND MYTHOLOGY

In 1951 Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das of new Delhi published Chughtai's Indian Paintings, which included twenty-seven color plates, five etchings and three drawings.<sup>79</sup> It was the first and only publication dealing exclusively with Chughtai's Hindu and Buddhist subjects.<sup>80</sup> Although his productions treating non-Islamic subjects coincide with his earliest period and continue into maturity, Kashmira Singh related a conversation with Chughtai in his studio which suggests that the artist had not formally studied the Hindu legends.<sup>81</sup>

I found him painting the victorious Arjuna. I asked him, if he had created that picture out of his own fancy or from a close study of the Hindu scriptures. This is what he said in reply;---  
'Sincerity is the first quality of an artist. If I had studied the legends associated with Arjuna, I cannot say what final form, this painting would have taken. My imagination and artistic sensibility have visualised (sic) through Dhayanam the Arjuna whom Lord Krishna inspired with power and light.'<sup>82</sup>

However, it is apparent from the paintings that Chughtai had at least a basic understanding of the myths and legends, and he gave these paintings a unique twist that betrayed both his personal style and his Islamic heritage.

Many of the illustrations in Chughtai's Indian Paintings are in the collection of the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. I was not allowed to photograph those paintings, so the museum provided me with black and white photographs, however, since color is an important part of the iconographic meaning of these paintings, I have used photos of the color illustrations in the above cited book. Like the format in Chughtai's other books, there is no thematic or chronologic ordering of the paintings; consequently, I have arranged these works thematically. The categories are: Radha-Krishna, Krishna Alone, Radha Alone, Themes from the Mahabarata, Sivite Themes, Other Hindu Themes, Yakshi, Buddhist Subjects.

### RADHA-KRISHNA

Most numerous among his Indian paintings are representations of Radha and Krishna. Chughtai's Holi in

the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi repeats a theme that was given considerable attention by Hindu artists painting in the miniature tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and to a lesser degree by artists of the Bengal School, but his treatment of the subject is unique (Fig. 142).<sup>83</sup> If the playful games of Holi, the ceremonial occasion that initiates spring, give the excuse for flirtation and romance, Chughtai's painting has capitalized upon the opportunity to express this in paint. Miniature paintings of the same theme traditionally depict a group of frolickers spraying one another with squirt guns loaded with colored water or colored powders.<sup>84</sup> In these miniatures, Radha and Krishna are part of the group and are usually indistinguishable from the rest save for Krishna's attributes: blue skin, peacock feather headdress, vanamala, and yellow dhoti. Chughtai has chosen to isolate the couple in an animated, sensual pose that bears little resemblance to the traditional Indian compositions. Radha's arching pose has exposed her breasts, and the entire painting is bathed in a tint of scarlet, the color symbolic of love and romance in traditional Indian painting. Couples embrace in the background rather than playfully douse one another with colored spray as one would expect to see in the Indian miniatures. Sensuous and erotic motifs are not uncommon in Indian miniature painting, but there are conventions limiting this kind of theme to a single couple usually in a bower, on a terrace, or in the bedroom. Chughtai has broken with those conventions to make Holi more than an occasion for flirtation and has presented a group of romance makers.

Another painting of Radha and Krishna from Chughtai's Indian Paintings, entitled Charm of the Valley, presents the couple in an unusual form (Fig. 143). Here, as in most of Chughtai's Krishna paintings, the God is colored blue and wears the inevitable peacock feather, but the turban, shirt and dhoti, all in purple, deviate from the traditional Hindu presentation: no shirt, vanamala (long garland necklace), and yellow dhoti.<sup>85</sup> Radha exhibits her charms, but the two do not share glances. These innovations appear to be related to the message of the painting. The commentary published with the painting points out the weakness of man blinded by love and the vain, narcissistic quality of women.<sup>86</sup>

The romance of Radha and Krishna, proves that God, though all powerful, and the creator of the Goddess of Beauty, becomes as helpless as man, when He falls in love.<sup>87</sup>

By depriving the God of his traditional attire and replacing it with the most inappropriate dress, Chughtai

created an anomaly. Krishna has lost his God-like attributes and takes on the qualities of a mortal. His purple dress is the complement of his usual yellow dhoti---opposites on the color scale.<sup>88</sup> If Chughtai intended to portray the happy-go-lucky God as a helpless, lovesick mortal, I contend, he succeeded. The vacant expression and dark purple covered figure present a gloomy impression.

Radha, on the other hand, is the perfect antagonist. She exudes self-confidence and seductive appeal, qualities noted by Singh in the commentary.

Krishna sits on a terrace, supplicating Radha, who oblivious to his entreaties is lost in the pride of her beauty, (sic) and in the charm of Natur (sic).<sup>89</sup>

Rather than simply "lost in the pride of her beauty and in the charm of nature," as the commentary suggests, Radha appears to taunt Krishna with her physical assets. She is bare-breasted---a phenomenon not particularly unusual in Indian miniature painting, but one not usually associated with this type of setting. Exposed breasts find their place in scenes of dalliance and love making, but in Charm of the Valley the two participants are both physically and emotionally separated.<sup>90</sup> It is Radha who tempts Krishna; not the reverse. The latter, oblivious to her entreaties, is lost in thought. Radha's red skirt, yakshi-like pose, and her coquettish expression, imply romance and fertility, but Krishna seems unaffected. It is not the theme that is unusual. Traditional dance and painting enact the literature that describes Radha's entreaties of the blue God, but both Chughtai's iconographic reinterpretation, and the commentary, are novel.

The Divine Cowherd is of course, Krishna (Fig. 144).<sup>91</sup> In this colored-line drawing from the National Gallery of Modern Art in new Delhi, Krishna appears to have opened Radha's choli and admires her beauty as she turns her head in a gesture of shyness. The scene is tender and sensuous, but it borders on the erotic partly because of the tension created by the placement of Krishna's finger and the focus of his eyes, and partly because such a candid scene of amorous activity in miniature painting would have been intended as religious edification. Even if Chughtai understood the metaphysical implications of the lovemaking of Radha and Krishna, being a Muslim he was probably not painting with the purpose of inspiring religious devotion, but for the enjoyment of the painting as an exciting work of art.

## KRISHNA ALONE

Chughtai's rendering of Krishna seated alone on a twisting tree trunk is another novel depiction of the Hindu god. In With the Flute (Fig. 145), a colored line drawing from the National Gallery of Modern Art, Krishna is not the readily identifiable blue-skinned god from the Hindu tradition but Chughtai's own conceptual embodiment of that god. His skin is outlined in a yellow ochre color, rather than blue, and the dhoti is grey and black, not the usual yellow. The traditional peacock feather crown has been replaced by a red striped cloth wound loosely around the head, vaguely resembling a turban. A pink lotus issuing from a stem that wraps around Krishna's upper arm is a Chughtai trademark for distinguishing Indian subject matter.<sup>92</sup> The lotus may have a deeper symbolic meaning in Chughtai's paintings, but sometimes (as here) it becomes the center of focus with subjects whose identity is questionable.

Were it not for the lotus this painting could easily have been interpreted as a portrait of Ranjha, hero of the Punjabi romance Heer-Ranjha.<sup>93</sup> Krishna and Ranjha share many elements in legend and iconography. Both were identified as a lover (Krishna with Radha, Ranjha with Heer), as a cowherd boy, as playful and lovable youth, and each has the flute as an attribute. There are, in fact, many similarities between Krishna in With the Flute and the colored drawing of Ranjha on a cow (Fig. 139).

Chughtai depicted Ranjha in a whimsical gesture, seated on the neck of a cow (or bull). Krishna, as he is depicted in With the Flute, appears to be sitting on a bull-shaped tree trunk. Head and horns are behind Krishna's left arm---he is seated on the animal's rump resting his feet on the bull's legs.<sup>94</sup> The youths are also remarkably similar in facial shape and features, and the checkered border pattern of their kamarband is a common feature as well. The pink lotus in With the Flute is a reassurance that it is Krishna, not Ranjha, seated on the bull-like tree trunk.

## RADHA ALONE

Paintings of Radha alone are not always easy to identify since she had no individual attributes apart from Krishna. Nevertheless, there are a few paintings which Chughtai titled Radha and others that imply it is she. Chitarlekha<sup>95</sup> (Picture drawing) reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings is Radha at her toilet with the 'peeping Krishna' indicated by peacock feather and flute behind the compound wall (Fig. 146).<sup>96</sup> The theme of Krishna peeping



at Radha was popular with artists in the Punjab Hills and Rajasthan, but in these earlier paintings Radha was not supposed to be aware of his presence. In "Chitarlekha" the viewer is led to believe that Radha has seen the playful God. She saw his image reflected in the mirror and hides her head in response. The composition is abstracted and simplified so that the figure of Radha is the focus of attention. Chughtai has balanced the composition in such a way that the eye is able to perceive all the action in one glance. This enables the viewer to appreciate the beauty of the painting and comprehend the iconography with very little effort. Many of his mature paintings make use of this device.<sup>97</sup>

#### THEMES FROM THE MAHABARATA

The large percentage of Radha and Krishna themes among Chughtai's Hindu painting suggests that he favored Krishna in his aspect of romance. He did, however, present Krishna as the divine lord of the Bhagavad Gita in a painting entitled Krishna Instructing Arjuna and composed at least three more works from the Mahabarata: Arjuna, Draupadi and Pandavas, and an untitled outline drawing of the five Pandava Brothers, all are reproduced in Chughtai's Indian paintings.

Krishna Instructing Arjuna (Fig. 147) depicts a famous incident from the Bhagavad Gita (the Song of the Lord or the Blessed Song) in which Krishna convinces Arjuna of the need to fight and presents him with the weapons for battle. In Chughtai's painting, Krishna (identified by his yellow dhoti and peacock feather surmounting his top knot) hands over the weapons to Arjuna. Their eyes avoid one another's face: Krishna looks out to the battlefield and Arjuna seems dazed, his gaze turned inward to avoid the visible world.

Their skin colors are reversed. Krishna has salmon colored skin and Arjuna (only partly visible below Krishna) has been painted a grey-green color. The commentary explains: "Chughtai has painted Arjuna in the colour of Sri Krishna and Sri Krishna in the colour of Arjuna, because Sri Krishna, by his magic touch, has infused his own personality in Arjuna and made him invincible, while he himself has taken the peaceful role of charioteer."<sup>98</sup> We can appreciate the pictorial iconographic aberration (the exchange of skin colors) imbuing Arjuna with Krishna's own personality to make him invincible because the commentary reminds us that "Before the Mahabarata war Arjuna waited upon Sri Krishna, in a dejected and disheartened mood. He could not fight with his own Kith and Kin."<sup>99</sup>

Whereas Arjuna was portrayed as a humble and somewhat timid figure in the painting just discussed, he is depicted as a courageous victor in the painting entitled Arjuna (Fig. 148). In this painting Arjuna retains the darker skin tone---this time a grey blue color and sits alone on a platform in a desolate landscape. We can assume the Great War is over since the commentary states "he has conquered (sic) the world."<sup>100</sup> His eyes are half closed (no pupils showing) as if in a deep state of meditation and his bow is unstrung. He is contemplating conquering the kingdom of Yama, according to the commentary ---"his bow now points higher."

He is seated before a column and lintel---a torana perhaps. The torana could symbolize entrance into a higher realm; either the personal state of consciousness Arjuna has achieved or the readiness to overcome Yama (god of death). The setting may be intended to suggest that he is resting in a sacred place, a temple, or the ruins of a temple after the devastation of the war. The landscape is desolate too, imparting the feeling of wide destruction. Though I have not seen other Chughtai paintings of Arjuna, the commentary states there are more than a dozen of this Pandava brother.

Another painting relating to the Mahabharata, Draupadi and Pandavas (Fig. 149) seems to lack the fullness of imagination and diversity of content apparent in other paintings.<sup>101</sup> I agree with the commentary that Draupadi "is the sole attraction of this picture," but I'm not so certain she looks sweet or in a pious pose as the commentary further suggests. If she is bidding good-by to her husbands (the five brothers) as they go off to war, one would think she might look sad. My attention is caught, however, by the figure who faces Draupadi from the group below. Is it Krishna? His skin is bluish-grey, he has a peacock feather in his hair, and wears a yellow scarf. If it is Krishna, then only four of the brothers are shown. Perhaps it is (as the first painting in this series explained) Arjuna imbued with Krishna's personality.

An intricate, detailed line drawing depicts the five Pandava brothers, who with Krishna's encouragement, won the great war that is described in the Mahabharata (Fig. 150). Arjuna stands in the center holding the treasured weapons: fish decorate the border of his dhoti recalling his prowess during the syamvara where,<sup>102</sup> "In the presence of many princes, Arjuna held his bow and with full (sic) confidence shot an arrow at the eye of a moving fish."<sup>103</sup> A snake, coiled into a concentric circular pattern is the only other animal decoration in the drawing. The delicacy and curvilinear quality of Chughtai's outline imparts a femininity to the drawing. Weapons look like fishing poles

rather than bows that must deliver lethal arrows to the bravest, strongest warriors of the opposition. Arjuna and his brothers hardly look like strong, stout warriors, and they embrace one another gently, or as the figure on the left, pluck up a loose end of cloth in a feminine gesture. Perhaps Chughtai thought to refute the old adage that "might makes right" and force the viewer to accept the notion that faith (in Krishna) and intelligence are superior weapons.<sup>104</sup>

#### SIVA THEMES

Krishna advised the reluctant Arjuna that it was his moral duty to fight the war of the Mahabarata; similarly it was Śiva's duty to cause the cyclic destruction of the universe. Certainly Chughtai was aware of Śiva's many aspects through sculpture and painting even if he were not conversant with the particulars of these aspects in the literature. "Nat-Raj" (Fig. 151), in the National Gallery of Modern Art is, according to the commentary, "his [Chughtai's] vision of the destructive rhythm, which (sic) clears the world for a new outburst (sic) of creative power---Shakti."<sup>105</sup> Śiva's shakti walks in front of the dancing god; she carries the trishula (Śiva's trident) and her own dog doggie (tiny drum). Śiva raises the cup of poison in his right hand encircled by the snake which coils up from its resting place on Śiva's shoulders. Both figures are also identified by a tip of the crescent moon which clings to their hair like a slivered halo. That of Śiva turns upward beside a peacock feather at the back of his knotted locks; Uma's crescent moon turns downward to the left of her head.

I suspect that Chughtai was not concerned with maintaining appropriate iconography in Śiva's dance of destruction. He may not have been aware of the distinctive dances performed by Śiva, (not all of which were dances of destruction).<sup>106</sup> It is likely that Chughtai collected the various attributes and accessories in Nat-Raj from contemporary Indian painting. Śiva was a popular subject with several of the Bengal School artists and Nandalal Bose's painting Śiva's Dance of Destruction (Fig. 152) might have been a precedent.<sup>107</sup> In Bose's painting Chughtai would have noted the little drum in addition to the better-known attributes---trishula and snake. The commentary for Chughtai's Nat-Raj also states that "Śiva drinks poison and starts the death-dance." Chughtai may have added the cup of poison without concern for the iconographic veracity of this particular aspect of Śiva, having seen other paintings showing Śiva with the cup. Nandalal Bose's well-known, Śiva Drinking Poison, was painted in 1913 and must have been widely published.<sup>108</sup>

It is possible that Chughtai intentionally created aberrations in Hindu legend to exert his own personality and individual style. In this respect he places Siva's consort in front of the god and it is she who carries the drum and trishula.

After the furious dance (which according to Hindu mythology destroys the universe for cyclic renewal), Siva and his consort are shown at rest in the sacred mountains that surround Kailash.<sup>109</sup> In this painting from Chughtai's Indian Paintings, entitled Shakti Devta, Siva affectionately rests his hand on his consort's dark leg and catches her leg with his foot (Fig. 153). The tender gestures and loving mood are reminiscent of Pahari paintings of the couple enjoying a family outing in a picturesque landscape.<sup>110</sup> Unlike the Pahari miniatures, however, are the somber landscape and barren mountains, stacked like pinnacles against a foreboding sky.

Hues of indian red and burnt umber dominate the painting, perhaps to recall the fiery destruction and draw attention to Siva's cream-colored, ash-covered body. Parvati's nude, brown body blends with the pinnacle against which she rests. Although sculptures depict her uncovered above the waist (save for jewelry), earlier miniature paintings do not, and Chughtai's approach to exposing her form is subtle and clever. Siva's right elbow touches Parvati's breast, or nearly so, creating tension and an erotic overture. Furthermore, Siva's gaze is focused directly on that uplifted breast. Erotic overtones are as manifest in this work as they were in "Holi" (Fig. 142) or "The Divine Cowherd" (Fig. 144). A majority of Chughtai's Indian subjects are romantic and sensual and many are, or border on the erotic.

The last painting to be discussed in this category, Behind the Mountains, depicts a fair skinned male and a blue-grey skin-colored female who could be either Radha and Krishna or Siva and Parvati (Fig. 154).<sup>111</sup>

Radha and Krishna are closely linked with this motif, due to the popularity of Pahari miniature paintings that show the couple together under a blanket taking refuge from a rainstorm (Fig. 155). It would therefore, be plausible to presume Chughtai was representing Radha and Krishna in this familiar motif. However, if this is the case their skin colors are reversed. Krishna is fair skinned and Radha is blue. Neither does Chughtai provide the male with any of Krishna's other attributes---the peacock feather, flute or vanamala. If we suppose that the couple represents Siva and Parvati, we find similar arguments both for and against that identification. Siva is flesh colored, consistent with his usual iconographic designation and even though his

shakti is not normally depicted with blue skin, we saw her with a dark reddish skin color in Shakti-Devta (Fig. 153).

The dot on the male's forehead cannot be interpreted as Siva's third eye since Chughtai has used it indiscriminately with Siva, Krishna, and even Arjuna.<sup>112</sup> However, the commentary apparently favors a Saivite interpretation since it queries: "If the couple is Siva and Parvati, why has Parvati been placed in the shade and been given a dark face?"<sup>113</sup> I suspect that these very arguments which have just been presented were exactly what the artist hoped for. It is my opinion that the couple can represent either Siva and Parvati or Radha and Krishna, or both.

#### OTHER HINDU THEMES

Indian miniature painting provided Chughtai a bountiful source of Hindu themes and often the composition, postures, costumes, and colors in his works can be traced to Pahari or Rajasthani miniatures. The Ragni (Fig. 156) from Chughtai's Indian Paintings belongs to a category of Indian painting known as ragamalas, which are themes based on thirty-six musical modes that are associated with the seasons, months, days and hours.<sup>114</sup> Ragamala paintings are personifications of different phases of love, or various emotional situations in human experience that are expressed in one of these modes.<sup>115</sup> Ragamalas consist of either masculine forms known as ragas or feminine forms called raginis.

Chughtai's ragini most closely coincides with a mode known as Todi Ragini, so named because it usually centers around "a charming woman playing the vina, the instrument characteristic of the South, which attracts bright-coloured deer."<sup>116</sup> However, Chughtai's presentation of this theme is not entirely consistent with the format generally used by earlier Rajasthani miniature painters.<sup>117</sup> Most versions of Todi Ragini depict a fair-skinned maiden standing near a tree and holding a vina with several deer on either side of her (Fig. 157).<sup>118</sup> Chughtai has portrayed a seated lady of bluish-brown complexion holding a vina with two pair of recumbent deer and a single doe, all assymmetrically spaced around her.

In Chughtai's Ragni the exposed torso seems an effrontery since Todi Ragini in Hindu miniature painting is covered, either by a choli (blouse) or a sari. The light green background and soft pink skirt create a strong contrast with the dark torso, drawing attention to the nudity. Nevertheless, Chughtai's Ragni with her vina fits the description of Todi Ragini as "a maiden whose blossoming youth has just begun to inspire love in the

hearts of young lovers who cluster around her."<sup>119</sup> Since deer represent the absent lover in other Indian miniature paintings, that may be the case here as well. Chughtai's deer are not bright-colored as the earlier quote requires, but neither are the deer in paintings by Rajput artists.

Usha (Fig. 158) in the collection of the CMT closely resembles the format of many Pahari miniatures and may also be based on the ragini motif.<sup>120</sup> Indian miniatures from the Punjab Hills often depict a young lady standing alone on a terrace thinking about romance or waiting for the absent lover. A line drawing from Kangra of about 1810, entitled The Lady With a Nosegay from the Victoria and Albert Museum (Fig. 160), is remarkably similar in theme and composition to Usha.<sup>121</sup> Both figures nearly fill the pictorial space (somewhat unusual in miniature painting), and each stands on a terrace overlooking a river broken by small islets. Chughtai added a flowering tree and the ubiquitous cranes that occur so frequently in other Pahari miniature paintings, and slightly shifted his figure from the three-quarter view of the drawing to a full profile, but the pose is essentially the same.

According to the commentary Usha" (first rays of the morning sun) is an old Vedic theme represented here in a metaphoric romanticization. "Woking (sic) from her pleasant dreams, Nature, gives birth to Usha, who rises like a new Radha, exacting homage and worship."<sup>122</sup> Because Chughtai made special note of Botticelli's Birth of Venus in "Individual and the Group" I sense from the commentary that Usha is analogous to the Birth of Venus.<sup>123</sup> As Venus was surrounded by the elements of nature (Primavera offering her cloak and two zephers blowing her to shore), nature gives birth to Usha. Both Venus and Usha represent ultimate beauty--exacting homage and worship.

Toilet scenes, so plentiful in miniature painting, were another means for the Hindu artist to represent the various aspects of love. These were manifested in idioms such as that of the lover catching a glimpse of his beloved at toilet (she is unaware of his presence)<sup>124</sup> or scenes of the lady looking in a mirror making preparation for love.<sup>125</sup> Mulk Raj Anand links the act of indulgence in self beautification to the nature of the Gods. "The God Vishnu turned into Mohini contemplates her perfection of beauty."<sup>126</sup> Mortal women contemplate their beauty after an intricate toilet, according to Anand, in compositions "where ardent love is indicated by the preparation of the body for the occasion."<sup>127</sup>

Of Chughtai's many toilet scenes, some seem to be an excuse for rendering the nude or semi-nude in an acceptable context.<sup>128</sup> An untitled toilet scene in the collection of

John Cowasjee of Karachi is a study in narcissistic indulgence (Fig. 161). Seated on a cloth spread on the floor with various containers of powders, creams, and perfumes before her, the lady begins her ritual. On the subcontinent, both in India and Pakistan, feminine care is a serious matter with a long tradition and special prescriptions. Hair is treated with henna to make it thick and glossy, fine hairs are removed from arms and legs by waxing, creams, and perfumes are applied, kohl lines the inner rim of eyes, and rouge and lipstick are used as well. Special care is given to fingernails and toenails, and underarms are shaved. With such a premium placed on feminine care and beauty it is no wonder Chughtai painted many toilet scenes. In this scene the narcissistic element is linked with Persian metaphor: the rose on the arm symbolized the beauty of a woman and her long black tresses are a standard emblem of feminine allure. It seems unlikely, however, that a woman would sit at her toilet laden with jewelry in a real-life situation. In this painting the imagery derives partly from the tradition of Indian miniatures and partly from Chughtai's imagination.

#### YAKSHI

An untitled painting (Fig. 162) in the collection of Mrs. Majid Malik of Karachi may be Chughtai's interpretation of an Indian yakshi. As fertility spirits associated with the natural environment, they are believed to represent procreation and sexuality. The yakshi bracket figure at Sanchi<sup>129</sup> and the pillar yakshis at Bharhut<sup>130</sup> are only a few of these sensuous spirit figures that were reproduced in books on the art of India at the turn of the century. Consequently, Chughtai may well have been aware of their existence and symbolism. Bare breasts, heavy adornments, particularly the jeweled girdle (belt) and anklets in Chughtai's work are also characteristic of the yakshi sculptural idiom. Most often the yakshis cling to a tree, and Chughtai has included one behind the figure. The vase at her feet may refer to an ancient Indian metaphor for the fullness of the breasts, fertility, wealth, and auspiciousness.<sup>131</sup> Chughtai added the tika mark on the forehead and a long flowing scarf either for pictorial effect or to modernize the scene. As is, it becomes an odd mixture of history and fantasy.

#### BUDDHIST SUBJECTS

Chughtai treats Buddhist subjects much as he did Hindu ones---that is, he draws from the art, the literature, and folk lore of the religion, but adds his own embellishments and interpretation. He did two paintings of Ambapali, a beautiful courtesan said to have been converted by the Buddha during his lifetime.<sup>132</sup> Both paintings are entitled

Ambapali, one might be considered a before and the other an after (the conversion). Chughtai's interpretation of Ambapali as courtesan before her conversion to Buddhism, reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings depicts a voluptuous woman, elaborately coiffured and laden with jewelry (Fig. 163). The eyes, nearly closed, seem to be transfixed on the conch, delicately supported by the fingers of her right hand. Her expression seems dazed. The eyes of Chughtai's figures generally show part of the upper lid, but Ambapali's association with the Buddha brings to mind the half-closed eyes of sculpted Buddhas, particularly those very fine pieces from Gandhara and later Gupta examples.<sup>133</sup>

Chughtai offers no explanation for the significance of the conch (if there is any), and the two head-to-tail fish on the necklace pendant are equally curious. Isolated phrases from the commentary provide the viewer with insights to the character of the courtesan but the awkward construction of the paragraph requires a degree of reinterpretation for comprehension.

The graceful posture of Amapali (sic), her vanity, her personality, reveal, what depth of thought and tender emotion, the artist, has devoted to the evocation of her character, and how successful he has been in expressing the passion, the tempting maturity, of a wise self-conscious courtesan.<sup>134</sup>

Apparently, the artist, with depth of thought and tender emotion, desired to portray Ambapali's character and personality. The graceful posture reveals her astute personal awareness of status (a wise self-conscious courtesan) while vanity and passion are the psychological results of a seductively voluptuous mature figure (tempting maturity). The second Ambapali is equally mysterious (Fig. 164). This painting, in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, shows the back of a female figure, standing by a tree, holding a plate of lotus blossoms.<sup>135</sup> She must be the "converted" Ambapali watching Buddhist monks gathered around a Buddhist shrine. She seems to be waiting or hiding behind the large trunk---the lotus offering held in front of her face to obscure her identity from the monks as she waits for them to finish their ritual. The painting suggests to me that Ambapali is sincere and devoted to the Buddha, but hesitant to present herself among the purer devotees.

The exaggerated variation from light to dark and variety of hues in this second painting of Ambapali contrasts markedly with an untitled work of three monks in the same Hyderabad Museum (Fig. 165). The tonal quality is



high key but the value changes are nearly indistinguishable. Furthermore, except for a pale violet scarf held by the forward monk, the scheme is monochromatic in tints of orange. The three holy men are of the same variety as those in the Ambapali work, with shaven heads, flowing robes, and looped earrings, but they seem more kindly or at least innocuous. Facial features on the Ambapali monks are dark and strongly defined, whereas those of the three monks are thinly drawn, and light, thus appearing soft and gentle of character. Behind the central figure, one monk holds a lotus in each hand and the other grasps a begging bowl. A peaceful mood pervades the scene owing to the pale hues and lack of value contrast, and a sense of harmony derives from the closely knit figures that blend together like three heads sharing one bodily form. Whereas most of Chughtai's subjects illustrate a story or historical incident, or convey a message, these three monks simply represent the existence of one of India's many historic life styles. They record a part of India's timeless and varied traditions.<sup>136</sup> I believe Chughtai was fascinated by societal diversity within the subcontinent as much as he was dedicated (as will be shown) to projecting his own Islamic heritage.

An untitled colored outline drawing in the possession of the CMT does not impress me as a very successful work compositionally, but the draftsmanship is superb and the subject matter is evocative (Fig. 166). It appears to be a scene related to the temptation of the Buddha. The best known instance where Buddha is tempted by seductive women (and one commonly depicted in art) is part of the episode referred to as the "Attack of Mara."<sup>137</sup> Most depictions of this motif show Buddha seated under a pipal tree, and one or more of the three seductresses (daughters of Mara) nearby. In Chughtai's painting Buddha is standing and there is no tree. Much of the appeal for this work is due to the contrast and tension between the two figures. The seductress is enticingly voluptuous with a scarf draped over her breasts so as to accent their firmness and fullness. Buddha is fully draped, with closed eyes, and a sober determined expression that does not seem to have deterred the seductress. She has a come-hither smile and cleverly looks away from the unerring Buddha keeping him in sight out of the corner of her eye as she dangles a bauble beside him. Contrasting facial expressions heighten the drama and emphasize the Buddha's resolve to resist temptation and achieve enlightenment.

It is possible that Chughtai was not representing an event so specific as the Temptation by Mara's three daughters, but a more generalized visualization of temptation. In that case the presence of one rather than

three sisters, no tree, standing Buddha, and the begging bowl in his hand are no longer inconsistencies with the traditional story.

#### SUMMARY

For subject matter and iconography of his Hindu and Buddhist paintings, Chughtai looked to the literature (epics, legends, myths) and earlier and contemporary art. Although he claimed not to have studied the legends (at least those associated with Arjuna), his paintings reveal a basic understanding of Hindu and Buddhist belief and symbolism. Part of his understanding derived from passing nearly fifty years of his life in undivided India with Hindu neighbors, where myths and legends and a way of life were visible, if not (as in many cases) shared.<sup>138</sup> No doubt he learned a great deal from the eighteenth and nineteenth century miniature paintings of the Punjab Hills, many of which Chughtai purchased, while he could view others at the Central Museum of Lahore.<sup>139</sup>

Sometimes Chughtai's style and composition were modelled after a particular miniature painting. [Usha (Fig. 158)\* is a good example]. Other works adapt thematic information from miniature painting or sculpture and take liberties with the style and composition. Most of Chughtai's Hindu paintings fall into this category. Holi, Chitarlekha, Divine Cowherd, Nat Raj, Behind the Mountains, The Ragni, toilet scenes and the yakshi figure are examples. Finally, there are works such as Ambapali, Krishna Instructing Arjuna, and the five Pandava brothers that did not appear in miniature painting or sculpture as independent subjects, but were motifs used by several artists of the Bengal School. Regardless of the degree to which Chughtai's works corresponded with previous models, his compositions always offered a surprise.

## CHUGHTAI AND IQBAL: ISLAMIC IDEALS, HEROES AND HEROINES

Paintings that reflect Chughtai's Islamic heritage make up the largest percentage of subject matter throughout his career. Subjects in this category take a variety of forms: some have already been discussed, such as illustrations of poetry by the Mughal poet, Mirza Ghalib, or the eleventh century mystic, Omar Khayyam. Folk stories from the Punjab are also typically Islamic. This chapter and the three following chapters make use of illustrations and their commentaries from the book Amle Chughtai (1968).<sup>140</sup> The paintings of this book are described by the artist as illustrations that reflect the poetry and prose of Sir Mohammad Allama Iqbal.<sup>141</sup> There is no thematic or chronological plan dictating the organization of paintings within Amle Chughtai, the thematic scheme exemplified in this chapter and the two succeeding chapters are entirely of my own making. Commentaries and a verse by Iqbal accompany each painting/illustration in the book, but the works I have chosen for each of these three chapters are dispersed throughout the book, where each is independent having no relationship to the preceding or following illustration.

The dramatis personae featured in the paintings in this chapter are not historic or specific individuals but generalizations of the ideology of Islam. They represent ideals that appealed to Chughtai's sense of national cultural heritage and propriety and to some degree reflect the influence of Iqbal. Most of the paintings would be difficult, if not impossible, to identify with Iqbal's prose or poetry were it not for the accompanying commentaries.<sup>142</sup> The commentaries are written as if authored by an anonymous third party, but they were originally composed by Chughtai, edited by Syed Waqar Azim and rendered into the third person.<sup>143</sup>

The abstract nature of the paintings in this chapter manifest (better than concrete themes) Iqbalian philosophy as Chughtai interpreted it. Consequently the iconography of most paintings in this chapter have been interpreted by me in response to Chughtai's commentaries in Amle Chughtai and other commentaries on Iqbalian thought to clarify Chughtai's explanations and where evident I have tried to point out the discrepancies between Chughtai's personal beliefs and those of Iqbal. I have also relied on historical and cultural literature to explain or support theories I felt would be unfamiliar to a western audience.

My discussion of Chughtai's paintings from Amle Chughtai will show that the artist made an honest attempt to capture the ideas and ideals of the poet, Iqbal. Most paintings were not, however, conceived as illustrations for specific verses. Generally they related to a phrase or metaphor within the verse chosen as accompaniment to the painting or to broader concepts associated with Iqbal's philosophy. Chughtai made an attempt in the Urdu commentary to reconcile his illustrations to Iqbal's poetry, but I believe he was not always in accord with Iqbal's beliefs.

The artist freely admitted that he found it difficult to comprehend the meaning of Iqbal's works, but persevered in his endeavor to illustrate the poet's philosophy.

Iqbal always desired that his poetry should be illustrated and published...I also wanted to fulfill this wish of Iqbal, but to give practical shape to this wish has taken twenty five years...I went through all the pages of his works, but I couldn't really grasp the substance of his writing. But I never gave up and continued with the process by which I intended to bring forth a great cultural revolution...Now his philosophy and poetic images have been converted to color and lines in a figure of beauty and grandure.<sup>144</sup>

Both Chughtai and Iqbal aspired to reach the masses, but ironically their audience was limited to the literate class within their national society. Iqbal sang his verses at public meetings in Lahore to communicate with a broader group, but even then his style was beyond the comprehension of the uneducated. However, many Muslims have knowledge of and admiration for the great personalities who fostered Islam. For this reason Chughtai proposed that "the artist or poet selects his material from the past so that he may become the builder of the future and may be in a position to elucidate for the masses the difference between God and Pharaoh."<sup>145</sup>

Chughtai recognized that Iqbal's many references to heroes of the past were a medium for delineating the virtues of his (Iqbal's) ideal man.

When Iqbal imagines the appearance and mannerisms of a just king or the generosity of a prince or [the intellectual achievements of thinkers like] Razi, Rumi, Saadi or Urfi, they provide substance for the elevation of the soul...He had in view the radiant face of the marde kamal [the whole man] and the features of marde momin [the true believer, the

man of faith]. He also had before his eyes the fresh blood of those defenders of our faith who had given extreme sacrifice for the purpose of conveying higher values in the world.<sup>146</sup>

Underscoring the tangible virtues of Iqbal's superman is the elusive concept of khudi, which Chughtai interpreted as the motivating urge and creative activity that propelled man along the road to prosperity and contributed to the growth of mankind.<sup>147</sup> Iqbal's khudi may be further defined as the combination of knowledge with action that keeps one from complacency and motivates him toward action. Iskh (overly abundant love) is another notion integral to the completion of success for the perfect man.<sup>148</sup>

In attempting to illustrate the complex ideology of Iqbal, the painter was faced with the task of conveying concepts like khudi and iskh, as well as abstract ideals such as faith, piety, intelligence, perseverance, compassion, honor, and integrity. To this end Chughtai wrote:

As Iqbal voices the wishes of the laborers, the kings and the common man, so I also portray these inclinations and problems and they pin point talents and graciousness. As a result a self-understanding is born which creates confidence in the society. My characters depict pathos of life, hardiness, contemplation of life, responsible mothers, daughters of mujahids and eagle-like beloveds. These are my favorite themes because they are exemplary of the high ideals of life.<sup>149</sup>

Even if chughtai did not fully understand the message of Iqbal's verses, by his own admission he attempted to approach the task of illustration as the conceptual embodiment of Iqbal's ideal Muslim.

I believe that success comes through an abundance of zeal and gusto. Despite my failures I continued to work hard for this is the method of mujahid, and Iqbal taught the same thing. The influence of Iqbal's teachings...and perpetual hard work resulted in the edition [of Amle Chughtai].<sup>150</sup>

Reflecting the foundation of Muslim society, based as it is on religious ideology (the creed of Islam), Chughtai's motifs of the ideal Muslim epitomize the virtues of the man of faith. The artist wrote that "Islam has shown man a system of life that emanates from God" and it was his belief that this system "can insure immortal life for man."<sup>151</sup> A Muslim (a traveler on the path of God set forth in the Quran) may have faith in God and strength in

his religious convictions, but the trials of life are many and great. Herein Iqbal rallies his co-religionists to follow the way of the mujahid (fighter for the cause of Islam) with the heart of the marde-momin (the true believer, the man of faith). By definition of the word "Islam"---submission (of man to God)---Satan can be overcome. According to the commentary for Chughtai's painting Temptation (Fig. 167), the contest between man and evil is so prominent a theme with Iqbal "that his marde-momin is always involved in the struggle for getting rid of Satan."<sup>152</sup> It takes little imagination to read this painting as a pious man resisting the temptation of wine and women. Chughtai calls him marde-momin a term popularized by Iqbal that critics often compare in interpretation to Nietzsche's Superman. In this painting "one is reminded of those holy people who are sitting in samadi and whose beliefs, confidence and imam [faith] were tested again and again. Each time they were successful in maintaining their greatness. Marde-momin is committed to his objective and has the blessing of God."<sup>153</sup>

Those two opposing forces of good and evil, are symbolized by red and green (opposing hues on the color wheel), deceptively termed complementary colors in the language of art. A green robe nearly overpowers the body of the marde-momin who is seated on a green hillock. Scarlet hued, half-naked women dominate the scarlet colored atmosphere behind the central figure. On either side ladies offer him wine from long-necked red-colored vessels. According to the commentary these colors represent a mixture of water and fire.<sup>154</sup> Behind the momin, the earth is burning with the greed of men:

Satan...has never stopped chasing man...He continually finds a new appearance to succeed in misleading man. At times he takes the form of a beautiful, voluptuous woman, at others he appears in the form of wine.<sup>155</sup> He's burning the whole earth through creating in man the lust for money and power.<sup>156</sup>

From the commentary it seems certain that the scarlet-hued background is the fire, a metaphor of man's burning greed. It follows that the green (cloak and hillock), a cool color must be the water that metaphorically "puts out the fire". However, Chughtai does not clarify his use of green beyond stating that "in addition to being visible in the robe... green is used with so much confidence and abundance that it reflects onto the environment."<sup>157</sup> Green is the color associated with Islam, and certainly Chughtai was aware that a green robe is associated with The Prophet Mohammed and is generally not acceptable attire for any other than a syed (a descendant of The Prophet's lineage).<sup>158</sup>

While the painting seems totally Islamic in intent and symbolism, it makes reference (in the commentary) to Buddhist belief. Chughtai's description of this marde-momin calls to mind depictions of Buddha after he resisted the temptation of Mara.

His entire personality and his style of looking, sitting, and doing manifests a state of spiritual elevation. He is neither impressed by Satanic temptation nor amenable to inducements. He is in a state of total meditation, realizing man's possibilities through the beauty and grandeur of God.<sup>159</sup>

In a previous quote, Chughtai mentioned samadi, a highly desirable mental state for religious perfection achieved through much practice and concentration in yoga. Samadi was and is a goal sought by many Hindus and Buddhists, but would be practiced by few Muslims since they do not foster yogic meditation.<sup>160</sup> A visual parallel between Temptation and traditional representations of the Temptation of Buddha by Mara can be drawn by the presence of solicitious females. The three daughters of Mara who tried to tempt Buddha are paralleled by the two females on either side of the marde-momin and the group of women in the back as the collective third.

Aside from the obvious message of resisting evil (symbolized here by wine and women), the commentary prescribes that the true believer should submit completely to God. In the following passages a number of key words, central to Iqbal's philosophy and poetic expression, transform the painting into a didactic illustration of Iqbalian thought.

The artist is trying to show the siret of this marde-momin who should atone for the sins of man...This texture of marde-momin is a creation which has given new thoughts. Ecstasy of iskh goes with evolution. Man's khudi is the miracle of his iman. Man has never been deprived of the values of life and attributes of God. He has never revolted against abidi.<sup>161</sup>

Siret (actions that reveal one's character) is exhibited by "his entire personality and his style of looking, sitting and doing."<sup>162</sup> That he should atone for the sins of man, invites comparison with the crucifixion of Christ,<sup>163</sup> but more probably, chughtai intended to present the momin as a personification of Iqbal's ideal Muslim, who, if emulated by the masses, could (collectively) atone for the sins of man.<sup>164</sup> Each individual who aspired toward the perfection of the marde-momin could, according to

Iqbal, contribute to a gradual evolution of national betterment and that cannot be realized without iskh (a deep overflowing love). Man's khudi (ego and self-respect) is the result of his imam (faith). Muslims should not feel they have been denied anything by God. He (God) has never revolted against abidi (life in its total manifestation or spiritual application, something akin to the sūnyata of the Buddhists).

Iqbal's verse that accompanied Temptation is a plea for Muslims to develop their khudi to avoid a meaningless, unproductive life. The self-image becomes more positive through iskh.

Keep the desire alive in thy heart at any cost;  
Lest the handful of thy dust should turn into a  
grave. The self becomes more enduring through  
love---more alive, zealous---more effulgent!<sup>165</sup>

In the painting Temptation the marde-momin inspires dedication to Islam by strength of character and the conviction of his faith. His symbol is the rosary, delicately held in the right hand, half hidden behind his leg and trailing down to the green earth. Like the momin, the scholar in Chughtai's next painting Wisdom and the Wise (Fig. 168), is a model of and for Muslim society, but his symbols are the sword and the book.<sup>166</sup> He represents the great achievements of Islamic intellectuals in science, mathematics, and literature and the necessity for maintaining a literate and enlightened brotherhood. "He is a man of wisdom," the artist wrote in the same commentary. His left hand grasps a book, (there are others on the floor beside him and under the table) and near his right hand in front of the table the blade of a sword is partially visible.

"He is the observer of sword and the book," a spectrum of personalities," the commentary adds, "he can be a poet, a mujahid, or a perfect man." As mujahid, his symbol is the sword---"the beginning of victory and the end of slavery."<sup>167</sup> From the time of Mohammad in the seventh century until the Mughal conquest of India in the sixteenth century, the spread of Islam gained as many adherents by the sword as it did from voluntary conversion. One who holds the sword is in power, and therefore "he is the protector of the universe and trustee for its prosperity."<sup>168</sup> The physical structure of this figure idealized by the artist to emphasize strength and regality is noted in the Urdu commentary: "It is obvious from his upright neck and broad shoulders that he carries the burden of humanity." His bulky frame nearly fills the picture plane and dwarfs the small head. A large strong body and



small head may be illustrative of Iqbal's ideal man, his superman, according to various interpretations of the poet's art.

Iqbal's call for self-confidence and the realization of personal worth, termed egotism or egoism, is shown in the posture and gaze of Chughtai's man of wisdom. All of the requisites for the perfect man are as the commentary states, "present in his egotism...super-humanity, height of thought, purity of soul, poetic vigor...all the secrets of life are revealed to him." The secrets of life are wasted on ignorance; and wisdom (the antithesis of ignorance) derives from knowledge. Chughtai has directed our attention to the books (a major source of knowledge), the symbol of wisdom, and the partially hidden sword. Since the highest literary form among Islamic peoples has traditionally been the art of poetry, it was natural that Chughtai envisioned this man of the book as a poet. In the concluding sentence of the Wisdom and the Wise commentary, Chughtai reconciles this composite personality, who is observer of the sword and the book: "Poet and soldier both follow revolutionary talents with their thought and action so that the road of thoughts may not become narrow and dark."

If a book's cover is meant to typify the contents within, then Chughtai's painting, Marde-Mujahid (Fig. 169) was a good choice for the cover of Amle Chughtai. Marde-Mujahid was used on the cover of the de luxe edition of Amle Chughtai and as the cover of an elaborate publicity brochure for that volume.<sup>169</sup> However, it was not included in the book itself so consequently there is no specific commentary for this particular painting. Nevertheless, this figure represents all the assets of Iqbal's perfect man, and among persons I interviewed, is generally regarded as the representative icon of Amle Chughtai. As conqueror for Islam and defender of the faith, the mujahid was a symbol of the glorious past and a model of Muslim patriotism and brotherhood in the twentieth century. His primary attribute is the sword, owing to which his ancestors conquered lands extending from Spain to India, thus amassing a great empire. By the fifteenth century that empire had lost its European holdings and by 1850 the Muslim rulers of India had become vassals of the British Raj. Twentieth century Indo-Muslims suffered a multitude of woes---economic depression, political subjection, and not the least---a lack of self-confidence and personal esteem on a national basis. There can be little doubt that much of Iqbal's philosophy and Chughtai's appreciation of that philosophy was molded by the political, economic, and religious strife that had confronted Indian Muslims since the decline of the Mughal Empire in the early nineteenth century.<sup>170</sup>

Chughtai's vision of the mujahid depicts a man of physical strength, with eyes focused upward and lips clenched in a gesture of determination. The sword is drawn from the scabbard, poised for action. These are characteristics of a man of action and self-realization---a plea for Muslims of the subcontinent to rediscover pride in self and religion. Interpreting Iqbal, Syed Abdul Hasan Ali Nadwi claimed that Muslim youth "has grown indolent, slothful and ease-loving. So unbounded is its apathy, torpor and insipidity that the stirrings of ambition are hardly felt in its bosom."<sup>171</sup> Iqbal's concept of khudi (self-realization and creative activity) is prescribed as the antidote to this national slumber. Khudi is the result of a fully developed ego that incites one to excel and to struggle. According to Madam Behnam, part of 'Iqbal's Great Message to Muslims' "was the need for passionate action. Life to him meant struggle...growth is life---stagnation is death."<sup>172</sup>

Iqbal placed much of the blame for the national apathy on the west in general and specifically as the result of European imperialism in India. Thus Nadwi explained that "modern education [in India and Pakistan] encourages a blind imitation of the west among the youth till no spirit of originality or independent action is left."<sup>173</sup> Nadwi cites numerous unidentified verses by Iqbal which maintain that the new generation of Muslims are being shaped into "turncoats, opportunists and timesavers, instead of functioning as leaders of their age."<sup>174</sup> Marde-Mujahid is the antithesis of complacency: his sword is drawn, and he faces the future with a fixed gaze in response to Nadwi's allegation that modern education "robs the crusader of his manly qualities and deprives him of his weapons by supplying the good of luxury in the battlefield of life."<sup>175</sup>

Even though Iqbal died ten years before the creation of Pakistan, his references to freedom have continued to remain valid. The depression, pessimism, and poverty of Iqbal's era did not disappear with the creation of Pakistan, so that Muslims still needed to be reminded that they were free men, residents of a democratic country. With confidence and a strong will they could determine their own destiny. To this end Chughtai focused on the facial gestures expressing courage, self-reliance, and the concept of determination that Iqbal associated with a free man.<sup>176</sup> The mujahid appears to be distant, removed from society, even haughty, but the artist only meant to show the mental state of "an alive man of a free nation, in which life seems active, involved in a constant struggle and wisdom keeps awake."<sup>177</sup> The free man has as spiritual connotation also, being one who has dedicated himself to God, therefore, is free from human concerns.<sup>178</sup>

The falcon, perched beside the Marde-Mujahid, is a bird of prey with attributes that make it another of Iqbal's symbols for the 'alive man'. Chughtai used the falcon symbolically as well. The commentary for another painting in Amle Chughtai, showing a hunter with his falcon, states: "These are two falcons not one. One is a falcon and the other is a man with all the qualities of a falcon...He is rich with the wealth of consciousness and knowledge of self."<sup>179</sup> The man has the qualities of the falcon which are the qualities of khudi. A falcon has keen sight to locate prey from a great distance, just as the wise, awake, marde kamal (the whole man in Iqbalian thought) must have perceptive vision, awareness of his environment, and foresight to react intelligently. When the falcon spots the prey, it reacts quickly, with complete confidence, and moves swiftly; these are also characteristics intrinsic to the concept of khudi.

For Chughtai, the bond between falcon and master also suggests the spiritual consciousness among Muslims that unites their community and underscores the 'wholeness' of each individual. "One falcon has taken the other falcon into confidence. There is no difference between master and the slave which could prevent the wholeness and the harmony of the spirit of love."<sup>180</sup> Slave is the Quranic term for one devoted to God who acts in accordance with the holy scriptures revealed by God ~~who acts in accordance with the holy scriptures revealed by God~~ to the Prophet Muhammad. Therein complete devotion of the slave to the master (to God or the word of God) would allow for successful merging of the physical self with the spiritual mandates of Islam. As a result, this wholeness, owing to the harmony of physical and spiritual self cemented by the spirit of love for God and mankind, will contribute to the fulfillment of marde kamal.

Chughtai's idealized Slave Girl (Fig. 170) may represent the spiritual interpretation for the Quranic concept of slave as one who is completely devoted to God.<sup>181</sup> She appears devoted to her master. Offering slippers is a humble act, perhaps because it reminds us of bowing to touch the feet of a master or a great person for forgiveness or luck or a favor. The crescent moon (symbol of Islam) behind her, pointed out by Dr. Susan Huntington, seems to further substantiate her metaphorical role as the slave to God. Furthermore, Islam forbids racial discrimination, and the slave girl's dark skin color appears to have had no effect on her apparent well-being. She is carefully coiffured, well-dressed and elaborately adorned with bracelets, rings, earrings, and hair ornaments. According to the commentary "she has that expediency which has prompted her to get out of her deep sleep and having gone through dark paths has taken her to a

special station where the distinction between the master and slave and red and black ceases to exist."<sup>182</sup>

Slave girls were fully aware that they might be among the fortunate few to be taken as wives by the ruler or other high officials, yet had they been Muslims they would not be in servitude. Muslims were ~~forbidden to~~ <sup>discouraged from</sup> enslaving their co-religionists and for this reason frequent raids into the lands of the infidel were made for the purpose of procuring slaves. This slave girl, the commentary confirms, represents the beautiful slaves that were in the service of the pharaohs of Egypt, caliphs of Baghdad and the great sultans like Mahmood.

The most beautiful and talented female slaves often became concubines and upon birth of a son were sometimes legally wedded to the monarch.<sup>183</sup> A famous example is the story of Shakla, a black slave who the Abbasid Caliph, Mehedi, acquired as a young girl through the spoils of war. Impressed with her innate musical talent, Mehedi sent Shakla to a respected school in Medina for a complete musical education. She graced the court with her musical talents and bore Mehedi a son who became aspirant to the Caliphate. This was the dark skinned Ibrahim who was recognized historically and in his own time as a distinguished scholar, poet, and musician.

The courts of powerful and wealthy Islamic rulers were generally elegant, refined, genteel, and cultured. According to John Glubb, during the period of the Great Abbasids in the reign of Haroon al Rasheed for example, "There may have been two thousand women in the palace household...however [Rasheed] required all slave girls who attended to him or his family to have a good education and a knowledge of poetry, in addition to good looks."<sup>184</sup> Professors, poets, and theologians quizzed potential servant and slave girls on culture, education, and poetry before any purchase was made. Haroon al Rasheed paid an average of 10,000 dirhems for each and is said to have favored poetesses, singers, and musicians.<sup>185</sup>

Chughtai's slave girl is more than a noble representative of this past phenomenon, she exhibits ego and the awakened consciousness requisite for Iqbal's marde kamal. Because of her inner fire she will blaze forth like a flame of light and "continue her journey towards her destination where her salvation lies."<sup>186</sup> The pair of slippers held by a slave is a metaphor used by intellectuals and poets, explained in the commentary, as the imagery meant to bewail the trampling of moral values.

The slave girl, in addition to conveying possible metaphorical content and fulfilling the requirement for

Iqbal's marde kamál in strength of character and promise for a better life within the context of Islam, also represents an aspect of the female role. With some notable exceptions, women have played a much less visibly active part in the development of Indo-Islamic civilization than their male counterparts.<sup>187</sup> Over the centuries a woman's primary purpose has been perceived as a vehicle for the transmission of culture from one generation to the next. To this end women must bear children and raise them in a forthright manner, instilling the virtues of faith and tradition in their offspring. Iqbal earnestly espoused this belief and validated a traditional role for Muslim women in the twentieth century.<sup>188</sup>

In the imagery of the painting "The National Emblem" (Fig. 171) and in the commentary that accompanies it, Chughtai is committed to the same point of view, but I suggest that his attitude toward women is somewhat more liberal in light of a personal anecdote he committed to writing, his romantic episode in Europe and the erotic nature of some of his paintings and etchings.

As Chughtai explains (via the commentary), "The yearnings of mothers and the duties of motherhood will remain alive and everlasting as long as mothers keep on feeding their children with the milk of culture and civilization."<sup>189</sup> Because the mother is entrusted with this important responsibility, she must possess and cultivate lofty traits. Sobriety, piety, and composure are attributes of The National Emblem that "Iqbal desired to see in the coming generations."<sup>190</sup>

The mother in The National Emblem seems to glow with pride as she presents her son to the viewer. In Indo-Muslim culture a woman's greatest accomplishment is the birth of a son; newly born daughters are often received in disappointment and accepted with resignation. A well brought-up son is a reflection on the mother and a requirement for the perpetuation of the family lineage. The mother's right hand rests on her son's head in a protective gesture as if she is shielding him from the world he is still too young to meet face on. Her ample body provides the strength and comfort that will carry him to manhood. He is destined to become a mujahid, symbolized by the sword above his head.<sup>191</sup> The sword is the son's attribute not hers, but she is expected to instill within her son the understanding and responsibility of accepting that station in life. "Faith and action, belief and confidence grow side by side in the lap of the mother and fly toward their source."<sup>192</sup> Because of her faith and confidence the protective cover of the mother, her hands and the dagger have become the flag of victory.<sup>193</sup> A book in the hands of the child acts as a literal and visual counterbalance to

the sword. Both Chughtai and Iqbal realized that success does not come from the sword alone. To this effect, Chughtai said of Iqbal:

Any admirer of Iqbal knows that he was constantly striving for a means to combat the present discontent...to create a world where talent and imagination is utilized to understand and judge the intelligent group [the decision makers]. This intellectual endeavor affirms the dignity of men and this affirmation creates self confidence... Stories of the Revealed books...are a source of righteousness and guidance to humanity.<sup>194</sup>

In an unusual gesture the mother presses her hand against the point of the sword, and the son draws attention to the book by balancing it on the palm of his hand in the manner of displaying a small, revered object. Book and sword are the two most frequently recurring attributes of Chughtai's idealized heroic model.

Though I have no argument with the sincerity of this painting or its commentary as a reflection of Iqbal's views, I do not believe that Chughtai was as conservative in his attitude toward women as was the poet he illustrated. In the forward of Lagan (tax collector), Chughtai recounts his experience in a Paris brothel.<sup>195</sup> He treats the subject with delicacy and sensitivity giving the impression of wonderment and awe, but not of condemnation. In the passages that follow, Chughtai argues that "the sexual revolution is a healthy emotion of life," but it is sublimated and rendered vulgar in his culture by many who lack education and sophistication.<sup>196</sup>

Chughtai had a German girlfriend in Europe, an experience which must have caused him to examine his own attitudes toward women's roles. Apparently he did not condemn her for her intelligence and independence, in fact he proposed to her.<sup>197</sup> Furthermore, he fathered a beautiful and determined daughter, who married a man of her own choosing, thus rejecting the tradition of arranged marriage.

Lastly, Chughtai's romantic, sensuous paintings of women and his erotic prints, suggest an attitude of delight and pleasure regarding the opposite sex. Iqbal's attitude toward women has been reported to be quite the opposite. He was unhappy in his marriage and further frustrated by a friendship (with an attractive, aristocratic Indian woman he met in England) that could not be consummated in marriage.<sup>198</sup> In his poetry, Iqbal condemned a western type education for Indo-Muslim women and advocated separate

roles for men and women: women should raise children and care for the home, men should work to support the family.

If Iqbal viewed motherhood as the mainstay of Islamic culture and tradition, <sup>and</sup> Chughtai regarded the farmer as its lifeblood. Once again the views of Chughtai and the poet he illustrated may not be entirely in agreement. In the painting The Young Farmer (Fig. 172) and several other paintings of the same theme, Chughtai pays homage to the fortitude of the farmer and the bounty of nature. In the commentary for this painting and in that for The Green Field (Fig. 101), Chughtai hints at his attitude on landownership. He implies that the farmer should own the land he tills, whereas Iqbal is committed to a socialist view of landownership.

In the painting The Young Farmer, a full-bodied young man, clad in red vest and red turban proudly displays an ear of corn from his productive field. The commentary explains that the farmer is smiling because, (like Chughtai), he is "proud of being a Punjabi...[he is] cheerful and thinks that his soil is very fertile."<sup>199</sup> It is partly his love for the land that renders his crops fruitful. "It is the nature of the soil that she keeps on providing treasures to her lovers."<sup>200</sup> A farmer and his fields are metaphysically entwined in the great scheme of nature. "The green field brings before the eyes endless spirit and infinite expanses...trees in the infinite atmosphere are touching the skies...it unveils the mysteries and secrets of fields and farmers."<sup>201</sup> That mystery is the marvel of growth of crops in endless cycles and the courage and vigor of the farmer to pursue his labors tirelessly.<sup>202</sup>

In Chughtai's mind The Young Farmer is "the motto of the struggle of life."<sup>203</sup> Farmers provide sustenance for the population, derive satisfaction from their work and have a good measure of security when they have sovereignty of the land and their produce.<sup>204</sup> But many farmers do not own their land and theirs is a meager subsistence, this distresses Chughtai. Iqbal on the other hand, contended that private landownership was a travesty of imperialistic mimicry. Land and production in the hands of few contributed to the misery and degradation of the working class.<sup>205</sup> He advocated socialism as the alternative and only way to achieve "a perfect social order in which exploitation of labour will cease."<sup>206</sup> As Abdullah Farooqi explained: "According to Islamic socialism (of Iqbalian design) private ownership of land and other means of production is completely unjustified."<sup>207</sup> Iqbal's verse chosen to accompany "The Young Farmer" supports his socialistic point of view.

Who rear the seed in the darkness of the ground?  
 Who lifts the cloud up from the ocean wave?  
 Who drew here from the west the fruitful wing?  
 Who made this soil, or that light of the sun?  
 Who willed with pearls of grain the tasselled wheat?  
 Who taught the months by instinct to revolve?  
 Landlord! This earth is not thine, is not thine,  
 Nor yet thy fathers; No, not thine, nor mine.

For Chughtai, the farmer bound to land, possesses the land.  
 For Iqbal the land should be owned and managed by the  
 State, the farmer is caretaker only.

Because the commentary for the next painting The Sultan and the Saint (Fig. 173) does not refer to Iqbal in explanation of the iconography, there is no conflict of attitude as I perceived in the two preceding paintings. In this painting Chughtai contrasts the personal spirituality and humane tendencies with the leadership responsibilities of an Islamic ruler.<sup>208</sup> Marshall Hodgson defines the term sultan as the reigning source of authority; in the Early Middle Period the term applied to the actual, often military holder of power, but later came to signify the normal Muslim term for sovereign.<sup>209</sup>

Here, garments worn by the two figures are meant to identify each with a separate role. A rich dark brown cloak covers embroidered underclothes of the sultan while his religious companion wears white. White is not necessarily associated with piety in Islam: Chughtai merely wished to point to a "contrast between the simplicity of his [the saint's] garments and the worldly dress of the sultan."<sup>210</sup> Historically, Muslim rulers distinguished themselves with elaborate dress, not unlike other political/religious leaders of the world. Because there was no separation of religion and state, the sultan was responsible for religious, political, and military administration of his domain. He was the model in each of the three areas, but since Islamic leaders often had no claim to royal lineage, regal attire contributed to their image of power and prestige.

As the final authority on matters of religion, the sultan needed to be knowledgeable in Islamic law, the dictates of the Quran and hadith.<sup>211</sup> He was supposed to be fair and just in his policies but had to maintain an air of superiority so as not to be challenged politically or militarily. Many weak and ineffectual sultans and even caliphs were deposed by military coup, ambitious relatives, and/or clever advisors. Humility could be mistaken as a sign of weakness. According to the commentary, there is a paradox here, "for the sultan is seen contemplating with sadness the blossom he holds, with its



one remaining petal. He is reflecting on the transitory nature of his power and the agelessness of the saint's wisdom."

The action between the two is obvious: "the man of power [sultan] is taking counsel from the man of wisdom [saint]." <sup>212</sup> This type of consultation was common and freely depicted in miniature paintings of the Persian Safavid and Indian Mughal periods. Whereas the Persian and Mughal miniatures often depicted a prince conferring with his pir in the wilderness, Chughtai chose to ignore the background and setting. <sup>213</sup> There is no indication of place or time; nothing distracts from the primary interaction between the two individuals.

If this painting is meant to reflect Iqbal's philosophy it might be interpreted as belonging to the poet's assignation of man to act as God's vicegerent on earth: Madam Behnam interprets this task as man's responsibility to dedicate his life to establishing the kind of moral order on earth that is envisaged by the Quran. <sup>214</sup> The sultan, by definition of his title is spiritual and temporal vicegerent of his nation. By expressions of spiritual association with the saint he appears to fulfill Iqbal's requirement for God's earthly vicegerent.

#### SUMMARY

In the artist's magnum opus, Amle Chughtai (1968), paintings are paired with a verse by the poet/philosopher Allama Iqbal and each painting has Urdu commentary. Many of the commentaries relate the theme or iconography of the painting to Iqbal's philosophy as it was perceived by Chughtai. Chughtai, however, admitted that he found it difficult to comprehend the poet's reasoning and some critics believe Chughtai merely tagged Iqbal's verses to existing paintings. In several cases this may be true, but I believe that Chughtai was influenced by Iqbal (generally on a superficial level, occasionally reaching a more profound meaning) and sincerely tried to evoke Iqbalian sentiment in the paintings of this volume. I agree with Waheed Quairashi's assertion that the personalities of Iqbal and Chughtai were quite different and I have tried to point out this discrepancy vis a vis several paintings in this chapter. <sup>215</sup>

There was no thematic or chronologic organization dictating the arrangement of paintings in Amle Chughtai. Each set (painting, poem and commentary) was independent of every other set. The thematic order imposed on the paintings in this chapter has no relationship to their order (rather disorder) in the book.

In order to illustrate Iqbal, Chughtai had to interpret and visually render a complex ideology with abstract concepts such as khudi, iskh, and siret. Since Iqbal often referred to personalities of the past and made use of traditional poetic metaphors, Chughtai was able to do the same. Almost any Islamic hero or heroic type could be termed a mujahid (fighter for the cause of Islam) or marde momin (a saintly super man). So Chughtai uses both of these terms to characterize the painting of a noble, pious figure entitled The Temptation who is shown resisting wine and women. Chughtai's affinity for the 'Indian' element is evident in its similarity to the theme of Buddha resisting the daughters of Mara and the mention of samadi in the commentary. The commentary (it must be noted) was composed by Chughtai, edited by Syed Waqar Azim and represented in the third person.

Chughtai's idealized images are generally faithful to Iqbal's philosophy without sacrificing his own ideology. Marde Mujahid is the image of Mughal period regality, confidently posed with sword and falcon, ready to defend the faithful. He is a man of action and self realization thus fulfilling Iqbal's plea for khudi. The same is true for the perfect man entitled Wisdom and the Wise who is an embodiment of Iqbal's concept of marde kamal (the whole man). His attributes are the sword and the book so he is both poet and mujahid.

On the other hand, there are (at least two) paintings in which Chughtai may have compromised in his commentary to align the subject with Iqbalian thought. The commentary for The National Emblem emphasizes the female role as motherhood and the transmission of culture from one generation to the next. There is no doubt that Iqbal viewed these two responsibilities as the sum total of the female role. He was adamant that women should respect pardah, should not work outside the home, and should not have a western oriented education. Chughtai's writing, experiences, and paintings suggest he held a more liberal view. In the realm of political differences, I suspect Chughtai's approbation of individual landownership by the peasants who till the soil, implied in the painting and commentary of The Young Farmer, would have elicited some comment by Iqbal who adhered to a strong socialist philosophy. For the most part, however, I believe Iqbal would have approved of the illustrations in Amle Chughtai had he lived to see the work published.

## ISLAMIC HEROES BEFORE THE MUGHAL PERIOD

Islam had no lack of colorful figures who contributed to its history and Chughtai depicted a sampling of those heroes in his art. He chose musicians and poets, philosophers and saints, as well as famous rulers and their queens as subjects for his watercolors. All but one of the paintings used in this chapter were illustrated in Amle Chughtai and consequently were connected with Iqbal's philosophy. The Urdu commentary composed by Chughtai and verse by Iqbal accompanying each illustration have aided in interpreting the subject matter. Supplementary literature has been consulted for the discussion of these paintings and that of Poet Firdosi which had no commentary since it was not included in Amle Chughtai.

The period of the Great Abbasids must have particularly appealed to Chughtai for he painted no less than four notables from that era.<sup>216</sup> Perhaps the best known of all the Abbasids is the caliph Harun al-Rashid.<sup>217</sup> Chughtai presented this famous caliph in a desert-like environment, seated in front of a walled enclosure with domes and minarets (Fig. 174).<sup>218</sup> The caliph lifts a curved sword in his right hand and grasps a small object in his left hand. The commentary in Amle Chughtai notes, "He is a great swordsman and enjoys sword play." His role as commander of the army was one of his most important duties, since government functions were largely delegated to administrators during this time.<sup>219</sup>

Harun inherited a vast and wealthy empire. The might and security of his domain were never seriously challenged, yet he personally led a number of military campaigns against the Greeks and the Byzantines. To this end the commentary states, "he has a great devotion for his nation and country, and wishes that every member of his nation should become conqueror of the world. East and west should be under his rule."

Baghdad, the capital of the Abbasids, became the largest city in the world under Harun al-Rashid.<sup>220</sup> Although he re-established his court at Ar-Rakka in the north of Syria some eight or nine years after his accession, his reign is associated with the luxury and grandeur of Baghdad.<sup>221</sup> The architecture behind the caliph is similar to that in another Chughtai painting entitled Mourning for Baghdad, suggesting that Harun is seated in front of this famous city and that he is its protector.<sup>222</sup>

Harun inherited the position of caliph at the peak of Abbasid splendor and luxury and, during his reign, the empire enjoyed a period of relatively unbroken peace. In the view of Marshall Hodgson, "his reign typifies, indeed, the society of classical Baghdad at its height."<sup>223</sup> With much of the business of government out of his hands, Harun acted as "defender of the faithful" by waging war and defending the city. It is perhaps to that effect that Chughtai shows the ruler with the uplifted sword. In addition to his military feats, Harun endeared himself to rich and poor alike by dispensing charities in a variety of ways. Perhaps due to his acknowledged generosity, the commentary in Amle Chughtai accompanying this picture states "he attacks the pessimism of life with the sword of his optimism." In a more general sense, Harun represents optimism par excellence. According to Sir William Muir, "[He] was perhaps the ablest ruler of the Abbasid race. If we except some flagrant instances of tyrannous cruelty, his government was wise and just; and without a doubt, it was grand and prosperous."<sup>224</sup>

Muir also noted that "No caliph, either before or after, displayed such energy and activity in his various progresses whether for pilgrimage, for administration, or for war. But what has chiefly made this caliphate illustrious, is that it ushered in the era of letters."<sup>225</sup> The vainglorious air demonstrated by the caliph in Chughtai's painting cannot be attributed simply to his military prowess and the luxuriant court to which he belonged, but to his avowed sophistication as a patron of the arts. Today he might be referred to as the true Renaissance Man, though he is more popularly celebrated as the ideal monarch in the stories of the Thousand and One Nights.<sup>226</sup> Muir expounds upon this caliph's contribution to the arts and sciences as well:

His court was the centre to which, from all parts, flocked the wise and the learned, and at which rhetoric, poetry, history and law, as well as science, medicine, music, and the arts, met with a genial and princely reception,---all which bore ample fruit in the succeeding reigns.<sup>227</sup>

Rather than surround the caliph with emblems that symbolize his wealth, religious piety, and association with the arts and sciences, Chughtai presents the figure as a strong, bold, confident leader. Perhaps because Harun Rashid is such a well-known historical figure among Muslims, the upright posture and determined facial expression are sufficient clues to evoke his diverse personality and his fame. Even the commentary adds little beyond noting that "His manner of sitting is like those saints who never accepted slavery."

Chughtai's paintings of other illustrious individuals from the court of Harun al-Rashid serve to further emphasize the caliph's fame and the splendor of his court. Ishaq Moosli, also reproduced in Amle Chughtai, but not illustrated here, was Harun's court musician. Marshall Hodgson described Moosli as "the most celebrated musician... of the time, [whose life was] identified with wine and the gaiety of song, [and who] lived from the wealth of the court, as was to be expected."<sup>228</sup>

Another legacy from the reign of Harun al-Rashid is the fame and power of the family named 'al Barmaki. A painting entitled al Barmaki depicts a proud individual in a profile pose.<sup>229</sup> The Barmakis were a powerful and wealthy family, influential in the court of Harun. But their story is one of tragedy as well as glory. Ja'far Barmaki was Harun's constant companion in the indulgence of pleasure and amusement, in addition to holding the office of vizier for seventeen years. Six years before his own demise (809 A.D.), Harun had Ja'far put to death and imprisoned Ja'far's influential father and brother. The Barmakis thus fell from power, their wealth was confiscated, and "the family disappears from the scene."<sup>230</sup> While the fall of the Barmakis by the hand of Harun is common knowledge, it is doubtful that Chughtai meant to convey this negative aspect of the caliph's nature in the painting Khalifa Harun al Rashid. The only possible reference to this event in the commentary is that Harun "longs for the victories and pleasures of life."

The legacy of Harun Rashid was further engendered by the personality and philanthropic gestures of his wife, Zabeda Khatoon (Fig. 175). Chughtai envisions her as an ideal woman of Islam---charming, pious, chaste, and brave. According to the artist, her black cloak was characteristic attire of the Abbasid ruler, who considered its sobriety appropriate and desirable.<sup>231</sup> Other details of Zabeda's costume and her Persianized features seem to conform to historical veracity. In this period, women wore long shirts reaching from chin to ankle that covered baggy trousers. The shirts in turn were covered by a full-length colorfully embroidered dress. Zubeda's black dress or cloak supplants the embroidered dress, but cuffs and a skirt hem (both in blue) belong to an undergarment, possibly intended as the long shirt. Owing to strong Persian influence at the Abbasid court, women tied silk scarves around their heads or wore bands ornamented with jewels.<sup>232</sup> Zabeda's head is wrapped in a blue cloth ornamented with several baubles, possibly jewels, and a small white feather.<sup>233</sup> Her gently curved eyebrows, extended to meet at the bridge of her nose may reflect the current fashion, which Glubb explained, was "introduced

from Persian...where women used a slight amount of powder on their faces and also painted their eyebrows."<sup>234</sup>

Chughtai's commentary expounds upon Zabeda's grace and dignity, talent and perfect personality.

This image of grace and dignity arises from the perfect personality of that lady, who ruled thousands and millions of hearts in her era...Her worthy face expresses all the talents and revelations which were bestowed upon her by nature. The structure and arrangement of her hands and conic fingers reveal the natural height of her character.

The verse by Iqbal which Chughtai chose to accompany this painting relegates her primary assets to motherhood:

Owing to Motherhood, the speed of life is hot,  
Motherhood displays the secrets of life to shine!

Any verse taken out of context is incomplete; however, this verse expresses an attitude toward women that is typical among many adherents of Islam. A woman's primary function is motherhood. In comparison to Chughtai's Hindu and Buddhist ladies, Zabeda Khatoon appears matronly and severe. If Chughtai saw Zabeda Khatoon as more than a symbol of the regeneration of life (which is his claim), he compromised his message. Behind the figure is a colorful mosaic in paint, of a camel nursing her young, an analogy referring to the Zabeda canal which irrigated and nourished the desert of the Hijaz.<sup>235</sup> Taken metaphorically or otherwise, the nursing camel reinforces the interpretation of motherhood and fecundity engendered by this composition.

Ironically, however, the maternal and pious propriety reflected in Chughtai's interpretation of Zabeda Khatoon is not entirely borne out by historians. Zabeda's son, al-Amin, named as successor to the caliphate by his father, Harun al-Rashid, was less suited for that exalted position than his half brother, al-Ma'mun.<sup>236</sup> According to Hodgson, "al-Amin...had the reputation of being debauched and hence manipulatable by his ministers, while al-Ma'mun [son of a Persian slave girl] was intelligent and more likely to be independent."<sup>237</sup> Hodgson suggests that Zabeda's influence directed Rashid's decision in naming her son as his heir. A civil war ensued over division of the empire, factions were divided owing to complicated political motives, but al-Ma'mun emerged as the leader and new caliph.

If high ideals were emphasized at the court of Harun Rashid and exemplified by Chughtai in the portrait of Zabeda Khatoon, the legacy of another pre-Mughal Muslim

hero, Mansur-al-Hallaj, made an even greater impact on subsequent Islamic theology. Mansoor Hallaj (Fig. 176), the most renowned religious martyr of Islam, was a Sufi who wandered the lands of Islam preaching to the common people. His sermons contradicted the rituals of orthodox Islam, and when he began making disciples in high places in Baghdad, the authorities found reason to arrest him as a heretic. He was crucified in 922 A.D.<sup>238</sup> Popular accounts, however, hold that Hallaj was condemned to death by stoning. He is said to have quietly accepted his fate as the will of God, ignorance of the people, and corruption of the men in power---until he noticed a flower tossed in front of him, when he supposedly broke down crying because one among them understood. Chughtai chose not to depict the physical torture of Hallaj, but rather his mental agony, and is shown in Chughtai's painting surrounded by a curious, but emotionless crowd, one of whom has thrown the flower; others hold ready their stones.

A faint halo encircles the head of Hallaj, indicating his spiritual devotion and martyrdom status. Chughtai rarely made use of the halo in his paintings and did not mention it in his commentary. However, another Muslim martyr painted by Chughtai, Sultan Shaheed of late Mughal period fame, is provided a red halo by placement of his head in the center of a canon wheel (Fig. 196). The superhuman quality attributed to one who merits a halo is expressed in the verse of Iqbal accompanying the painting of Hallaj:

The cosmos ever fealty makes to him, who calls himself 'his worshipper'. This rank is past thy ken, as he is all at once a human being and yet an essence pure. He is a man, yet pristine more than man.

There can be little doubt that Chughtai chose the verse above as a description of Hallaj who is "an essence pure...a man, yet pristine more than man." And directed to those gathered behind Hallaj (faces without smiles, without grimace, without pity) is the condemnation that "this rank is past thy ken." Even the caliph, al-Muqtadir, sits in the executioner's chair awaiting his order to be carried out with an expressionless face.

Iqbal acknowledged the contribution of Hallaj to the history of Islam, but it was the mystic poems of Jalaludin Rumi (1207-1273 A.D.), the famous Sufi intellectual, that had the greatest impact on Iqbal's writing. In Chughtai's painting Iqbal and Rumi, the artist brought together two of Islam's greatest minds, Iqbal in black and Rumi in white, and united past with present by suggesting Iqbal's debt to

Rumi's philosophy (Fig. 177). Iqbal's verse on the facing page eloquently verbalized his debt to the wisdom of Rumi.

The old man of Rum turned my dust into elixir; from my dust he raised the lights; I am a wave and take my abode in his sea so that I may obtain a lustrous pearl at last. I, who derive intoxication from his wine, live through his breath, so fast and warm!

Like classical Persian and Arabic poetry, Iqbal's verses are pregnant with metaphors and similies. Though obvious to the indoctrinated, they are often lost on outsiders. Of significance here is Iqbal's allusion to the wine of ecstasy through which Sufis have the mystical experience that allows them communication with God. While some critics assert that Iqbal rejected the basic tenets of Sufism, he acknowledged the mystic Sufic wisdom learned from the 'old man of Rum [Rumi, who] turned his dust into elixir...[and] derive[d] intoxication from his wine'.

In Chughtai's painting, the book Iqbal holds in front of him may be the intoxication, i.e. the mystical experience expressed by the words of Rumi, who is standing beside him. Seven hundred years and several thousand miles divided the two in time and space and yet in the commentary Chughtai imagined them:

...standing at an infinite place where the scope of wisdom ends. They have faced all the ups and downs of life, broken the bonds of space and time and crossed every height and depth in search of the truth of life. At that point with one leap of ishq [great love and excessive passion] they achieved the fruit of their search.<sup>239</sup>

Aside from the obvious connection between commentary and illustration (the two are placed on top of a precipice, "an infinite place where the scope of wisdom ends" after a life-time devoted to a "search of the truth of life"), the commentary continues with a message intended to encourage Muslims to continue seeking great heights by exercising imagination and intellect.

Leadership is due to imagination and intellectual talent. Thoughts will keep on flying and vitality will take stride after stride to look for new possibilities unless [until] mankind reaches the height that suits his greatness.

The elements and structure of the painted composition reinforce its message and that of the commentary. Because Iqbal and Rumi lived in different centuries, juxtaposition of the two poets transcends the accepted concept of time



and space. Their placement in a lofty location not only points to their high-ranking positions as poets and intellectuals but elevates them above the masses. The difficulty of their ascent (to high achievement) is demonstrated by their solitude and represented symbolically as belonging to the few who struggle and persevere. Both Chughtai and Iqbal felt that the power, dynamism, and glory of Islam belonged to the past; to each, the force of their religion had become apathetic and barren.

The compatibility of Iqbal and Rumi as religious, philosophical poets with a metaphysical orientation predicated Chughtai's compositional pairing of the two and the resulting iconography. There are other famous poets who might have been paired with Iqbal in a similar setting, and the message would be similar. The eleventh century Persian poet, Firdowsi, however, was quite unlike either Iqbal or Rumi.<sup>240</sup> He is the author of the Shah Nama (the Book of Kings)---the Persian national epic. His book is a collection of episodes in verse, narrating the history of the Iranian people from the creation of the world to the domination of Iran by Muslim Arabs. It is, of course, partly fiction, but Firdowsi did not invent the legends; they were part of the national tradition handed down from generation to generation.

Chughtai envisioned Firdowsi as a large man, seated on the floor surrounded by tools of his trade (Fig. 178).<sup>241</sup> A tablet of paper rests on a stand in front of the poet, who looks into the distance with a pensive air. His right hand holds a pen near an open ink pot, but the scene is frozen; there no movement, the intellectual strain subdues all physical action.

This painting of Firdowsi is similar to that of Khalifa Harun Rashid with a few minor exceptions. Both men have large, powerful bodies with small heads. Firdowsi's posture is nearly identical to that of Rashid, and each stares into the distance with a determined expression. Each figure dominates the composition in which the background is simple and direct. Rashid grasps a sword, Firdowsi, a pen. Chughtai's image of Firdowsi is like that of Rashid---a proud and noble figure. It is known that Firdowsi belonged to the class of dehqans (landed gentry), but his family was neither royal nor wealthy. He was obligated to seek patronage of the Ghaznavid court, but "he was too proud," according to Ehsan Yar-Shater, "too detached and too dedicated to his uncommercial art to secure that patronage in the accepted mode of the day."<sup>242</sup> Certainly Chughtai has captured that quality of pride, vanity, and aloofness that is attributed to the poet's personality. Yar-Shater further notes of Firdowsi:

He is contemptuous of the servility and the parasitic existence of the court poets, of the artificiality of their panegyric verse, of the ignobleness of their self-seeking and mutual vanity, yet he is not without the artist's vanity, envy and acrimony and, occasionally, he succumbs to the temptation of proving himself on their terms.<sup>243</sup>

It is likely that Chughtai had some understanding of Firdowsi's character from biographical material, but even if not, Firdowsi's artistic accomplishment is so highly acclaimed as to warrant the vision of a grand individual. It is little wonder Chughtai portrayed Firdowsi as handsome and as he portrayed Rashid. On the other hand, it is curious that Chughtai chose few, if any themes from Firdowsi's book, the Shah Nama, as motifs for his paintings.

Whereas Firdowsi chronicled history, Tariq ibn Ziyad created it. Better known as General Tariq, this military hero was responsible for the Muslim conquest of Spain in 711 A.D. With a force of only 7,000 men, Tariq crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, conquered most of southern Spain and advanced as far as Toledo, which fell without resistance. Chughtai's painting, General Taraq (Fig. 179), is a bust portrait of the officer, who holds a small boat near his left shoulder. although the painting is reproduced in black and white in Amle Chughtai, dark and light strokes to the right of Tariq's head suggest the background was meant to be a mountain, hill or rock. Most probably it represents the rock of Gibraltar, named after Tariq, originally from the Arabic, "Jabal Tariq" which means the mountain of Tariq.<sup>244</sup> Tariq was a Berber, who served as lieutenant for the governor of Ifrikiya and Maghreb (northern Africa), a fact which might account for the unPersian-like turban. As a rule, Chughtai's turban styles are either Persian of the Safavid period with a kula protruding from the top (like that of Harun Rashid) or of the Mughal style [like that of Jahangir (Fig. 181)]. In contrast, Tariq's turban is full and rounded and comes down over his forehead, covering all his hair except for a patch around his ear.

It is not clear why Tariq holds up an Egyptian boat and figure as if displaying a prize. The boat, itself probably refers to an unusual act on the part of Tariq, which has been interpreted as a display of courage and justification of Islamic imperialism. Upon reaching the coast of Spain, Tariq divided his fleet in two. He hid half the ships and gave orders for the other half to be burnt. In this way he could prevent his troops from even

considering retreat. Author S. F. Mahmud imagines the ensuring discourse when Tariq's men confront him with the inevitable---what should we do now?

Do? he asked, Why nothing! But what shall we do if we have to go back? But why should you go back? Suppose we are defeated? Now, now, my men, that is not like you. Who speaks of defeat? You have no need to go back. This land belongs to God, why then it belongs to you also.<sup>245</sup>

Iqbal composed a poem celebrating Tariq's act that served as a forum for expressing the Muslim's right to unlimited conquest.

As Tariq burnt the boats at Andalusia's coast His companions protested: 'Your act is unwise. We are away from home; how shall we return? repudiation of material means the Shariat [the holy law] does not permit.' Tariq smiled, drew his sword, declared: 'Every country is our country for its the country of our Lord.'<sup>246</sup>

The depiction of an Egyptian style boat is somewhat enigmatic. Neither Tariq nor his men could be mistaken for the ancient Egyptians, and their ships would have been vastly different from the small boat in Tariq's hand, but they were residents of north Africa as were the Egyptians, the majority of whom had become Muslims more than fifty years before Tariq invaded Spain. If we associate Tariq with the conquest of Spain and the tiny boat with the Islamization of Egypt, we might conclude that the painting is pointing to the territorial breadth and international commingling of Islam.

Chughtai's noted interest in Tariq is almost certainly less political than that of Iqbal. Chughtai may view Tariq as the catalyst that introduced Islam to western Europe and as a consequence the link between northern Africa and Spain, but he probably had no intention of projecting the image of Tariq as a symbol of Islamic manifest destiny.

#### SUMMARY

Chughtai's depictions of famous Islamic figures before the Mughal period are similar to his paintings of Islamic ideals in the preceding chapter, but they are more anecdotal and interpretive than the abstract ideals. Khalifa Harun al-Rashid and Zabeda Khatoon, caliph and queen of the Great Abbasids, represent the glory and grandeur of that period. While Harun is generalized like the idealized mujahid with his other characteristics left to the imagination of the viewer, Zabeda is treated in a

more personal, anecdotal manner. She stands with hands together in an appropriately pious gesture, is clothed in the Abbasid black cloak, and is posed in front of a nursing camel mosaic. The mosaic refers to her philanthropic contribution---financing the Zabeda Canal in the Hijaz--- and is an allusion to Iqbal's concept of the female role---motherhood.

With his depiction of Mansur al Hallaj, Chughtai is interpretive. This painting conveys a spiritual message: nimbused like a saint (symbolic of his martyrdom), Hallaj awaits imminent death. Chughtai chose the popular account of the execution---that of being stoned and included the flower that figured in the story. Hallaj kneels in the foreground looking at the flower, compositionally separated from the crowd behind. In interpreting Iqbal's verse, Chughtai certainly intended Hallaj as the "essence pure" while the crowd is that whose "rank is past thy [Hallaj's] ken."

The Persian poet, Firdowsi, author of the epic Shah Nama and General Taraq, the Muslim conqueror of Spain, and for whom the rock of Gibraltar was named, are distinguished by attributes peculiar to each: books and calligraphic accessories for Firdowsi, a small Egyptian boat and its oarsman for Taráq.

In the painting Iqbal and Rumi, Chughtai extended his iconographic genre. Not only does he place two figures of different time periods together to convey Iqbal's intellectual debt to Rumi, but he places them on a mountain to emphasize the difficulty of achieving high intellectual achievement. At the same time, Chughtai vindicates his own use of history for subject matter. Showing Iqbal with a thirteenth century Islamic philosopher could conceivably validate Chughtai's use of historic personages as applicable to contemporary demands.

## ROYAL PORTRAITS: BABUR TO AURANGZEB

In an article for the Pakistan Times, "The Future of Art in Pakistan," Chughtai explained the almost universal feeling of loss of culture among Indian Muslims with the downfall of the Mughal empire. He described the intimate ties of identity he and his co-religionists derived from the most splendid period of Islamic predominance in the history of India.

In India, the religious, cultural, literary and artistic traditions of the Muslims ~~were artistic traditions of the Muslims~~ were associated with the Moghuls. These traditions were the product of eight centuries of Muslim rule and bore the stamp of the Muslims' earnestness and fine taste.<sup>247</sup>

Chughtai traced his own blood to the period of Mughal greatness, for he claimed and endeavored to prove that his paternal ancestor, Ahmad Mimar, was the chief architect for Shah Jahan, the great Mughal ruler. Supposedly, Mimar was principally responsible for designing the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Jamia Masjid, and the Red Fort of Delhi. Arif Chughtai, the painter's son, continued the research and published a booklet that purports to prove the validity of Mimar as architect of the Taj Mahal and a flyer tracing the family lineage.<sup>248</sup> It is therefore, not surprising that a majority of Chughtai's Islamic themes are devoted to the Mughal period. Because his Mughal themes are so numerous, I have separated this topic into two chapters: MUGHAL ROYAL PORTRAITS and OTHER MUGHAL SUBJECTS. As the most convenient method of organizing this chapter, I have presented Chughtai's depictions of the royal Mughals in a chronological fashion, according to the order of their reigns.

Chughtai's painting of Babur and Humayun (Fig. 180), reproduced in Amle Chughtai seems to reveal a personal attitude not manifested in the commentary.<sup>249</sup> The commentary credits Babur and his son Humayun with having created a "new India, new man and a new world." Babur (a descendent of Timur and Genghis Khan) inherited the nomadic tradition along with a small, crumbling kingdom. He won and lost several Central Asian dominions in his lifetime, never holding any for a significant time, with the exception of Kabul in Afghanistan. About 1519 Babur began his conquest of India. By 1526 he claimed much of the continent but lived only four years longer to enjoy his life's endeavor.

Neither was Babur's heir, Humayun, able to enjoy for long the territorial conquests bequeathed him. Fleeing from the Afghan, Sher Shah, who had taken much of northern and eastern India, and pursuing (and alternately being pursued by) his own traitorous brother Kamran, Humayun spent thirteen years on the move as a king with no control over his kingdom. Chughtai depicts Babur and Humayun standing side by side in front of tents, looking not at one another, but out to the viewer. It is appropriate that Chughtai placed the two in front of tents instead of a structural palace to indicate the transitory existence and ephemeral security endured by father and son. Both spent most of their lives in military campaigns, making use of tents during encampment. Bamber Gascoigne wrote of Babur: "To be at home was to be camping in one's favorite surroundings."<sup>250</sup>

Humayun had been forced to flee to Persia partly because of the threat from Sher Shah and partly because his brother Kamran had conspired against him. Even Hindal and Askery, Humayun's other brothers, had several times opposed the deposed monarch. Though Humayun had been cruelly deceived by his brothers he refused to punish them. According to the Memoires of Humayun, it was his father's dying wish---Babur's advice---that dictated this perhaps unfortunate leniency. Babur is reported to have said, "O Humayun beware, beware, do not quarrel with your brothers, nor even form any evil intentions towards them..."<sup>251</sup>

In Chughtai's commentary for Babur and Humayun we are told: "Prince Humayun is listening to the advice of his father with full concentration and respect. This advice guided him at every step and in the hour of crisis and so he regained his lost honor with continuous effort."<sup>252</sup> It is perhaps ironic that Chughtai should depict Babur advising Humayun. Gascoigne believed that Babur's dying words were "fatal advice for a man as naturally inclined to sentimentality as Humayun," who could have prevented half his troubles by restraining an "incomprehensible leniency to his three disruptive half brothers..."<sup>253</sup> Indeed, the Memoires of Humayun relate that criticism to this effect was voiced against Humayun among Persian chiefs at the court of Shah Tahmasp where Humayun had taken refuge.<sup>254</sup>

In the painting, Babur holds a falcon and extends his arm out toward his son. The gesture is ambiguous, but more like one of paternal patting or a sign for calm, than an aggressive action. Babur seems to have his attention directed toward the falcon rather than to his son. Humayun clasps both hands in front of him in child-like supplication, his splayed feet contributing to a less than imperial impression.

Though Babur looks smaller in stature than his son, Chughtai appears to give Babur the dominant role. Of father and son the commentary says: "One is an eagle and the other is son of the eagle." (The bird in the painting looks more like a falcon which is one of Iqbal's symbols for the quality of ego in men that contributes to the ideal Muslim.)<sup>255</sup> The son, Humayun is merely the son of the eagle, and no qualities of his own are pronounced (either in the painting or in the commentary). Furthermore the commentary states, "Babur lived with discipline and solidarity. He is standing upright in a victorious manner with courage and determination." No more is said of Humayun, which, coupled with his humble posture, indicated to me that Chughtai harbored greater respect for the father than for the son.<sup>256</sup>

Akbar, Humayun's son, inherited the newly won and yet unsecured empire of northern India. He spent much of his life expanding his territorial holdings and finally claimed all but a small part of the entire subcontinent. Akbar, the first of the four Great Mughals, is credited with an impressive personal history of military exploits, generous patronage of the arts and an inquisitive mind that led him to create a composite personal religion after much disputation with leaders of other faiths as well as Muslim theologians. Most historians agree that he was a brilliant administrator who had built up the empire on the basis of tolerance between religious communities, but in spite of his reverential status in world history, he was almost entirely ignored by Chughtai. Khaled Ahmed, who reported on the 1981 Chughtai Death Commemoration Exhibition featuring Chughtai's Mughal paintings, made the same observation. "There is a definite bias of the Muslim exagesis (sic) of the period in Chughtai's treatment; Akbar, the greatest patron of the miniature art is rarely depicted."<sup>257</sup> Ahmed mentions only one painting of that emperor from the exhibition, Akbar and Young Saleem, and I have not seen any paintings by Chughtai of Akbar or encountered any titles that included Akbar's name.

On the other hand, Akbar's son, Prince Salim (Saleem), the future Jahangir, is depicted with some frequency. In Amle Chughtai, a work entitled Prince Salim shows the future emperor nimbused, standing in front of an elephant (Fig. 181).<sup>258</sup> In one hand he holds a narrow panel with a cypress tree on it and in the other, a paint brush. This can only be a reference to Salim's aesthetic disposition and universal renown as a patron of miniature painting. He is described as a true aesthete who took a personal interest in the artists of his atelier. No doubt the style and direction of miniature painting was greatly influenced by his personal involvement.

After the death of Akbar and upon accession to the throne, Salim took the title Jahangir (Seizer of the World). In a break with accepted tradition, he struck coins with his own portrait. While other Islamic emperors had ignored the religious ban on images, they did not court public offense by producing their own images in so blatant a manner. Furthermore, Jahangir has been shown nimbused in miniature paintings during his reign, a convention avoided by his Mughal predecessors. It could not have been accepted without opposition by the orthodox, but nevertheless, it continued to be practiced by succeeding Mughal emperors.

Among the Chughtai paintings I have seen, the nimbus occurs only twice, once around the head of Mansur al Hallaj (Fig. 176) and again in this painting of Prince Salim. In a painting entitled Sultan Shaheed, Chughtai placed the head of Tipu Sultan in the center of a cannon wheel so that the red hub appears to function like a nimbus, but it is not a proper halo. The egocentricity of appropriating a halo to glorify (or deify) oneself may have offended Chughtai, but he remained true to Mughal practice by including it in this painting.

Salim's pose, posture, and costume are modeled after the customary full-length portrait in Mughal miniature painting. His head is in profile, while the body is slightly less than a three-quarter pose, and the feet are positioned like so many others in paintings of that period. Salim's jama (coat dress) extended slightly below the knee, but Jahangir popularized the longer skirt. Turban styles between father and son differed too, as can be noted by comparing paintings from the period of each. It could be argued that the long skirt and turban style are represented somewhat prematurely in this painting, since Salim is still a prince, but it is possible Chughtai chose the longer skirt as a compositional device or from a personal preference in fashion. It is also possible he was not aware of the subtle change in jama length.

Though an esthete, Salim was never characterized as effeminate or cowardly. He personally led military campaigns to increase the empire as well as to defend threatened borders. To point out Salim's military and imperial status, Chughtai included the Mughali double bladed knife in the embroidered kamarband and a long sword and dark shield at Salim's waist. It is as if Chughtai wished to decorate Salim with all the accoutrements of his fame. The pearl earring hanging from his lobe is a reminder of his Hindu heritage and the precedent for religious tolerance established by Akbar.<sup>259</sup> The symbolism or significance of the elephant behind Salim is a mystery. Stuart Cary Welch is reported to have thought it "stood for Saleem's more pragmatic father (Akbar)," but no reason is



given for his interpretation.<sup>260</sup> The commentary adjoining <sup>252</sup> this painting in Amle Chughtai identifies the elephant as a sculpture. Indeed, the rigidity of its appearance and the solid dark grey color reinforce the notion that it is a sculpture. Dr. Waheed Quraishi noted that the elephant may be another emblem representing Salim's royal status.<sup>261</sup> Soldiers often owned their own horses, but elephants belonged to the emperor. In pre-Muslim India elephants were symbols of royalty, and as has just been shown, the Mughals assimilated numerous Hindu customs and beliefs. Quraishi's observation is more convincing that Welsh's because Quraishi related the imagery to history and culture in a way that Chughtai had with other paintings of this type during this period.

Considering Chughtai's proclivity to paint subjects historically and culturally close to him, it is natural he should be partial to subjects that feature Jahangir, the Mughal emperor most noticeably associated with Lahore. Jahangir's mausoleum lies close to the Ravi river on the outskirts of Lahore and is a popular picnic place for the local people. The Jahangir quadrangle at Lahore Fort comprises a major part of that complex, and many other monuments and gardens dated to his reign attest to the personal involvement of that emperor with the locale. This undoubtedly explains the importance of a woman named Anarkali in Chughtai's depictions of the Jahangir theme. One of the more curious monuments associated with Jahangir, the tomb of Anarkali, is located within the enclosure of the ~~Pakistan~~ <sup>Punjab</sup> Civil Secretariat just off the main street of Lahore's principal business district. It is an impressive marble structure with an inscription on the cenotaph that dates the tomb, 1915 A. D. The Pakistani historian, M.F. Khan, points out that the tomb has undergone so many changes over the years that it has lost all the original decoration.<sup>262</sup> The legend associated with the tomb has several versions differing only in details; therefore, the essence of the story is basically the same in each.<sup>263</sup>

The several renditions agree that Anarkali (pomegranate bud or blossom) was a beautiful dancing girl attached to the Mughal royal court at Lahore. The young prince, Salim, fell in love with Anarkali and proposed marriage, but Akbar was infuriated by the thought of the liaison and forbade the union. When neither Salim nor Anarkali would relent, Akbar ordered her death. Even though the name Anarkali was not included in any of the four inscriptions on the cenotaph, the tomb undoubtedly belonged to someone deeply loved by Salim. The longest inscription evokes the pathos of young love cut short by death. "I would give thanks to God until the day of resurrection. Ah! Could I behold the face of my beloved once more." A second inscription confirms the signature,

"The profoundly enamoured Salim Akbar." The third and fourth inscriptions give the date of death as 1599 and the date of the tomb as 1915.<sup>264</sup> Because of the circumstances, Salim must have found it prudent to delay the construction of the tomb until sometime after Akbar's death in 1605.

Chughtai's painting Salim-Anarkali (Fig. 57) was one of the illustrations for the book, Anarkali, a three act play written by Chughtai's friend, Imtiaz Ali Taj.<sup>265</sup> It was probably painted around 1931, the year before Taj's first edition of Anarkali was published. During the 1930s Chughtai's Islamic figures were painted with particular characteristics that I have referred to as his Persian style. See p. 119. Indicative of that style in this painting are the Safavid period red kula in Salim's turban and Anarkali's Persianized features like those from sixteenth and seventeenth century Iranian miniature paintings. While other stylistic influences are evident in this period, they complement rather than detract from the overall effect. Anarkali's balloon type shalwar (pants) are more twentieth century Punjabi in style than the tight-fitting pants of Persian ladies, and Salim's jama (dress) looks as Mughali as it does Persian.

The long chaddar that covers Anarkali's head and flows down her side is colored red, perhaps as a reference to the passion of the lovers, and she holds a long-necked stringed instrument symbolic of her profession as an entertainer.<sup>266</sup> In spite of the illicitness of the affair, Chughtai's sympathy seems to be with the lovers. He presents Anarkali as a shy girl who looks demurely away from the young prince. Salim appears to be gazing with admiration at Anarkali, his hands suggesting communication and emotion where words failed. The naivete and innocence of the two young lovers is evident in yet another painting entitled Salim and Anarkali from the Sri Jayachamarajendra Gallery, Mysore, but Salim's character takes on another dimension when he is shown with his queen, Nur Jahan.

At least three paintings by Chughtai feature Jahangir and his queen, Nur Jahan. In two of these they are shown together, and in a third---a diptich---the emperor and his wife face each other from their positions on either side of a doorway at the Governor's mansion in Lahore. All of these paintings portray Nur Jahan as the aggressive, athletic partner, while Jahangir is the follower, an intellectual and esthete with delicate actions and artistic sensibilities. Jahangir and Nur Jahan (Fig. 182) in the State Archaeological Museum of Hyderabad shows the royal couple standing on a veranda in front of a tent.<sup>267</sup> Nur Jahan has just released her falcon, and the two seem to be watching it fly away. Meanwhile Jahangir's falcon spreads

its wings waiting to be released. The emperor stands close to his queen with his right arm around her shoulders in a loving gesture.

In a similar composition Nur Jahan alone sports with the falcon while Jahangir watches. This work (Fig. 183), also entitled Jahangir and Nur Jahan was reproduced in Amle Chughtai. The commentary for this painting does not seem to be consistent with the implications suggested by the imagery. The commentary states that the king has just set his falcon to prey and is confident that its attack will be fruitful and that the bird will return successful. The king, however, has no falcon glove which he will need to receive the returning bird. His placement below Nur Jahan gives her the prominent position; she is more centrally located and is shown full-figure, her arm extending above his head, whereas the king is partially hidden by the stairs of the veranda. Furthermore, her action is aggressive; his is retiring. He clings to the pillar, dangling a cord in a manner more feminine than manly. She wears a katar (a typical double-bladed Mughal period dagger) in her kamarband. It is also noted in the commentary that "She is standing like a pillar of grace...The characters are majestic and dignified. Their life is full of tradition, and has passed like a solid rock after facing difficulties and troubles." It is possible Chughtai was making reference to Nur Jahan's de facto control of the empire---standing like a pillar of grace---when Jahangir became debilitated by his dependency on liquor and drugs.

In the Government House of Lahore, two paintings flank the doorway of a parlor. Though not titled, there can be little doubt that the painting to the left of the door depicts Nur Jahan (Fig. 184) and that on the right represents Jahangir (Fig. 185). The costumes of each are nearly identical to those in the painting just discussed. Nur Jahan's orange kamarband (Fig. 183) is now longer and cream-colored, but otherwise her costume is the same. Jahangir's jama and turban are cream-colored rather than orange (Fig. 183), but the style and pattern are unchanged.

In what maybe a stereotyped identity, Nur Jahan is shown with the falcon on her hand. Her gestures are graceful and feminine. The twist of her body and her hand and arm positions are reminiscent of Indian dance postures. The spray of delicate flowers and leaves in the background reflect the feminine yet stately ambience of the painting. Jahangir, in contrast, holds an open book and stares at it intently. This gesture tends to postulate an inquisitive and literary oriented nature---characteristics associated with Jahangir in view of his interest in recording nature

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(manifested in scientific-like studies of flora and fauna in miniature paintings) and his self-authored memoirs.

The addition of the sword in this rendition adds another dimension for interpretation. It may be inferred that Jahangir represents the mujahid who defends the faith and conquers in the name of Islam, and like the idealized personification of Wisdom and the Wise (Fig. 168), he is poet as well. (See Islamic Ideals, Heroes and Heroines, pp. 206). The role of mujahid implied in this painting, does not dominate the rather effeminate image presented here. Jahangir's body is elongated and equally as graceful as that of Nur Jahan. His long, light-colored jama is elegant, and certainly less masculine in appearance than one shorter or darker in color. Chughtai presents a royal couple, complementary to one another, but each unique and unlike the other. The queen is aggressive, athletic, possibly domineering---the king is retiring and intellectually inclined.

Because Chughtai believed his ancestor Ustad Ahmad Mimar was the architect of the Taj Mahal and of other important buildings in the reign of Shah Jahan, he might be expected to have given special attention to both the architect and the emperor who employed him. Apparently this is the case. I have seen three works that feature Shah Jahan, and Khaled Ahmed mentions a triptych featuring this ruler exhibited at the Chughtai Museum Trust during the 1981 Chughtai Commemoration Ceremonies.<sup>268</sup>

As early as 1922 Chughtai completed The Last Days of Shah Jahan (Fig. 186), probably his first painting of the emperor. It was purchased by Shamsheer Jung Bahadur, the Chief Minister of Nepal, after it won first prize in the Simla Exhibition of 1922.<sup>269</sup> The motivation for this painting may have been inspired by a desire to compete with Abanindranath Tagore as much as to express his personal ties with that Mughal emperor. Abanindranath Tagore's widely acclaimed Passing of Shah Jahan (Fig. 187) was chosen as the lead painting for the first volume of Chatterjee's Picture Albums in 1918 and graced the cover of Modern Review in the same year. By his own admission, Chughtai was eager to compete with Tagore and his students and to establish himself as an Islamic artist independent from the Bengal School. Refer to Chughtai's quotes pp. 38-41, and 45.

The overwhelming attention directed toward Tagore's Passing of Shah Jahan must have greatly irritated Chughtai. This was a Mughal subject, one Chughtai identified with personally. Tagore emphasized the architectural setting in his version of the dying Shah Jahan. The pillars and architrave and the pierced marble balcony railing are

faithful representations of those at Mussaman Burj, the complex at Agra Fort where Shah Jahan spent the last years of his life as prisoner of his son, Aurangzeb, who had usurped the throne. In 1916, two years before Tagore's painting was featured in Modern Review, Chughtai photographed the balcony of Mussaman Burj (Fig. 188) and used it as the setting for his painting of the same theme. The two paintings are nearly identical in content, but there the similarity ends.

Chughtai's version is full of movement and emotional content, whereas Tagore's composition fosters calmness, stability, and peacefulness. Chughtai based his composition on diagonals and a zigzag pattern receding into space, while Tagore balanced strong stable verticals (the pillars) with calming horizontals (the railing and the architrave). Refer to the diagram (Fig. 189). In Tagore's work the faithful daughter, Jahanara, calmly waits by the emperor's bedside and forms a gentle curve which culminates on the distant vision of the Taj Mahal. In Chughtai's painting, Jahanara passionately grasps her father's hand, her blowing hair and flowing scarf adding emotion and movement to the scene.

Chughtai's painting The Last Days of Shah Jahan was reviewed by Abanindranath Tagore in Rupam in 1922.<sup>270</sup> The article, "Priyadarshika or the Amiable Critic," was a review of the paintings in the thirteenth Exhibition of the Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta. Tagore praised each painting and tactfully avoided damaging criticism, but of Chughtai's painting he was petty and critical.

In the "Death of Shah Jahan"...the quiet solemnity of a death scene has been entirely missed. The discordant details, depicted with meticulous precision, militate loudly against the melancholy peace on which the mind would dwell. There is a veritable riot of colour and movement. It may be that this is just the impression which the artist sought to give. The fact, however, remains that the picture fails to be satisfying and leaves a sense of waiting for a change of scene...It is as if he is telling us plainly, nay boastfully, that this [technical skill] is all he has to offer.<sup>271</sup>

If Chughtai were not furious, he must have been amused. Of course the crowded scene, jarring movement, and overtly expressed emotion were intentional. But surely Chughtai could not have expected words of praise for this painting which challenged one of Tagore's greatest

successes by following its theme so closely, yet capitalizing on the differences in personality and culture between himself and Tagore.

As a Hindu, Tagore may not have been aware of the Muslim prescription that the Quran be read before the dying individual. consequently, in Chughtai's painting, while Jahanara holds her father's hand, two companions read from the Quran. The death of a Muslim is generally followed by loud emotional wailing and even pulling of the hair by the women folk. So important was this display of lamentation that professional mourners could be hired to perform for a funeral. Furthermore, considering the circumstances under which Shah Jahan died---as a prisoner, incarcerated by his own son, forsaken by all save his daughter, it seems unlikely he died a peaceful death. Popular stories of his incarceration emphasize suffering and pain. One story circulated that Shah Jahan went blind staring at the reflection of the Taj in a crystal prism he hung from the eaves of the balcony.

Some years later (about 1934), Chughtai painted Jahanara at the Taj (Fig. 190), now located in the field Museum of Art and Archaeology of Andhra Pradesh at Mahabubnagar, and used the same setting as that in The Passing of Shah Jahan.<sup>272</sup> Kneeling, Jahanara leans against the empty throne and looks across the Yumna river toward the Taj Mahal. Her pensive attitude and somber attire (brown dress and cloak) foster the popular image of Jahanara as the devoted daughter of Shah Jahan. A Quran stand before her and a chain of rosary beads in her right hand depict her as a pious lady. The combination of piety and filial devotion is the type of inspirational model Chughtai incorporated into his paintings, emblematic of the enduring ideals of Islamic society.

Whereas Jahanara at the Taj was meant to glorify a great woman and project the high values of Islam, the painting, Ustad Ahmad Mimar Presents the design of Taj Mahal to Emperor Shah Jahan (Fig. 191) fulfilled the personal desire of the artist to legitimize his own prestigious artistic heritage. This painting was featured as the flyleaf for a six page booklet by Arif Rahman Chughtai.<sup>273</sup> In this short report the artist's son prefaces the text with a paragraph from the diwan (collection of writings) of Lutuf Allah Mahandas (son of Ahmad Mimar) and a statement (in capital letters) that reads: "Only conjectures existed before the discovery of this diwan which ultimately confirmed the architect of the Taj Mahal."<sup>274</sup> Proof of the conjecture is less important to this study than recognizing that Chughtai himself fervently believed and/or wanted others to believe that his ancestor, Ahmad Mimar, was the chief architect of the Taj

Mahal. Chughtai's sincerity was demonstrated in a letter to his friend, Dr. Ibadat<sup>7</sup> Brelvi, which the latter received while in London. In the letter, Chughtai advised Brelvi "there is much information on our culture in England so you must see it." He then requested of Brelvi, "If you go to various libraries, try to find out something about Ahmad Mimar and Lutufallah Mahandas, our distant relatives who had something to do with the Taj."<sup>275</sup>

By the time Chughtai painted Mimar presenting the design to Shah Jahan, he must have accrued more information on the architect. Apparently, this painting is part of a triptych described by Khaled Ahmed in the Pakistan Times and referred to as the attraction of the exhibition. According to Khaled Ahmed, the three panels were entitled Vision of Shah Jahan, Shah Jahan and Architect Ahmad, and The Completed Vision of Shah Jahan. The first panel, Vision of Shah Jahan, refers to the inception of the idea for the Queen's mausoleum. Ahmed described this work as "a blue study, illustrating Chughtai's special involvement with the moon and the landscape it helps create."<sup>276</sup> Though I have not seen this painting, I am reminded of The Storyteller (Fig. 206), a romantic vision in blue of the Taj framed by a peacock in the shape of the crescent moon. Ahmed's interpretation of the first panel, however, bears no resemblance to the theme of The Storyteller.

A depressed king is thinking of his dead queen and dreaming of Taj Mahal, a rose-water bottle, a relic of Mumtaz Mahal, prefiguring the dome of the great mausoleum.<sup>277</sup>

The second panel must be the same painting Arif chose to illustrate his booklet and the one reproduced here. Ahmed noted that it depicted the presentation of the plans of the Taj Mahal to the king and betrayed the influence of miniatures from the Akbar Nama, "apparent in the depiction of the courtiers looking on in great wonderment," but he offered no further comments on iconography.<sup>278</sup> It seems to me the courtiers look on in great wonderment because the emperor is holding, not a design for the Taj, but a portrait whose image overlaps minarets and a dome (that of the Taj?).— Contrary to what is drawn one would expect to see an architect's plan or at least a recognizable rendering of the Taj. Perhaps the expected design is among the sheets to be seen stacked below the portrait. This type of anomaly is an occasional occurrence in Chughtai's work. Sometimes he offered an explanation, but usually it seemed to be part of his desire to catch the attention of the viewer by creating a dichotomy. Furthermore, the architect is laden with assorted accoutrements, some of which seem to bear no relationship to the profession. The box under his right arm could be the portfolio for his drawings, but one

wouldn't normally associate a sword with the tools of an architect. Under his left arm he carries a wrapped object, either a weapon or the king's standard. These can also be seen in miniature paintings held by various men in attendance at durbar scenes.<sup>279</sup>

Perhaps the oddities of this second panel would make sense in the context of the complete triptych. The third panel Ahmed referred to as The Completed vision of Shah Jahan, and he interpreted it as the fulfillment with a prediction of tragedy. "The Taj has been built but ahead lies the imprisonment at the hands of his own son."<sup>280</sup> Unfortunately because the booklet illustration is reproduced in black and white, no information is provided by color, and I have not seen the other two panels. Nevertheless, the concept of a triptych, if it were indeed intended as a three-part unity, is unusual in itself in terms of Chughtai's artistic approach.

Considering Chughtai's personal interest in the emperor Shah Jahan and the architect Ahmad Mimar, it is curious that only the triptych was displayed at the 1981 Chughtai exhibition, particularly in light of the fact that four studies of Aurangzeb were shown. It is possible that Chughtai did not paint any other compositions featuring Shah Jahan and Ahmad Mimar, but it is not so easy to guess why Chughtai would devote so much attention to the son who imprisoned Shah Jahan and render him as an admirable individual. Of all the Mughals, Aurangzeb has been the least respected among western historians. Indo-Muslims, however, have not been so critical as Khaled Ahmed suggested in noting that Chughtai's studies of Aurangzeb are almost explanatory in their treatment "stressing his austerity and piety while effectively removing the threadbare and narrow-minded orthodoxy associated with the Emperor by Hindu and British historians."<sup>281</sup>

Two similar compositions by Chughtai depict the aging monarch, Aurangzeb, (Figs. 192, 193) holding a book, probably the Quran, in a relaxed posture with a contemplative attitude. Aurangzeb, (Fig. 192) reproduced in Amle Chughtai and almost certainly in the CMT collection, may have been one of the four paintings of which Ahmed wrote, "Aurangzeb is well-dressed though not foppishly. His backdrop is disciplined and austere without the Kangra lushness of nature Chughtai used with other monarchs."<sup>282</sup> There is no hint of the eccentricities of his personality or short-comings of his reign that even the most admiring Muslims admit to and that at least one British art historian, Robert Skelton, has impartially examined.



Stigmatized by history as a cold and calculating religious bigot, Aurangzeb emerges from its pages as a somewhat tragic figure. Admittedly a fratricide, who imprisoned his aged father and other male relatives, he was rather a victim of his own overriding sense of duty than a tyrant. He maintained the imperial dignity of the court but tried to sweep away features which he found inconsistent with Muslim orthodoxy. His piety was beyond reproach but the simplicity of his personal life, demonstrated by his copying out the Qur'an for sale, was not without its inconsistencies. He was an enemy of those arts such as painting and music which broke the tenets of Islam but nevertheless permitted portraiture when it magnified his imperial status or enabled him to check that an imprisoned relative was not rejecting doses of a debilitating drug.

His relentlessly pursued political aim was the subjugation of the Deccan sultanates...In the process he over-extended and impoverished the empire so that despite his exertions as the dynasty's supreme bureaucrat he ended his reign with a confession of failure. In a letter to his son, A'zam Shah, he wrote "I came alone and am going alone. I have not done well to the country and the people, and of the future there is no hope."<sup>283</sup>

Chughtai's two portraits of Aurangzeb reproduced here are similar in composition and style, but his attitude toward the ruler seems to have changed from one to the next. In the earlier work, a reproduction from Chughtai's scrapbook in the CMT (Fig. 193), the bulbous body of Aurangzeb contrasts markedly with miniature paintings of the monarch that depicted him as a frail, thin individual.<sup>284</sup> His upright posture and curved brow give him a look of determination and sternness—characteristics consistent with historians' view of his personality but quite unlike the image (bent and repentant looking) manifested in many Mughal miniatures. Aurangzeb with a red book, (obviously meant to be the Quran) and a dagger (on the walk in front of him) placed so that it projects from behind the hand evokes the adage in Islam---"to conquer by the book and the sword." Moreover, his hands are plump and fingers short like those of a laborer---suggestive of his military prowess.

In the later work (Fig. 192) the pious aspect of Aurangzeb's personality is emphasized. Here, the ruler is wearing a green robe with a red vest that matches the cover of the book he holds. Green is symbolic of his piety, and

the dagger has been replaced by a Quran stand. The figure is not thin, but elongated and more graceful than the earlier rendering. His hands are delicate and graceful---a characteristic of the artistic or literary person. Taken together, the two paintings catch the essence of Aurangzeb's notoriety---the political ambitions through military conquest and the fanatic fidelity to orthodox Islam.

An untitled painting of Aurangzeb from the 1920s belonging to Mrs. Miriam Hatim Tyabji of Karachi depicts the ruler as a much younger man (Fig. 194).<sup>285</sup> Here, he may be viewed as a loving, attentive father or as a pious man listening to the Quran. Aurangzeb sits or kneels on the floor below his daughter, Zebunissa, who appears to be reading to him. Zebunissa, acknowledged as an accomplished poetess, may be reciting her poetry. Or, Aurangzeb may be listening to his daughter read the Quran, and copying the verses. In either case, a sympathetic relationship between father and daughter sets the mood. The colors are low key, almost drab, and contribute to the sense of austerity.

Aurangzeb's jama is yellow-orange with a touch of design on the shoulder. His hands are long and graceful, like a poet's. By depicting him as a man of letters, Chughtai may have been manipulating his image. Whether listening to Zebunissa's poetry or copying the Quran, Aurangzeb in this work dispells the image Skelton referred to as "enemy of those arts such as painting and music..."

According to several popular legends and unauthenticated histories, Zebunissa was not a drab, conservative personality. The detailed story of a supposed scandalous love affair between Zebunissa and Aqil Khan, governor of Lahore, was published by Jessie Westbrook in the introduction to her Diwan of Zeb-un-nissa in 1913. Jadunath Sakar, indignant because of the effrontery directed toward Zebunissa, vigorously challenged the validity of Westbrook's conclusions and referred to another love affair reported between Zebunissa and the Marathi military hero, Shivaji, as "fiction and nothing more."<sup>286</sup> While these love stories may be no more than gossiper's lies, that they are widely known is significant. Chughtai, like Jadunath Sakar, is the champion for the reclamation of Zebunissa's untarnished reputation. Sakar writes in her defense and Chughtai paints her as the pious, unpretentious intellectual.

Certainly part of Chughtai's talent, a result he consciously aimed for, was a degree of ambiguity in the interpretation of his subjects. The artist wrote that each person should interpret his paintings within the realm of his/her own experience. A portrait of Zebunissa from Amle

Chughtai entitled The Virtuous (Fig. 195) is another example of suggestion mixed with personal symbolism.<sup>287</sup> The commentary in Amle Chughtai expounds upon the technical and artistic merits of this painting, ignoring any discussion of the subject matter except for the final sentence---"The atmosphere depicts the aspect of Mughal culture which renders lustrous their splendor and the scholarship of the princess."

Chughtai's title The Virtuous seems self-evident, Zebunissa is dressed in green from turban to hemline. Green as noted before, was the color of the Prophet's robe and the color most symbolic of Islam. Chughtai's most pious figures are clothed in green. She sits alone, with a book in her lap---the symbol of her scholarship. The necessary requirements of her virtuous and intellectual image are in order, but her head is bowed and her eyes are closed. She looks as if she is sleeping.

Khaled Ahmed felt that "the remarkable canvas showing "Princess Zeb-un-Nisa" suggested the poetess in confinement. "Her great poise and self-control is contrasted to a flaming red foliage in the background symbolizing her own inner passion."<sup>288</sup> Historically, Ahmed can be supported in his remarks. By Aurangzeb's decree his daughter spent the last twenty one years of her life in confinement because of her steadfast sympathy with her brother, Akbar, who had plotted against the aging emperor. History also describes Zebunissa as a willful but talented young woman, who probably deserved much of the notoriety she received.

#### SUMMARY

Generally Chughtai's personifications of Mughal royalty are idealized portraits that manifest an historic or personal characteristic of the individual represented. Many of these paintings also reveal the personal attitude of the artist. Chughtai's point of view, however, is not always self-evident. Some of his paintings appear to reflect purely personal inclinations; others may respond to local community-held convictions.

In the painting Nur Jahan and Jahangir, the artist depicts the queen as the more aggressive of the pair. Chughtai may be responding, in part, to historical criticism (Nur Jahan is reported to have participated in riding and hunting activities normally forbidden to women and exerted considerable political influence), but in the four paintings examined, she appears to dominate her more retiring husband. In the portrait of Jahangir as Prince

Salim, the artist has again focused on the future king's aesthetic proclivities, showing him with a brush and painting in hand.

Aurangzeb, whose character and reign had been criticized by some western scholars, is presented as a relaxed, confident, man of the book in the Amle Chughtai illustration and as a stout 'defender of the faith' with sword and book in a painting from the CMT. Another painting (untitled, but in my opinion, Aurangzeb without a doubt) shows the ruler as a young man seated below a lady (who must be his daughter, Zebunissa) in an attentive fatherly image. I know of no reason why Chughtai should take a personal interest in projecting the character of Aurangzeb, particularly when he appears to have ignored the first great Mughal, Akbar ( who certainly patronized the arts far more generously than Aurangzeb). I can only guess that Chughtai may have gravitated toward twentieth century Indo-Muslim sentiment activated by ethnocentric motives.

On the other hand, it is reasonable to expect Chughtai to have been favorable toward and much concerned with the most noted patron of Mughal architecture, Shah Jahan. Chughtai believed his ancestor, Ahmad Mimar Lahori was the chief architect of Shah Jahan, responsible for the Taj Mahal of Agra, the Jamia Masjid and the Red Fort of Delhi. One of his most famous early paintings "The Passing of Shah Jahan" c.1920, is a tender rendering of the dying ruler looking at the Taj Mahal from the veranda of Mussaman burj. A triptych of Shah Jahan exhibited at the CMT in 1981 was described in the Pakistan Times, and though I have not seen the group, I know of no other triptych in Chughtai's oeuvre.

## OTHER MUGHAL SUBJECTS

Chughtai did not limit his paintings of Mughal subjects to depictions of royalty alone; he painted many scenes meant to show the customs, attitudes, and exotic costumes more general to that period. Many of these paintings are generalized scenes with anonymous figures, while others are depictions of heroes or other well-known persons, each in a setting appropriate to his or her fame.

Sultan Shaheed (Fig. 196) is the portrait of a Muslim martyr (of the late Mughal period) popularly known as Tipu Sultan. Tipu (1749-1799) inherited the predominantly Hindu kingdom of Mysore from his father, Haider Ali. Although the British had de facto control over much of India, Tipu was recognized as the primary barrier to British supremacy in the central and southern part of the continent. Lord Wellesley, installed as Governor General in 1798, fully isolated Tipu from sympathetic neighboring kingdoms and foiled his attempt to form an alliance with the Nizam of Hyderabad. When the British attacked Mysore, Tipu fought courageously but was killed in battle in 1799.

For costume and pose, Chughtai appears to have referred to Mughal miniature painting. Tipu's attire in this painting---the open jama skirt revealing pants that are full at the thigh and tight at the ankle---is similar to the costume in miniature paintings of rulers from the Deccan in the eighteenth century. The turban, however, seems to be Turkish in style, and is quite different from those seen on Chughtai's other Mughal or Persian subjects. The pose (profile head and three-quarter torso view) is typical of Mughal miniature painting both in the north and in the Deccan.

The Urdu commentary in Amle Chughtai states that Tipu Sultan was a mujahid, a great freedom fighter, who laid down his life for his cause. In Chughtai's painting, the head of this hero has been placed precisely in the center of the cannon wheel so that the red hub acts as a halo. There is no doubt that Chughtai regarded Tipu as a martyr and little doubt that he intended to honor him with an implied but subtle halo. Furthermore, the commentary notes that the manner in which he is standing is significant because it represents "the grace and dignity by which the legend of a martyr gains completion." Alertness, courage, majesty,

confidence, and determination are characteristics of Tipu's personality, stated in the commentary, that the painting is intended to convey.

Because of its placement, size, and primary focus as the sole object of the background, the cannon would seem to have a major role in the iconography of this painting. There is no legend or historical report that specifically links a cannon to the story of Tipu Sultan. The commentary for the Tipu painting, however, reveals that "the cannon depicts the concept of courageous action which never proved fruitless for the sultan." A cannon, more than guns or swords, dramatizes the concept of destructive potential. The cannon intensifies the militaristic aspect associated with the sultan's martyrdom. Furthermore, a famous cannon in Lahore (one of Lahore's tourist attractions) was in the height of action at about the time of Tipu's death.

This cannon, known as the zam zama in Rudyard Kipling's book Kim, has long been enshrined in the middle of the street (forming a roundabout) in front of the National Museum in Lahore. As such, it was a familiar sight to Chughtai as well as all of Lahore's citizenry. The zam zama belonged to Ranjit Singh, who made Lahore his capital in the same year as Tipu's death (1799). Singh, who ruled in the Punjab, used the cannon against the army of Multan in 1818 in an effort to expand his domain. It serves as a reminder of the rich history of Lahore and almost certainly inspired the inclusion of a cannon in this painting of Sultan Shaheed.

Stories of daring and heroism are abundant from the Mughal period, but only a few personalities have withstood the test of time and are vividly remembered and eulogized in the present century. Tipu Sultan (late Mughal, early British period) was one and Chand Sultana another. There are notable similarities in heroism and historical circumstances between the two and one glaring difference--- Chand Sultana was a woman. Chughtai's painting Chand Sultana (Fig. 197) now in the Victoria Jubilee Museum in Vijayawada, India, is probably a later version of a painting by the same title shown in the British Empire Exhibition of 1924. The Descriptive Catalogue for that exhibition gives a concise introduction to the story of Chand Sultana (excerpted below) that generally agrees with authoritative accounts such as that in Majumdar's voluminous History and Culture of the Indian People.

In 1595 A.D. Prince Murad with Khan-e-Khana, the Mughal commander-in-chief, was sent by his father, Akbar the Great, to Ahmednagar to effect its conquest. The Rajput Princess, Chand Bibi, ruler of Ahmednagar, was the life and soul of a heroic

defense. The Mughal forces, after a siege of some months, made peace with the princess, and the title of Chand Sultana was bestowed on her by Akbar the Great, who thus recognized her heroic virtue... 289

Possibly for the sake of brevity in the catalogue, this commentary omits several important points. Most importantly, like Tipu Sultan, Chand Sultana lost her life because she refused to compromise her convictions. Ironically, however, she was not killed in battle by the common enemy, the Mughals, but by "a riotous faction [of former allies] which was opposed to her policy." 290

Realizing the superiority of the Mughal forces, Chand Bibi (Chand Sultana) finally agreed to surrender Ahmednagar. Her rival, Abhang Khan, continued to oppose the Mughal forces, and even after he was forced to retreat, some of his supporters murdered the heroine. Like the downfall of Tipu, Chand Sultana was unable to sufficiently co-ordinate or depend upon her natural allies, the leaders of neighboring states who face the same Mughal threat.

In this painting, Chughtai shows Chand Sultana sword in hand, leaning on a small domed structure. She seems to be standing on a roof-top, looking out from her high vantage point to catch sight of the oncoming forces. Below her, a group of women and one child huddle together. One looks up at the heroine as if beseeching her reassurance. The congregation of women within a besieged fortress, when the odds are against their winning, is a reminder of the Hindu tradition of jauhar. The most noted record was the case of Chitor, where hundreds of women and children committed suicide by fire to avoid falling into the enemy's hands. The intimation that these women are considering jauhar seems unlikely, since Chand Sultana and the ruling faction were Muslims belonging variously to the Five Sultanates of the Deccan. However, it should be noted that Chughtai referred to Chand Bibi as a Rajput princess in the previous quotation and many of her subjects were Hindu. The remainder of the commentary from the British Empire Exhibition catalogue gives further insights into Chughtai's interpretation of this motif.

In this picture she is shown equipped with weapons and robed as a Princess, as she appeared when her city was besieged by Murad. She is seeking the cooperation of her own sex, who are offering her their ornaments as the sign of their fidelity. The place where she is standing is the corridor of her own Harem, as the Mosaic decoration of precious stones indicated. On the wall is an inscription from the Holy Quran meaning 'Those who embraced

Islam fight on the path of God,' The inscription coincides with the scene depicted in the picture. This Indian Herione is not unworthy to be placed beside the immortal 'Joan of Arc.'<sup>291</sup>

The Fragrance (Fig. 198), reproduced in Amle Chughtai, was meant to evoke a response quite different from that of Sultan Shaheed or Chand Sultana. The commentary from Amle Chughtai conveys the artist's desire to depict the quality of life during the Mughal period "where all desires and ambitions take root and flourish... It is a world of color and fragrance of the immature atmosphere [morning], a world where individuality is the hallmark of life and luxuries abound."<sup>292</sup> The Fragrance is one of many paintings that reflects the artist's love and admiration for the Mughal era and shows the influence of local Mughal monuments on his art. The lady, a Mughal princess, is elaborately dressed and richly adorned. From turban to skirt border she is covered in yards of pink. She wears bracelets, rings, earrings, and jewels on her turban and a jewel at her throat. The style of her costume is Mughal, but the degree to which it is faithfully accurate is questionable. There is no doubt that Chughtai romanticized the Mughal period, and embellished costumes are part of his romantic vision.

The props and architecture in this painting are typically Mughal. Probably inspired by local monuments known to Chughtai, they give the scene a quality of historical narrative. In shape and relative size, the pavilion behind the princess greatly resembles the Naulakha from Lahore fort (Fig. 199). This structure appears frequently in the settings of Chughtai's Mughal style paintings. The Lahore fort Naulakha (or Bungla) is located in the center of a courtyard across from the Shish Mahal (room of mirrors). It is a small marble pavilion described by historian M. W. U. Khan as an example "of delicate pietra dura work wrought in semi-precious stones such as agate, jade, gold stone, lapis-lazuli."<sup>293</sup> In Khan's opinion, it is one of the finest architectural achievements of the Mughals in the subcontinent.

Chughtai's abstracted version is less ornate than the real Naulakha; furthermore, the painted version has a roof, whereas the top of the original pavilion has been removed. Nevertheless, there are other features in common to support my contention that the actual monument served as an inspiration to Chughtai. Both the painting and the building have nearly identical ornamental brackets beneath the overhanging eaves. Chughtai adapted the decoration from the cornice to embellish the roof of the pavilion in his painting, although his design is manifestly more florid. The delicacy and grace of the Naulakha and its neighboring



apartment, the Shish Mahal, were well-suited to function as the residence for the empress of Shah Jahan when she stayed in Lahore. Since Chughtai must have been aware of this fact, it may be suggested that the lady in pink represents a princess, perhaps even the empress Mumtaz Mahal, Queen of Shah Jahan, herself.

Cut bricks, inlaid to create patterned walkways, barely visible in The Fragrance, are also a feature of the courtyard surrounding the Naulakha. However, the vertical/horizontal design in the courtyard is not so intricate as the hexagonal pattern in Chughtai's painting. Hexagonal patterns of inlaid brick were featured in several of Lahore's Mughal period monuments. Chughtai would have noticed them at Jahangir's tomb, at Wazir Khan Mosque (Fig. 200), or at the Lahore Fort. In Paien Bagh (the royal harem garden) at Lahore Fort, walkways of cut brick in the hexagonal pattern criss-crossed the private enclosure. Khan says that a spacious platform of brick-work paving and a shallow water tank were the focal point of Paien Bagh, a secluded yet attractive setting "for the morning and evening walks of the inmates of the Haram..."<sup>294</sup> In Chughtai's painting, The Fragrance, it is morning, the hazy blue sky is making way for the light of dawn, and the viewer might assume the princess has just enjoyed an early walk in Paien Bagh. Open places flanking the brick paths were planted with "fragrance-giving flowering plants, cypress, and dwarf plants bearing beautiful fruits," a garden of delights inviting the princess to pluck and sniff or merely contemplate the beauty of the flower.<sup>295</sup>

The Mughal love for gardens was inherited from Central Asian and Persian ancestors, and in addition to providing a cool, green environment (like an oasis in the desert), these gardens carried paradise symbolism as well.<sup>296</sup> In their book, The Gardens of Mughal India, Crowe and Haywood relate the concept of paradise, in part at least, to water.

The basic design of the paradise garden is very simple. It is an idealized form of the pattern of irrigation, in which water is shown symbolically and physically as the source of life. In its primitive form, water-channels, representing the four rivers of life, cross in the center of the garden, dividing the rectangular area into four quarters...The whole is surrounded by a wall to keep out the surrounding desert with its dust-laden winds and to give privacy and protection.<sup>297</sup>

I know of three Chughtai paintings, and assume there are others, that depict figures in a garden setting with walks and pools.<sup>298</sup> An untitled work of a Mughal couple standing next to a lily pond (Fig. 205) is an idealized

vision of a pleasant scene that derives its imagery from Mughal miniature painting.<sup>299</sup> The pose and costume of the young couple emulate miniature painting, although the crossed feet, expressing a gesture of rest, deviate subtly from the usually stiff posture of figures in Mughal painting. The prince extends his arm to admire a red flower, while his partner reaches out to enjoy the cool spray of water from a small delicate fountain in the pool.<sup>300</sup>

At Shalimar Bagh,<sup>301</sup> Shah Jahan's pleasure gardens in Lahore, there are innumerable small fountains in the shallow pools, some of which spray many delicate streams from one sprocket; others (as in this painting) eject a single plume.<sup>302</sup> In The Mughal Princesses (Fig. 206) Chughtai depicts the other type of spray in a similar setting. There are a number of Mughal gardens in Lahore, but most have fallen into ruin or considerable disrepair. They vary in overall size and in relation of ponds and canals to grassy planted areas. In these paintings Chughtai has focused on the reflecting pools and connecting walkways. As a general rule, Mughal pools were shallow and expansive, in contrast to the narrower water courses and smaller tanks of the Persian gardens.<sup>303</sup> Pools were sometimes deep enough for swimming but then would not have been covered with lilies such as seen in Chughtai's painting. The pool in the upper left of the painting (Fig. 205) reflects nearby cypress trees and shrubs, indicative of the trend to alternate tanks and planted areas within the overall geometric grid. In gardens like this, the royal family would enjoy the sound of the water as it cascaded down courses from one level to the next, and they could savor the refreshing breeze cooled by the spray of the fountains. It was a small paradise on earth, fashioned after what the Mughals believed their heavenly paradise would offer them.

The Melody of Life (Fig. 203) reproduced in Amle Chughtai, is another scene of a Mughal couple placed in a sumptuous setting, displaying the symbols of the privileged class. In the background, ubiquitous cypresses form a repetitive continuum to counter the foreground activity of pattern against pattern. Although the domed structure behind the couple may be a fanciful creation of the artist, its architectural forms (low retaining wall, dome, and pointed arch) and the multicolored patterns embellishing it and the floor find their counterparts in Mughal monuments and manuscript design.

The well-dressed couple conform to Chughtai's ideal of Mughal regality. Military prestige is indicated by the young man's sword; the restless falcon in his raised hand suggests affluence; and the tiny cup in his other hand may

hold wine or some intoxicating beverage, generally forbidden to Muslims but freely enjoyed by the elite. While the young man boldly confronts the viewer, his partner is shown with closed eyes, either looking down at the flower she holds or responding to the demand for modesty expected of all respectable women.

The flower is a reminder of the popular Persian/Urdu simile that compares the beauty of a flower (usually a rose or a tulip) to the face of the beloved. With her left hand she clutches a book, another sign of the privileged class, and in her right hand she grasps a delicate vessel. Small handblown glass vessels of this type were used as perfume bottles, perfume being a preoccupation with cultured ladies. Nur Jahan's mother gained immediate acclaim for her discovery of attar of roses and was rewarded by Jahangir with a string of pearls.<sup>304</sup> By title alone The Melody of Life suggests harmony, rhythm, pleasure, and enjoyment, and the painting manifests these expectations.

Although we have seen the Mughal women in Chughtai's paintings enjoying outdoor gardens with a lover or husband or absorbed in solitary contemplation of a fragrant flower, we cannot forget the overriding restrictions of purdah (seclusion of women). with a few exceptions, none of these women could have been seen by men outside the royal family. Mughal artists painted scores of scenes that featured or included royal women; scholars generally agree they must have been purely imaginary, as no artist would have been permitted to see any lady of the court. Chughtai painted a number of similar scenes with Mughal women, alone or in pairs, on a pillared terrace or in an interior, and I believe these represent the ladies of the harem. some of the titles are explicit, leaving no doubt they are women of the seraglio.<sup>305</sup> As the representative example, I have chosen Wazir's Daughters from the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, India (Fig. 204).

A wazir was the most influential advisor to the ruler; nearly all Islamic rulers (khalifa, shah, or emperor) had a trusted wazir. The wazir, therefore, was attached to the court, and his ladies often formed part of the royal harem. If the wazir maintained a separate residence, he supported a zenana modeled upon that at the palace.<sup>306</sup> Women were provided private quarters within the compound with all the amenities for a comfortable existence. Their special gardens have already been described. While they were not allowed to be seen by men outside their immediate family, the harem ladies were allowed to attend functions such as musical performances and poetry readings while hidden in privacy behind finely pierced screens. They could see out but could not be seen.

The wazir's two daughters stand alone on a terrace overlooking rooftops and domes amid slender pointed cypress tops. The city below lies along the bank of a lake and offers a pleasant view for the solitary sisters. Both women are elegantly attired in floor-length garments with long, flowing head scarves draped over golden colored embroidered caps. One sister, in profile, looks out pensively, holding a cup in a frozen gesture. The other looks down with a vacant expression, hands together in front of her, clasping a scarf. The immediate impression is that the girls suffer from boredom and indifference. Here are two attractive young ladies, well-bred, well-dressed, and envied by commoners. They can view the activities of the townspeople below, but they must remain aloof, restricted by class and sex to mix only with their own.

I imagine that each is pondering her future. If not already married, they are anticipating arrangements being planned. Marital alliances with royalty of other kingdoms was a common practice in the Mughal period. Princesses and high-placed ladies were often sent to distant realms to become wives of rulers and courtiers. Not infrequently, they found themselves entering a society different from their own. In their own household, the wazir's daughters probably welcomed girls from other kingdoms, some of whom may have spoken another language. Since polygamy was common among the wealthy, girls expected to be accepted on a par with the other wives, but most feared the possible reprisals of jealous, older mates.

In general, Chughtai's paintings do not address these complex personal concerns of interfamily relationships. Societal values and mores, however, are expressed in his works. Paintings such as Zabeda Khatoon, Chand Sultana, Nur Jahan and The Wazir's Daughters are a few examples that reveal the artist's interpretation of female roles. In The Bound of Love, Chughtai presents an idealistic, romanticized view of marital commitment (Fig. 205) with extensive commentary advocating love, fidelity, duty, and tradition.<sup>307</sup> The young man is a mujahid preparing to fulfill his duty as defender of the faith. "This painting," noted the commentary, "is a perfect expression of the sentiment of love which exists between the two loving souls."<sup>308</sup> Each will be faithful to the other. "When a [honorable] soldier stands tall and erect, looking down upon his shy beloved as he presents a sword for her oath. He is equipped for battle with sword and shield and "is self-confident that he will return victorious."

His beloved, the commentary noted, "touches the blade with reverence" in a gesture that suggests a pledge acknowledging the bond of love. By presenting the sword,

according to the commentary, Chughtai "is showing that they have recognition of other obligations rather than merely a selfish tie." The commentary did not identify these obligations but determined that "they are all aware" and explained that this is a selfless love; inherent is the realization that she is committed to fidelity, knowing the possibility exists that her lover or husband may be killed. Herein a peculiar Chughtai characteristic is manifested. He views the situation as a "conflict of sentiments, made by God, common to both men and women, but indispensable...[The] conflict is one of fidelity and of not knowing if there can be fruition of the bond." Chughtai imagined a similar conflict confronting Sohini, the potter's daughter, obsessed by her love for Mahinwal. She stood on the bank of the river Chenab, ready to cross with the aid of an earthen pot for flotation, and Chughtai is reported to have said of his painting "Look at her face, see the dilemma; she knows it's not baked but she can't decide to go or not."<sup>309</sup>

In The Bound of Love Chughtai balances propriety and passion. The heroine is a picture of modesty. Securing the scarf to cover her head, she looks with downcast eyes, demurely avoiding her lover's gaze.<sup>310</sup> At the same time the background is red, the color of passion, and her red sari is covered with an orange veil. In Pakistan, brides wear red or orange. This duality of restraint and self fulfillment is explained in the commentary as the combination of vajadané (ecstatic experiences of life) and atheia (expecting no return and able to give back freely at any time). While it was the artist's intention to show romance and produce the feeling of ecstasy, Chughtai wanted the viewer to realize that "the two are bonded in such a chaste relationship...that the sensation should not be that of sensuality."<sup>311</sup>

The Storyteller (Fig. 206), like The Bound of Love, is a representation of profane love, but the imagery is wholly symbolic.<sup>312</sup> As he did for The Bound of Love, Chughtai wrote extensive commentary for The Storyteller, but the connotations of the latter are more far-reaching than those of the former. The storyteller is the peacock, and according to the artist's son, it is Chughtai himself.<sup>313</sup> The Taj Mahal, most renowned of all Mughal monuments, is represented as the symbol of love.

There are at least three versions of The Storyteller, each slightly altered while maintaining the basic composition.<sup>314</sup> One of the earliest, if not the first version, entitled Symbols (Fig. 207) was inspired by Iqbal's condemnation of contemporary Indian painting.<sup>315</sup> In a paper entitled "Chughtai and Iqbal," Arif Chughtai explained the origin of Symbols: On September 7, 1926,

Allama Iqbal wrote a letter to Chughtai's brother, Abdullah, requesting a selection of Indian paintings for his viewing:

If you have a printed version of paintings by Indian artists, then please lend such a selection to me for a day or two. I want to see it. If no such selection exists, then at least give me the names of some famous paintings, along with necessarily a commentary on them. I want to find out as to how the Indian artists are relating the subject of their paintings to the selection for exhibition of their works. I particularly need names of the paintings from the Bengal School. Besides if there is any book on critics and art criticism, include that also for my reference.<sup>316</sup>

Abdullah sent the poet a number of books, including a complete set of Chatterjee's Picture Albums.<sup>317</sup> Iqbal's poetic response to the art was disparaging.

Their fantasy, death-bed of love and passion: Their sunless minds the burial vaults of nations; In their idolatrous halls Deaths' portrait hands, Their art, like a priest's soul, sickens of life; They hide from mortal eyes the heavens' high places, Their gift is drowsy spirit and itching flesh. Oh, India's painters, poets, and story-tellers! The female sits astride their quivering nerves.<sup>318</sup>

According to Arif Chughtai, his father "recognized the vulnerability of Iqbal to the dominance of the female figure in paintings, and so created a new experimentation in form of that immortal work, 'The Story-Teller.'<sup>319</sup> Apparently what Arif meant is that Iqbal was annoyed by the ubiquitous occurrence of the female in Indian painting. He felt Indian artists were preoccupied by the female in her physical form and with insipid, romantic iconography. Chughtai then painted Symbols which was a romantic painting (lamenting the loss of Islamic grandeur and as a symbol of the tomb dedicated to love of woman) but it included no female personification. It was regarded, therefore, as "a new experimentation."

Abdullah took the painting to Iqbal; after they had a long discussion about it, the poet wrote to Abdullah expressing his desire to continue the discussion with Abdur Rahman.<sup>320</sup> For many months the painting hung in the study of Dr. Iqbal...and [then] he wrote a verse on the inspiration of the 'Story-Teller.'<sup>321</sup> The same verse accompanies the painting in Amle Chughtai.

Look for the moment at the precious gem, The Taj  
 agleam in the light of the moon, Its marble  
 rippling like a flowing stream, Each ripple a wave  
 of eternity. A man's love has expressed itself in  
 it, Stringing the stones together with the thread  
 of his eyelashes as if they were pearls.<sup>322</sup>

Iqbal's poem dramatizes the fame of the Taj as the gift of love---the most splendid tomb in the history of mankind---commissioned by emperor Shah Jahan for his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. consequently, the Taj Mahal is regarded as a symbol of romantic love. Chughtai's own couplet on the Taj is similar to the last two lines of Iqbal's poem: "Shah Jahan shed so many tears in the memory of Mumtaz Mahal and the Taj is one of those tears that became frozen."<sup>323</sup> No doubt the couplet loses its poetic quality in translation, but the message is clear nevertheless.

In addition to the Taj, the peacock is also a symbol of romantic love. In Indian literature and miniature painting, the peacock is the harbinger of romance, flying up to meet the rain as romantic couples enjoy the cool breezes of the coming storm; as a mated pair, the two birds emulate the joy of love in their human counterparts. Peacocks, like other animals can also serve as symbols for the absent lover in miniature paintings of nakiya or raga modes, as has been shown on pp. 195-196. Chughtai does not refer to this aspect of the peacock's role in the commentary, but his own paintings of Hindu motifs manifest this understanding.

If the peacock represented Hindu India for centuries past, to the Muslims this bird was emblematic of the splendor of Shah Jahan's reign in the magnificence of the Peacock Throne. From the decline of Mughal power in the seventeenth century, Indo-Muslims experienced continual political domination and economic deprivation. When the first version of The Storyteller (Symbols) was done in 1927, Indo-Muslim prestige and self confidence were at an exceptionally low ebb. About this time Chughtai began to distinguish between his Hindu and Muslim subjects.<sup>324</sup> Though not active in politics, he could not ignore the climate of public sentiment. Muslims were frustrated and depressed. No one believed it possible or practical to return to the kind of political or economic policies employed by their ancestors in the Mughal era, but as the commentary points out, the glory of that era remained an inspiration. "The Storyteller' keeps reminding us of the glory of our forefathers, and the Taj is an aspect of beauty and human greatness which glorifies our individual and collective life." A sad, romantic lament for that lost affluence is expressed in the poem printed beneath the

first version of Storyteller: "The spirit of the peacock throne broods in the magic of the Taj. Vain pomp and circumstance writ in stone, symbols of a vanished Raj."

Between the time Chughtai painted the first version (1927) and the third version (mid 1950s), the social and political climate had changed. Iqbal was dead, the Islamic state of Pakistan was secured and Chughtai was becoming more convinced of his ancestral involvement in the Taj.

The peacock frames the Taj like the crescent moon, incessant in its vigil, as if quietly aware of over three hundred years of history and romance associated with that monument. If Chughtai saw himself as the storyteller, he saw the Taj as an emblem of his ancestor's talent. In the commentary Chughtai wrote this of the Taj: "It represents peace, beauty, grandeur, and elevation of imagination, as if the storyteller is narrating with confidence the artistic qualities of its creator." One automatically assumes "its creator" refers to Shah Jahan, but Chughtai must have had his own ancestor, Ahmad Mimar, in mind. While Arif Chughtai claims to have established proof that Mimar was the architect, it is not a question of validity that is significant here, but the fact that Abdur Rahman believed it to be true.

#### SUMMARY

Chughtai's Mughal subjects are more than romantic visions of India's Muslim ancestors. Portraits of famous individuals such as Sultan Shaheed and Chand Sultana (Figs. 196, 197) served to remind twentieth century Muslims that heroism and martyrdom were part of their not-so-distant heritage. The Fragrance (Fig. 198) incorporates local Mughal architecture in its setting to recreate the mood and atmosphere of a moment in the life of a seventeenth century princess. Pleasure and elegance, enjoyed by privileged Muslims under Mughal rule, are the combined motifs of two lovers in a garden (Fig. 201) and The Melody of Life (Fig. 203). Status, power, and pleasure---the manifestations of affluence---are not condemned by Chughtai in these paintings but deemed to be qualities worthy of aspiration.

His men and women are healthy and wealthy, but not necessarily joyous. According to Mughal society, each person had a role to play. Chand Sultana did not conform to the woman's role, and, though now she is honored as a heroine, during her lifetime she misjudged the risk and died a martyr. The wazir's daughters enjoy the status and wealth of royal palace women, but social customs and protocol restrict their lives. Chughtai suggests these limitations in several works showing women alone or in pairs. The Wazir's Daughters (Fig. 204) look idle, bored,



lonesome, and alienated; they are attractive and young, yet denied freedom of social interaction because of their rank and the system of purdah.

In The Bound of Love, Chughtai presents the ubiquitous motif of true, faithful, moral, and devoted love. He is careful, however, to point out in the commentary that this love must survive the conflict of passion and integrity.

The artist's style is a keynote in all of these paintings, and his social/cultural attitudes are often apparent as well, but few of his paintings may have been motivated as directly by personal interests as The Storyteller (Fig. 206). There are at least three versions of a peacock perched on a limb overlooking the Taj Mahal, and at least two levels of interpretation. The peacock represents the storyteller, and, as an ancient symbol of India, serves as a witness to the centuries of history associated with the Taj. To most people the Taj is a symbol of human love, evidence of the devotion of Shah Jahan for his wife, but to Chughtai, the Taj represents peace, beauty, grandeur, and elevation of imagination. The peacock (Chughtai himself) is narrating the artistic qualities of its creator (Chughtai's ancestor), the architect of the Taj, Ahmad Mimar.

## GENRE AND PEOPLES OF SOUTH ASIA

Although several Pakistani critics have accused Chughtai of being old-fashioned and provincial in his choice of subject matter, the paintings discussed in this chapter will show that he was concerned with depicting contemporary life.<sup>325</sup> Many of these paintings are timeless in terms of Islamic culture; some are thematically contemporary to the period in which they were painted, and a few were considered stylistically avant garde when first exhibited. This sampling includes secular as well as religious subjects, and because of the diversity of themes, I have categorized these remaining figural representations simply: GENRE AND TYPES.

Among the more than three hundred Chughtai paintings I have seen, I was surprised to find only one painting on the most important and colorful of all Islamic religious celebrations, that of Muharram. Muharram Festival (Fig. 208) in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, India, is a carefully cropped, selective view of a noisy, emotional, colorful, and visually exciting event. Muharram, meaning sacred, is the name of the first month of the Muslim calendar. It is a month of mourning to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Husain (the grandson of the Prophet) and the massacre of his companions in the tragedy of Karbala. On the first nine days of the month, majalis (commemorative gatherings) recount the events relating to the battle between Imam Husain and the army of Yazid. On the tenth, Ashura, a huge procession fills the streets. Men of the Shia sect (those claiming descent from the Prophet) carry black or green banners, spears or whips; others walk barefooted beating their chests and backs with hands or chains. Tazias, which are colorful, often intricate and beautiful models of the mausoleum of Husain, are pulled through the streets on floats or on horseback.

Chughtai's painting Muharram Festival does not include the tazias or men with whips and chains, however. Instead, it is a realistic depiction of women watching the procession from seclusion on a balcony above the street. Even in Karachi (the most westernized and modern of Pakistan's cities) where I witnessed the Ashura parade in 1979, there were few women on the street. Though accompanied by three women and two young men, I was advised to view the parade from a nearby roof top. This I did with the other five, sharing binoculars, looking down upon the parade and at other women who (like those in Chughtai's painting) had a closer view from a first story balcony.

Even from the roof top, I could clearly discern the black and green alams (banners) carried in the parade. In Chughtai's painting, true to tradition, the banners are green and black (actually a greyish blue, looking like a faded black); but a red scarf draped over the top of one banner is a startling contrast to the two-color palette.<sup>326</sup> The obvious comes to mind---the red scarf symbolized the blood of the martyr, Husain. From the balcony, women in green and black dresses and chaddars (veils) watch the parade.<sup>327</sup> One lady leans over to place a white garland on the banners passing below.

If the Muharram parade is the most solemn Muslim religious celebration, Id-ul-Fitr (festival of the breaking of the fast) is the most joyous. Chughtai painted several compositions depicting the theme of Id.<sup>328</sup> The one to be considered here, entitled Eid Message, was reproduced in Amle Chughtai (Fig. 209). Id-ul-Fitr begins with the appearance of the new moon on the first of Shawwal, the tenth month of the Muslim calendar. The previous month, Ramadan, is marked by fasting and prayers.<sup>329</sup> A. B. Rajput writes that "According to Islamic injunctions every able-bodied person, other than a very young child, is required to observe fast for the full month of Ramadan, from the first sign of dawn to the end of dusk, but refraining from food or drink, or indulging in any sort of pleasures, or quarreling with or abusing anyone."<sup>330</sup>

After an entire month of fasting and controlled behavior, everyone is ready for the celebrations of Id.<sup>331</sup> In Eid Message the women may be gathered on a balcony for the first sighting of the new moon. Though meant to be a contemporary version, Chughtai's painting represents an old and continuing Islamic celebration. Persian painters, at least as early as the sixteenth century, recorded the excitement and festivities that accompany the sighting of the Id moon.<sup>332</sup> An early painting by Chughtai (Fig. 210) shows a mother, child and grandmother with their hands cupped in supplication waiting at a window for the new moon.<sup>333</sup> More probably this gathering of happy women in Eid Message signals the beginning of the Id day celebration. Rajput describes the traditional sequence of events:

On the Id morning every Muslim household is astir with activity while it is still dark. The first item on the programme is to put on new or the best available clothes after taking a bath, and have a special breakfast consisting of a sweet dish of vermicelle and shir-khurma (a liquid preparation of dates, raisins, almonds, and nuts cooked in sweetened milk).<sup>334</sup> The women in Eid Message are dressed in varying

colors, some hold a small dish, perhaps the vermicelli and shir-khurma. They look out with expectant faces or at the old woman who gestures quizzically with uplifted hands as if to inquire "Is it time to begin?" Having completed ablutions, they apply itr (a sweet-smelling scent) to their clothes and go out in groups to the congregational prayers held either in a mosque or at the idgah (a special park for Id prayers). Id is a joyous occasion when money gifts are given by the head of the household to family members and servants too. It is also customary to visit friends and relatives to exchange Id greetings, and special parties of Id week are an added diversion.

Even more welcome than Id are the multifarious festivities and preparations that precede and culminate in marriage. Rajput contends that "marriage is one of the most important institutions among the social customs and traditions, and the ceremonies connected with it in various parts of Pakistan are so diverse that they cannot be universalized."<sup>335</sup> Nevertheless, certain procedures are more or less standard. Long before the nikah ceremony (the actual marriage ritual), parents of the bride and groom agree to the terms of mihr (a guarantee for the financial security of the bride) and a date is then fixed for the betrothal ceremony.<sup>336</sup> Normally a group of seven or eleven persons representing the groom's family go to the house of the bride-to-be, "place a silk stole over the head and a gold ring on the second finger of the right hand of the girl."<sup>337</sup> In return, a group from the bride's family go to the future groom's home to place a ring on the young man's finger. Now that the betrothal is official, preparations, ceremonies, and parties begin. The Bride (Fig. 211) in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad is one of Chughtai's earlier works, from the 1920s or early 1930s, and though the costume is fanciful and somewhat dated, the format and rituals of the wedding have changed little through the decades. The title does not necessarily indicate that the young lady is preparing for the nikah ceremony. If this were so, she should be dressed in red or orange and laden with jewelry. Her bodice is green while that of the girl who kneels, holding up a mirror, is red. Essentially the style is a colored outline drawing, but the touches of color indicate that Chughtai provided what he felt sufficient for aesthetic enjoyment. If the girl looking into the mirror (the bride) were putting on her wedding finery, Chughtai could have reversed the bodice colors.

Whether or not Chughtai intended this particular scene to represent preparation for the final ceremony is irrelevant. It reflects Pakistani life and tradition in the way that Chughtai conveys the excitement, and the almost constant attention a bride-to-be receives. This

painting could represent a variety of events that take place before the nikah ceremony. Friends and family sew a new trousseau for the bride, which she might get a peek at before the wedding.<sup>338</sup> Seven days before the wedding, she dresses in a special set of clothes to receive female guests for an evening of singing wedding songs. These festivities may continue off and on up to a few days before the wedding. Several days before the final ceremony, women from the bridegroom's family bring the bari (bride's dresses, jewelry, sweets, etc.) in great procession to the brides's home.

As many paintings as Chughtai devoted to women, it is surprising that this is one of only two paintings I've seen labelled as a bride. Only one other painting warrants speculation as belonging to the same theme. An untitled work in the collection of Mrs. Mogri Cowasjee of Karachi (Fig. 212) depicts a woman in wedding-like regalia. She wears a red blouse and golden-colored jewelry. An orange odhni covers her hair. Her head tilts down slightly suggesting the pose of modesty mandatory for all new brides, but her expression is not the shy, innocent look of a girl facing in-laws she has rarely seen and a husband she may be meeting for the first time.<sup>339</sup>

If this painting were meant to represent a bride, as was the unanimous consensus among my consultants in Pakistan, it presents provocative challenges in interpreting some of the imagery. The girl holds a fan and her hair is knotted on her forehead. Fans have no particular association with weddings nor with brides, and the knot of hair is a curiosity for which none of my consultants were able to offer a guess. Stranger yet are two hands on either side of the lady's head, hanging like leaves from the foliage of the tree behind. Several persons suggested that the hands represent the groom or his family who take the bride from her parent's home into a new and sometimes stressful environment.

From my experience in Pakistan, and the understanding I have formulated about Chughtai from his art and interviews on his personal attitudes, I believe that the painting maybe a comment of the changing social climate in Pakistan. I assume the lady is a new bride and the two hands represent her husband, but the marriage was not arranged by their parents. It is called a "love marriage," where boy and girl meet and fall in love. It was and still is discouraged and met with disapproval by parents of both parties. Love marriages are the foremost challenge to the traditional social code of most Islamic countries. The knot of hair and the bride's hands crossed in front of her chest act as symbols of defiance and determination. She cannot feign the shy, innocent look expected of Pakistani

brides because she has broken the rules. She is not seeing her husband for the first time on the wedding day as tradition requires---they know each other already. Her facial expression shows determination, and satisfaction. The fan is a symbol of the traditional way of life and may have been included as the antagonistic element. In most villages, where a lack of electricity precludes the use of water coolers or air conditioners, women still make and use fans of this very kind. Chughtai was fond of including such opposites in his painting, a point well noted by Agha Abdul Hamid.<sup>340</sup> This painting could have special significance for the artist because his own daughter married a man she chose for herself.<sup>341</sup> For many months Chughtai opposed the match and only agreed to attend the wedding when he realized his daughter would not give in and that plans had already been made.

In the previous paintings, Chughtai depicted ceremonies that all members of the Islamic society participate in and identify with. There is a strong mystical tradition in Pakistan in addition to the widespread orthodox base, which from the thirteenth century deeply permeated the religious milieu and is to this day part of the living tradition. In spite of having influenced the orthodox community, Sufis (adherents of the mystical tradition) have not been assimilated by it. Their beliefs and practices are not entirely consistent with those of the Sunni or Shia, and some are held to be contradictory.

Rajput explains Sufism as a mode of religious life in Islam in which "the emphasis is placed, not on the performances of external ritual but on the purification of one's inner self, in order to attain lasting spiritual bliss."<sup>342</sup> Among the Sufi orders founded in the subcontinent, the Qalandria Order is not the best known, but in Pakistan the term "qalandar," according to Rajput, "has been variously defined as [a] synonym of 'Sufi'... Some writers think that when a Sufi attains perfection, he is regarded as a 'qalandar.'"<sup>343</sup> Chughtai's painting, The Qalandar (Fig. 213), in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, depicts a gaunt, shirtless individual in a foreboding landscape. His eyes are fixed and vacant looking. Shading above and below the eyeballs makes them appear eerily white, and his hands are held in an awkward position---palms up, wrist to wrist. Certainly Chughtai intended the Qalandar to represent a man in ecstatic trance. The artist would have had innumerable opportunities to see real or staged religious exhibitions of this sort. During the annual Urs (death anniversaries of saints and Sufis celebrated with prayers and devotional

songs) at local shrines, men young and old, singly or in groups, come under the spell of the repetitive beat of qawwali music.<sup>344</sup>

If Chughtai had never been to an Urs (which is hard to imagine), he could have seen a similar scene enacted in the movies.

During recent years the mazar of Hazarat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar at Sehwan, situated in the heart of Sind, has attracted the attention of well-known film artists and producers in the country. The annual Urs of the death anniversary of the Qalandar, draws huge crowds for three days, and among other ceremonies, every one present performs a sort of dervish dance, known as Dhammal. In this dance also the film stars are in the forefront, and Dhammal has become a sort of popular innovation in almost every second Panjabi film produced in the country.<sup>345</sup>

While the Qalandar represented the Indo-Muslim Sufi tradition, one that was (and still is) most prevalent in Pakistan Dance of Darveshes (Fig. 214) reproduced in Amle Chughtai, was meant to depict Persian Sufis performing dhammal.<sup>346</sup> The commentary in Amle Chughtai states that "in Persia the dance of the Darveshes is very important. Darvesh is the origin of the mysteries of life." According to the commentary, "the limitless passion of the darvesh reveals the expanses of life, the horizon of which is never visible." Four dancers in the center of the composition extend their arms, emulating the posture of the Whirling Dervish who spins like a top seeking to reach the ecstatic state, but the movement is frozen. Chughtai did not emphasize the circular motion of the dancers, as he might have by drawing full, tent-like skirts catching air from the movement or kamarbands flying out from the waist. Rather, the dancers seem to be parading forward, moving rhythmically to the beat of the drum seen in the upper right hand corner, and following the signals of their leader holding a branch-like rod and bowl. Are they meant to be---as the commentary suggests---"moving like a flood to conquer the great forces of nature"? The leader's attributes are the focus of this composition because we are told, "the universe is spellbound due to the movement of the Darvesh's rod...and when the Darvesh is in ecstasy the earth trembles and revelation leaps." Commentary and painting seem tenable and compatible, but in keeping with the Chughtai pattern, anomalies exist. If, as the commentary states, "the Darvesh will keep on revolving his rod until he finds the essence of his search"---then how is it that "sometimes he is in such an ecstatic state that he enters the bonds of infidelity? The commentary offers no

reconciliation for these apparently contradictory concepts. Is Chughtai making reference to tantric mystical relationships with Sufism? The leader holds up an organic-shaped container from which dangles a short chain. It seems to me to be reminiscent of the skull cup of the tantrics, symbolizing the insignificance of the physical self, and the broken chain might refer to the detachment of the self from the fetters of the material world. Perhaps the cross-bared baton of the leader makes reference to the vajra of the tantric priests and the boy is holding a sword because Chughtai was fascinated with the symbolic function of the purbah in tantric ritual. On the other hand, these objects might have been included as visual accessories to the decorative richness of the composition with no special symbolic meaning, intended merely to arouse our curiosity.

Secular motifs of everyday events are as varied a group in Chughtai's art as the religious and ceremonial paintings just examined. Some reflect the contemporary scene of the last few decades of Chughtai's life; others make no reference to time; and a few appear to depict the past. There are paintings that show people of both sexes and all ages, but scenes with young women predominate. Chughtai's painting, The Village Maiden, (Fig. 215) was presented as a gift to the Queen of the Netherlands.<sup>347</sup> The title aptly defines the subject matter. A modestly dressed lady sits in a courtyard of pounded earth amid pottery vessels presumably filled with milk. In one hand she holds a hand-made fan, the same type as that in the painting of the bride. Today, these fans are collected by astute urban Pakistanis, aware that their traditional handicrafts are being neglected and may be lost. In the other hand she holds a tassel. Her hair is braided in the traditional fashion (popular with urban girls as well) and interwoven with strands of yarn attached to a colorful tassel. Girls with medium length hair like to make their braids appear longer by attaching tassels with long strands to the end of their own braids.

Village girls love jewelry as much as city girls, but village people are primarily farmers and much poorer than their urban cousins; probably few would possess the elaborate jewelry this girl wears. Therefore, she may be the daughter of a village chief or from one of the wealthier families. If that were the case, she probably would not have been the one churning butter with the apparatus behind her. Even in villages, the more fortunate families support several servants. It is common to see village women or their household help sitting at the butter churn preparing curds, butter, or cheese. Urbanites who keep a cow (many still do) prefer fresh churned curds or butter to the commercial variety, but the churn tends to symbolize the rustic life as opposed to modern conveniences



most city dwellers aspire to. I doubt that Chughtai intended this painting to be scrutinized as I have done. It does not have the mysterious qualities of the "love bride" painting and may have been painted as a "straightforward impression" of the pure, simple life of village people. It is reminiscent of other paintings in which Chughtai idealized rural existence such as Green Valley (Fig. 123) and The Young Farmer (Fig. 172).

A painting that contrasts in presentation and subject matter with The Village Maiden is Chughtai's version of two modern girls (Fig. 216) in the collection of Soli Minocher Cowasjee of Karachi. This painting of two modern girls has affinities with another work entitled College Girls (Fig. 217) in the United Nations collection of Art. In both of these paintings, two girls dominate the picture plane, standing in a shallow space backed by a screen of varying sized rectangles. The composition is devoid of any supporting elements. The background is cubistic and architectural, not in the manner of Picasso, but more like the color experiments of Joseph Albers. In the modern girls, the background may be viewed as an abstracted window, but in The College Girls it is non-objective.

The monotonous geometric backdrop, squeezing the modern girls into so shallow a space contrasts markedly to The Village Maiden with her asymmetrically arranged pots scattered near and far about the background. Because the shallow-spaced, non-objective, cubistic background is rare in Chughtai's compositions, it imbues the two paintings with a quality of westernized modern art. I believe the type of background in modern girls and in The College Girls, Chughtai intended to be symbolic of modernity. Chughtai was constantly frustrated by accusations that his work was old-fashioned or non-progressive and he responded to this criticism both in writing and in paint. In "Individual and the Group," Chughtai defended his aims and goals in art and attacked Pakistani artists who blindly aped twentieth century western trends. His argument was not with the meaningfulness of western art as much as it was with his countrymen who Chughtai felt had forsaken values and purpose in exchange for novelty and shallowness. He mentions abstract images and abstract art as the predominant western influence in Pakistan.

In an artist's craze for being inventive he devises abstract images, features and ideas which erodes the confidence of the viewers. Experimentation in abstract art is full of sensuality, however, there is always the danger of being misled...These new movements in art may be good just to partially

fulfill one's self but with a veil of self deception, and these works can never be called immortal.<sup>348</sup>

Consequently, the abstract and non-objective backgrounds of The College Girls and modern girls, apparently fulfill several functions. First it is a signal that these are supposed to be westernized, up-to-date, "modern" paintings, and second, it provides evidence that Chughtai had no grievance against modern or western style, abstract art if used in an Eastern context.

The background design, therefore, is an appropriate setting for these girls who represent progressive ideals within the cultural sphere. Whereas The Village Maiden represents traditional values associated with a simple, unsophisticated life style, The College Girls evokes the modern concept of higher education for women. The two girls stand close to each other as if seeking mutual support in an untried situation. Until the last decade, only a few colleges in Pakistan were co-educational. Girls seeking a bachelor's degree, therefore, are faced with new social situations, and are placed in an environment with students from distant cities and given the opportunity to interact with young men. This painting could have been considered harmful propaganda when it was first shown in the early 1950s.

In Karachi and, occasionally, in Lahore, Pakistani women can be seen on the streets wearing jeans or pants and a short-sleeved blouse. Chughtai's modern girls are wearing the traditional kurta, though the fitted contour and mandarin collar make it look quite contemporary. In the process of westernization in Pakistan, the burka (complete body covering) gave way to the chaddar (a veil kept over the hair and hand held to cover the face) which was then streamlined into the ubiquitous dupatta (a long narrow scarf draped around the shoulders and over the breast). Even progressive young women in 1979 (when I was in Pakistan) were reluctant to leave the house without a dupatta. As was explained to me by a college-aged Pakistani girl friend, the dupatta is an integral part of the traditional outfit; girls feel incomplete and improper without it. It is an emblem of modesty. Chughtai, it seems to me, made a great compromise by excluding it from the costume of the girl on the right. Cowasjee's painting of modern girls is the zenith of Chughtai's westerism and modernity and still it conforms to traditional standards.

More daring and progressive than omitting a dupatta (by Pakistani standards) was the realistic representation of a female nude. An untitled painting in the Karachi collection of Sultan Mahmood of a brown-skinned nude (Fig.

218) is the only example I have of a "Chughtai nude." However, Chughtai is reported to have done a number of nude female paintings. Some of Chughtai's audience were shocked or offended by his nudes, others were intrigued, and some may have regarded them objectively as an accepted subject in the history of artistic expression. Chughtai's Hindu and Buddhist paintings of semi-nude goddesses and undraped mortal women appear to have escaped the censor's pens along with the generic women from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, who in their pathos often reveal exposed breasts.

In a short article, Salim-ur Rahman recorded his personal reaction to these paintings that may be representative of the majority opinion: "Some of the thrill...came from looking at his particularly graceful women in dishabille. In those days [thirty years ago] books and magazines did not believe in permissiveness at all, at least not those I had access to, and to look at paintings which were a bit revealing was refreshing."<sup>349</sup> On the other hand, there is evidence that more recent paintings of nudes in a realistic style and genre-like setting were regarded with varying degrees of fascination and dismay, even shock. Certainly Manohar Kaul was not referring to Chughtai's Hindu goddesses when in 1961 he wrote, "he has also drawn portraits of some richly sweet women as excellent essays in realism though they look suffused with the aroma of suggestive eroticism."<sup>350</sup>

Manohar Kaul may be said to represent the Indian opinion, while in Pakistan Amjad Ali expressed a similar opinion based on a 1951 Chughtai exhibition that featured several nudes:

...it was a splendid exhibition. There was an endless variety of his work. Chughtai had even deigned to paint some contemporary subjects, like "College Girls"...Shockingly, there were even a few nudes, (torsos only) exhibited in Pakistan for the first time.<sup>351</sup>

Amjad Ali implied that the Pakistani public (in 1951) was not accustomed to seeing nude paintings done by Pakistani artists. Another response to Chughtai's nudes was offered by Agha Babur, director of the Rawalpindi Arts Center, in a four page essay he sent me in 1978. The title of his paper, "Whores and Nudes by Chughtai," revealed a personal attitude toward paintings of nudes that may have been shared by others. Agha Babur visited Chughtai's studio and viewed a group of fifteen paintings he categorized as "whores."<sup>352</sup> He believed these paintings "may be emerging from the baser mind of the artist...having the precision, gentleness and mysterious quietness of the seductive element of the whores."<sup>353</sup> Although he imbues

this group with possessing an air of artistic respectability rather than vulgar indulgence, he sets them apart from another group of twelve paintings he referred to simply as "nudes." Of the latter, Agha Babur remarked, "These nudes were chaste in their nakedness...The quiet calm, and detached order of the painting was not stimulating in the least."<sup>354</sup> Agha Babur's essay suggests that Chughtai painted two distinct types of unclad female---professional prostitutes and innocuous nudes. Both of these, it seems were shocking to the public in 1951.

Chughtai's brown nude, being a torso, fits the format for the type of painting described at the Karachi exhibition in 1951. As a westerner, my impression of the brown nude rejects any association with the erotic, however, Pakistanis in 1951 apparently reacted differently. I suggest the brown nude represents a non-Muslim girl primping herself while looking in a mirror. Her skin is dark, a characteristic Chughtai often reserved for "Indian" women and her dupatta is colored yellow and orange with border designs that several friends have suggested is a type of cloth typical of Madras. Rather than intending to entice the viewer with her charms, I suggest that Chughtai, like August Renoir enjoyed painting personal, intimate activities of attractive women.<sup>355</sup>

The painting of a woman offering water to her pet dove is another scene of a private moment (Fig. 219). She holds the bird to her breast and looks down on it as if gently persuading the creature to partake of the liquid. There is an affection between the two that may be intended to represent the love she will have for the child she is evidently expecting, as suggested by the form of her body. Here is the essence of Eastern feminism---the lady is ready to give birth (note the size of her stomach) and yet she is well-groomed, neatly attired, happy and affectionate. The dupatta looped around her neck identifies her as Muslim rather than Hindu,<sup>356</sup> and suggests she belongs to the twentieth century.

Half-figure portraits (like the lady with her bird) of men or women, most in profile, set against an uncluttered, sometimes empty background are a common type of Chughtai painting as known from examples in private collections. At least two more include a dove or pet bird.<sup>357</sup> Others depict a lady examining a jewel; a smiling young woman grasps a handmade fan close to her face; a young man holds a sycamore leaf close to his face and others vary slightly from these.<sup>358</sup> Some of these are noteworthy for an unusual piece of costume, an irregular hand gesture, strange body posture, or distorted anatomy; others seem unremarkable---almost a pattern varied a little from one to the next.<sup>359</sup>

The last five figural paintings to be discussed are portrait-like compositions that depict varying ethnicities and occupations of the subcontinent. Young Bhil (Fig. 104) in the Victoria Jubilee Museum in Vijayawada, India is a painting from the 1930s, suggesting that Chughtai was fascinated by the variety of ethnicities in the subcontinent early in his career. The Bhils were an ancient tribe mentioned in sanscrit literature, believed to be a Dravidian people (aborigines of Marwar) expelled from the productive lowlands by the Aryan competitors.<sup>360</sup> Ptolemy referred to an Indian tribal group of "leaf wearers" which was taken to be the Bhils, and an Indian miniature painting of the eighteenth century depicts a family of Bhils with leaf garments.<sup>361</sup> Chughtai's depiction, however, conforms more to the genre of early twentieth century photographs, lithographs, and drawings illustrating Indian races, customs, and costumes. Most of these were made by British artists, commissioned by British residents of India. The People of India by Sir Herbert Risley, published in 1915, typifies the growing scientific interest in defining and classifying the inhabitants of India.<sup>362</sup> His illustrations, like so many others, concentrate on the figure (usually a single individual, occasionally a small group), eliminating the background or providing hints of ground cover.

Young Bhil is an artistic rendering in the same vein as the early twentieth century anthropological studies. A lithograph of three Korwas from Risley's book (Fig. 220) is a good example of similarity in treatment of figure and background with Chughtai's Bhil portrait.<sup>363</sup> The latter may be a compromise between this type of illustration and the artist's imagination. In Chughtai's painting, the background is simplified to a grassy mound, a few stones, a spindly plant and one flower; the distant background is vague and insignificant. It is very much like the background in Risley's illustration of three Korwas, a base for the figures to stand on but little more. Neither work gives any indication of geographic location and yet popular and scholarly accounts in the first few decades of the twentieth century describe the Bhils as forest dwellers. Bengal School artist, Mulkul Dey's encounter with the Bhils recorded in My Pilgrimage to Ajanta and Bagh (1925) would have been of interest to Chughtai and may have been brought to his attention a few years before this painting as done.<sup>364</sup> Noting the terrain near to Bagh Caves, Dey wrote, "Now the land became mountainous and wooded, the haunts of Koles and Bhils, a wild and fierce tribe, the aborigines."<sup>365</sup> Like the aborigines in Risley's print, Young Bhil carries a bow, but Chughtai shows it unstrung and there are no arrows about.<sup>366</sup> Also Chughtai's Bhil wears necklaces and arm bands and a short loin cloth not unlike those in Risley's illustration. This is not to say

Young Bhil was patterned on the lithograph of three Korwas, but this type of illustration had been processed and made available in India at least as early as the first decade of the twentieth century.

On the other hand, Chughtai's Bhil poses with a leaf in his hand. This is a typical Chughtai prop, an unrealistic device that separates documentary illustration from artistic license. If the Bhils were as savage a tribe as the early chroniclers reported, scientific studies would not confuse the reader by showing the aborigine contemplating a leaf. Furthermore, Young Bhil is tall and thin, colored in light skin tones, with Indo-Aryan facial features and short hair, contrary to the prevalent contention of Chughtai's day that they were a "stunted race, but well built, active and strong, of a black color, high cheek bones, wide nostrils, broad noses, coarse features, hair is long and wavy like all Dravidians."<sup>367</sup>

If Chughtai was influenced by British or native studies of the indigenous population, Young Bhil may be one of the few paintings that demonstrates this. Though Chughtai claimed to have traveled widely, it is doubtful that he actually saw this tribal group before completing this painting, and therefore it is likely that his source was a volume such as Risley's The People of India.<sup>368</sup> His studies of more accessible, therefore more familiar types were probably done from memory. An untitled painting in the collection of John Cowasjee of Karachi of a girl with apples from the northern provinces of Pakistan was painted at least two decades after Young Bhil. Owing primarily to costume and jewelry, I suggest this girl is from Swat and I have titled this painting Apple Girl of Swat (Fig. 112).

Swati women have a fondness for bright pinks, reds, and black, manifested in their traditional embroidery of pink and red patterns on a black cotton background. Their embroidered shawls, blouses, and pillow cases are prized and sought after by foreigners and Pakistanis alike. The colors in The Apple Girl of Swat are Swati colors. The girl's kurta is deep violet, the dupatta over her hair is pink, and her skirt is black. The composition draws inspiration from the embroidery by including patches of red colored leaves, a red tassel holding together her two black braids, and touches of red on the variegated apples.

Swati kurta styles are distinctive too, for they are sewn differently from kurtas and kameeses characteristic of other parts of Pakistan. As the painting shows, these kurtas are loosely fitted around the bust and fall tent-like nearly to the knees. The sleeves are long and full. While there are a variety of tribal blouses, the Swati

style contrasts with the fitted garment worn by the modern girls (Fig. 216), the type most widely seen in Pakistan.

Jewelry is popular with women all over Pakistan and, like their dress, it can be associated with geographic areas and specific tribes, but due to the mixing of jewelry styles and intricate designs which determine provenance, it is risky for the novice to identify jewelry. Keeping this in mind, I refer to a 1973 calendar featuring jewelry of Pakistan that illustrated a Swati girl wearing a necklace called hasli which looks very much like the one in this painting.<sup>369</sup> The caption further remarked that lakhtai (earrings), favorites of the Swati women, are the longest anywhere in Pakistan, and this girl's earrings are long, indeed.

The territory of Swat and surrounding areas are a major fruit producing center of Pakistan. Much of the geography is hilly and mountainous, conducive to growing apples. In Lahore fruit hawkers sometimes entice buyers by advertising that they have the best selection---apples from Swat. In Chughtai's paintings, apples symbolize the northern provinces of Pakistan including Kashmir.<sup>370</sup> Dr. Shah of Lahore owns another apple girl composition by Chughtai (Fig. 113) that represents a girl from the northern area of Pakistan. Under the Apple Tree (Fig. 120), a Chughtai painting in Amle Chughtai, depicts a mother and son from Kashmir, again making use of the identity of apple growing with those areas.

Tulip of Kashmir (Fig. 221) also in the collection of John Cowasjee is another work that records the life style and ethnicity of one of the Kashmiri regions.<sup>371</sup> It is one of at least four paintings of Kashmiri subjects suggesting an affinity for that area on the part of the artist.<sup>372</sup> There is an element of sadness in the other three paintings which is not so strongly felt in Tulip of Kashmir. Chughtai's empathy the Kashmiri people was noted in the Amle Chughtai commentary for the painting Son of the Soil:

When I went to Kashmir for the first time, I saw that the artisans of Kashmir laboured day and night but did not get enough reward to make ends meet. This observation of poverty, valuelessness and helplessness of Kashmiris left deep impression upon my heart. I started looking at Kashmir and Kashmiris from new angles. This painting is of that strange character whom I met in the Jamia Mosque of Kashmir. I wondered whether this character belongs to the same Kashmir where poverty, slavery, treason and beauty was in abundance. Because this character

dreamed for the freedom of his country, he said, 'one day my country will be free and prosperity will prevail everywhere.'<sup>373</sup>

Most of the poverty and suffering Chughtai described in Kashmir was intensified by the prevailing political situation where the Muslim majority was governed by the hereditary Hindu power structure. In the Amle Chughtai commentary for Under the Apple Tree (see p.?), Chughtai points out the political iniquities in Kashmir that makes it "the highest as well as the lowest land of humanity, where even the stones speak of the continuous struggle...and this mother who sits daily with her son under the apple tree...does not touch the apples because she does not know who has the right to enjoy their pleasure...and she sees those apples without having any hope or future."<sup>374</sup>

The helplessness and despair expressed in the commentary and depicted in chughtai's other Kashmiri subjects are not evident in the Tulip of Kashmir. Yet it is neither gay in mood nor brightly painted. The girl is young, pretty, well dressed, and wears a faint smile, but the colors are subdued and earthy and the palette is nearly monochromatic. Her heavy, bulky dress is the same style and color as that worn by the Kashmiri mother in Under the Apple Tree. Both wear a long cream colored dupatta, though the tulip girl has a camel colored cap under her head scarf. Her hairstyle is different from that of the mother, but their earrings are nearly identical. Perhaps she was meant to represent a teenaged girl. Long hair (pulled back in braids or fashioned into a bun) was and still is a requisite of beauty for eastern women. Short hair and straight bangs are considered less feminine and a convenient style for active young girls. While traveling in the north west frontier provinces and Swat, I noticed that young children of both sexes wore pill-box style caps like the one in this painting, and very young girls had the same hairstyle.

Like the young lady of Swat who offered apples, this girl earns a living by selling flowers. Tulips seem to be as emblematic of Kashmir as are apples of Swat. The verdure and flowering beauty of Kashmir captivated the Mughals. In his journal, Jahangir marveled at the multitude of flowers and gave special notice to the ubiquitous tulip:

Kashmir is a garden of eternal spring...a delightful flower-bed...The red rose, the violet and the narcissus grow of themselves; in the fields there are all kinds of flowers...and the plains are



filled with blossom; the gates, the walls, the courts, the roofs are lighted up by the torches of banquet-adorning tulips.<sup>375</sup>

It is not necessary to identify the species of flowers filling the two baskets in this painting---they represent the botanical beauty and abundance of Kashmir. The Tulip of Kashmir is the girl who holds the basket of flowers. The tulip and the rose are merely metaphors for the beauty of the beloved---metaphors composed by Persian and Urdu poets and rephrased to fit the needs of modern Pakistani poets. Iqbal's verse for Under the Apple Tree applies as well for the Tulip of Kashmir:

Whose faces put the tulip and the rose to shame,  
mature [nature?] at work and diligent and keen of  
eye, their very glance commoves the west. Their  
origin is this our soil, our catching earth; in  
Kashmir's sky, these stars.<sup>376</sup>

In his genre motifs and type casts of the subcontinent, Chughtai sought out characteristics in costume and supporting elements that related his figures to the basic theme. In most cases, as I have shown, his paintings have proven to be faithful representations, but this may not always be true. Milk Maids (Fig. 222) in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad does not appear to be authentic in tradition and looks more European than Asian. In India and Pakistan village women draw water from a well or a nearby river and carry it home in jugs gracefully balanced on their heads. It is their custom to carry other liquids (milk as well) and food in this manner too. Illustrations of Indian milk maids from the British period and later show lower class women with vessels on their heads. Chughtai's milk maids are richly dressed and carry the milk in pails---a western fashion---rather than in jugs on their heads. Logistically it would be impossible for a woman to lift sixteen buckets full of milk (the eight buckets shown in the middle of the painting must be balanced by eight on the other side).

There is a Netherlandish quality about the work, owing to the full sleeves and full skirt with its white apron pulled tight at the waist and from a distance the folded dupatta, on the first maid's head, resembles a Dutch bonnet. Perhaps Chughtai had seen the label from a package of Danish cheese or some imported product that would use this type of design as a logo. Their dresses are bulky and heavy---not convenient for the type of manual labor they perform, and they look too elegant, too neat and clean, to have practiced this task habitually. The dress of the lady in front is richly patterned and both costumes have ornate cuffs and other decoration. A profusion of heavy, white

jewelry stands out against their dark blue dresses and contributes to the sumptuous effect of material wealth. The strong value contrasts and textured patterns covering the entire surface of the painting suggests that Chughtai could have contrived the scene for the sake of visual delight.

His painting of a musician is nearly as colorful and fanciful as that of the milk maids, but its iconography can be more substantially related to existing norms. Court Musician is the title I have given this untitled painting in the collection of Packages Ltd. of Lahore (Fig. 223). The clothing and turban style as well as the instrument place this female entertainer (note the breasts) in the past. However, the clues to her ethnicity are confusing; some point to Persia, others to India. Long dresses like the one she wears are depicted in sixteenth century Persian miniature paintings and in early Mughal paintings of the Akbar Period when Persian influence was still a dominant force. Conforming to the Persian style, her pagri (turban) is tall and wrapped around a baton of tall conical cap called a kulah. The Mughals generally preferred a skull cap as the anchor for their pagri or no cap at all. Yellow flames issuing from behind her head are not part of the wall decoration. The flames are a halo, a device in fifteenth and sixteenth century Persian miniature painting that Sir Thomas Arnold believed "to have been reserved for Muhammad and the other prophets, and, in Shia pictures, for 'Ali also."<sup>377</sup> The stylistic derivation of this flame-halo can best be noted in the sixteenth century Persian painting, The Ascent of the Prophet to Heaven framing the heads of the Prophet, Burak (his mount), and the Archangel Gabriel, in front of him.<sup>378</sup> I know of no musician that warrants a halo in the history of Islam, so here it must be interpreted as a symbol of glory and prestige.

Decorative architectural panels like the one to the right of the musician with floral motifs flanking a cypress tree were as common in sixteenth century Persia as they were in Mughal India. On the other hand, the musical instrument is a type belonging to India. It could be a sitar, first developed by Amir Khusrau of Delhi in the thirteenth century A.D.<sup>379</sup> Although the sitar is pivotal in classical Indian music (Pakistan included) it never gained favor in Persia. The decorative drum, fashioned like a peacock or a high-crested bird, was popular embellishment for sitars and similar instruments, and many are still in use today. Most telling, however, is the posture of the musician, which corresponds to that of classical musicians and singers who follow the mood of their pieces with arm movements and graceful hand gestures. Head nodding and facial expressions like that in this painting convey emotion as well. These actions could be

considered stereotypical, as they are basically the same from one musician to the next. They are intimately entwined with the improvisational character of ragas, a form of classical music endemic to the Indian subcontinent. Classical music, like miniature painting, writes Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, "has always stood in need of financial [royal] patronage for its survival because the audience who can appreciate its intricacies are [were] too few to pay the performing musicians. In Pakistan, this patronage suddenly came to an end after the departure of the rajas and nawabs after partition".<sup>380</sup> For this reason I concluded that the elegant woman in emotional gesticulation, expressive of the raga tradition, can only be a court musician.

#### SUMMARY

A variety of religious and secular motifs ranging from solemn festivals to contemporary girls testing the bounds of traditional society, reveal Chughtai's diversity in subject matter and expressive creativity beyond the more traditional historic themes of Islam or the Buddhist/Hindu mythology of India previously examined in this study. While most of the paintings in this chapter serve to record an event or ethnicity peculiar to the Indo-Muslim subcontinent, Chughtai often chose the least obvious way of presenting each subject. In Muharram Festival (Fig. 208) the scene focuses on the sentimental, human aspect of the Ashura parade, rather than the impersonal noise, activity, or confusion of that event. Only the top of green and black banners can be seen below a small group of women thus diverting the attention from the parade festivities to the delicate gesture of one woman placing a garland on the banner below. Similarly The Bride (Fig. 211) is not concerned with the lavish costume and jewelry normally associated with Pakistani weddings. Instead it catches the sense of excitement and self-importance granted all brides during the marriage process.

A number of Chughtai's figural works might be loosely categorized as ethnographic studies, but their purpose is far from didactic. They vary from purely imaginative to fanciful memories serving to give an impression or act as a visual metaphor. Young Bhil (Fig. 104) doesn't seem to follow any of the racial characteristics defined for that tribal group at the time Chughtai did the painting. In presentation, however, it is reminiscent of ethnographic studies by British Indologists. Several untitled paintings each of which could appropriately be called Apple Girl of Swat (Fig. 112, 113) are probably memory impressions from trips to the northern provinces. The girl in the painting Tulip of Kashmir is a visual metaphor in that she, like the tulip, is the beauty of Kashmir. This painting, done in

Chughtai's mature style, is a subtle version of earlier painted metaphors from Persian and Urdu poetry such as the lamp and the moth and the rose and the nightingale.

If Muharram Festival and Eid Message (Fig. 209) allowed Chughtai to depict religious themes familiar to the majority, The Qalandar (Fig. 213) and Dance of the Darveshes (Fig. 214) provided him the opportunity to show eccentricities within the religious tradition. The Muslim Sufi in ecstatic trance and dervishes mesmerized by their whirling dance and repetitive music are a curiosity to the average Pakistani as well as the non-Muslim foreigner. In Dance of the Darveshes, Chughtai may have incorporated Tantric symbolism---a reasonable supposition considering the many Hindu and Buddhist themes he painted and the allusion to Hindu and Buddhist practices in some of his Muslim paintings such as Temptation.

Perhaps as a compromise to prove his modernity, Chughtai painted several themes of contemporary women, but clothed them in the traditional costume. Young men do not have to adjust their lives and fashion to the system of pardah; therefore, the subject of college girls and contemporary young women is better adapted for expressing modernity and their attempt to challenge tradition. College Girls (Fig. 217) draws attention to the increasingly liberalized female role. The modern girls (Fig. 216) have western hairstyles and wear modernized kurtas; one girl even appears without her dupatta. More shocking to the Pakistani public were Chughtai's nudes, one of which is reproduced here (Fig. 218). While this nude seems far from erotic, others may have been more evocative, and according to Amjad Ali, the lack of sophistication in 1951 when Chughtai's nudes were first exhibited was reason enough for the public's dismay.

A number of schematicized bust portraits of genre motifs resemble candid photos of loved ones and friends. These glimpses into Pakistani life often include accessories and preoccupations typical of middle class society, but seem to lack the diversity and imaginative individuality of his ethnic types. Overall, the painting in this chapter are less predictable than Chughtai's depictions of the Mughals and other Islamic heroes. The latter were conceived as inspirational subjects---famous ancestors---that could generate pride in Muslims, while paintings of this group are Chughtai's impressions of people and ideas encountered in his lifetime.

## PIGEONS, LANDSCAPE, AND STILL LIFE

### PIGEONS

Because I found seven compositions with pigeons treated as an independent subject, I believe this was a significant theme in Chughtai's repertoire.<sup>381</sup> They span from the earliest style to the latest, show the birds always in pairs, close to the picture plane and occupying most of the pictorial space. It could be argued that these birds are doves, but doves have never played so intimate a role in the lives of Indo-Muslims as have pigeons. The content in this chapter should confirm the identification of these birds as pigeons as well as define their cultural significance in Indo-Muslim life.

During the Mughal period as well as in other periods of Indian history, pigeons were dispatched as messengers. More importantly, flocks of pigeons were kept on roof tops by royalty and commoners alike.<sup>382</sup> Keeping pigeons was a common practice, a diversion which demanded time and attention but brought enjoyment to the entire household. It is still a popular practice in Pakistan today. Chughtai is reported to have kept pigeons too.<sup>383</sup> His pigeon studies are, in my opinion, more sensitive and realistic than his studies of human figures. Unfortunately my black and white photos of color originals do no justice to the details and intricacies of feathers, feet, and beaks, or the three dimensionality of form and quality of movement displayed by these pigeons.

An untitled painting in the collection of the Punjab Art Center at Lahore that I will refer to as Two White Pigeons (Fig. 224), depicts two birds that face each other with their heads together in an affectionate pose. Since all the pigeon paintings feature two birds close together, interacting one with the other, it is natural to assume they represent male and female. It seems particularly obvious that Chughtai intended this painting to be interpreted that way. Like the paired birds (cranes, egrets, peacocks) in Indian miniature paintings, Chughtai's pigeons may be symbolic representations of human lovers. See p. ?!!!!. Even in Mughal miniatures, birds were frequently depicted in pairs; however, these were mostly scientific studies or records of native fauna rather than symbolic paintings.<sup>384</sup>

A second pigeon painting (Fig. 225) contrasts with the first in this group because the birds appear to be in the midst of a squabble rather than cuddled affectionately as before. The details are clearer in a print (Fig. 226) that copies the composition but is slightly more decorative.<sup>385</sup> The pigeon in front has lifted wings and ruffled feathers---literally and figuratively---and seems to have lost a feather. In the painting, the pigeon behind has an angry eye and a bent head that suggests it may have taken a peck at the other.

Another painting of two white pigeons in the collection of Dhumwai and Phiroze Dalal of Karachi (Fig. 227), focuses on the two birds in a background devoid of distractions except for the nearby bowl. To create a feeling of depth, the birds were placed in a light-valued triangular area that is juxtaposed with a darker area above. A small light-toned triangular shape at top right is repeated again in an untitled work of two black pigeons (Fig. 228). The latter, in the collection of Babur Ali of Lahore, places the birds on a high place (a roof top:) perched on the rim of a water bowl. The two pigeons look out over tree tops and hillocks (in the right hand corner) perhaps awaiting the arrival of companions.

It may be concluded that these pigeon paintings are a Chughtai innovation that combines the symbolism of birds as paired lovers from Rajput miniature paintings with the realism of scientific style bird studies by Mughal artists. However, unlike either the Rajput or Mughal bird studies, Chughtai's pigeon pairs take on human characteristics. They cuddle, or squabble, share the expectation of some event, and conform to at least one societal norm--no racial color mixing. In all the pigeon paintings the birds are paired white with white or black with black. Different colored pigeons are not paired in the same painting. Above all these pigeon paintings represent a facet of Indo-Islamic society as familiar to that life style as purdah or the five daily prayers.

## LANDSCAPES

Chughtai's landscapes vary in form and function. Landscapes may constitute the background setting for figures in a composition or function as independent subject matter where zoomorphic accompaniment is either subsidiary to the landscape or nonexistent. In his mature work, landscapes that provide a setting for one or more figures usually contribute to the identity or mood of the subject matter. This is the case with Leila (Fig. 137) where the heroine defied the challenge of the desert searching for her lover Qais; Chughtai colored the desert a yellow-ochre hue and the sky a shade of orange to intensify the feeling

of near desolation. The same is true for his Kashmiri subjects. For example, the lady in The Apple Girl (Fig. 113) collects the red fruit, the well-known bounty of Kashmir, and the poor mother with her son in Under the Apple Tree (Fig. 120) dwell in the fertile valley of Kashmir, but dare not touch even a single apple.

Generally Chughtai's landscapes appear to be realistic visions derived from local terrain or areas Chughtai had visited. The Chenab River not far from Lahore was the scene for the popular romantic tale, Sohini-Mahinwal. Chughtai's painting of Sohini preparing to cross the river with the aid of a ceramic pot (Fig. 140) features trees and lush ground cover in the background of the same type I saw growing along the Chenab while on a drive from Lahore to Islamabad.

In his Indian (i.e., Hindu) paintings, the landscape is frequently similar to that in miniature paintings from the Punjab Hills. Usha (Fig. 158) the near replica of a Kangra beauty in a Pahari drawing at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, stands on a terrace in front of the ubiquitous river and hillocks of Punjab Hills miniatures. A similar landscape forms the setting for Sunder Valley (Fig. 55), a romantic scene with Radha and Krishna. Siva and Parvati in Shakti Devata (Fig. 153) sit at the base of jutting mountain peaks after (as the commentary states) "the enbasting (sic) fury of his death dance, to enjoy a spell of rest..." The sky, mottled grey-green and red at the top---yellow near the horizon, gives the impression of a smoke-filled world. The conical mountains reflect red on the slopes facing the god and goddess and dull shades of blue and greenish brown on the other sides. Most of Chughtai's landscapes, like the examples just cited, are background settings that contributed to the iconography of the subject.

There are, however, a few landscapes that were not designed to function as background or as a setting for figures but independently form the subject matter. The animation of the trees, the lushness and verdure function simply to celebrate nature. To my knowledge, these landscapes have not been published and this aspect of his art is little known. Scenery (Fig. 122), Landscape (Fig. 121), and Green Valley (Fig. 123) are personal expressions of the artist's love for his natural environment. They are fanciful depictions based on local terrain and flora.

In his youth, Chughtai was an outdoor enthusiast. He loved activities that took him away from the city like fishing and hunting. With regard to nature Chughtai wrote:

I am fond of hunting and this interest has taken me to every nook and corner of the land of the five rivers [the Punjab] and I feel a natural affinity for it. I belong to the soil.<sup>386</sup>

Landscape (Fig. 121), in the Pakistan Arts Council, Lahore, is an idyllic vision of nature. The twisting trunks bend toward one another in silent communication. They seem almost human, like two companions bound to one another with common roots. The scene is peaceful and the colors in it are lush greens, deep blues and warm yellows, ochres, and orange hues. A single red bird, perched on the branches of the left hand tree, stands out against the dark background in the original work. It is a warm, friendly painting that I react to as an invitation to step into the scene and enjoy the beauty. The Punjab is not a dry, desolate desert like some parts of Pakistan. It encompasses a variety of terrain, but is stereotyped as the land of rivers. Landscape is a vignette from the diversity of the Punjab, but one which (in Chughtai's mind) may have typified it best.

I suggest that Chughtai treated his landscapes as he did human subjects in composing the painting. He saw a scene, a river or a tree, internalized it, returned to his studio and painted it. Scenery (Fig. 122) is more fanciful than Landscape, but it is probably also based on real forms. Here the artist is in a playful mood. The roots of the dominant tree curl up and touch the leaves that droop down from their graceful branches. A small limb entwines the larger trunk, a convention commonly used in Persian miniature painting usually as a symbolic gesture to parallel the embrace of human lovers. These trees are at once realistic and unbelievable. The forms are convincing, but the exaggerations are beyond reality. The leaves of the left hand tree are too large to be believable, and the sprouting umbrella-like puffs of foliage from the smaller tree reach too high to be realistic. Nevertheless, the genus of both could probably be determined by a botanist. Apparently Chughtai favored the budding quality of the smaller tree as he used this type in other works.

Green Valley (Fig. 123) is a panorama of rolling hills and mushroom-shaped trees. Just as a winding river and verdant hillocks typify miniature paintings from Kangra and Guler, rolling hills with scattered mushroom and conical-shaped trees typify Chughtai's landscapes. In some paintings this landscape is associated with crop production, like the background in The Young Farmer (Fig. 172), or The Green Field (Fig. 98). With some variation, rolling hills and scattered trees provide a setting for the myriad dramatis personae of Chughtai's oeuvre. Background landscape like Green Valley is the type that complements



the human element without upstaging the actors. The rolling hills complete the scene but do not compete with the primary attraction.

Because Chughtai was so comfortable with this landscape and used it so often as a setting, I am led to assume this is the landscape he knew best. Green Valley must be the countryside he frequented near Lahore. It is a representation of Chughtai's Punjab---the land he knew and loved. It is green and tranquil. Because of the monochromatic color scheme of the painting, the people and their homes blend into landscape. My personal experiences in several rural Punjabi villages evoked the feeling of harmony between man and nature, a feeling I get from this painting as well. There is an element in Green Valley of the arcadian spirit that art historians attribute to the second century Roman landscapes in fresco from Pompeii and Herculaneum.

An untitled landscape in the collection of Mr. S. M. Nawaz of Karachi (Fig. 229) is neither a setting for figures nor a celebration of the beauty of nature but imagery that conveys an Islamic romantic/religious metaphor. I refer to this work as Two Tombs in a Landscape and find it comparable with a similar but much earlier painting entitled The Better Land (Fig. 22). Both works ultimately derive from the romantic tragedies of Arabic and Persian poetry and romantic folk stories of the Punjab. See chapter IV, Persian and Urdu Poetry: Omar Khayyam and Ghalib, and Islamic Literature and Punjabi Folktales. Because marriage was (and still is) arranged for sons and daughters by their parents, romantic love not sanctioned by the family was discouraged---even forbidden. In the literature young men and women who fell in love with someone outside the extended family were doomed to suffer a tragic ending. Most often the lovers died trying to reunite after parents or family had separated them. The moral of the story is actually a religious metaphor: The two lovers will be united in heaven after death. The passion of the lovers that compelled them to seek one another against all odds is a metaphor for the true lover of seeker of God who pursues faith with all his soul. The true lover will receive his reward by being united with God after death. In Chughtai's painting a small bird in the foreground looks toward the two tombs that are framed by two curving tree trunks. Exemplary of his love for opposites---one tree is alive with lush green foliage and the other is barren. The tombs rest in a patch of green earth below the verdant tree while the open space beyond is light orange and the mountains and sky are shades of red. There is a mystical quality to the painting intensified by the juxtaposition of greens and reds and the contrast

between the details of tree, rocks, bird and tombs on the right side of the work with the open, vacant spanse on the left.

### STILL LIFE

I have only seen two Chughtai paintings that could be classified as still life, but there are several etchings and a black and white design that fit this category as well.<sup>387</sup> Bottles, plants, and other still life components often contribute to the composition of a painting with figures, but the still life motif does not appear to have been a subject of much concern to Chughtai. In my opinion, his two still life paintings are not as successful compositionally as his figural paintings or landscapes.

The Still Life (Fig. 230) from Amle Chughtai is manifestly Islamic in keeping with Chughtai's professed desire to be recognized as an oriental artist.<sup>388</sup> A red Quran in its brownish red holder is the focus of the subject matter, being complemented by a blue vase with Arabic script and a small blue perfume bottle for additional oriental effect. According to the commentary for The Still Life, "this spiritual and romantic arrangement is the expression of the sincere devotion and love Chughtai had for the Holy Book...which is the will of the Lord and the guide of human life." Large red leaves and light yellow-orange flowers embellish the painting, combining (according to the same commentary) religious symbolism with a study of nature.

"This origin of thought," the commentary continues, "has given freshness to the subject...freshness that carries vitality and pleasure of life." In an effort to reconcile the juxtaposition of Holy Book and flowers, the commentary adds: "Every part of the painting is a meaningful gesture towards the struggle of hope and fragrance." It is well to keep in mind that this painting was reproduced in the volume meant to reflect Iqbal's philosophy so that the artist may have felt compelled to compose a dialogue for the commentary that expressed Iqbalian sentiment. I cannot say exactly what is meant by "the struggle of hope and fragrance" but "struggle" and "hope" are key concepts in Iqbalian thought, and "fragrance" is a word and concept often used abstractly by Chughtai.

Spring Flowers (Fig. 231),<sup>389</sup> the other still life painting, is very different in concept and composition from The Still Life. Bottles that appear to float in air and the exaggerated upward curving sweep of flowers and leaves give a surrealist element to the painting. The pink flowers and red leaves come forward optically as they ascend upward pictorially. Somehow the unlikely

arrangement---a crescent-shaped bouquet---manages to stay lifted. Greenish-yellow bricks (a near complementary color for the red leaves, on the darker side to the left) seem to function as a vertical wall and backdrop for the ~~flowers~~ <sup>bottles</sup> but do not give a place to the three jars at the top. The vessels simply float in front of the wall. In spite of the surrealist bent of this work and the common knowledge that much of the Surrealists' work had exotic meaning and symbolism, I do not think Chughtai had any message in mind. It is simply a still life with forms incongruous with reality meant to arouse our curiosity.

#### SUMMARY

Chughtai's love of nature is evident in the supporting landscapes of his figural compositions and in his humanized trees. In some instances he reveals the Persian influence of intertwining trees with its accompanying symbolism; in others the Pahari tradition and style are incorporated into his work. There are other landscapes, however, that are pure innovation, composed and shaped in a way that makes them uniquely "Chughtai." For the most part Chughtai's landscapes are realistic, probably derived from flora endemic to Pakistan and Kashmir, but occasionally he exaggerates forms beyond plausibility. Still life motifs, on the other hand, are less convincing. His compositions seem forced and uninspired. He seems to have resorted to visual tricks to enliven the painting. In comparing these two subjects, it seems apparent that Chughtai preferred the living vitality of the botanical world in its natural state to the static nature of leaves and flowers in a vase.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Chughtai did not name himself as the author of the commentaries for the illustrations in Amle Chughtai; neither did he attribute them to anyone else. While these commentaries appear in the third person, Chughtai, either alone or in collaboration with his brother or some other close friend, wrote the first draft of these commentaries and then gave them to Sayed Waqar Azim for editing. In "Reminiscences," Chughtai: Personality and Art, Azim wrote that sometime around the end of 1964 or the beginning of 1965 "Mr. Chughtai came to my residence along with his younger brother, Mr. Abdur Rahim and...after discussing various things he mentioned the purpose of his visit. I knew that Mr. Chughtai desired to convert Iqbal's verses into paintings. I [then] came to know that he was also writing the explanations of the paintings which were based on Iqbal's thought. All of the paintings of the illustrated edition of Iqbal would carry detailed explanatory notes. Mr. Chughtai had brought some such notes with him. I accepted this as his order and as an honour for me." Syed Azim does not discuss the nature or extent of his editing or attribute the use of third person to Chughtai's preference or his own. He only adds that "Explanatory notes of the paintings kept on coming to me. I read those and made changes where needed." Final proof of Azim's contribution was marked by the inclusion of his name in the credits in Amle Chughtai as one of the three persons named with gratitude in the book Amle Chughtai.

<sup>2</sup> See note 69, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>4</sup> Some titles from the Mussorie Exhibition catalogue of 1922 are: Evening Gaya by Mrs. F.A. Maynard, A Temple Evening Bangalore by Mr. Carlton Smith, Early Evening Kailana by Capt. E.C. Boon, Morning by Mr. Kitchen, and Sunset Ranikhet by Mr. H. Barrowcliff Ellis. Most of the entries in the Mussorie show were British, which may be explained in that the show was held in June and Mussorie was a hot weather retreat for the British. The Indian Society of Oriental Art Exhibition catalogue of 1922 suggests that Indian artists used similar titles such as Spring Evening by S.S. Choudhury, Winter Morning by Prosad Mukherjee, or Autumn Sky by D.K. Deva Varman.

<sup>5</sup> See (Fig. 27)

<sup>6</sup> A Flower Once Blown forever Dies (Fig. 23) is a line from verse XXVI of the first edition of the translation of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam by Edward Fitzgerald. It was first published in 1858 bearing only the publisher's name, not Fitzgerald's. Ten years later it was published again with "several alterations and additions" under Fitzgerald's authorship. See Edward Fitzgerald, Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1952), p.54.

<sup>7</sup> Mukherjee, "Chronology," p. 126

<sup>8</sup> Some of Tagore's Mughal subjects, also taken from Mukherjee, pp. 120-131 are: Shah Jehan Dreaming of the Taj (1910-1911), Aurangzeb Examining the head of Dara (1911), sixteen copies of Mughal drawings (1905-1906), Bahadur Shah---The Last Mughal Emperor (1897-1900), and Zebunissa (no date given)

<sup>9</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>10</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>11</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>12</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>13</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>14</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>15</sup> Chughtai, "My Paintings"

<sup>16</sup> Leadership, Modesty, and Bond of Love are reproduced in Amle Chughtai; The Kashmiri Boy and Young Bhil are in the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, India; Bengal Boats is in the collection of Packages Ltd. of Lahore and was reproduced as Nightfall Over the River in a folio of reproductions of Chughtai's paintings produced by the National Bank of Pakistan, 1968.

<sup>17</sup> Chughtai's first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928) was a divan of Ghalib with selected verses of the poet illustrated by Chughtai; Naqsha-i-Chughtai (1935) was also a divan of Ghalib, identical to that in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai, but different verses were selected for illustration with different paintings for each.

<sup>18</sup> Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib (1797-1869) spent most of his life in Delhi and is best known for his Persian and Urdu ghazals.

<sup>19</sup> Rahbar, p.1.

20 Translations of Ghalib's verses from Muraqqa-i-Chughtai were done for me by Professor Aziz Butt, Zahoorul Akhlaq and Syed Anjum Nisar.

21 Flame, candle and lamp are synonymous in that each symbolizes the beloved.

22 See Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (Lahore: Sh. Niaz Ahmad, 1975), A.R. Tariq, trns., p. 215.

23 See p. 104 and note 15, p. 150.

24 My Lamp Goes Out Every Time (Fig. 25) by Charudchandra Roy is a typical example from Chatterjee's Picture Albums (1918).

25 The editor's note explained that the iconographic discussion was composed by a friend of the artist at the artist's request and was published by the editor "in a somewhat modified form" as given above.

26 Modern Review "Our Frontispiece," XXV, No. 1, 1918, p. 306

27 Votress and Leader were photographed by me from Chughtai's scrapbook. The captions were retained, but the publications they came from were not recorded in the scrapbook.

28 Amle Chughtai, commentary accompanying Fame, trns. for me by Pervaiz Kazmi.

29 A colored outline drawing of three women spinning, dated 1921, in the National Gallery of Art in New Delhi is probably the painting Arif Chughtai was referring to. He believed it was purchased by the Bureau of Education (government of India) by request of Gandhi. Communication with Arif Chughtai, 1978.

30 See p. 49, also chapter VII.

31 Dr. Susan Huntington added that she sensed that Chughtai very much wanted his paintings to stand on their own as visual works. Yet on the other hand, he felt the need to insure (with words) that the paintings were interpreted correctly.

32 Interview with Dr. Waheed Quraishi, professor of History and Urdu Literature at Oriental College, Lahore, August 12, 1978. Dr. Quraishi was a friend of the artist and had written several articles on the artist's work.

33 Interview with Arif Chughtai, May 14, 1978, Lahore.

- 34 Interview with Arif Chughtai, May 14, 1978, Lahore.
- 35 See Chughtai's quote, p. 166-167.
- 36 The Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad has a nearly identical version of For Love that is entitled Lady and Lamp.
- 37 Ralph Russell and Khurshidul Islam, Three Mughal Poets (Great Britain: G. Allen, 1969), p. 115.
- 38 Russell and Islam, p. 245.
- 39 Considering Chughtai's interest in literature, there can be no doubt he was aware of these metaphors too.
- 40 Rahbar, p.5.
- 41 Russell and Islam, p. 106.
- 42 Russell and Islam, p. 161.
- 43 Russell and Islam, p. 229.
- 44 Poet's Vision is reproduced in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai
- 45 Rahbar, p. 3 explained "If ever the beloved relents, it is at the moment of the lover's last breath. More often it is after the lover has expired and is already buried. The disheartened lover's reverie about the beloved's visit to his grave is both touching and amusing."
- 46 Yakub Zaki, "Aspects of Chughtai," p.8, a paper delivered for the Chughtai First Death Commemoration, Lahore, 1976. I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for making a copy of this paper available to me. Dr. James Dickey with the World of Islam Festival Trust (1975), converted to Islam and changed his name to Yakub Zaki.
- 47 Rubaiyat, Tariq, trns., p. 215.
- 48 Hamid, "Chughtai," p. 137 noted that "One finds again and again in his paintings examples of this [unconscious symbolism]. near a very old decrepit beggar in rags, a spray of flowers is in full bloom; a tiny bird is chirping happily near a woman broken with grief; the trunk of a dead tree lies near the feet of a robust and youthful prince: These are a few examples." Hamid then concluded that this symbolism "really expresses the traditional Indian view of life which accepts everything with resignation. Every living thing, a man, a bird, a tree, has to go through the cycle of life."

49 Zaki, p.8.

50 See p. 169.

51 Subjects overlap and I have chosen to discuss Poet Firdose in chapter IV. Shirin and Khusrau was listed in the Punjab Fine Arts Society, 8th Annual Exhibition, 1929, but I have not seen the painting. It should be noted that while Shirin and Khusrau are among the many important characters in the Shah Nama, their story was also popularized by Nizami.

52 These stories may have been written too late to become illustrative material for Persian artists or their provincial nature may not have appealed to their royal patrons. Annemarie Schimmel, "Culture: Regional Literatures," Pakistan (London: Stacey International, n.d.), p. 238, suggests that Punjabi folk romances were not formally recorded before the sixteenth century. "By the sixteenth century notable classics were being written like...Mirza Sahiban. The first known literary figure is Madhu Lal Hussain of Lahore (d. 1593)...an admirer of beauty, who sang of his love for it, using the symbolism of native folk tales, as did most later poets. His contemporary, Damodar, was the first major poet to versify the celebrated tragedy of Heer Ranjha."

53 While the Persian, Nizami, contributed to the popularization of this romance, there exist other versions by Persian and non-Persian authors. Some of the variations may have occurred in the process of translation.

54 Descriptive Catalogue, British Empire Exhibition, p.2.

55 Annemarie Schimmel, Foreword, Three Mughal Poets, p. x.

56 Amle Chughtai. Iqbal's verse on the page opposite the painting The Desert in Love.

57 Allama Iqbal, "Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" (Lahore: n.p., 1930) also (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, 1958).

58 See Muhammad Daud Rahbar, "Glimpses of the Man," p. 40, 51 and Hafeez Malik, "The Man of Thought and the man of Action," p. 74, both in Iqbal: Poet Philosopher of Pakistan, ed., Hafeez Malik (New York: Columbia univ. Press, 1971).

59 Conversation with Aziz Butt, Nov. 1978, Lahore.



60 I am grateful to Dr. Susan Huntington for alerting me to the article by Schuyler Cammann, "Religious Symbolism in Persian Art," History of Religions, XV, No. 3, (1976), p. 193.

61 Nila Aziz, reporter for Pakistan Times, Lahore, also contributed to my understanding of the meaning of deer in this painting during conversations in Sept. 1978, Lahore.

62 A.B. Rajput, Social Customs and Practices in Pakistan (Islamabad: RDC Publication, 1977), p. 13.

63 Abdul Salam Khurshid, "Regional Literatures: Punjabi," The Cultural Heritage of Pakistan, ed., S.M. Ikram and Percival Spear, (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1955), p. 151.

64 Khurshid, "Literatures" p. 151.

65 These titles were found in the following catalogues: Ranjah on the Chenab in The Punjab fine Art Society, 1924, Lahore; Ranja on the Chenob River in The Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1924, Calcutta; Hir and Ranjhu (sic) in Exhibition of Modern Indian Painting, Society for the Encouragement of Indian Art, no location, Sept. 1927; Hir and Ranja in The Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1925, Calcutta; Ranjhansa in The Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1926, Calcutta; Sehti, Ranjha, and Hir and Sehti all in Chughtai Exhibition Catalogue, Pakistan Arts Council, Lahore, 1950; Hir and Sehti, Rahnja to the Fair, Hir and Ranjha, and Ranjha with flute all from Chughtai Exhibition, Pakistan Arts council, Karachi, 1959.

66 Khurshid, "Literatures," pp. 151-152.

67 It is common knowledge among Pakistani Punjabis that Ranjha was a flute playing herdsman. A.B. Rajput, p. 15 confirms that "everyday Ranjha would go to the riverside for grazing the buffaloes where he would spend his time playing on the flute."

68 In the process of retrieving a trunk that I had shipped from Lahore to Karachi, I happened upon two Chughtai paintings in the home of the owners of the Shipping Company. Since I wasn't expecting to find any paintings, I did not have my flash accessories. My photos turned out very dark, but it is possible to see that one of the two is almost an exact copy of the Lahore Museum Sohini painting.

69 A miniature painting from Bundi entitled Sohini Swimming to Meet Mahinwal dated to about 1790, was

published in M.S. Randhawa and J.K. Galbraith, Indian Painting: The Scene, Themes, and Legends (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), plate 17, p. 89. Drs. John and Susan Huntington, Ohio State University professors of Asian Art History have an eighteenth century Rajput painting of this theme.

70 The Punjab fine Art Society, Lahore, Third Annual Exhibition, 1925, the catalogue lists Sohne Crossing the River by Jagan Nath, the Eighth Annual Exhibition, 1929 of the same Society in Lahore shows Sohini on Way to the River by Mohammad Hussain Qadri and Sohni by Allah Bux.

71 Punjab or panj ob. literally means five waters and refers to the rivers, Sutlej, Ravi, Chenab, Indus, and Jhelum. Consequently, the Punjab and by extension all of Pakistan, is sometimes referred to as the land of the five rivers.

72 Khurshid, "Literatures," P. 153.

73 Interview with Nadra, Nov. 1978, Lahore.

74 Nadra Interview.

75 Schimmel, "Regional Literatures," p. 238.

76 Sassi and Punnu is number 77 in Chughtai Exhibition, Arts council of Pakistan, Karachi, 1958.

77 Bhanbhore was a city near Karachi in the province of Sind, but according to Khurshid, "Literatures," p. 152, the folk romance Sassi and Punnu is equally as popular in the Punjab as it is in Sind. A number of poets committed it to print, but Hashim Shah's version (the one here) is the most popular.

78 Khurshid, "Literatures," p. 152.

79 Chughtai's Indian Paintings (New Delhi: Dhoomi Mal Dharam Das, 1951).

80 Chughtai's Indian Paintings should not be confused with Chughtai's Paintings, "Indian" as Chughtai used it, refers to Hindu and Buddhist, rather than Muslim themes.

81 One of Chughtai's earliest Hindu paintings Radha and Krishna (Fig. 30) signed and dated 1921, is in the collection of the Birla Academy of Art and Culture in Calcutta.

82 Kashmira Singh, "Introduction," Chughtai's Indian Paintings, p. 12.

83 Another version entitled Holi Dance was reproduced in Trends of Indian Painting by Manohar Kaul, plate 4. Mr. F. U. Ahmed of Karachi owns a painting nearly identical to Holi Dance in Kaul's book, that I believe to be a forgery by an Indian artist. See pp. 347

84 See Barrett and Gray, Indian Painting, (Geneva: Albert Skira, 1978), p. 163.

85 Baramasa paintings (paintings of the twelve months) normally show Krishna dressed according to the season; as such he wears a variety of different costumes. There is no indication, however, that Charm of the Valley is a work of that category.

86 Although the commentaries are attributed to Kashmira Singh, I believe that most were the result of a co-ordinated effort between writer and artist. This assumption is based upon information that the two were personal friends and from Singh's "Introduction" in Chughtai's Indian Paintings p. 12, that describes their meeting and discussion of the art works.

87 Chughtai's Indian Paintings, commentary for Charm of the Valley, No. 20.

88 Chughtai often made use of complementary colors in his paintings, being aware of their intensifying effect. He may have intellectualized the impact of using purple for Krishna's dress in place of the traditional yellow.

89 Commentary for Charm of the Valley.

90 Compositionally the two are separated. Radha faces left and Krishna to the front. They are further separated by the pillar between them.

91 This painting is also reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings, No. 26.

92 See chapter IV, Persian and Urdu Poetry, p. 173.

93 See chapter IV, Folk Romances of the Punjab and Sind, p. 53.

94 Animal forms appearing in trees and rocks occur both in Indian and Persian miniature painting and is not unique to Chughtai. In Persian miniature painting artists had animals and grotesque monsters within masses of rocks. Sometimes knot holes in trees became eyes which peered down on the figures below. In Indian miniature painting, trees took on ghoulish anthropomorphic shapes to frighten the beloved seeking her lover in the forest at night.

Chughtai's art is derived from both traditions, Persian and Indian, and is perhaps one step beyond in its syncretic innovation. The tree is a tree in With the Flute, but maybe it's a bull too.

95 Usually spelled chitralkha.

96 A second interpretation of Radha's activity could be that she was making a painting of her absent lover and has lowered her head in grief because they are apart. She may not know that her beloved Krishna has returned and caught a glimpse of her from behind the wall.

97 See Figs. 165, 168, 174, 178, 180, 212, 216, & 217

98 An earlier version of this painting from Chughtai's scrapbook in the CMT (a copy in my files) shows Krishna with blue skin holding the weapons and Arjuna below with cream colored complexion. Since the first version shows Krishna and Arjuna with their traditional skin colors, it seems likely that Chughtai made the change in response to aesthetic considerations (for greater impact or mystery) rather than from literary concerns.

99 Commentary for Krishna Instructing Arjuna in Chughtai's Indian Paintings, No. 10.

100 Commentary for Arjuna, No. 16.

101 Another version of "Draupadi and Pandavas" is in the collection of the State Archaeological Museum of Hyderabad. The plates in Chughtai's Indian Paintings are numbered in the table of contents but not in the reproduction, neither are the pages numbered beyond the Introduction. The outline drawing of the five Pandavas is included in the Introduction on page 13, but is not among the colored plates.

102 Syamvara is a ceremony where a princess chooses a husband among princes who have competed in various athletic skills.

103 Commentary for Draupadi and Pandavas No. 23. This incident is described in the Mahabharata.

104 Krishna, related both to the Pandavas and the Kurus, offered a choice to the opposing families: Krishna's army for one side---himself, unarmed for the other. The Kurus chose the army, the Pandavas (under Arjuna's guidance) gladly accepted Krishna unarmed on their side. The Pandavas won the war after a long hard battle and many casualties.

105 Commentary for Nat-Raj no.6.

106 I am grateful to Dr. Susan Huntington for pointing out that Siva's dances are not all one and the same and noting that this painting does not conform to the usual iconography of Siva's dance of destruction.

107 Bose's painting was published in Chatterjee's Picture Albums No. 2, 1918. Chughtai's painting A Flower Once Blown Forever Dies was included in this same album. Therefore, Chughtai must have seen Bose's reproduction if not the original.

108 Jaya Appasamy illustrated this work of Bose in Abanindranath Tagore and the Art of his Times, Fig. 11, p. 31, and stated on p. 54 referring to this particular style "well-known examples are his "Sati," "Siva Drinking Poison," etc."

109 The commentary for Shakti-Devta established this interpretation: "The great god Shiva sits, after the enbasting (sic) fury of his death dance, to enjoy a spell of rest with his divine consort---Shakti."

110 See plate 69, p. 91, The Holy Family in Rajput Miniatures from the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, catalogue of exhibition organized by Portland Art Museum, Portland, Oregon, Sept. 1968-Dec. 1969.

111 Behind the Mountains is no. 14 in Chughtai's Indian Paintings

112 See Figs. 146, 152, 158, and 167.

113 Commentary for Behind the Mountains No. 14.

114 Chughtai's painting, reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings, deleted the first 'i' from the spelling of ragini and thus titled the work The Ragni.

115 Benjamine Rowland, The Art and Architecture of India (1953, rpt., Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1970), p. 345.

116 Indian Art Through the Ages, p. 9.

117 The majority of reproductions of "Todi Ragini" attribute their provenance to central India (Rajasthan). However, Mulk Raj Anand, Album of Indian Paintings (New Delhi: National Book Trust, India, 1973), p. 83, reproduced a painting entitled "Todi Ragini: Deccani style" depicting a seated figure under a tree with vina and one deer in front of her.

118 See Rajput Miniatures from the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, Plate 51, p. 66.

119 Indian Art Through the Ages, p. 9.

120 Usha is reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings, but I was not aware of that when I first saw this painting in the 1978 Chughtai Anniversary Exhibition at the CMT in Lahore. I thought it was a large adaptation of a miniature painting by a Hindu artist from the Pahari idiom.

121 Another version of Usha, entitled Lady in Yellow (Fig. 159), belongs to the collection of former American ambassador to Pakistan, Benjamin Oehlert Jr. and is published in a booklet, Art in the Embassy, no other information on publication data available. Lady in Yellow is nearly identical to the Victoria and Albert Museum Kangra miniature (Fig. 160) in pose, arm positioning, and background. Lady in Yellow was probably the immediate prototype for Usha since the latter shows greater deviation from the Kangra miniature which certainly was the original prototype.

122 Commentary for Usha No. 4.

123 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," p. 8.

124 M.S. Randhawa, Kangra Valley Painting (1954 rpt., New Delhi: Publications Division, 1972), Plate 11, p. 41; W.G. Archer, Visions of Courtly India (catalogue by International Exhibitions Foundation, Washington D.C., 1976), Plate 46, p. 84; and Chughtai's own painting Chitarlekha (Fig. 150) are good examples.

125 Archer, Visions, Plate 61, p.114 and Plate 56, p.104; and Anand, Album, the plate on p. 149.

126 Anand, Album, p. 149.

127 Anand, Album, p. 149.

128 Three other untitled toilet scenes by Chughtai that feature a nude or semi-nude lady are in private collections. A toilet scene of this type in the collection of Mirza Jamil of Karachi and was reproduced as the cover of Focus on Pakistan, I, No. 1, (1971), a slightly modified version appears in Chughtai's Indian Paintings as The Bather, and Mr. Gafoor of Karachi owns a toilet scene that was reproduced in Naqash-i-Chughtai, while the third is a brown nude at toilet owned by Sultan Mahmood of Karachi.

129 The Sanchi yakshi dates c.second century B.C., see see Rowland, Fig. 29, p. 80.

130 The Bharhut yakshi dates c. first century A.D., see Rowland, Fig. 43, p. 99.

131 See Rowland, Art and Architecture of India, p. 82.

132 See. A.L. Basham, The Wonder that was India (1954 rpt., New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959), p. 184 also Paul Thomas, Incredible India (Bombay; D. B. Taraporevala Sons, 1966), p. 122, further information was provided by Deepak Shimkhada, Asian Art historian and my colleague in the doctoral program at The Ohio State University

133 See Sherman Lee, A History of Far Eastern Art (New York: Harry Abrams, Inc., 1964), Plates 119 and 120.

134 Chughtai's Indian Paintings, commentary for "Ambapali" No. 7.

135 There is no commentary for this painting since it was not reproduced in Chughtai's Indian Paintings.

136 Other paintings that support this supposition are: Young Bhil (Fig. 104), Qalandar (Fig. 213), and the Kashmiri subjects.

137 The "Attack of Mara" is the title of an episode in the life of the Buddha that was sculpted repeatedly in the great Buddhist centers of premedieval India. In his quest for truth, Siddhartha finds a place to meditate under the Bodhi (also called Pipal) tree and vows to remain until he gains the great understanding (Enlightenment). Mara (personification of the devil in Buddhist theology) seeks to prevent Buddha from achieving his goal and sends his army of ganas (midgets) to attack Siddhartha. When the ganas fail, Mara sends his three daughters to distract (seduce?) Siddhartha, but this fails as well. Finally Mara demands of Siddhartha "What right have you to this piece of earth?" Siddhartha points to the earth to be his witness, whereupon "the deity of the earth rises out of the ground (to bear witness)...that Shakyamuni had fulfilled the complete discipline and duty of a Bodhisattva." Edward Conze, Buddhism: Its Essence and Development (New York: Harper & Row, publishers, 1959), p. 35. Siddhartha attains the enlightenment he was seeking---becoming then "The Enlightened One"---The Buddha.

While variations occur in sculpted compositions of the "Attack of Mara," they are consistent in showing the Buddha seated under a tree, surrounded by ganas and one or more of the three daughters sent to tempt him.

138 The expression "Hindu neighbors" does not necessarily mean residents of the house next door, but

refers to a mixed city in terms of religion. Lahore was the home of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs up to the time of partition of India in 1947. Though the Buddhists had all left centuries ago, remnants of their culture permeated the area. Gandhara, an ancient Buddhist region of Pakistan and Afghanistan left behind treasures of art and craft for the local museums.

139 The Central Museum of Lahore had one of the finest collections of Indian miniatures in India, and even now its collection is nearly unrivaled after dividing much of its holdings with the Chandigarh Museum to appease the demands of partition in 1947.

140 Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Amle Chughtai (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, 1968).

141 Each cover of this book has a different title. The left cover (meant for western readers, since this is the cover opened first by readers of European languages) has the title Iqbal: Poet of the East in English script. The right cover (meant for readers of Persian and other languages which are read from right to left, as the cover they open first) is inscribed in Urdu, Amle Chughtai (work of Chughtai).

142 Critics have never agreed about the relationship of Chughtai's paintings to Iqbal's philosophy in this book. Some like M. Iftikhar, Pakistan Review, "Amle-E-Chughtai" XVII, No. 4, (1969), p. 50, assumed that the paintings were directly inspired by Iqbal's poetry: "Chughtai's versatile genius has been able to capture the inner essence and the spirit of the character of Iqbal's imagination and to give concrete shape to his poetic conceptions." Malik Shams wrote in the catalogue Chughtai Exhibition, Karachi, 1959, n.p., that Chughtai sought to capture in visual terms "the man of Iqbal's concept...spirited, determined, dauntless and devoted...[but] like Ghalib and Hafiz it is difficult to translate and render Iqbal in pictorial form." Dr. Abdullah Chaghatai, in "The Chughtai School" wrote that he believed that the paintings were conceived independently of Iqbal's beliefs. He felt that Amle Chughtai was no more than an album of Chughtai's paintings, that Chughtai should not have tagged Iqbal's verses to his paintings, he should have concentrated on his own work and Abdullah forwarded the opinion that the paintings in Amle Chughtai have little to do with Iqbal's poetry or ideas. A somewhat evasive though more compromising opinion was offered by Arif Rahman Chughtai in "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 8: "Amal-Chughtai is about both Iqbal and Chughtai. It sacrifices none, but the end product is not an artist or a poet. It is a conglomeration of feelings, and aspirations, the vision and



words of those countless moslems (sic) in history, who have finally found expression, adaptation to a new time."

143 In an essay on Chughtai entitled "Reminiscences", Syed Waqar Azim confirmed that he edited Chughtai's commentaries for Amle Chughtai: "One day Mr. Chughtai came to my residence along with his younger brother, Mr. Abdur Rahim...after discussing various things he mentioned the purpose of his visit. I knew that Mr. Chughtai had made it his desire to convert Iqbal's verses into paintings. I came to know in that day's discussion that he was also writing the explanations of the paintings...which were based on Iqbal's thought and all the paintings...would carry detailed explanatory notes. He had brought some with him and wanted me to examine its language and style. I accepted this...as an honor. It was the end of 1964 or the beginning of 1965. Explanatory notes kept coming to me. I read them and made changes where needed...The artist who had a magical mastery of the use of color and lines, derived a special impression from the verses of Iqbal." translated for me by Pervaiz Kazmi, no date or page number for the original.

144 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p.1.

145 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 10.

146 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 9.

147 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 10.

148 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 16, wrote "Iqbal has repeatedly emphasized the infinite powers of love and the universality of the intuitive drive as the fountainhead of success. But he also is convinced of the validity of the intellect, according to him, art doesn't thrive on imagination and passion, it is directly connected with intellect also."

149 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 16.

150 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 16.

151 Chughtai, "Individual and Group," p. 10.

152 Commentary for Temptation, Amle Chughtai.

153 Commentary Temptation.

154 Commentary Temptation.

155 Proscriptions against wine are accepted by the orthodox Islamic community as the mandate of Hadith

(apocryphal literature of Islam). Sufis, on the other hand, do not abide by this mandate, therefore, the marde-momin must represent other than a Muslim with Sufi tendencies.

156 Commentary Temptation.

157 Commentary Temptation.

158 See Thomas Arnold, Painting in Islam (1928, rpt., New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965) p. 121.

159 Commentary Temptation.

160 Many religious scholars note certain similarities between Sufism and mystical beliefs of the Hindus and Buddhists. In particular the method for communication with, or understanding of the Godhead. All three groups attain an altered mental state of consciousness--the Hindus and Buddhists through meditation (the highest state of concentration being samadi)--the Sufis through ecstatic trance brought about by wine or dance (i.e. the Whirling Dervish) or both. Was Chughtai referring to the Hindus and Buddhists when he wrote "one is reminded of those holy people who are sitting in samadi" or was he referring, by euphemism, to the ecstatic state of the Sufi?

161 Commentary Temptation.

162 Commentary Temptation.

163 A comparison with the crucifixion of Christ is wholly tenable considering that Islamic theology recognizes Christ as one of God's holy prophets. Theologians do not deny the crucifixion or its metaphysical significance, but they do contest the belief that Christ was the son of God or part of the Holy Trinity.

164 In "My Paintings," Chughtai defined his paintings as "symbolic expressions of the aesthetic standards of our culture and of its glory and grandeur as well." Of his hope to inspire his co-religionists he wrote in the same essay, "My art has an individuality steeped in oriental values and is the kind of sustenance on which nations thrive." Use of the word "sustenance" signifies his desire to encourage, uplift and nourish his countrymen, Temptation certainly fulfills these requirements and what he believed to be the purpose of his art. In "The Future of Art in Pakistan" Pakistan Times, August 14, 1949, p. 2, Chughtai vowed, "My desire and the purpose of my art is that I should create men with the virtues of sphinx and

women who are worthy to be the wives, sisters, and daughters of brave crusaders in the cause of good."

165 Iqbal's verse for Temptation.

166 Commentary for Wisdom and the Wise in Amle Chughtai.

167 Commentary Wisdom and the Wise.

168 Commentary Wisdom and the Wise.

169 An elaborate four page brochure printed on both sides of each page included a color reproduction of marde mujahid on the cover and two Mughal princesses on the last page. It was printed by Print Printo Press, Ravi Road, Lahore, West Pakistan, no date. (before 1968, i.e. West Pakistan)

170 In "The Future of Art," p. 2, Chughtai wrote, "In India, the religious, cultural, literary and artistic traditions of the Muslims were associated with the Moguls...The humblest Musalman had faith in these traditions, which made them believe that India was his. Today, he has perforce abandoned these traditions. Now he will have to build a new Taj, a new Delhi, new gardens, new mosques and shrines. He will have to create new individuals for this reconstruction, individuals who can prove that they had a past with traditions, that the country and its art were their creations and that they were true creative artists."

171 Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Glory of Iqbal (Lucknow, India: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1972), p. 60

172 Madam Behnam, "Iqbal's Great Message to Muslims," Pakistan Review, XVIII, No. 5, (1970), p. 17

173 Nadwi, p. 68.

174 Nadwi, p. 68.

175 Nadwi, p. 69.

176 Commentary for Determination in Amle Chughtai, a painting with the same message as that of Marde-Mujahid

177 Commentary Determination.

178 In accordance with "Iqbal's Great Message to Muslims," p. 17, Madam Behnam determined that it is the responsibility of a free man to act as God's vicegerent on

earth. "Only free men, free from all bondage, who recognize no one as God except Allah and who accept Muhammad as Allah's apostle and the Quran as the final, and complete revealed book, can carry out the vicegerent's mission, who live and die for the cause of humanity, for the cause of that freedom which the Quran alone prescribes as the birthright of man."

179 Commentary for With the Falcon in Amle Chughtai.

180 Commentary With the Falcon.

181 A nearly identical version of Slave Girl is part of the collection of the Punjab Art Council, Lahore. I am grateful to Mr. Moine Nadjme, director of the Lahore Council for allowing me to photograph all of the paintings in that collection.

182 Urdu commentary for Slave Girl translated for me by Mr. Aziz Butt, history professor at Government College, Lahore.

183 Khaizwas was a slave girl who became the concubine of the Abbasid Caliph, Mehedi. With the birth of her first son, Musa al Hadi, she was given the status of wife and eventually shared political responsibility of the empire when her second son Haroon al Rasheed ascended the caliph's throne.

184 John B. Glubb, Haroon al Rasheed and the Great Abbasids, (Sondon: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), p. 196.

185 Glubb, p. 197.

186 Commentary for Slave Girl.

187 Zabeda Khatoon, and Nur Jahan are a few of these notable exceptions.

188 See Farrukh Sultana's article "Status of Women in Iqbal's Thought" in Pakistan Review, XVI, No. 5, (1968), pp. 35-36,45 for a detailed analysis of this topic.

189 Urdu commentary for The National Emblem trns. for me by Pervaiz Kazmi.

190 Commentary The National Emblem.

191 The commentary specifies this role for the son: "From the child's expressions, the hope of becoming a mujahid is visible."

192 Commentary The National Emblem.

- 193 Commentary The National Emblem.
- 194 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," pp. 14-15.
- 195 Chughtai, Lagan, Foreword.
- 196 Chughtai, Lagan, p. 15.
- 197 See Biography, pp. 50-51.
- 198 See Hafeez Malik and Lynda P. Malik, "The Life of the Poet-Philosopher," Iqbal, Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan, (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1971), pp. 20-24.
- 199 Urdu commentary for The Young Farmer trns. for me by Pervaiz Kazmi
200. Urdu commentary for The Green Field trns. for me by Pervaiz Kazmi
- 201 Commentary The green Field.
- 202 Commentary The Young Farmer.
- 203 Commentary Young Farmer.
- 204 Commentary The Green Field.
- 205 This is suggested by Abdullah Farooqi, "Iqbal as a Social and Religious Thinker," Pakistan Review, May 1968, p. 15, who says that "[when] the means of production are concentrated in a few hands, and the small producers are being swallowed by the large capitalists...[there] can never be a true Muslim social order."
- 206 Farooqi, p. 15.
- 207 Farooqi, p. 15.
- 208 Sultan and the Saint was also published in Art in Pakistan (1968) by Jalaluddin Ahmed, and in Jacob Baal-Teshuva, Art Treasures of the United Nations (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1964).
- 209 Marshall Hodgson, The Venture of Islam, (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1974), II, p. 585.
- 210 Commentary for Sultan and the Saint trns. for me by M.A. Razi.

211 Hadith, according to Hodgson, II, P. 582, is a report of saying or action of the Prophet, or such reports collectively. Sometimes this is translated 'tradition', as having been transmitted from reporter to reporter.

212 Commentary for Sultan and the Saint.

213 Pir, according to Hodgson, II, p. 583, is a Sufi master able to lead disciples on the mystical way.

214 Behnam, p. 17.

215 Quraishi, "Chughtai and Iqbal".

216 The four paintings of the Abbasid period are Khalifa Harun al-Rashid the Abbasid caliph, Zabeda Khatoon, wife of harun Rashid, Ishaq Moosli, a famous musician of the court of al-Rashid, all reproduced in Amle Chughtai (location of originals unknown) and al Barmaki, vizier for Rashid, reproduced in a catalogue entitled Chughtai's Paintings from a 1950 exhibition sponsored by the Arts Council, Karachi.

217 In the standard edition of Amle Chughtai, the title page for the painting Khalifa Harun al-Rashid is separated from its reproduction by another title page entitled Leadership. Apparently there was some error in co-ordination of title page with reproduction for these two paintings. The deluxe edition, which I viewed at the British Museum in London, confirms the painting I have presented (Fig. 174) as Khalifa Harun al-Rashid. I wish to point out this anomaly for those who have access only to the standard edition and may question my identity of this painting.

218 Harun served as caliph (the supreme authority who leads Muslims in worship and war) from 786 to 809 A.D. For a more complete definition of the concept of caliph, see Hodgson, I, p. 86.

219 Hodgson, I, p. 292, noted that "Under the caliph, the government was now largely delegated to administrators, a vizier as financial chief and generally head of government, and his secretaries in their many bureaus (diwans)."

220 M. Lombard, The Golden Age of Islam (The Netherlands: North-Holland Pub. Co, 1975), p. 126.

221 According to Sir William Muir, The Caliphate, its rise, Decline, and Fall (Edinburgh, 1924; rpt., New York: AMS Press Inc., 1975), p. 476, t

have been a military tactic "to hold disloyal Syria in check...but it seems likelier that he had contracted an aversion towards Baghdad, for he never again resided there, and seldom even visited it."

222 Mourning for Baghdad is reproduced in Amle Chughtai

223 Hodgson, I, p. 292.

224 Muir, p. 476.

225 Muir, p. 486.

226 Hodgson, I, p. 292.

227 Muir, p. 486.

228 Hodgson, I, p. 294.

229 al Barmaki was reproduced in the 1950 catalogue, Chughtai Exhibition sponsored by the Pakistan Arts Council, Lahore.

230 Muir, p. 481.

231 The commentary for Zabeda Khatoon, states "The black cloak is the sign of sobriety, respect, grace...and beauty. It was the peculiarity of the...Abbasids that they wore black dress and regarded it exemplary of the grace and greatness of their court." Black attire at the court of harun is corroborated by Glubb in Haroon al Rasheed and the Great Abbasids, pp. 204,207.

232 Glubb, pp. 212, 213.

233 Glubb, p. 212, cites Dr. Jounard as saying that Zabeda wore no jewels on her head or chest, but rather preferred to use them on her shoes.

234 Glubb, p. 212.

235 The commentary states, "In the background the artist has used a female camel as a symbol, whose offspring are sucking at the mother with enjoyment. This decoration reminds us of the Zabeda Canal which irrigates the deserts of the Hijaz till today." Hodgson, I, p. 294, confirms Zabeda's role in financing the canal: "Zubeydah made herself famous for her charities, notably causing numerous wells to be dug along the pilgrim trail from the Iraq to Medina for the use of the Hajj pilgrims."

236 Hodgson, I, p. 299, noted that al-Rashid deemed that upon his death the empire should be divided between these two sons, but the title of caliph was assigned to Zabeda's son, with right of subsequent succession given to the other.

237 Hodgson, I, p. 300.

238 Hodgson, I, p. 409.

239 Commentary for Iqbal and Rumi

240 Reuben Levy, trns., The Epic of the Kings, by Ferdowsi, ed., Ehsan Yar-Shater (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), p. xv, explained that Ferdowsi is a pen name meaning Paradisal. The poet also had an honorific title, Abo'l-Qasem, but his personal name is unknown. He is believed to have died between 1020 and 11025 A. D. and his birth date is also uncertain.

241 This painting belongs to the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad and carries the title Poet Firdose.

242 Ehsan Yar-Shater, Editorial Note, Epic of the Kings, p. xxiii.

243 Yar-Shater, p. xxiii.

244 S.F. Mahmud, The Story of Islam (Great Britain: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959), p. 52.

245 Mahmud, pp. 52-53.

246 Nadwi (quoting Iqbal), p. 99.

247 Chughtai, "The Future of Art," p. 2.

248 Ancestry of Abdur Rahman Chughtai (Lahore: Nisar Art Press, n.d.) reproduced the lineage tree of Chughtai showing Ustad Ahmad Mimar Shah Jahani (d. 1649) as the great grandson of ustad Abdul Latif al-Qatib. See p. 131

249 Because this painting was reproduced in Amle Chughtai in black and white, I have no reference to color to assist in discussing the iconography.

250 Bamber Gascoigne, The Great Moghuls, (New York: Harper & Row, Pub. 1971), p. 19. He further explained that there was a building secure within the citadel of the city for Babur's use, but when home between campaigns, he preferred to camp in one of his gardens.



251 Jouher, Tezkereh al vakiat, or Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun, trns. by Major Charles Stewart (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1969), p. 26.

252 Commentary for Babur and Humayun, Amle Chughtai

253 Gascoigne, Moghuls, p. 47.

254 Jouher, Tezkereh, pp. 68, 69.

255 See chapter IV, Islamic Ideals, Heroes, Heroines, p. 209.

256 It is interesting to note that no other Chughtai paintings of Babur or Humayun have come to light, whereas paintings of Shah Jahan, Jahangir and Aurangzeb are many. I wonder if Chughtai's affinity for the Great Mughals and his apparent lack of interest in their predecessors had any relationship with his estrangement from his brother, Abdullah. Babur belonged to the race of Chaghatay Turks of Central Asia. The designation for the empire he founded in India (the Mughal empire) was an Indo-Persian word applied to his line according to Hodgson, III, p. 62 "on account of their association with the Mongol traditions in the Oxus basin, [thus] distinguishing them from the Afghan military class which had entered India rather earlier and held power under the Lodi dynasty." Since Chughtai's ancestors are reported (by Musa Kalim in Chughtai p. 3) to have come from Herat to Ghazni then to Lahore, they may have been related to the Timurid line of Chaghatay Turks (Babur and Humayun) who established themselves in those areas before concretising their 'Mughal' supremacy in India. Chughtai's academic brother, Dr. Abdullah, signs his name Chaghatai, perhaps in deference to that historic Timurid lineage, whereas the artist, his other brother and son, use the spelling 'Chughtai'. It has been shown that the artist and his scholarly brother were seldom on friendly terms and as the dedication for his book, Lagan (1941), the artist wrote: Dedicated to them: to the one who always opposed my writing; to the one who always favored my writing---Dr. Abdullah Chughtai, and Abdur Rahim Asghar Chughtai.

257 Khaled Ahmed, "The World of the Mughals," Pakistan Times, Magazine Section, I, Jan. 23, 1981, a review of the seventh annual Chughtai Museum Trust Exhibition, this one entitled "The Mughal Stimuli in the Art of M.A. Rehman Chughtai." Dr. Susan Huntington suggested that Akbar's liberalness may have prevented him from being perceived as a good example of Islamic greatness. Her point is corroborated by Hodgson, III, p. 61, who explained that while British historians praised Akbar for his religious tolerance and condemned Aurangzeb for setting the religious communities at odds, Muslim communalist historians built on

this thesis "only giving it a loyalist twist: Awrangzeb became their hero (and Akbar their villain), on the ground that what mattered even more than the empire was the maintenance of the Muslim community in its separate purity."

258 A nearly identical painting of Prince Salim by Chughtai, but slightly earlier (by stylistic comparison), is part of the collection in the Victoria Jubilee Museum in Vijayawada , India

259 Jahangir's mother was a Hindu princess, daughter of the rana of Amer. Akbar formed alliances with many Hindu rajas by taking their daughters as wives. He adopted the non-Muslim custom of wearing an earring and allowed his non-Muslim wives to continue their hereditary practices. If Chughtai were not aware of the significance of the earring, he would have noted its use in Mughal miniature painting.

260 Ahmed, "World of the Mughals".

261 I am grateful to Dr. Quraishi for making available to me his then unpublished article, "Chughtai and Iqbal" which I had translated. It was included in Wazir Agha's Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art (1980).

262 Mohammad Wali Ullah Khan, Lahore and its Important Monuments (1961, rpt., Dept. of Archaeology and Museums, Ministry of Ed, Govt. of Pakistan, 1973), p. 40.

263 Another version is given in Samina Quraeshi's Legacy of the Indus (New York: Weatherhill, 1974), pp. 83, 84. The legend is so popular that it has been made into a movie, is performed in dramas, and is presented on the radio.

264 Khan, p. 40.

265 See note 143, p. 92 and note 69, p. 156.

266 In Pakistan, brides wear red or dark orange for the marriage ceremony, but I do not know the history dictating preference for this color--as a color associated with brides.

267 Chughtai's Jahangir and Nur Jahan in the United Nations Collection is nearly identical to the Hyderabad work. See Ball-Teshuva's Art Treasures for illustration.

268 The triptych is discussed further pp. 237-238.

269 See footnote 41 of the Biography of the Artist.

270 Abanindranath Tagore, "Priyadarshika, or the Amiable Critic: Being discursive notes on the 13th Exhibition of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Calcutta," Rupam, No. 10, April 1922, p. 64.

271 Tagore, "The Amiable Critic," p. 64.

272 Jahanara at the Taj must have been a favorite painting of Chughtai as it was chosen for the dust cover of Chughtai's Paintings (second edition) 1970, reproduced as Plate 4 in that volume and also reproduced during the 1940s in Nargis---a respected Lahore journal of art and literature. (Although I was able to photograph Jahanara at the Taj from Nargis, I was not able to determine the year of publication of that issue).

273 Arif Rahman Chughtai, "Nadir al-'Asr Ustad Ahmad Mimar Lahauri Shahjhani: Architect of the Taj Mahal" printed in Lahore, no date.

274 Arif Chughtai, "Architect."

275 Interview with Dr. Brelvi, Professor of Urdu at Oriental College, Lahore, April 29, 1978. Dr. Brelvi translated the letter from Urdu into English as he read it to me and added that Chughtai said his ancestral family worked for the Mughals as architects. They migrated from Lahore to Delhi, to Agra and to Lucknow, Brelvi said. Chughtai told Brelvi he was writing a book on Mughal architecture and confided that "My younger brother, Dr. Abdullah Chaghatai has written so much on the subject, but our views differ greatly."

276 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

277 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

278 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

279 This painting (as noted by Susan Huntington) may have intended to show another subject. It is possible that it was not labeled and Arif Chughtai assumed or was led to believe it represented the architect presenting the plans for the Taj.

280 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

281 See note 257, p. 302.

282 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

283 Robert Skelton, The Indian Heritage "India in the Mughal Age," a catalogue for an exhibition at the Victoria

and Albert Museum during the Festival of India, April 21-August 22, 1982, p. 16.

283 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

284 See Gascoigne, portrait of Aurangzeb

285 The identification of this painting as Aurangzeb was based on stylistic comparison with Chughtai's depictions of other Mughal rulers. I have identified the female as Zebunissa because her long and checkered association with her father is emphasized by historians, eclipsing the importance of other women during his reign and because Chughtai had featured Zebunissa in other paintings, but has ignored the other women in Aurangzeb's family.

286 Jadunath Sakar, Studies in Mughal India (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1920), p. 89.

287 This painting is identified as a portrait of Zebunissa in the commentary for The Virtuous.

288 Khaled Ahmed, "World of the Mughals."

289 Descriptive Catalogue, British Empire Exhibition, The Indian Fine Arts Committee, 1924, I am grateful to Arif Chughtai for making this catalogue available to me.

290 Majumdar, VII, p. 165; also see pp. 162-165, 432-435 and 452-455.

291 British Empire Exhibition, Descriptive Catalogue pp. 4, 5.

292 Commentary for The Fragrance. An earlier version of this work is part of the collection of the Sri Jayachamarajendra Museum of Art in Mysore. There it has been titled Before the Quoran

293 Khan, Treasures, p. 34.

294 Khan, Treasures, p. 30.

295 Khan, Treasures, p. 30.

296 See Sylvia Crowe and Sheila Haywood, The Gardens of Mughal India (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972).

297 Crowe and Haywood, pp. 16-17

298 These are the three: The Mughal Princesses in Amle Chughtai; an earlier version of the same, entitled Two

Ladies in the Salar Jung in Hyderabad, India; and the untitled painting reproduced here.

299 This work belongs to a private collection in Lahore. The owner did not wish to be identified.

300 See Crowe and Haywood P. 152 for a similar fountain design at Shalimar Garden in Lahore.

301 Bagh means garden. Shalimar seems to be a popular or generic term. It was used for three gardens of Shah Jahan: one in Lahore, another in Srinigar, Kashmir, and a third at Delhi. According to Khan, Treasures p. 53, there is no conclusive definition for the meaning or origin of the word "Shalimar, which most probably means paddy field or abode of love or bliss."

302 Crowe and Haywood, p. 99 show that both types of spray were originally in use, but many (if not most) of the original fountains had to be repaired or replaced owing to vandalism from subsequent reigns.

303 Crowe and Haywood, p. 44.

304 Gascoigne, p. 137.

305 In mood and setting Wazir's Daughters is much like Daughter of the Haram, the title of the latter confirms the subject matter of this group. These two paintings are similar with the exception that Wazir's Daughters has a more detailed background and two women instead of one. Another painting from the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad entitled Princess fits into this group. The princess stands on a carpet under a pillared arbor in an enclosed terrace. A notable variation in this work is the falcon she holds. Charm of the East and Eve of the Future are nearly the same painting reversed. Each of these from Amle Chughtai shows a woman in profile situated in the center of the painting placed against a horizontal background. Eve is flanked by two potted plants and poses in front of a small painting of an elephant. Charm of the East faces right and stands in front of a shallow niche with two small bottles placed at shoulder height in the niche. There are several other paintings from private collections that fit in this group too, but since they are untitled and somewhat similar, it would be redundant to describe them.

306 Zenana means separate quarters for women within the house or palace.

307 The iconography of this painting indicated the artist may have meant to use 'bond' rather than 'bound' of

love. Another painting with two lovers, Radha and Krishna, in Chughtai's Indian Paintings is titled Bond of Love. However, as Dr. Susan Huntington suggested, it could refer to the 'boundary' or 'limit' of love.

308 The Bound of Love is reproduced in Amle Chughtai and the commentary quoted above accompanies it.

309 See p. 144 for a detailed explanation and source of the quotation.

310 It is important to the artist, according to the commentary, that the viewer recognize that "her posture and conduct produce a serious and profound sentiment."

311 Commentary Bound of Love

312 I have used "profane" as opposed to "religious," but this term is not intended to evoke a negative interpretation such as "defiled" or "unsanctified."

313 ~~Personal communication with Arif Chughtai, 1978.~~ Chughtai, himself, intimated that he is the story teller in the first page of "Arts and Aesthetics." Gleaned from the convoluted prose is his belief that "the painter is striving to make life eternal...[and] the Taj Mahal is a living product of such creative effort...The painter is...constantly engaged in the effort to fashion new 'koh-i-noors' and create new Taj Mahals..."

314 Approximately ten years elapsed between each painting. The first, Symbols, was done in 1927. The second version is in the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, India. The third and last version is reproduced in Amle Chughtai, but the location of the original is not certain. It is probably in the CMT.

315 Symbols had been reproduced in a journal or magazine, but I do not know which one because I photographed Symbols from Chughtai's scrapbook.

316 Portion of a letter from Iqbal to Abdullah Chaghatai: excerpted in "Chughtai and Iqbal," by Arif Chughtai, p. 4.

317 For an explanation of Chatterjee's Picture Albums see Survey of the Literature, pp. 3-4 and note 10, p. 8.

318 Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 4.

319 The commentary in Amle Chughtai dates this painting to 1927, adding that it received many gold medals and prizes. The art critics praised it and maintained

that it heralded a new era in Indian art, according to that same commentary.

320 Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 5.

321 Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 5.

322 Arif Chughtai, "Chughtai and Iqbal," p. 5. This is also the verse accompanying The Storyteller in Amle Chughtai, which is cited as belonging to Iqbal's Bandagi-nama, and the English translation is by Hadi Hussain.

323 Chughtai, "My Paintings."

324 See chapter III, Style, 1923-1927.

325 See chapter VII for a discussion of Chughtai's critics.

326 Except for the skin color of faces and hands, Chughtai used only green and shades of grey-blue in this painting. Even the white architecture is washed with a tint of grey.

327 Although I noticed no conformity to the wearing of green and black by women watching the parade, Chughtai may have intended to distinguish them as Shiites by assigning green and black costumes. In her book, Legacy of the Indus, p. 171, Samina Quraeshi describes the Muharram celebrations in Shah Jewna, a village in Pakistan near to the confluence of the Jhelum and Chenab Rivers. Their practices of celebrating Muharram are not particularly unusual only perhaps more colorful and energetic than most. She notes that the villagers wear black throughout the month of Muharram and that "for Sunnis...this is a quiet, home-centered affair. For the more ritual-loving Shias, the acts of mourning are an elaborate public ceremony that climaxes in the singular frenzy of the morning of Ashura---the tenth of Muharram."

328 Id literally means festival, and according to Rajput, p. 183, Id-ul-Fitr, which he refers to as "festival of thanksgiving," is simply called Id.. There are two Id celebrations; the second Id, Id-ul-Azha, coincides with the time of Hajj and has been somewhat obscured by the importance of the Hajj.

329 Rajput, p. 183, reminds readers that the Muslims observe the lunar calendar, where months begin and end with the appearance of the new moon; consequently, in some years there are thirty days of fasting and in others, only twenty-nine days.

330 Rajput, p. 182.

331 In an attempt to explain the function of Ramadan, Rajput, p. 183, compares the institution of fasting to that of spring house cleaning. "By rigid physical and mental discipline...controlling his diet and habits...it is considered to purify one's body and soul." He adds, "This festival has a religious character, having been initiated by the holy Prophet of Islam in the second year of the Hijra."

332 See Stuart Cary Welch, Persian Painting, p. 67, Plate 17, The Feast of 'Id Begins (c. 1527).

333 The 'Id Mood is reproduced in Muraqqa-i-Chughtai

334 Rajput, p. 183.

335 Rajput, p. 138.

336 Rajput, p. 157, explained that parents of the bride, particularly in rural areas, are expected to provide the parents of their son-in-law with a jahez (dowry) in keeping with their social and economic status. In recent years the government has limited the amount and recently has tried to outlaw jahez.

337 Rajput, p. 139.

338 While my information has been cited from Rajput's book, I was witness to most of the ceremonies he described. A Pakistani girl friend became engaged during my stay in Lahore. Her family kept me informed about the intricacies Rajput described and I was able to attend all but the betrothal. About two weeks before the nikha ceremony I was included in a family preview of the bride's new trousseau, which reminds me of Chughtai's painting.

339 With arranged marriage, the groom's parents meet the bride on several occasions: at first to evaluate her qualifications as a prospective daughter-in-law, and thereafter during the several festivities prior to the nikha ceremony. Traditionally the bride does not see or meet her future husband until the final ceremony of marriage.

340 Hamid, Pakistan Miscellany, p. 136.

341 Chughtai's daughter must have been married in the early 1970s, if not earlier. She had two sons, the elder I guessed to be at least 6 years old in 1978. The painting is of Chughtai's most mature style and could have been painted in the early 1970s.



342 Rajput, p. 170-171.

343 Rajput, p. 173-174.

344 Music with a strong, repetitive beat accompanied by ecstatic dance and elegies commemorating the martyrdom of Husain or praising the Prophet, Muhammad, is known as qawwali.

345 Rajput, p. 150.

346 The dancers are wearing Persian Safavid kulas beneath their turbans.

347 This photograph was taken from a reproduction in the CMT. A press release to Chughtai does not make it clear if the painting was a gift of the Pakistan government, the Pakistan Press or of Chughtai himself. The press release was included in a letter to Chughtai from Lalshah Bokhari, Embassy of Pakistan, The Hague, May 4, 1953, and states "The Pakistan Press Delegation, which is on a three week visit to this country, presented to Her Majesty Queen Juliana, your painting "The Village Girl" photographic reproduction of which has appeared in all important newspapers of this country."

348 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," p. While the College Girls dates to the early 1950s, Jalaluddin Ahmad's categorization of the older "traditional" artists in his 1952 Art in Pakistan publication infers the controversy existed then. See page ? Amjad Ali expressed the same concerns on the behalf of a certain part of the public who wanted instant modernization in his article "The Trial of Paint," p. 237.

349 Salim-ur Rahman, "The Solitary Vision," The Pakistan Times, no date or page. The author gave me a photocopy of this article, but did not save or remember the date or page number.

350 Manohar Kaul, Trends, p. 122.

351 Amjad Ali, "Trail of Paint," p. 237.

352 Agha Babur, "Whores and Nudes by Chughtai," an essay written for the author and received October 1978.

353 Agha Babur, "Whores"

354 Agha Babur, "Whores"

355 See Aranson, p. 24 for August Renoir's approach to painting women.

356 See discussion p. 264.

357 Mr. M. Nawaz of Karachi has a half figure portrait that depicts a woman trying to feed a parrot, and Mr. Gafoor of Karachi owns a half figure portrait of a lady in yellow with a parakeet next to her by its cage.

358 Cyrus Cowasjee, Karachi is the owner of a painting of a lady looking at a jewel, and the lady with the fan, while Oscar Moize Sheikh, Karachi owns the painting of the youth with a sycamore leaf.

359 These paintings may be works of the 1950s that Arif Chughtai claimed his father painted in quantity to sell in order to help finance Amle Chughtai.

360 Encyclopedia Britannica, III, (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1910), p. 845. The 1910 Britannica compilers, less informed than we are today, referred to the Bhils as "a savage forest dweller." It is also likely that British ethnocentric attitudes contributed to the deprecatory description.

361 Britannica, p. 845.

362 Herbert Risley, The People of India (1915, rpt., Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corp, 1969), among other positions, was director of ethnography for India, and a member of the anthropological institute of Great Britain and Ireland, which explains why he devoted the chapters of his book to physical types, social types, and caste with its various aspects and ramifications. His illustrations are lithographs taken from photographs by the British artist Sir Benjamin Simpson.

363 Risley, Plate XVI, A Group of Korwas.

364 Mulkul Dey, My Pilgrimage to Ajanta and Bagh (New York: George H. Doran co., 1925). Dey was a well-known Indian artist contemporary with Chughtai.

365 Dey, pp. 208-209.

366 Dey, pp. 209-210, recorded his companion's warning that "the Bhils are extremely dexterous with their bows, for, seeing a traveller coming along the road, they will let fly an arrow and cut off a nose or ear..."

367 Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 845.

368 In "My Paintings," Chughtai wrote that he traveled "to every nook and corner of the land of the five rivers"

but his Indian journeys centered on the cities and his Ajanta trip was not until 1935, at least ten years after he had completed this painting.

369 1973 Pakistan International Airlines calendar

370 Asad Kashmir is free Kashmir, the undisputed area that is aligned with Pakistan.

371 This is one of Chughtai's better known paintings because it has been published in at least two books and in the newspaper. It appears in Chughtai's Paintings with the title Tulip of Kashmir and in Art in Pakistan as Fragrance of the Valley, and without a title in "Chughtai and Shakir Ali," The Sun, Special Report III, p. v.

372 These four are: Son of the Soil and Under the Apple Tree in Amle Chughtai; A Kashmiri Boy in the State Archaeological Museum of Hyderabad; and Tulip of Kashmir in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Cowasjee.

373 Amle Chughtai commentary, Son of the Soil

374 Amle chughtai commentary, Under the Apple Tree

375 Crowe and Haywood, p. 46.

376 Verse by Iqbal in Amle Chughtai accompanying the painting Under the Apple Tree. According to Annmarie Schimmel, Gabriel's wing, p. 67, Kashmir and the tulip hold special significance for Iqbal and their unity in Chughtai's painting may be a special tribute. Iqbal was born in Kashmir and, according to Schimmel, p. 67, wrote some exquisite poems about springtime in his beloved Kashmir, yet he preferred, Schimmel contends, "one flower...the tulip...[which] is for him the symbol of the Ego yearning for manifestation."

377 Arnold, Painting in Islam, p. 96.

378 See S.C. Welch, pp. 96-97, Plate 33.

379 Khawaja Khurshid Anwar, "Music," Pakistan (London: Stacey International, n.d.), p. 257.

380 Anwar, p. 258.

381 I photographed six pigeon paintings and one etching with pigeons. Five of the six paintings were not titled but may be described as follows: Two black pigeons in the collection of Babur Ali of Lahore, two paintings with paired pigeons belong to the Punjab Arts Council in Lahore, one has been titled Two Pigeons; two white pigeons in the

collection of Dhumwai Dalal of Karachi; two paired pigeons in the collection of Mrs. Marian Habib of Karachi, and a reproduction of an early paired pigeon painting done in the Bengal School technique in the collection of the CMT. The National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi has a version of the two white pigeons almost identical to the work owned by the Punjab Arts Council in Lahore. The print is also a version of the Punjab Arts Council, Lahore painting, Two Pigeons.

382 Large wire cages and roosting perches are a common sight on roof tops in present-day Pakistan as they must have been in previous eras. The Leadership is a Chughtai painting reproduced in Amle Chughtai that shows pigeons lined up on a perch.

383 This was a passing remark in a conversation that I did not record. I do not remember who related the information, and did not think it important enough at the time to have it corroborated, but I do not doubt its authenticity.

384 See Gasciogne, p. 30, Plate 5. Among the Great Mughals, emperor Jahangir is singled out for his interest in pictorially recording the flora and fauna of India.

385 Figure 2 is entitled Two Pigeons and is from the Punjab Arts Council, Lahore. Figure 3 is a print in the collection of the CMT.

386 Chughtai, "My Paintings," n.p.

387 For etchings, see Figs. 255 and 257. The black and white design is reproduced in Naqsha-i-Chughtai.

388 Another (probably earlier) version of The Still Life was reproduced in the 1952 Exhibition catalogue of the Punjab University Annual Exhibition, and still another version was reproduced in a Chughtai portfolio of paintings published by the National Bank of Pakistan in 1968.

389 Spring Flowers is part of the collection of the Pakistan Council of Arts, Karachi, and has been reproduced in Chughtai's Paintings.

## TECHNIQUE AND USE OF COLOR

The intricacies of Chughtai's technique, his *modus operandi*, can only be speculated upon at this time. Close friends of the artist may have watched him paint, but N. D. Taseer was the only friend to write anything substantive on Chughtai's technique. Since his closest friends were not painters, but poets and literati, they were less interested in his manner of working than in the final product. Ghulam Abbas (a highly respected short story writer) recalled early afternoon get together<sup>s</sup> with Taseer at Chughtai's home in the mid 1920s.

I first met Abdur Rahman Chughtai in 1924 or 1925...I was sort of unemployed. Taseer, my friend, had passed his M.A. and was doing nothing. So now and then we went in the early afternoon to Chughtai's place in Koocha Chabuk Sawaran. Abdur Rahman would come down to the ground floor with his brushes and paints and unfinished paintings. He would sit on a chair and talked to us and painted both at the same time.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently these afternoon sessions were limited to a few close friends and pertain only to the early years of Chughtai's career. Interviews with other friends and acquaintances of the artist indicate that he restricted the painting activity to his upstairs studio. In 1946 Chughtai gave a painting demonstration for students in Hyderabad, India,<sup>2</sup> that differed little from the famous wash technique of Abanindranath Tagore, but he may have withheld the nuances of his personal technique that he claimed to have spent a lifetime perfecting.

An informant, who wished to remain anonymous, told me that Chughtai had at least one apprentice (he thought there were several), whose story he recounted for me. In short, the parents of the apprentice were not convinced that their son was learning craftsmanship or technique so they removed him from his apprenticeship after some months. My informant mentioned no names. In the 1920s and early 1930s Chughtai may have worked with several local artists but none were still living to grant me an interview in 1979. The artist's brother, Abdur Rahim, and Rahim's son, Abdul Waheed are well acquainted with Chughtai's technique. Abdur Rahim painted and exhibited in the 1920s and 1930s using the pseudonym, Ashgar. His style and technique were nearly indistinguishable from that of his brother, Abdur

Rahman. I met Abdur Rahim and his son at the CMT in Lahore and had an opportunity to speak briefly with Abdul Waheed on several occasions, but not long after I learned that he had studied painting for a time (either under his father or under Abdur Rahman), Abdul Waheed left for England, where he was then living. I was never invited to interview Abdur Rahim and sensed that he was not amenable to an interview. By the time I discovered that Ashgar was actually Abdur Rahim, he had had a stroke and had been hospitalized. Due to his poor health, I was not able to arrange a meeting with him during the remainder of my stay in Pakistan.

Arif chughtai either was unfamiliar with his father's technique or wished to keep it a secret. When I pressed him on the topic, he hedged by making an analogy with the techniques of Mughal artists, whom, Arif contended, jealously guarded their knowledge and refused to share it with anyone, that being the key to their lively-hood and fame.<sup>3</sup> Chughtai's other brother, Abdullah, reluctantly granted me an interview, and offered little new information. In his essay for the Chughtai commemorative volume, however, he had this to say about Chughtai's technique: "He worked as a painter for nearly sixty years, yet no one can describe, apart from the members of his family, his method of work."<sup>4</sup>

#### DRAWING

Chughtai wrote very little about his method of painting and critics only guessed at his technique. However, one thing can be said with certainty, Chughtai was an accomplished draftsman. This fact is borne out by his etchings as well as his numerous drawings and paintings. About his drawing, Chughtai wrote:

When the mood is on me, I take up pencil and paper and literally complete scores of drawings in one sitting. I have such mastery of drawing that I never use an eraser. The secret of my success is my mastery of drawing. No one can imagine the hard work I have put in, learning to draw.<sup>5</sup>

An early sketch done around 1920 in the collection of the CMT (Fig. 232) gives some indication of the artist's approach, and compared with later examples, an idea of his development as a draftsman. The background figure (upper center) is blocked out with loose repetitive strokes in a continuous-line technique. The facial features and the turban of the old man reveal a degree of competence that indicated the artist was a skilled draftsman by the 1920s. Even in this early sketch, the quality of line is sensitive and expressive. The small, awkwardly drawn hands of the

unfinished figure and the raspy scribbles of the old man's sleeves are overcome in later drawings.

A playful pen and ink drawing (also from the CMT) of faces and a female nude (Fig. 233) reveal the hand of a confident draftsman. These and other sketches suggest he favored a combination of contour and continuous-line technique.<sup>6</sup> A light pencil line roughly following the body of the female indicated that Chughtai blocked out his figure first, but the pencil line is not sketchy and seems to have been only a guide for proportion and size. Another example from the CMT of two birds (Fig. 234) is informative in pointing out Chughtai's assurance with pen and ink and also his awareness of far eastern motifs noted in the leaves of bamboo.

No doubt Chughtai's own apprenticeship as a naqash (one who draws floral and geometric designs) under his uncle at Wazir Khan Mosque, and his draftsmanship training at the Mayo School of Art, contributed to his skill and complemented his preference for intricate designs, arabesques and floral designs in the manner of Art Nouveau.<sup>7</sup> Colored outline drawings typify Chughtai's art from the 1920s through the 1930s as much as his watercolors. See Figs. 46, 47, 48, 49. The colored line technique accented with light washes over a few objects was not new in the subcontinent. It was an art form used by Persian and, with some variation, by Mughal artists. Rizza-i-Abassi, a sixteenth century Persian artist (several times mentioned by Chughtai in his writings) brought the technique to its highest form and may be the inspiration for this style in Chughtai's art. Rizza's technique using varying colored lines and light washes in selected areas is closer to Chughtai's approach than the line drawings of the Mughals.<sup>8</sup>

One of Chughtai's chroniclers traced Chughtai's line to the calligraphic tradition of Islam.<sup>9</sup> I do not see any resemblance. His line is more of a wire line, modulating dark to light, but it does not emphasize the thick and thin quality of Arabic or Persian script. As Chughtai matured artistically, he relied less upon line as a dominant feature of his paintings. First he began by simplifying his drawings. This can be noted by comparing two outline drawings: Dancing Stars (Fig. 36) of about 1924 is a profusion of lines, whereas This End (Fig. 48) of about 1932 shows an economy of line. He never entirely abandoned the outline technique but it appears less frequently after the 1930s. By the 1940s he had perfected a type of painted drawing. In Leila With a Camel (Fig. 93) color defines the forms. Lines add a richness to the composition, but this painting would survive as a successful watercolor even if

the lines were eliminated. Chughtai never abandoned line, but his later paintings rely as much on color to define and shape his forms as on line.

## PAINTING

Although Chughtai vehemently denied it, his earliest paintings made use of a technique that is indistinguishable from that used by the Bengal School artists. According to Jaya Appasamy and Ratan Parimoo, the Bengal School wash technique was invented by Abanindranath Tagore. Both authors agree on the procedure and its inspirational inception. Referring to the visit of two Japanese artists, Hishida and Taikan, to the Tagore residence in Calcutta sometime around 1902-1905, Parimoo determined "It was after watching Taikan at work that inspired Abanindranath (as he confessed later) to evolve his famous 'wash-technique.'<sup>10</sup> Because this technique accounts for some of the far eastern influence in the Bengal School art and is basic to Chughtai's early work, it is necessary to describe Tagore's procedure in detail as explained by Jaya Appasamy in Abanindranath Tagore and the Art of His times.

The style he created found its appropriate language in two major techniques. The first of these was his invention and is generally called 'the wash'. (It is important to remember that traditional painting in India is in tempera, while the arrival of the British there had spread an interest in watercolour). Abanindranath's 'wash' is a kind of water colour and the choice of this medium is in itself significant. In wash, a drawing is first made in pencil on some sturdy paper and the spaces and images are painted mostly with transparent colour; the colours are then allowed to dry. The entire paper is then dipped into a basin of water and taken out and dried; the colour on it is now fixed (i.e., naturally). After this other layers of colour are applied; these may be the same or different from the previous ones but are usually transparent washes. The dip is repeated. This process can be continued indefinitely till the desired depth of colour is reached. The effect of the wash is to give a certain haze and paradoxically the haze contributes a sense of space to the picture. Lastly finishing is added with a heightened details, highlights, or even gold. The finishing may be either with opaque or transparent colour. In general the quality of the picture is flat, though plasticity and spatial recession can be rendered through the drawing and can be reinforced by the wash. The



nuances of colour, the drawing and the composition enhance and carry out the major chords set primarily by the colour harmonies ... The natural tendency of the wash is toward the merging of colour brought about by the superimposition of layers of washes. The unimportant parts of the pictures often get lost in obscurity or shadows (darker areas) lending an air of mystery. The wash technique also lends itself to the depiction of atmosphere or of space, the figures seem bathed in a luminous and timeless ambient.<sup>11</sup>

While the primary inspiration for this process has been the influence of Japanese wash, it is well to remember that Abanindranath studied a variety of painting media and techniques under two European artists. Consequently, the results of the technique and the procedure itself must have been unconsciously influenced by his background and training.

It also appears that shortly after its inception, Tagore's original wash technique was altered by substituting color tinted washes for the clear water dips. Paintings by Sarada Ukil (Fig. 238), Charuchandra Roy (Fig. 25), and several other Bengal School artists are muted by an overall film that graduates from red to purple. Often these paintings focus on a face or figure that is highlighted in an orange glow. This could have been Chughtai's innovation, but it seems unlikely since Bengal School paintings reproduced in Modern Review and Chatterjee's Picture Albums by 1918 seem to make use of this technique. Ideas spread rapidly among Tagore's students in Bengal and reached the Punjab more rapidly than was true of the reverse.

The procedure to achieve these results was demonstrated by Dr. Y. K. Bhat in a course on Indian painting at the Ohio State University in 1976.<sup>12</sup> Bhat called the process "the Bengal School technique" and began by covering the paper surface with two thin coats of white tempera (he used rice paper glued to butcher paper). After the tempera dried he sketched a landscape with figures in pencil and painted in the background using broad washes of transparent watercolor. When the washes had dried he covered the entire work with a tint of yellow and continued painting landscape and figures after the yellow wash had dried. Before the work was finished he had added several more overall washes---a red tint and a blue tint. At the end he painted in details of the figures and landscape.

As I have shown in Chapter III, The First Period: 1918-1922, Chughtai's paintings of the 1920s look like those of

several Tagore students. It is possible that he learned the technique from Samenendranath Gupta, one of Abanindranath's primary exponents, who was vice principal at the Mayo School of Art during the time Chughtai was a student and later employed there. See my discussion pp. 40-41. Sometime during the 1930s, Chughtai discontinued the hazy effect and his paintings began to resemble traditional (western) watercolor techniques. However, as late as 1947, Chughtai gave a painting demonstration for students at the Hyderabad (India) Fine Arts College that was based on the technique of tinted washes over the entire painting. Fremi Brehmshah was present and remembered that before he began he recommended whartman paper; then she described his procedure:

He dipped the paper in clear water; it stretched; he taped it to the board and pushed the excess water out of the crevices. When it was flat and just about dry, he took white color (windsor-newton artists' quality) mixed with lots of water and applied it as a ground, he washed in one direction, let it dry and crossed the first coat with a second wash and let that dry. Then he drew a figure with pencil and filled in the areas with flat colors. He let it dry, put a wash over the whole painting with a very dilute solution of transparent color. He only used one wash but said several could be used. He suggested staying with a certain tonal quality if more than one wash is used. It took him several hours for the demonstration and at the end he did the outlines.<sup>13</sup>

Miss Brehmshah's account differs little from Appasamy's description of Tagore's procedure and is like Bhat's demonstration in the use of tinted overlay washes with a tempera undercoat. Nevertheless, Chughtai insisted "My technique; colour-mixing, composition and drawing are very much my own. I have spent a life-time perfecting them."<sup>14</sup> He was so adamant in his resistance to being linked with the Bengal School that he repeated the refutation in the next paragraph. "To say as some people do, that I use a rather common wash technique is the height of conceitedness and ignorance. They should know that this wash technique is my innovation. It has not been borrowed from someone, I alone have perfected it after years of trial and error and sheer hard work."<sup>15</sup>

It is conceivable that Chughtai developed a unique technique that has yet to be revealed, but what has been said or written of his technique to date is not significantly different from the process described by Appasamy or Bhat. In 1950 Chughtai's friend, N.D. Taseer,

documented some notes on Chughtai's procedure. Taseer, a respected author, "was not only well-versed in the literature of the East and the West," according to Ghulam Abbas, "but he had also made a deep study of western art."<sup>16</sup> Taseer defended Chughtai's allegation of originality in reference to the frequent washes (here termed china glazes) but it is not specified if these are tinted or clear water washes.

Chughtai has transformed the Oriental water-colour into tempera and thus brought greater weight and impact to the medium. The creative conception is spontaneous. There is no going back, no improvisation, as in oils. The nuclear plan of modelling and composition, as well as the whole course of linear design is pre-ordained. The picture is completely planned ahead and does not grow under the brush. But the carefully prepared white gesso ground subdues the sumi outline and makes pliable variations possible, and as the China glazes are applied one above the other the lines begin to achieve depth. Colour seems to come from inside and has an unusual quality of resonance. The frequent washes, a peculiar technique of Chughtai, bring out granular areas of pigment which lend body to plastic modelling. And yet the flow and ease of linear movement, the dexterity of gradations and the accents of hues do not lose their intensity. This unique combination of power and flexibility is particularly visible in Chughtai's portraits a genre which was almost completely neglected after the heyday of Mughal painting.<sup>17</sup>

Taseer may have based this report on recollection from the mid 1920s when he watched Chughtai paint at the artist's home. There is no doubt that by 1950 Chughtai's style was very different from the earlier Bengal School style. In another statement, Chughtai declared, "My technique, my composition, my art of colour-mixing are all of a classic type."<sup>18</sup> The artist does not explain what he meant by "a classic type", but indeed his mature paintings appear to be based on standard western watercolor techniques. Certainly he had discontinued the tinted overlay washes by 1950 (probably twenty years earlier), but he may have retained the occasional clear water baths to fix the paint upon the paper and give a soft appearance and harmonious tone to the entire surface. This could account for his statement that:

There are people who think that the brightness, grace and distinctiveness of my colours is due to some special process which I have evolved. They

think I make my own colors. In fact I use imported colours and imported paper, but my technique changes their complexion. I claim that if you were to immerse my paintings in water and let them lie there for a long time even then, when you take them out, you will find the colours as bright and fast as ever.<sup>19</sup>

Though Chughtai did not want to be a follower, he did want to be identified as Eastern. He wrote that he chose watercolor, not because it was the popular medium of the day, but "because oriental artists have always preferred to use watercolour."<sup>20</sup> We must suppose he meant "watercolor" in its broadest context as opposed to oil based mediums because Chughtai's watercolors are closer to the western tradition of aquarelle than the opaque tempera paintings of the Rajputs and Mughals. He used flat washes, graduated washes, and overpainting, and achieved a mottled effect from juxtaposing wet colors, but the overall effect is not that of a typical European watercolor. His paintings do not have the same thin, translucent quality of European aquarelle. The white tempera undercoat may account for the opacity in Chughtai's work that belies his use of transparent colors. Kashmira Singh posited the speculation that there is "a prevalent belief that his watercolour paintings are done with air-brush."<sup>21</sup> Frami Brehmenshah did not think this was true, but an artist from Sargoda, Pakistan, who wished to remain anonymous, claimed to have worked with Chughtai and watched him use the air-brush. This man believed that he was the only artist (other than Chughtai's brother and nephew) to watch Chughtai work in his mature technique. He added that the family desired to keep Chughtai's technique a secret and "are exceedingly protective of it."<sup>22</sup> He described Chughtai's manner of working in the following way:

Using spray guns (the first he [Chughtai] made himself, then he had others made copying the original) he sprayed a foundation coat over the paper in a light tone. He worked from light to dark building up layers starting with yellow, then orange, light green, and finally darker values. At the critical point he made use of stencils to avoid overlapping into other areas of different hues. My informant claimed that Chughtai devised a liquid solution that would allow him to dilute areas of the sprayed sections. By brushing it on he could achieve gradations in the sprayed areas. Some areas were painted in after spraying using brushes and a standard watercolor technique and details were added at the end---fine lines being drawn with pen. Kashmira Singh disagreed with the use of pen: "Some people say, that Chughtai's colour 'outlines' are executed with metal point, in fact these outlines are made with brush alone."<sup>23</sup>

A

It is not inconceivable that Chughtai made use of air-brush. The evenness of the flow of color in some of Chughtai's washes is clearly remarkable and the preplanned compositions (noted by Taseer) contribute to the effective use of air-brush. Nevertheless, Chughtai's post Bengal style watercolor paintings encompass four basic traditional western approaches to handling the flow of pigment on paper. These are: graded washes, flat washes, overpainting, and juxtaposing wet colors. Some paintings such as Sharfunissa (Fig. 235) use all four methods, others use one or any combination of two or more. Graded washes are most often used for the sky and large areas of background such as the terrace Sharfunissa sits upon. Graded washes may be one hue moving from light to dark. For example, a sky may be a shade of prussian blue at the top and a tint of that same hue where the sky meets the horizon. Graded washes sometimes change in hue as well as value, or they may change in hue but not in value. For example, a sky may be dark blue at the top and gradually become light yellow near the horizon. This is the case in The Fragrance (Fig. 198). In others a wall may change from brown to orange while the relative value stays the same. Soz o Sauz (Fig. 72) is an example for this.

Flat washes and overpainting: Flat washes may define large areas or small shapes of design such as the pillow and vertical panel behind the seated Sharfunissa. Both graded washes and flat washes may be embellished with linear designs and overpainting to create depth. Sharfunissa's red dress appears to be a flat wash that was overpainted with darker tones to define the vest and the folds in the skirt. Darker red lines were added to emphasize the folds of the skirt after the washes had dried. Her turban may have been a graded wash---darker at the top, lighter near the forehead---that received the linear decoration after the wash had dried.

Juxtaposition of wet colors of different hues creates a mottled effect that is most prevalent in Chughtai's landscapes. The trees in the background of the Sharfunissa painting are an example. Chughtai was such a master of this technique that he could control the bleeding from one color to the next. His varying hues juxtapose and blend at the edges but seldom bleed into one another. His effect is mottled but never muddy.

## COLOR

Chughtai's skill as a draftsman and his dynamic use of color are the two qualities most often mentioned by his chroniclers. Some say he favors yellow, others say red or blue. It is not so much predilection for one color over another as using the appropriate hues to establish a mood

or convey a concept that characterize Chughtai's style, however, color has emotional and symbolic qualities and Chughtai seems to have had an innate understanding of how to apply this basic concept.

Some of his paintings are low key like Aurangzeb and Zebunissa (fig. 194) or nearly monochromatic like The Three Monks (Fig. 165). In these two works the subject matter demanded a low key approach. He frequently makes use of complementary colors to create a contrast and perhaps to act symbolically. In Temptation (Fig. 167), he plays green against red. Red symbolizes the passion and lust while green---the representative color of Islam---represents piety. Red is hot, the fire of passion; green is cool, the antidote of burning lust. In Charm of the Valley Krishna succumbed to the powers of love and Chughtai clothed him in purple. Purple is the complement and direct opposite of Krishna's usually yellow colored dhoti. In this same painting Radha flaunts her beauty and thus is wrapped in a yellow scarf and red skirt.

In Chughtai's paintings color may be used emphatically. The background in Leila (Fig. 137) is a yellow-ochre color and the sky a hazy reddish hue to suggest the heat of the desert. If color is used symbolically, it may be culturally or historically established or a personal convention. Red suggests passion, love, or marriage in a number of Chughtai's paintings. Indian miniatures made use of red to symbolize passion and Indo-Muslim brides wear red and orange for their bridal costume. Because the Abbasids wore black as an expression of their sobriety and propriety, Chughtai provided the Abbasid Queen, Zabeda Khatoon (fig. 175), with a black cloak. It is not easy to pin down colors that may function symbolically in the personal idiom of the artist, but repetition of a color in a similar context is a clue. Green clothing almost certainly represents piety and spirituality of the wearer. It has an historical basis as the accepted color of the Prophet Mohammed's mantle and as the symbolic color of Islam, but to my knowledge was not used symbolically by Arabic, Persian, Mughal, or any other Muslim artists. For this reason I would classify green as a color imparting personal symbolism of the artist. In most cases a red book is meant to be the Quran. Quran stands are generally red as well in Chughtai's paintings. There are red Quran stands in Jahanara at the Taj (Fig. 190), in Aurangzeb (Fig. 193), and in The Still Life (Fig. 230). Aurangzeb, who was dedicated to reading the Quran, is shown holding a red book, certainly the Quran, but Sharfunissa (in the painting of the same title) holds a blue-colored book (Fig. 235). It may have been intended to represent a book of her own writing, but probably blue was used to offset the preponderant use of red in the tree and scarf. There may

be exceptions in Chughtai's personal color symbolism depending on the context. I believe that Zebunissa is reading her own poetry even though the book she holds has a red cover. More likely, however, Aurangzeb and Zebunissa is an early work and Chughtai's color vocabulary and symbolism does not appear to have been established until the 1940s. As his style and subject matter matured so did his color idiom.

#### SUMMARY

Though Chughtai evolved a personal style in watercolor, his results appear to be based on traditional European watercolor techniques. His early paintings are nearly indistinguishable from those of the Bengal School, suggesting Chughtai followed their approach in technique. When Chughtai abandoned the frequent overall tinted washes, he may have still retained clear water baths over the painting. A white tempera ground and clear water washes give his work an overall evenness and degree of opacity that distinguished his work from traditional western watercolor. Some critics suggest he achieved the effect of overall smoothness through the use of air brush, but even if this were true, its use would have been limited. Most of his paintings incorporate several well-known techniques such a juxtaposing wet next to wet, or overpainting intricate designs that would preclude the use of air brush.

While parts of any given Chughtai painting look loose and spontaneous, the composition was always carefully worked out beforehand. he may have made precise master drawings, transferred the outlines to watercolor paper and filed the drawings for possible further use. This is suggested by the almost exact duplications of various watercolors. Draftsmanship was a skill that Chughtai consciously and energetically developed and perfected, whereas the creative and skillful use of color appears to have been an innate talent with the artist.

#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 Abbas and Hamid, "Some reminiscences"
- 2 See pp. 56-58.
- 3 Conversation with Arif Chughtai, March 1978, Lahore
- 4 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"
- 5 Chughtai, "My Paintings"
- 6 For clarification of contour, continuous-line drawing, see Kimon Nicholides, The Natural Way to Draw (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1941)
- 7 For a discussion on the type of training Chughtai might have received at the Mayo School of Art, see Lionel Heath, "The Mayo School of Arts, Lahore," Indian Arts and Letters, V, No. 1 (1931), and Abdullah Chaghatai, A Century of Painting in the Punjab: 1849-1947 (Lahore: Kitab Khana-I-Nauras, 1961).
- 8 Compare Rizza-i-Abassi's drawing in E. Blocket, Musulman Painting XIIth-XVIIth Century, (N.Y.: 1929 rpt., Hacker Art Books Inc., 1975), Plate C>VII, with Jahangir Shooting in Roopa Lekha, 7 & 8, 1930-1932, n.p. Line drawings by Mughal artists were generally concentrated on the borders of their paintings.
- 9 Zaki, "Aspects of Chughtai," p. 7.
- 10 Parimoo, p. 59, explained that Taikan demonstrated Japanese paintings techniques for the Tagores, and that "These demonstrations and the prints left over by Okakura were their first direct contact with Japanese art and served as eye-openers to its beauty."
- 11 Appasamy, pp. 17-18. Parimoo, p. 59, quoted Tagore on the influence of Japanese procedure: "At a particular stage of the picture he (Taikan) would go over it with a flat brush dipped in water, I (Tagore) gave the whole picture a bath and discovered the effect to be quite pleasing."
- 12 Bhat was an art education specialist on a fulbright grant to the Ohio State University to complete his PhD. I,



along with other students in this class, practiced this technique and produced several completed paintings.

13 Interview with Fremi Brehmshah, Jan. 16, 1979, Hyderabad, India.

14 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

15 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

16 Abbas and Hamid, "Some Reminiscences"

17 N. D. Taseer, Introduction, Chughtai Exhibition Dec. 11, 1949-Dec.11, 1950, catalogue and show sponsored by Pakistan Arts Council, Karachi

18 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

19 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

20 Chughtai, "My Paintings"

21 Singh, Introduction, p. 16.

22 Interview with artist from Sargoda, April 24, 1978, Lahore. My informant was extremely hesitant about divulging the above information and certain aspects were not fully or clearly explained. This was partly because the Sargoda artist spoke no English and we had to make use of a mutual friend as translator who knew nothing about painting. I was skeptical about the authenticity of my informant's information but he provided me with some little-known facts on Chughtai (later corroborated) so that I was less ready to dismiss his contribution. He discussed Chughtai's humble origins, stating that his grandfather was a "raj mason," (one who did plaster designs on walls and ceilings and brick work for the Raj) not a well-known architect. He believed Chughtai was influenced by his grandfather's work. My informant also stated that Chughtai had been a drawing student at the Mayo School of Art and became a drawing instructor there for a short time. He claimed that Chughtai often dated his paintings behind the work. Since all but one painting I saw were framed and backed, I could not verify the claim. The one painting I looked at behind had no date.

23 Sing, Introduction, p. 16.

## ETCHINGS

Although Chughtai's fame owes primarily to his appeal and voluminous output as a painter, his skill and creativity as a printmaker are widely acknowledged. Little has been written in depth about Chughtai's prints, but this is no indication that they lack in popularity with the public. An unnamed staff reporter for the Morning News, cynical about Chughtai's fame as a painter, praised the artist's etchings in a 1972 exhibition review.

The most pleasing thing about Chughtai is his etchings, specimen of superb craftsmanship, fantastically mobile lines and judicious balancing...And considering the price tag, these etchings are going to be the best art buy of the year...Even at the preview held on Thursday, most of the etchings displayed sold-out ribbons.<sup>1</sup>

In a 1959 exhibition catalog, art critic Malik Shams, attributed Chughtai's success in etching to his mastery of line and versatility in personalizing a foreign technique.

His lineal genius and skill finds remarkable expression in his etchings. Etching is a purely graphic art to be executed through line alone. And Chughtai commands a mastery of line. Here is an inseparable alliance between the master and the medium. No one can, perhaps exploit more fully the potentialities of the medium of etching than the mind and hand of Chughtai. To the Westerners, whose technique he has borrowed, but made quite his own, he would seem to be a born etcher.<sup>2</sup>

I cannot attest to the popularity of Chughtai's prints in the west, but they are to be found in private collections, museums and art galleries in Pakistan. Apparently Chughtai was as serious about etching as he was about painting. Shams noted that Chughtai wanted to bring out "a survey album of his works comprising more than five hundred paintings...and about three hundred etchings."<sup>3</sup> Certainly these etchings were a stable source of income and new editions of old plates may have been printed from time to time as demand dictated.<sup>4</sup> It is my understanding from

conversations with Arif Chughtai that the artist was not in the habit of destroying the metal plates. Neither did Chughtai include edition numbers on his prints. However, western standards in printmaking could hardly be expected to apply in Pakistan where so few artists practised the art.<sup>5</sup> For this reason journalists and most art critics in Pakistan had little first-hand experience from which to discuss Chughtai's prints in detail. Furthermore, all his prints are black and white, and many seem obscure and mysterious in subject matter. It was much easier for the critics to expound on color and subject matter in his paintings than discuss his elusive, monochromatic etchings.<sup>6</sup>

There are no references to suggest that Chughtai began etching before he studied that media under private tutelage in London in 1932; however, he must have been introduced to the process during his student or lectureship days at the Mayo School of Art (c.1913-1924). S.N. Gupta, then vice principal of the Mayo School of Art, had been exploring the medium of etching and one of his prints (c.1915-1925) is illustrated in the National College of Art, Lahore Centenary Catalogue; 1875-1975. Chughtai was admitted to the School of Photo Engraving in London for the term which began Sept. 3, 1937 and extended until Easter, 1937. If he studied longer, there is no record to confirm it.<sup>7</sup>

When Chughtai returned from Europe, he set up a press and devoted great attention and time to etching and aquatint.<sup>8</sup> Arif Chughtai mentioned copper plates, but of his technique I learned nothing. He made new plates reworking previous themes, just as he did with his watercolors, and apparently he ran new editions from time to time when certain prints sold out. Most of his prints are signed in pencil in English on the left under the print and titled on the right also in pencil in English, but I have not seen any with individual print or edition numbers or a date.

With the exception of the first two examples in this chapter, the present state of research does not suffice for a stylistic or chronological evaluation of Chughtai's etchings and aquatints. The examples in this chapter have been loosely grouped by subject matter, and for each print an attempt has been made to explain the content as it relates to Chughtai personally or his cultural milieu. Where composition was a distinguishing feature of the print, I have made appropriate comments. The prints are grouped as follows: birds, a fishing scene, peasant laborers, lovers, interiors in a mosque, flowers in a container, animals, women, and undetermined subjects.

An etching entitled Mujahid (Fig. 236) was reproduced in Nargis, a Lahore based journal of art and literature.<sup>9</sup> A later version was published in Amle Chughtai with the title His own Passion (Fig. 237). The compositional changes are minor. Chughtai pulled the figure closer to the viewer, thus eliminating some of the space around the figure, and added a halo and lines in the background for texture. The body of the mujahid stands out more clearly in the later version due to the greater background texture and darker wooden railing. The lines of his upper torso and those delineating the features of his face, hair, and beard are sharper and more defined in the second version. In my opinion, the composition of His own Passion is an improvement over Mujahid, and the lines of the upper body, now precise and pristine, reveal a confidence superior to that of the earlier version.

Another set of etchings from the CMT provides evidence for the development of style and may be among his earliest etchings. Peer Obeidy claimed that Under the Arch "was his [Chughtai's] first attempt [at etching] and in its third state it was a marvel."<sup>10</sup> Only one of the pair is signed and titled. The titled etching, Under the Arch (Fig. 238), seems to me to be the more recent of the two. That it is signed and titled suggests a certain conformity the other (Fig. 239) lacks. The signed version is a tighter work and looks better planned compositionally. The full-bodied figures and the costume of the youth (detail Fig. 240) find counterparts in Chughtai's paintings from the 1940s or later. See (Fig. 88) The Poet, (Fig. 192) Aurangzeb and (Fig. 108) from the Safar illustrations. The style of the old man's face, beard and walking stick is very close to those of the old man in Safar (Fig. 97). The other example (Fig. 239) shows a looseness that suggests Chughtai may have executed this print before he tightened up his watercolor technique in the mid 1930s.

I suggest the unsigned version was done before or immediately after his first trip to Europe (1932) and the signed etching done after the second trip (1936). Chughtai collected several Rembrandt prints and, according to Arif Chughtai, greatly admired Rembrandt's technique.<sup>11</sup> Abdullah wrote that Chughtai made a special study of Rembrandt and even went to Holland to see Rembrandt's house and his works during his second trip to Europe.<sup>12</sup> In my opinion, the signed etching more closely resembles Rembrandt's style than the unsigned version. The concentration of lines form patterns and create nuances of value, an effect not realized in figure 239. The linear quality of figure 238 is more refined than that of figure 239 and may have evolved after a careful study of Rembrandt's etchings.

Some of Chughtai's prints are complex, nearly filling the picture plane with line, shape, and texture, such as Under the Arch (Fig. 238). Others are simply likear outlines or sparse compositions like Morning Flight (Fig. 241). The rectangular grid and horizontal perch supporting an assortment of pigeons create a geometric pattern against the empty background. Morning Flight is a group portrait of pigeons, a theme that seems to be an extension of his paired pigeon paintings discussed in chapter IV, pp.274-75.

Another print that includes birds, In the Rain (Fig. 242), is a composition of movement and force. Wild birds in a river landscape are taking flight to escape the torrent. A wall of rain is about to inundate the landscape. It comes forcefully and unexpectedly---typical of the periodic monsoons experienced in Pakistan as well as in India. Feather-like, crescent-shaped bushes blow in the wind and repeat the graceful curving arc of the bird's wings. In comparison with In the Rain, Morning Flight (a domestic scene of tame birds) is static with lighter lines and less jagged forms. There is less tension in Morning Flight than in In the Rain.

The Pet Bird (Fig. 243) is similar to the two previous etchings only because all three focus on fowl. The bird has been reduced to geometric shapes to create an abstract image that dominates the composition. Circles, triangles, and arcs are repeated in the forms of the bird, the branch, and the bowl to produce a rhythm and render the negative space as important as the image.

Far Eastern style and motifs are manifest in some of his prints. A bird perched amid flowering branches in the aquatint Spring Breezes (Fig. 244) is undeniably reminiscent of Chinese and Japanese flower and bird painting. Japanese painting and prints, however, seem to have appealed to Chughtai as a source more than Chinese examples. Hiroshigi's print Bird in a Cherry Tree (Fig. 67) along with several other Japanese two dimensional works of art were reproduced in Caravan, 1934 (Chughtai's own journal).

Fishing Day (Fig. 245) has an oriental flavor too, and even with the recession into space, it maintains a vertical perspective not unlike far Eastern painting. Chughtai was fond of fishing. It may have been one of his favorite outdoor diversions. Perhaps, like many Chinese landscape paintings, this is a memory of a particular place. Ghulam Abbas remarked to Agha Hamid that there were times Chughtai would not come out of his house for months on end. But "occasionally he went to fish at Degh Nullah with his brothers and relatives."<sup>13</sup> Sometimes Ghulam Abbas went along too and everyone had a good time.<sup>14</sup> This is a

happy etching with a touch of humor. It is light and bouncy; the trees curve across the river and lead the eye up the hill. All the fishermen are active, and the nearest angler seems to have made a catch. He clasps his right hand to the side of his head in a gesture of astonishment.

Kashmiri Woodcutter (Fig. 246) contrasts vividly with the lighthearted, happy motif of Fishing Day. Chughtai's empathy for the peasants of Kashmir, already discussed in light of his paintings (~~see chapter pp.~~), is even more poignant in this etching. The scantily clad laborer bends with the burden of his load, his head hangs over in utter despair. The landscape is dry and foreboding. Gnarled trees with leafless branches fill the distant background, repeating the shape and texture of the woodcutter and his bundle.

Golf Ground (Fig. 247) and The Carpet Seller (Fig. 248) are ambitious etchings in the same mode as Kashmiri Woodcutter. These two also depict the poor laboring-class who must endure continual physical stress as the mainstay of their survival. Golf Ground depicts a ragged-looking caddie leaning on his heavy load with eyes closed for an obviously much needed rest. It is amusing, if only to a westerner, because the golf ground is encircled by a rustic, rickety-looking fence, and the caddie has golf clubs, golf bag and sundry other items in a huge cone-shaped basket, which it appears he must carry on his back. The Carpet Seller walks the streets of a crowded city trying to hawk the bulky, heavy rugs piled on his shoulders. A foreigner nearby in western style suit, hat, and cane alludes to the disparity between rich and poor; leisure and labor.

Indian miniature painting has influenced at least one etching and possibly others. The Romance (Fig. 249) borrows in theme and composition from miniature paintings of the Punjab Hills. The placement of trees juxtaposed to form the background for lovers at a tryst, is a typical composition and popular theme in Basholi painting.<sup>15</sup> Chughtai's figure style replaced the stylized Basholi images of Radha-Krishna. On the other hand, there are themes obviously Islamic, like the Lamp of the Mosque (Fig. 250) reproduced in Amle Chughtai, or a similar untitled etching with a provocative composition that I have titled The Leaning Corridor (Fig. 251). In the latter, hanging lamp, book stand, and a large ceramic vessel establish the verticality of the composition, thus accentuating the irregularity of the leaning arcade. Chughtai may have been inspired by the tilted pillars and slanting arcaded corridor by Antoni Gaudi in Barcelona. If Chughtai had not

actually walked through the corridors of Gaudi's Casa Mila, he could have seen reproductions of this unusual complex since it was completed in 1907.

Two still life prints seem to derive in part from an anonymous photograph, (Fig. 253), that was reproduced in the 1934 issue of Caravan. Similarities between the photo and the two following prints suggest that Chughtai may have had some special attraction for this particular photograph or its imagery. The Earth(Fig. 252), a grainy textured print typical of aquatint, has an elongated format to accommodate the entire plant. The type of flower is very similar to that in the Caravan photograph and the human element is present in both---two hands support the plant in the aquatint and clasp the flower stem in the photograph. In both cases the individual's identity is ignored: these are merely anonymous admiring hands.

The second still life entitled Vase (Fig.254) focuses on the hand and vase rather than on the flower, which is nearly lost, having been integrated into the design of the vase. Nevertheless, the elements and mood of the photograph are present in the print. Neither of these prints has any characteristics that distinguish them as typically oriental, and yet they fit into the "Chughtai style".

Animal motifs include cattle, deer, and camel placed in landscapes generally associated with their habitats. Two deer rest at the base of a rock outcropping in Beneath the Mountains (Fig. 255). Chughtai's print is remarkably similar to a drawing by K. Venkatappa (Fig. 256) that was published in Chatterjee's Picture Albums in 1918. A brahma bull dwarfs the scattered shubbery of rolling hills in an untitled etching (Fig. 257); and in another untitled print the camel plys his load across deserts and plains (Fig. 258). In The Endless Horizon (Fig. 259) reproduced in Amle Chughtai, the camel eyes his human cargo who is sitting amid a melange of assorted goods reading as they go. An element of humor and anticipated calamity define the mood as the rubbery legs of the beast, bent in front, give the feeling that the animal is about to go down. Meanwhile, the left front foot steps on a cloth that hangs from the saddle. The devious expression in the camel's eye, the bent-back ears, and smirking mouth predict his mischievous intentions.

Evocative studies of the female form are presented in various guises. Two are nudes (Fig. 260) and (Fig. 261), another is draped in a flowing, richly ornamented sari (Fig. 262), or flouncy Persian pants and a see-through blouse (Fig. 263). As a group, these prints are less conservative in subject matter than his paintings of

females. Several could be considered controversial in light of Pakistani cultural standards. The interaction between two females (Fig. 260) has a homosexual implication. Even if the scene may be excused as a lady at her toilet, a typically Indian theme, the gesture of the attendant (sitting on the floor below her nude mistress) looks like a promiscuous pat on the derriere.

The nude provocateur seems to be paronizing her attendant with a pat on the head rather than rejecting her attention by pushing her away. I am reminded of lovers in Rajput and Mughal miniature paintings where the amorous couple proceed with dalliance oblivious to servants who attend them. In Chughtai's print the birds (upper left) are facing the two women, some with uplifted wing, and appear to be giving full attention to the human activity.

If voyeurism were motivation for the toilet scene, lust with a humorous bent emanates from the scene of a nude holding a peacock feather. This chubby nude unabashedly faces the viewer, wearing no more than jewelry and a tika mark (Fig. 261). While her facial expression is smug, her posture and gestures are provocative and inviting. Is she holding the peacock feather as an offering, and for what purpose? Chughtai has a special gift for the ambiguous. Her distorted breasts (one growing on top of the other) and the tiny plant facing a very large posterior provide amusing contrast with her complacent expression. The singular line describing her body is strong and sure, contributing to the open, self-confident ambiance of the nude. A weaker line would have allowed the details of head and jewelry to overpower the composition. The peacock feather to the right and small flowering plant to the left emphasize the classical triangular composition.

Sweetheart (Fig. 263) is neither nude nor imbued with lesbian overtones, but the woman's transparent blouse is attention-getting. The setting and her provocative outfit suggest she may be a Persian or Mughal harem lady. Perhaps she is seated on the rooftop of a place fortress under a canopy with battlements behind her. Her curled-toed slippers, see-through blouse, harem-style pants, and dagger are accessories variously associated with Persian or Mughal harem women in literature and painting, but most probably Chughtai drew from his imagination to create a generalized impression.

In contrast to these prints of alluring women, there are a number of prints that depict religious or spiritual themes. A musician sits in front of a mosque in one example (Fig. 264), a crowd of men exit a mosque in another and a woman holding a book (the Quran?) stands in front of an open arch with a Quran stand in the background (Fig. 265)



in yet another. The woman's compelling expression and the schematic composition engage the viewer to question the meaning of this work. Chughtai's comment may well have been---let each person interpret the subject in his/her own way.

Another group of prints focus on bizarre or unusual human gestures and mysterious settings. In one untitled print (Fig. 266) an old man covets an oyster shell containing a small unidentified object while two children peer down on the scene from a dungeon-like enclosure above. For this print and the two that follow, the explanation of the subject matter must remain with the artist. Perhaps it represents a personal experience, or the artist's interpretation of a story he heard or read. On Her Feet (Fig. 267) looks like a scene of romantic intrigue. The lover caresses a woman's alluring feet. She looks down at the supplicator as she amuses herself with a wheel-on-a-string game. I can offer no explanation for the subject or for the scale-covered tree limbs, either as to what is represented or why the two are in the branches. Equally curious is a detailed, decorative print of a man and a woman seated together in an ambiguous relationship (Fig. 268). The female (dupatta over her lap) looks down at an open book on her knees and seems to gesture curiously with her hands while a large male leans toward her. Neither seem to be speaking and their faces are dispassionate if not serious, nevertheless, the print is commanding from the standpoint of composition, decorative quality, detail and mystery of the subject matter.

#### SUMMARY

This brief overview of selected prints does little more than introduce the reader to another facet of Chughtai's artistic production. It is generally agreed that Chughtai was a superior printmaker by either eastern or western standards.<sup>16</sup> While this medium and the method of production are western, his subject matter remains eastern. Owing, perhaps, to the small format (more personal in nature than the larger watercolors), Chughtai was freer and more diversified with his subject matter in his prints. His etchings and aquatints range from serious to humorous, and from conventional to daring or mysterious.

"The Kashmiri Woodcutter" and "The Carpet Seller" provide social commentary on the plight of the poorest peasant class---manifested in the posture of the laborers, their tattered garments and the foreboding landscape. Chughtai's paintings of Kashmiri subjects posit the same message but their emotional impact is less dramatic. "Golf Ground" ridicules both the foreign element, (a patch of land enclosed by a haphazard fence as the playing field)

and the native caddie (pathetically carrying golf bag and sundry gear in an oversized basket). It is a mixture of the serious and the absurd, and as such has no counterpart in Chughtai's painting.

The chubby nude with a peacock feather is a subtly humorous depiction of a woman offering her exposed body. This light hearted jest with prostitution may have been less daring than the toilet scene with lesbian overtones. Other prints are more conventional in subject matter, such as "Village Maiden", bird and animal compositions, mosques, and potted plants. Nevertheless, even these conventional subjects are approached from some unusual viewpoint. While Chughtai reveals various influences in style---Indian miniature painting in "Romance" and a far eastern impact in "Spring Breezes"---his own personal style is still overwhelming. His old man looking into an oyster shell and the two figures amid scaly tree limbs are mysterious in the best Chughtai tradition.

## FOOTNOTES

1 Staff reporter, "Chughtai's Paintings on Display in City", Morning News, April 6, 1972, n.p.

2 Malik Shams, "The Art of Chughtai", essay in catalogue for Chughtai exhibition sponsored by Pakistan Arts Council, Karachi, Aug. 14, 1959, n.p.

3 According to Shams, "Art of Chughtai," the survey album would also include one thousand pencil sketches and one hundred fifty color outline drawings.

4 In the Morning News article cited above, the staff reporter wondered if "perhaps Chughtai uses them as the source of permanent income, turning out dozens through zinc plates."

5 Arif Chughtai "Life and Works of Chughtai," Dawn, Supplement, Saturday, Jan. 17, 1976, misleads the public by stating: "Chughtai introduced the art of etching to this subcontinent, the technique of which he acquired from his tour of Europe..." He qualified this statement in the booklet Artist of The East, p. 7, saying: "Some other Indians had experimented with etching and failed in its true sense. Hence Chughtai virtually introduced this art in this region, and unlike other hands, the medium proved successful under him and interest generated in it." Faiz Ahmed Faiz quoted by Osmani, p. 12, confirms the paucity of printmaking in the history of the western Punjab. "He owed his technique of etching entirely to the west, for this was unknown in our own tradition."

6 Peer Obeidy, "Chughtai and His Etchings" Bombay Star, April 14, 1946, pp.8-9 is an exception. However, in this article Obeidy devotes almost a fourth of the text to the history and an explanation of etching as a medium. The remainder of the article is a commentary on the meaning of the etching, Mujahid.

7 Amjad Ali, "The Trail of Paint", p. 230, wrote that Pakistani artist, Sheikh Ahmad "claimed to have taught etching to Chughtai." Though Sheikh Ahmad had been in London teaching in the Central Institute of Art there are no other references suggesting he and Chughtai had any contact there or even that they were in London during the same years.

8 Apparently Chughtai purchased the press in Europe and had it shipped to Lahore, but it is not clear if that was after his first or second visit abroad. Abdullah, "The Chughtai School," places it after the first trip in 1933. Obeidy, p. 8, wrote that "Chughtai's excellence in printing was acknowledged when he produced single handed with a tiny press, his own book Muraqqa-i-Chughtai which still forms a landmark in the annals of book production in India." I had one brief meeting with Majid al Makki, a relative of the Chughtai family by marriage, who claimed to have provided his press for some of Chughtai's early needs.

9 There is some uncertainty about the date, but I believe Mujahid was reproduced in the first issue of Nargis in 1946.

10 Obeidy, p. 8.

11 Arif Rahman Chughtai, Artist of the East, p. 10.

12 Chaghatai, "The Chughtai School"

13 Abbas and Hamid, "Reminiscences"

14 Abbas and Hamid, "Reminiscences"

15 See F.S. Aijazuddin, Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum, (London: Southeby Parke Bernet, 1977), color plate 4(x)

16 Veteran printmaker, Rodney Frew, Southwest Missouri State University, was so impressed with Chughtai's technique and imagery he requested from me an address to purchase prints.

## THE QUESTION OF MODERNISM IN CHUGHTAI'S ART

An ongoing controversy focusing on the modernism of Chughtai's art is evidence of the current lack of art historical consensus regarding his status as a Pakistani painter. After partition, a majority of Pakistani painters wanted their nation's art to be competitive on the contemporary international scale and Chughtai's fame represented to them an outmoded tradition; as a result Chughtai's artistic contribution to his nation has become confused and is in danger of being lost. In this chapter I will examine the accusations of Chughtai's detractors and their implications, submit the arguments of his supporters and evaluate the controversy in terms of Chughtai's stated goals, his attitudes on the westerization of Pakistani painting, and my conclusions regarding the controversy.

Chughtai's detractors allege that the artist lived in a dream world of the past, not keeping pace with the changing world; that he used Persian and Mughal precedents rather than more modern inspiration; and that he was withdrawn, reclusive and aloof with a narcissistic preoccupation for the excellence of his own work. His supporters argue that he fostered, transmitted and further developed the cultural and artistic heritage of the Indo-Muslim tradition of the subcontinent; that he created a personal style; and that he lived in a world of tangible ideas, not a dream world.

Chughtai made it clear in his own writing that he believed art should reflect and promote the culture of a country. He felt that noble archetypes from the past could serve as examples or models for the present and the future. His attitude toward mid twentieth century western movements is unclear, but he condemned local artists who imitated the new foreign modes, accusing them of forsaking their own personality and cultural heritage. It appears to me that the questionability of Chughtai's modernity leveled by a segment of the art community is based on current concepts of modern art, rather than Chughtai's career. Chughtai's relevancy can only be evaluated against the milieu of his entire career, from 1915 to 1975, not just the period of time since the creation of Pakistan and the introduction of modern European movements.

A series of newspaper articles published shortly after Chughtai's death in January 1975 and on the anniversary of his death the following year exemplify the attitudes and

reasoning of both parties. The most vehement of the responses was penned by Dr. Akbar Naqvi in two articles for The Sun of Karachi.<sup>1</sup> In "Chughtai's Vision" (January 1975) Naqvi wrote that Chughtai "was a retiring man who had withdrawn to the esoteric pleasure of rehearsing and perpetuating his own excellence...for his own gratification. This narcissistic preoccupation with his excellence...no doubt [was] responsible for the Chughtai legend, but...gave his works their archaic patina, so removed, so distant, and so oblivious of an age of upheaval and bloodshed..."<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that Naqvi was not familiar with Chughtai's mature oeuvre, stating that "he perfected his style early in life with the publication of the famous 'Muraqqa' in 1928."<sup>3</sup> Typical of his work, according to Naqvi, are "the drooping maidens and rejected lovers" and the type of coloration associated with the Bengal School--- "he does not affix his colours hard, clear and bright...he makes them dissolve and diffuse atmospherically..."<sup>4</sup> Knowing only Chughtai's early work, Naqvi erroneously concludes that Chughtai did not paint from the world around him. Naqvi asserts that Chughtai's vision "represents a world of aesthetic day-dreaming...derived from poetry and not the observation of the phenomena of life and nature..."<sup>5</sup>

In his second essay, "Lonely Vigil" (March 1975), Naqvi compares Chughtai with his younger contemporaries. In a shrewd, specious argument Naqvi attributes sentimentality and lack of personality in Chughtai's art to his refusal to use the medium of oil. Having established that the younger artists chose Arabic calligraphy rather than "the Indo-Persian-Moghul cultural tradition" for inspiration, Naqvi avowed that "the neutrality and dissociation of the [oil] medium from our own cultural modes of expression and aspiration on this subcontinent helped these artists in shedding their local pride and prejudices, which further resulted in the elimination of local colour and climate."<sup>6</sup> According to Naqvi the personality of art (personal expression of the artist), missing in Chughtai's work due to his over indulgence with technical perfection and sentimentality, is enhanced in the work of younger painters because "in a strange way oil paint leads to subjectivity...which our artists learnt to use with competent skill, also prompting them to aspire after something more than mere sentiment..."<sup>7</sup> Naqvi's essay is so convoluted that a summary is nearly impossible, but his specific criticisms were meant to support the primary premise that Chughtai's figurative watercolors undermine the appearance of belonging to the contemporary international art milieu. Other critics repeated these criticisms as well.

Hameed Zaman contended that Chughtai's fame has been well established but he has had few followers, and now "his art has come to be regarded more as a manifestation of oriental exoticness than being anything with the contemporary meaning."<sup>8</sup> Zaman added that Chughtai and Allah Bux both "well established painters of the subcontinent...were abandoned by the new painters of Pakistan. They could worship them all right, but they did not follow them. Both the stalwarts failed to inspire the new generation of painters."<sup>9</sup>

Among those who wrote in defense of Chughtai was Agha Abdul Hamid, who sympathised with the artist's purpose and goals. In "Three Phases in Development of Chughtai Art", Hameed wrote that "Painters like Chughtai are of vital importance in the development of our painting primarily because they are developing the old tradition and widening its scope."<sup>10</sup> Paraphrasing Chughtai, Hamid stated that Pakistani artists who have opted for the European technique cannot "produce anything of real significance to enrich tradition because...both painting and music, although their mediums are universal, have very marked ideoms (sic) of expression which vary from country to country. ..and above all an attitude towards life...The Pakistan painter by painting in the European style is depriving himself of the value of his tradition and just limiting his own expression."<sup>11</sup>

S.A. Rahman, former Chief Justice of Pakistan and friend of the artist, contributed an article to Dawn, "Abdur Rahman Chughtai, a Synthesis of Beauty and Power" in which he noted that Chughtai's personality, "enriched with the heritage of Islamic, Iranian and Moghul traditions finds expression in his individualistic original style...He was not merely wrapped up in the past but conjured up past glories to light up the road to the future."<sup>12</sup> Other Chughtai supporters espoused this same philosophy with some variation. Zeno determined that Chughtai's expression is "the embodiment of a particular genius associated with the city of Lahore", though adding that the world of Chughtai is a dream world "it is a world of ideas and archetypes. It is a world trying to rediscover itself through its traditional symbols."<sup>13</sup>

Arif Rahman Chughtai wrote several articles defending his father's art and in "About Chughtai", The Sun (Feb.1975), he sought to refute "once for all, some of the things that are said about my father. First that he was not a man of yesterday but in fact, a visionary of tomorrow. For what my father painted...was never a period...what my father tried to put on paper were behavioral moods...necessary for

man's advent into tomorrow...No nation has a better past than us and my father only reminds that no nation has better prospects for the future."<sup>14</sup>

Ijazul Hasan, professor of art at the National College of Art when he wrote this perceptive article highlighting Chughtai's response to dramatic socio-political changes in Indian history, also recognized that to evaluate Chughtai one must study his work in context of his entire historical period. The following is a synopsis of quotes from Hasan's 1975 article, "Chughtai and Shakir Ali".

A.R. Chughtai is historically the most important painter of Pakistan...Some artists today criticize Chughtai for producing an art which is backward looking and which has no relevance to contemporary realities. They feel that while studying the past one must weed out the dead from the alive elements in order that the past may serve the present and that the new and modern things may replace the old and the outdated...But to make a correct historical evaluation of Chughtai it is essential to study his work in its own historical setting...Chughtai, from the very beginning...in 1914, wanted to re-establish the classical style of painting which had been totally debased by the end of the 19th Century. [a discussion on the status of painting from Mughal through the British period is here deleted] The colonial power in order to impose itself needs to convince the "natives" of their inferiority...Thus a climate was carefully created where those who followed the arts, craft and tradition of their forefathers were gradually starved through the hostility or indifference of their own countrymen...[Chughtai's] conscious efforts to revitalize painting on national footing cannot be minimized because it played almost valuable role in the evolution of a national consciousness and creation of a national identity...In the earlier stages of the anti-colonial struggle when Hindu-Muslim differences had not erupted into a direct confrontation, the subject of Chughtai's painting was based on Muslim history as well as on Hindu mythology. [A discussion of style follows, here omitted] The world view expressed in these paintings is subjective with romantic overtones, which is expressive of the general feeling and intellectual climate of the time...After his return from Europe, however, one finds this romantic view tinged with subdued notes of realism. [A discussion on style and



influences]...following the collapse of enthusiasm generated by the Khalafat agitation and the 1920-2 non cooperation movement campaign...the relation between the two [Hindu and Muslim] began to deteriorate. Chughtai seems to have been fully conscious of these developments..consequently from this period onwards he began to conceive his works in the framework of Muslim history and art alone. Chughtai can be termed as the Muslim League in the Arts...It is against this background that we should today study A.R.Chughtai.<sup>15</sup>

I do not believe Chughtai was as concerned with the perceived "modernity" of his art as he was with conveying its purpose and relevancy. In several essays, Chughtai expressed his belief that art should reflect the heritage of a country and address its cultural and national interests. Chughtai did not feel that drawing upon revered symbols and personalities from the past rendered art obsolete. In "Individual and the Group", the lengthy preface for Amle Chughtai (his illustrated volume of Iqbal's poetry), Chughtai referred to Iqbal as a precedent: "Iqbal's looking back to the past is not without purpose. He was in search of higher wisdom and revelation from the past that may explain the universe. In fact, he found everything in the past he was looking for."<sup>16</sup>

In "The Future of Art in Pakistan" (1949), Chughtai emphasized the artist's obligation to foster and inspire cultural continuity and pride. He wrote, "art progresses through social life and the artist, through his individuality makes it the proud possession of the country and the people...I regard it the duty of every artist to be fully conscious of his national traditions and through his consciousness influence others and prompt them to right action...In Pakistan we need an art which should reflect the individuality of the artist and be based on observations that conform to the highest artistic standards but which, at the same time, should depict the broad features of national life and be universal in its appeal"<sup>17</sup>

In "Individual and the Group", Chughtai reaffirms he need for art to have a cultural identity because art that does not, which blindly imitates western styles loses its meaning and spirituality. "Whether man belongs to West or East the subject of his creation, delicacy of his colors and lines, in fact every artistic creation he does is related to the nation and religion he belongs to. His mode of living and traditions are subservient to the objectives framed by the society or nation of his birth. As such it is his duty to protect the individuality and culture of that society and should save it from rotting."<sup>18</sup>

Chughtai warns that the imitators of western movements "tend to ignore that system of life which generates in that nation the national pride and urge to live...If an imitator accidentally created such a work of art he can't be ranked among the [significant] artists. This imitator is so obsessed with his own self, even in his creations he can't rise above that level."<sup>19</sup> Chughtai declares that art without a message or commitment turned artists into atheists. Mimicry robbed the artist of his spirituality and the painting then appeals to the baser sentiments of society where depth of spirituality and a message are forsaken for aesthetic indulgence alone.<sup>20</sup>

It is not acceptable in my opinion, that Chughtai's contribution to the development of painting in Pakistan be determined by artists and critics who feel his work is outdated or unprogressive in terms of their current concept of modern art. As Ijazul Hasan postulated, Chughtai's relevancy can only be evaluated against the milieu of his life time. His work evolved in style and content, passing through stages that reflect his personal interaction with Asia and Europe. The abstract qualities in Chughtai's painting, for example, seen as early as the 1920s, could qualify him as an avant garde Indian artist at that time, but the art scene evolved and so did Chughtai.

The creation of Pakistan effected new challenges and goals for the populace. Most importantly the country had to formulate and institute government policy and attend to the overwhelming refugee population. The Kashmir problem, bitterness over India's hedging on financial restitution, communal atrocities and moral debilitation were the legacy of Pakistan. Chughtai's art was a painful reminder of that past---what the people of Pakistan had experienced in the years before Partition---they needed new inspiration. Released from the status of British colonialism, the educated sector felt the country should modernize and be brought into the international milieu. By the early 1950s, modern French and British art movements had been introduced into Pakistan and were being disseminated through exhibitions and university art departments. Oil painting became a popular medium and Chughtai's validity was called into question by some of the art community.

Chughtai's fame, personality and personal habits may also have contributed to the downgrading of his art. Hameed Zaman committed to print what others reserved for gossip. "The prices of his paintings went on soaring higher...money started pouring in...He became a fad and a fashion. His studio was turning out paintings in dozens, and tongues started wagging. Some people alledged that all are not Chughtai's work...some said his disciples did the work under his guidance."<sup>21</sup> I do not know if these accusations

have any element of truth, but the question of authenticity in other artist's minds, must have elicited resentment against Chughtai.

Another complaint was Chughtai's reluctance to make himself available to others or discuss his own work. In "The Genius of Lahore", Zeno sympathized with the artist's dedication to his work, yet "visitors and buyers---local and foreign alike---often complained they never got to see him, or talk to him when they went to buy his paintings ...In his effort to devote all his time to his creative work he was even rude---though naturally a most affectionate and courteous man."<sup>22</sup> Other reports describe Chughtai as a congenial host. Jali wrote admiringly: "I still remember his smiling face, traditional dignity, the way he came forward to shake hands and offered me a chair next to him."<sup>23</sup> Salim Akhtar had written a piece about Chughtai's paintings in the journal, Auraq and was informed by the editor that Chughtai wanted to meet the author. When Akhtar's messages requesting a meeting yielded no response, the writer went personally to Chughtai's home, was invited in and described the visit as friendly and informal.<sup>24</sup>

Faiz Ahmad Faiz was quoted as noting that Chughtai was selective in his friends.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps he was shy and humble, as his son suggested.<sup>26</sup> Undoubtedly he wanted to avoid numerous intrusions on his working time, but nevertheless, he has been described by some as a recluse.

As the final word, I refer to Basil Gray's 1978 essay "The Art of Abdur Rahman Chughtai".<sup>27</sup> Gray introduces his article by stating that he has been studying the art of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent for more than forty years, and being a man of Chughtai's generation, he is able to empathize with the situation Chughtai faced as he embarked upon his career---"the bankruptcy of the then contemporary art scene through the subcontinent."<sup>28</sup> Gray categorically affirmed that Chughtai was aware of the widening horizons of his time and the need for an art that would belong to the whole community. As art historians expect, the work of Chughtai and his contemporaries recall a period quality. They sought "to forge a new twentieth century art, which in his [Chughtai's] case meant the synthesis of the Mughal-Islamic and local art traditions with the wider trends of world art: so that he speaks to a wide international public with the voice of a new-born Pakistan...But, like many of his contemporaries in the west, Chughtai found his own ways of reconciliation, quite different from those worked out in Paris or London or New York in the Cubist and other abstract systems of composition."<sup>29</sup> Gray concludes this essay ascertaining that Chughtai "more than any of his contemporaries...faced the problem of refounding an art to

correspond with the current cultural needs of his country, in seeking continuity with its strongest traditions...[he achieved] a personal style which at the same time appeared like a fresh blossom grafted into an old stock, and thus at the same time both old and new."<sup>30</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 Dr. Akbar Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision", The Sun, Jan 26, 1975, and "Lonely Vigil," The Sun, March 23, 1975.
- 2 Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision"
- 3 Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision"
- 4 Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision"
- 5 Naqvi, "Chughtai's Vision"
- 6 Naqvi, "Lonely Vigil"
- 7 Naqvi, "Lonely vigil"
- 8 Hameed Zaman, "Chughtai---a legend in his lifetime", Morning News, Jan. 18, 1975, p. 4.
- 9 Zaman, "A legend"
- 10 Agha Abdul Hamid, "Three Phases in Development of Chughtai Art", Dawn, Jan.17, 1976 (Chughtai Supplement: p.1 & 7.)
- 11 Hamid, "Three Phases"
- 12 S.A. Rahman "Abdur Rahman Chughtai, a Synthesist of Beauty and Power", Dawn, Jan. 26, 1975, p. 9.
- 13 Zeno (pen name), "The Genius of Lahore", Pakistan Times, Jan. 22, 1975.
- 14 Arif Rahman Chughtai, "About Chughtai", The Sun, Feb. 15, 1975, p. 4.
- 15 Ijazul Hasan, "Chughtai and Shakir Ali", The Sun (special report), Jan 24, 1975, p. 5.
- 16 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," p. 9.
- 17 Chughtai, "The Future of Art" p. 2.
- 18 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," p. 5.
- 19 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," p. 5.
- 20 Chughtai, "Individual and the Group," pp.5 & 6.

- 21 Zaman, "A legend"
- 22 Zeno, "Genius of Lahore"
- 23 Jali, "The Artist of the East," Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art, ed., Dr. Wazir Agha (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980), n.p. Translated for me before publication by Pervaiz Kazmi, 1978.
- 24 Salim Akhtar, "The Artist of the Orient," Abdur Rahman Chughtai: Personality and Art ed., Dr. Wazir Agha (Lahore: Majlis-e Taraqqi-e Adab, 1980) n.p. Translated for me before publication by Pervaiz Kazmi, 1978.
- 25 Nisar Osmani, "A.R. Chughtai was a progressive artist: interview with Faiz Ahmad Faiz," Dawn, Feb. 9, 1975, p. 12.
- 26 Arif Rahman Chughtai, Artist of the East p. 1.
- 27 Basil Gray, "The Art of Abdur Rahman Chughtai", Pakistan Times, (magazine section), Feb. 24, 1978.
- 28 Gray, "The Art of"
- 29 Gray, "The Art of"
- 30 Gray, "The Art of"

## NEED FOR A REVISION OF CHUGHTAI'S STATUS IN THE INDO-PAKISTAN SUBCONTINENT

Chughtai's contribution to the art of the subcontinent is not understood in India nor fully acknowledged in Pakistan. Indian art historical publications persist in viewing Chughtai as a Punjabi product of the Bengal School and generally ignore his mature work of the 1940s.<sup>1</sup> Pakistani art critics recognize Chughtai's technical expertise, his national popularity, and his dedication to Islamic culture, but many regard his work as unprogressive and most do not recognize the diversity of his subject matter or its complexity in form and content. Although Chughtai is now regarded as a Pakistani artist, it will be shown that he was a viable force in the art of India before partition, and in Pakistan, his innovations and contributions must be recognized and acknowledged.

It is not difficult to trace the developments that formed the "Indian" view of Chughtai's artistic position. His earliest public exposure in color plates of the English language journal, Modern Review, edited by Ramenendra Chatterjee (friend and aficionado of Abanindranath Tagore), projected and favored the art of the Bengal School. When Chatterjee published six volumes of contemporary Indian painting in 1918, a Chughtai painting was included in each set.<sup>2</sup>

In 1916, Chughtai made a short visit to Calcutta with S.N. Gupta on behalf of the Mayo School of Art to study photo-lithography and there met one of the Tagores, Nandalal Bose, and other Calcutta artists.<sup>3</sup> Apparently the purpose of that trip was later misconstrued by a Pakistani critic who wrote that Chughtai "moved on to Calcutta and worked there for several years painting in the style of the Bengal School", and the myth proliferated.<sup>4</sup>

While still painting in the Bengal School style, Chughtai won many awards in national art exhibitions, but perhaps the publicity regarding his success in the 1924 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, London, fixed his early style of painting in the minds of those who would record the progress of art in early twentieth century India.

Chughtai sold a considerable number of paintings in the 1920s and 1930s to collectors in India and some found their way to Indian museums. The Archaeological Museum and

the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad have between them over sixty Chughtai paintings, many in his mature style, but Indian art critics seem to have ignored them. Perhaps the greatest source for contemporary Indian scholars seeking Chughtai's art is the collection in the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. There (at least as late as 1978) Chughtai was accorded an entire room for his paintings. All but a few of the newer acquisitions were painted in the 1920s and 1930s and most are of Hindu subject matter.

After Partition in 1947, Indian scholars had little access to Chughtai's recent works, therefore gaining no awareness of his more recently painted genre subjects. Compounding the one-sided vision of Chughtai's oeuvre was the publication of Chughtai's Indian Paintings by Dhoomy Mal Dahram Das of New Delhi in 1951. It was a popular book (sold out---I was told when I tried to buy one in 1978), but featured only Buddhist and Hindu subjects (many from the National Gallery of Modern Art) and nearly all were from the 1920s and 1930s. See chapter III, pp. 117-119.

Indian scholarship must recognize that Chughtai matured beyond the scope of the Bengal School at least a decade before Partition. He should be recognized as a Muslim artist who, even before the advent of Pakistan, sought to convey the Islamic heritage and record the ethnic diversity of India. While his Hindu and Buddhist subjects need not be forgotten, his landscapes, historical and genre subjects should be noted as well.

Chughtai's Indian Paintings also contained a number of Chughtai's etchings, but this aspect of his output has been entirely ignored in India. It is likely that few of his etchings circulated in India even though they are popular with collectors in Pakistan.<sup>5</sup>

There is no doubt that Chughtai's earliest paintings borrow in style and subject from contemporary Indian painting, but there is some evidence to suggest that the reverse may be also true. A set of colored outline drawings by Asit Kumar Haldar referred to as his "Omar Khayyam Series" appear to have been inspired by Chughtai's drawings of the same mode.<sup>6</sup> Line drawing was practiced by most of Chughtai's contemporaries, but colored outline drawing accented with occasional washes of small areas was a Chughtai innovation derived from the style popularized by the sixteenth century Persian artist, Rizza-i-Abassi.<sup>7</sup> Chughtai began this style in his earliest period, perhaps as early as 1915, and many of these drawings were published in the 1920s.<sup>8</sup> No.2 of Haldar's "Omar Khayyam Series" (Fig. 269) appears in Roopa Lekha No.4, 1929, (the earliest date I've found this style in Haldar's work) and another of this series was published in Roopa Lekha No.7 & 8, 1930,



suggesting he began this style in the late 1920s. Chughtai's work of the 1920s (Figs. 46, 47, 48) gives evidence that he had referred to Persian miniature painting and adapted some of its mannerisms; this was highly innovative as Tagore and his students referred to Mughal and Rajput miniatures but ignored the Persian masterpieces. Haldar, probably following Chughtai's lead, drew from Persian miniatures for his background, setting, and costumes.

Though I cannot point to any other specific influences Chughtai may have effected on Indian painters, it is certain that his artistic success was noted by his Indian contemporaries. According to Jagdish Mittal, about 1945 several artists were trying to copy Chughtai's style in Hyderabad after his extensive exhibition in that city.<sup>9</sup> It was not clear to me in the interview with Mittal if those trying to copy Chughtai's work were local artists who had seen his painting demonstration and wanted to improve their own style or professional artists who contemplated making forgeries. However, I encountered three paintings in two private collections in Pakistan that I am convinced are forgeries. Holi Dance (Fig. 54) by Chughtai, was reproduced in Trends of Indian Painting by Manohar Kaul in 1961, printed by Dhoomimal Ramchand in New Delhi, but it is in Chughtai's early style of the 1920s and may have been published elsewhere up to three decades before 1961. I do not know the location of the original, but certainly it is in India, rather than in Pakistan. F.U. Ahmed owns a painting (Fig. 270) that is nearly identical in all respects to Holi Dance except for the painterly quality and color tonality. The lines in Ahmed's painting are less defined and separation between areas of color less harsh, giving the overall painting a softer appearance. There are subtle differences in the eyes. Ahmed's painting shows pupils in the eyes, the Chughtai original does not, and Radha's eyes are closed in the original but open in the copy. Ahmed's painting is not signed but the other two paintings, both in the collection of BaighMohammed, are signed.

BaighMohammed's painting of an oriental couple (Fig. 271) is certainly not a copy of any work by Chughtai. The style is completely different from that of Chughtai and upon first seeing this painting I was surprised to note the signature, Abdur Rahman Chughtai (top right) in Arabic script. The signature, however, was written horizontally without any dips or flourishes and was visibly different from an authentic Chughtai signature. I've had occasion to see many Chughtai signatures, but obviously the forger did not. Another painting in the same collection (profile of a woman, cut just below the bust, (Fig. 272) is signed with the same signature in the same style, also upper right.

This painting is much closer in conception and composition to a Chughtai work, but again the technical handling and color quality are unlike those of Chughtai. Both of these paintings have the same soft color harmonies and delicacy of brush work as the Ahmed painting. I feel certain all three works were done by the same artist, and the painting of the oriental couple owned by Baigh Mohammed may be the original artist's personal style.

I am aware of several Indian artists who have painted figures in this style and the owner stated they bought these two works from an Indian who claimed to be from Hyderabad, India. Consequently, I believe the true artist of these three works was a professional artist from India, though not necessarily from Hyderabad.

Certainly Chughtai's reputation as an Indian artist before partition of the subcontinent---recipient of numerous exhibition awards, a separate room for his paintings in the National Gallery of Modern Art, an artist worthy of copying---warrants a revision of the limited perspective accorded Chughtai by Indian scholarship. It should be acknowledged that Chughtai matured beyond the scope of the Bengal School at least a decade before partition. Scholars need only to go to Hyderabad to see examples of his mature work. In the State Archaeological Museum in Hyderabad, art historians will see various examples of Chughtai's thematic diversity including Mughal and Persian themes and genre and ethnic studies. Even if Indian scholarship chooses to delimit the inclusion of Chughtai in Indian art to 1947, it has a responsibility to present the full scope of his style and subject matter up to that time.

In Pakistan, the shortcomings of art historical scholarship concerning Chughtai are different from those in India. Competent art historical research is still in the nascent stage and the zeal to internationalize the image of contemporary Pakistani painting has obstructed an impartial evaluation of Chughtai's artistic contribution.<sup>10</sup>

There are no journals dedicated to the fine arts currently being published in Pakistan. Jalaluddin Ahmed's survey, Art in Pakistan, first published in 1954 is the only book on Pakistan painting to date.<sup>11</sup> Ahmed's appraisal, quoted and rephrased uncritically since its first publication, has promulgated a distorted appraisal of the artist's status. His descriptions of three groups of painters led the reader to believe that Chughtai's oeuvre was not progressive.

Ahmed placed Chughtai into the first group, the 'elder artists', which Ahmed admitted "for want of a better term,

[may] be called 'traditional' painters."<sup>12</sup> Ahmed determined that the second group, the 'young elders', "mark the transition from traditional and academic painting to modern techniques, including variations of abstract and near abstract art."<sup>13</sup> With this statement the reader automatically assumes the work of the elder artists, Chughtai in particular, was traditional and academic, making no use of modern techniques and was neither abstract nor near abstract. I don't know how Ahmed would define 'traditional' and 'academic' but these terms connote staying within the established norm, thus excluding progressive, experimental activity. Apparently Ahmed meant 'non-objective or non-figurative' when he used the term 'abstract' and 'near abstract' was his concept of 'abstract'. My chapters on Chughtai's stylistic development have clearly shown the abstract qualities in Chughtai's work and the chapter on technique shows the modern techniques he used.<sup>14</sup>

The third group in Ahmed's book are the 'younger artists' who "form the most active and prolific group of artists in Pakistan today," and whose work is experimental.<sup>15</sup> Of Ahmed's statements, this may be the most erroneous. When this was written in 1954, Chughtai was at his productive peak. Furthermore, Allah Bux and Haji Sharif were other 'elder' professional artists painting full time. Most of the younger artists from 1947 until very recently have had to support themselves with salaried jobs because they could not live on sales from art.

The 'progressive vs nonprogressive' controversy still debated in regard to Chughtai's art became an issue before Ahmed published Art in Pakistan (1954). Shortly after partition, Zubeida Agha (in 1949) and Shakir Ali (in 1952) returned to Pakistan after intensive study in Europe. Both were strongly influenced by modern and contemporary French masters and their painting created a stir among the art community. Shakir Ali's paintings were abstract and greatly simplified, often emphasizing a single figure. Some of Zubeida's work was abstract, others were non-figurative. Each exerted a strong influence on the development of painting in Pakistan. Shakir Ali was a professor of painting and later principal of art at the Mayo School of Art in Lahore, while Zubeida worked first in Karachi, then established an art gallery in Islamabad. Meanwhile, Mrs. Anna Molka Ahmad, a British lady, who received her art diploma from the Royal College of Art in London, married Pakistani artist ~~Shakir~~ Ahmad and joined the staff at Lahore's Punjab University in 1940 to teach painting to female students. By 1947, her program included male students and numbered two hundred.<sup>16</sup> Her influence was considerable in introducing oil techniques with texture and

impasto to young artists and inspiring them to paint in a style akin to German Expressionism.

With these pervasive influences, the art community began to equate contemporary western styles and the oil technique with modernism or progressivism. Chughtai's illustrative figurative style was condemned as provincial, old fashioned or non-progressive. Most critics evaluated his art in terms of the 'new' Pakistani art, rather than the creative innovations and distinctive personal style he had evolved over half a century.

In spite of the current attempt to devalue Chughtai's art, it cannot be denied that he contributed greatly to the prestige of Pakistani painting before and after Partition. Irrespective of Chughtai's perceived modernity, his innovations saved Punjab painting from being absorbed into the predominant Indian movements (that of the Bengal School and Academic Realism) and attracted international notice to the Punjab as its talented Islamic artist.

Chughtai's first book, Muraqqa-i-Chughtai (1928), has been called a masterpiece in book production of the subcontinent. The Muraqqa brought Chughtai recognition from Europe and firmly established his career on the homefront. The Muraqqa was evidence of new innovations in style and content. Chughtai created visual parallels for the poetic metaphors of Persian ghazal and integrated mannerisms and characteristics from Art Nouveau, Persian, Mughal, and Pahari painting to form a new, unique style. Long before publication of the Muraqqa, he revived and personalized the color outline technique of sixteenth century Persian artist, Rizza-i-Abassi. In the 1930s, he presented fresh interpretations of Hindu and Buddhist subjects and further simplified and modified his style. By the 1940s, he was painting historical and genre subjects that reflected his Islamic heritage and national homeland. Content was not only illustrative, it provided a message, made use of symbolism and sometimes had a humorous note.

Uncountable dust covers for Pakistani authors and the popularity of his etchings furthered his fame and reputation. By the end of the 1960s, Chughtai had published five books, several of which can now be found in major university libraries in the U.S.A. and in the British Museum library, thus furthering his international recognition among Asian art historians. His Pakistani postage stamps won international awards, his paintings were reproduced as greeting cards locally, and as UNICEF cards for the international market. Certainly there can be no doubt that Chughtai earned and deserves a prominent and well-defined place in the history of art in Pakistan as well as a revision of his status in the art of India.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Appasamy, Tagore and His Times, 1968, p. 68, wrote: "A.R.Chughtai is one of the outstanding Muslim painters of the Bengal School." Ramachandra Rao, Modern Indian Painting, 1953. p. 30, claimed that "the broad Oriental foundations of the art of Mohammed Abdur Rahman Chughtai are parallel to the basic impulses of the Bengal school..." and in Indian Art Through the Ages, edited by the Publications Division, Government of India, 1951, p. 43, Chughtai is mentioned under the subheading "Bengal Renaissance"

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of Chatterjee's Picture Albums, see chapter 1, "Biography of the artist", pp.8-9 !!!!!

<sup>3</sup> Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Lagan, translated for me by William Dass in 1978, n.p. also see Amle Chughtai, commentary for "Temptation" n.p. Chughtai is said to have made the visit to Calcutta in 1918 with the vice principal of the Mayo School of Art. He was introduced to Abanindranath Tagore whose many disciples were gathered there too.

<sup>4</sup> Ahmed, Art in Pakistan, second edition, (1962), p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benaras Hindu University Museum has a Chughtai etching, but I do not remember seeing others in India.

<sup>6</sup> Haldar's work followed the mode of the Bengal School.

<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of Chughtai's color outline technique and its derivation see chapter 3, "Style:1918-1922", pp.6-7.

<sup>8</sup> Muraqqa-i-Chughtai is a good source for referring to Chughtai's color outline style.

<sup>9</sup> Mittal thought that Chughtai spent several months in Hyderabad around 1945, but Fremi Brehmenshah remembered the year as 1946 or 1947. See chapter 2, "Biography of the Artist" p.63.

<sup>10</sup> See chapter 20, "The Question of Modernism in Chughtai's Art", p. 10

<sup>11</sup> Focus on Pakistan, a slick quarterly usually includes an illustrated essay on Pakistani art in each issue and

several Karachi weeklies and newspapers feature occasional articles, but the only journal dedicated to fine art in Pakistan, Contemporary Arts in Pakistan, edited by Jalaluddin Ahmed, was a short-lived experiment (1960-1964)

12 Ahmed, Art in Pakistan, p. 35.

13 Ahmed, Art in Pakistan, p. 35.

14 See chapter III, The Development of Style.

15 Ahmed, Art in Pakistan, p. 35.

16 Exhibition of Paintings 1952, catalogue by the Department of Arts and Crafts, University of the Panjab, Lahore, n.p., in section entitled "History of the Department" by Anna Molka Ahmed.

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#### INTERVIEWS

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Faiz Ahmad Faiz, internationally known author and poet, former principal of Haji Abdullah Haroon College, and vice-president of Pakistan Arts Council, awarded 1962 Lenin Peace Prize, interviewed in Lahore March 27, 1978.

Mian Majeed, photography instructor, National College of Art, son of Mian Abdul Rehman Ijaz, contemporary of Chughtai at Mayo School of Art, part of Chughtai's Punjab School of Painting, d. 1972. Son interviewed in Lahore March 1978.

Artist from Sargoda (wished to remain anonymous), in Lahore. April 24, 1978

Allah Bux, artist, d. 1979, interviewed in Lahore April 1978.

Mohammad Ajmal, former Professor and Head of Psychology Dept. and Principal of Governement College, Lahore. Former Vice-Chancellor, Punjab University, Lahore. Secretary, Ministry of Education at time of interview in Islamabad on April 3, 1978.

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- S. A. Rahman, former Chief Justice of Lahore High Court, Lahore, May 1978.
- Mrs, Chris Taseer, wife of N.D. Taseer (deceased) close friend of Chughtai from 1920s; author, poet, government post. Interview in Lahore, May 1978.
- Ali Imam, painter, former art teacher, owner of Indus Gallery, Karachi, at time of interview, July 11, 1978.
- Agha Abdul Hamid, close friend of Chughtai from mid 1920s. Interview in Karachi, July, 1978.
- Mrs. Marian Hatim Tyabji. Daughter of Sir Akbar Hydari who held several high posts under the Nizam of Hyderabad. Interview in Karachi, July 29, 1978.
- Mrs. Majid Malik, wife of Colonel Majid Malik, close friend of Chughtai from 1920s. Interview in Karachi, July 31, 1978.
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- Agha Babur, director Rawalpindi Art Council, Aug. 27, 1978
- Mohammad Husain Qadri, contemporary of Chughtai at Mayo School of Art, Vice Principal there 1931, principal 1942-1946, Lahore, Sept. 11, 1978.
- Anna Molka Ahmad, professor, administrator, Art Department, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Sept. 1978.
- Dr. Abdullah Chaghatai, younger brother of the artist, professor, art historian, Lahore, Nov. 1978.
- Nadra, student at National College of Art, father was Pakistani ambassador to African country and friendly with Chughtai, interviewed in Lahore, Sept. 14, 1978.
- Aziz Butt, professor English literature, Government College, Lahore, Nov. 1978.
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- Nila Aziz, journalist, Pakistan Times, Lahore, Dec. 1978.

Jalaluddin Ahmad, art historian, art critic, Lahore, Dec. 28, 1979.

Jagdish Mittal, art historian, critic, and collector, Hyderabad, India, Jan. 15, 1979.

Fremi Brehmenshah, art teacher, Hyderabad College of Art, interviewed in Hyderabad, India, Jan. 16, 1979.

LETTERS (photocopies in my files, courtesy of CMT)

Abdur Rahman Chughtai to Basil Gray, dated Oct. 11, 1947.

Lalshah Bokhari to Abdur Rahman Chughtai from Embassy of of Pakistan, The Hague, May 4, 1953. Letter included a press release for gifting of The Village Girl.

G. Venkatachalam to Abdur Rahman Chughtai, letters dated May 26, 1929, July 10, 1930, June 30, 1933 and May 10, 1946.

Abanindranath Tagore to A. R. Chughtai, letters dated Oct. 28, 1919, Nov. 2, 1919, Nov. 28, 1919, Dec. 10, 1919, June 29, 1934 and one to Abdur Rahim Chughtai dated Nov. 26, 1935.

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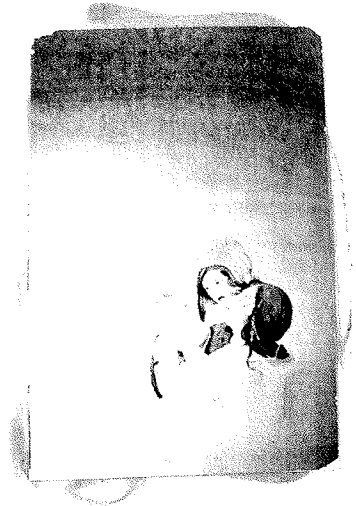
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Abdur Rahman Chughtai ca. 1913



2. Inayat Ullah  
The Poison Cup



3. Chughtai,  
Sketch of The Poison Cup



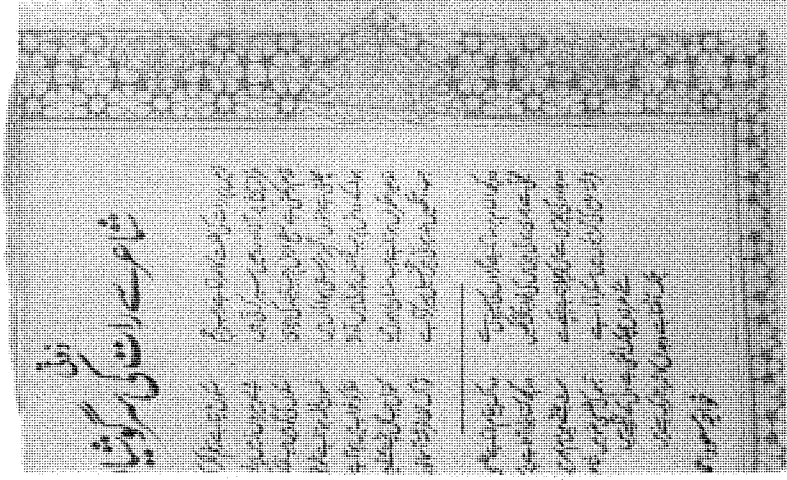
Abdur Rahman Chughtai ca. 1913



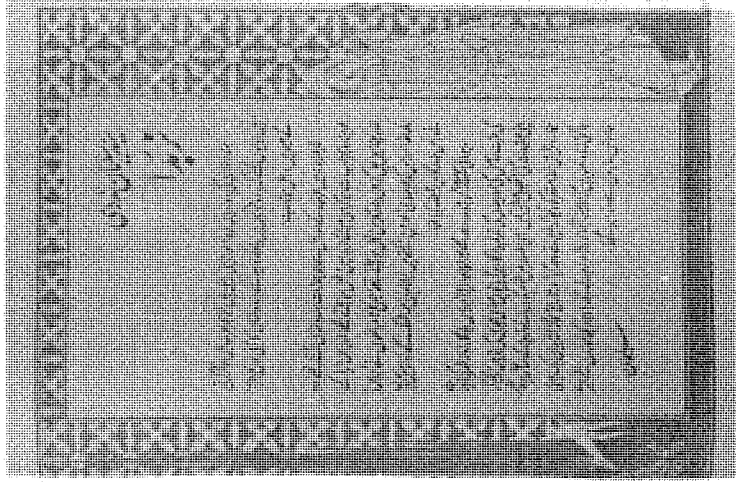
2. Inayat Ulla  
The Poison Cup



3. Chughtai,  
Sketch of The Poison Cup

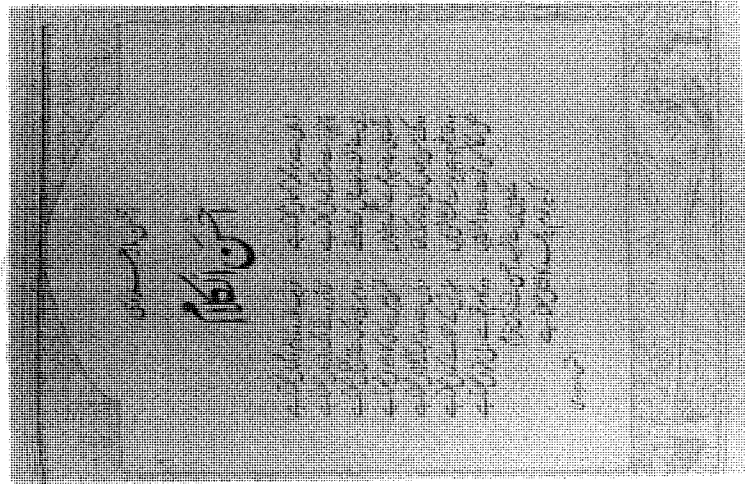


4. Chughtai, border design, 5. Chughtai, border design,



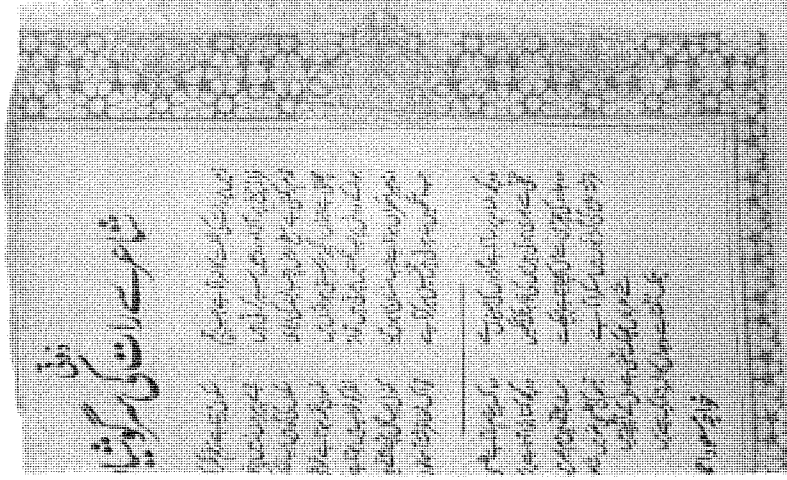
4. Chughtai, border design, 5. Chughtai, border design,

Caravan, 1934

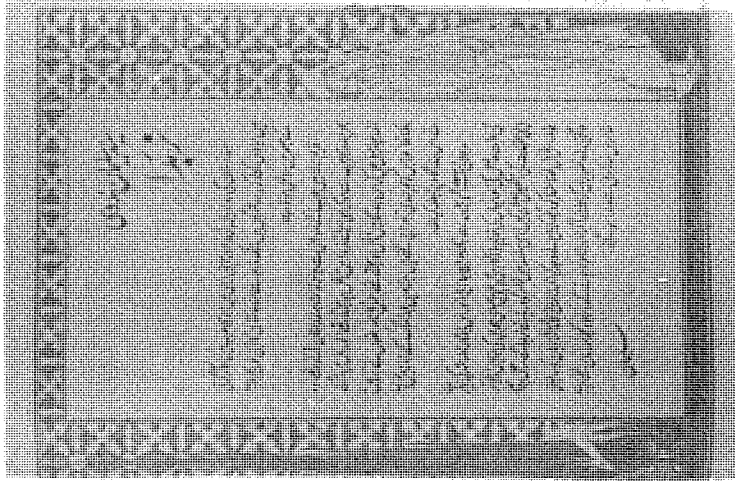


Caravan, 1934

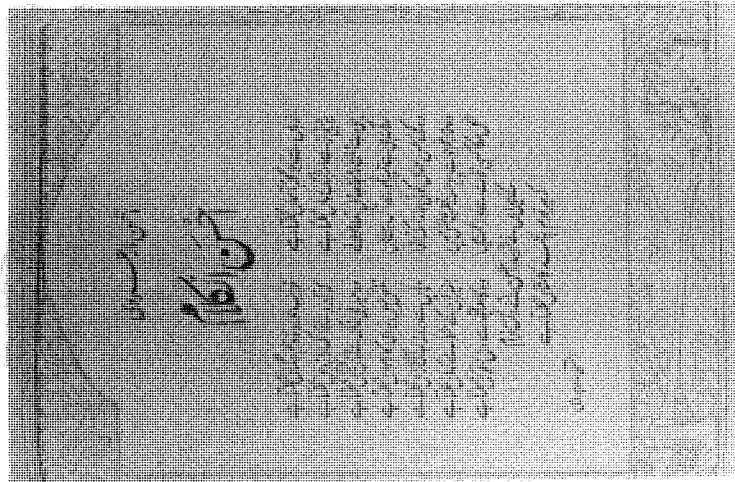




Caravan, 1934



Caravan, 1934



Caravan, 1934

4. Chughtai, border design, 5. Chughtai, border design,



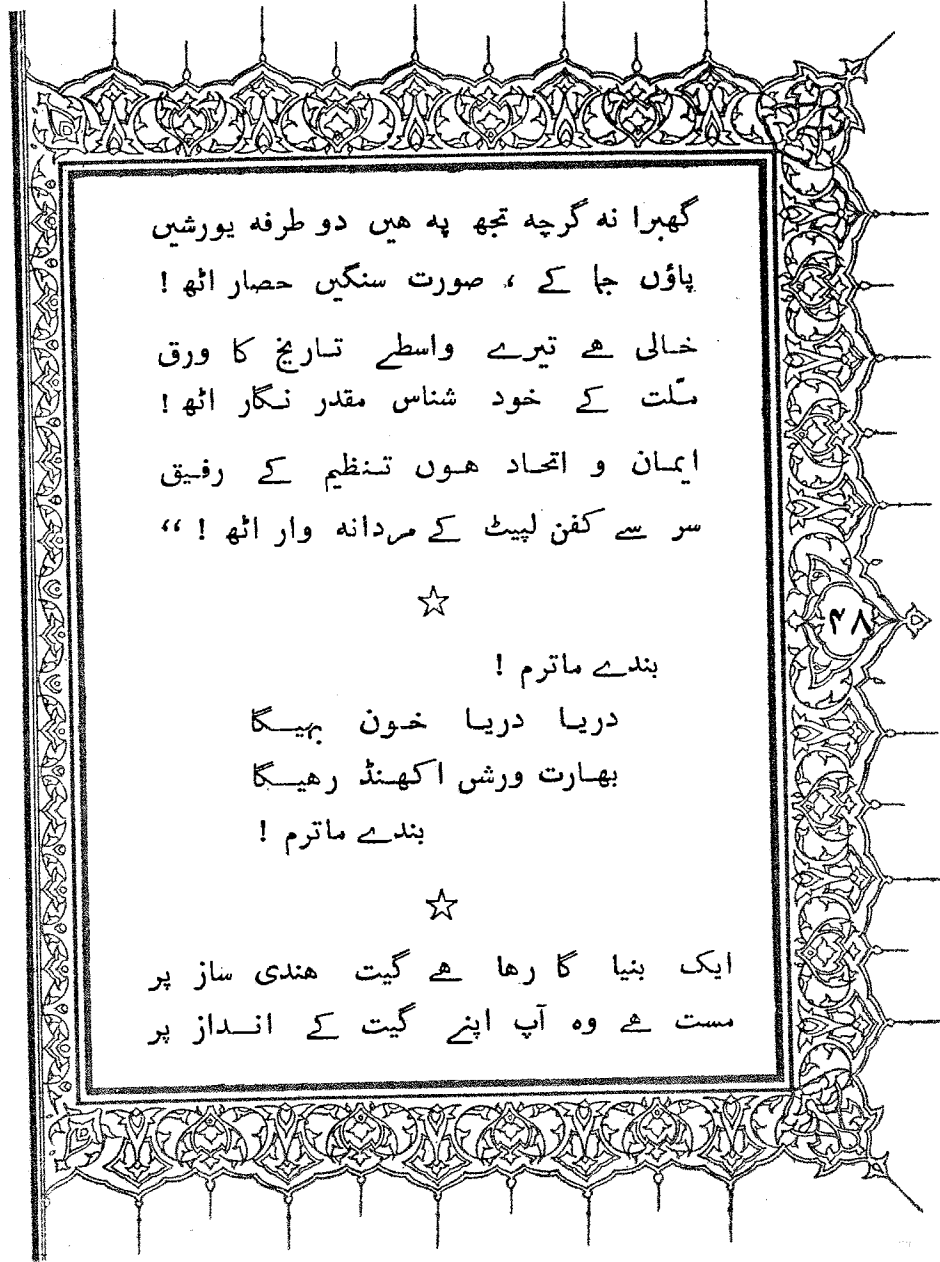
7. Chughtai, nagash panels,

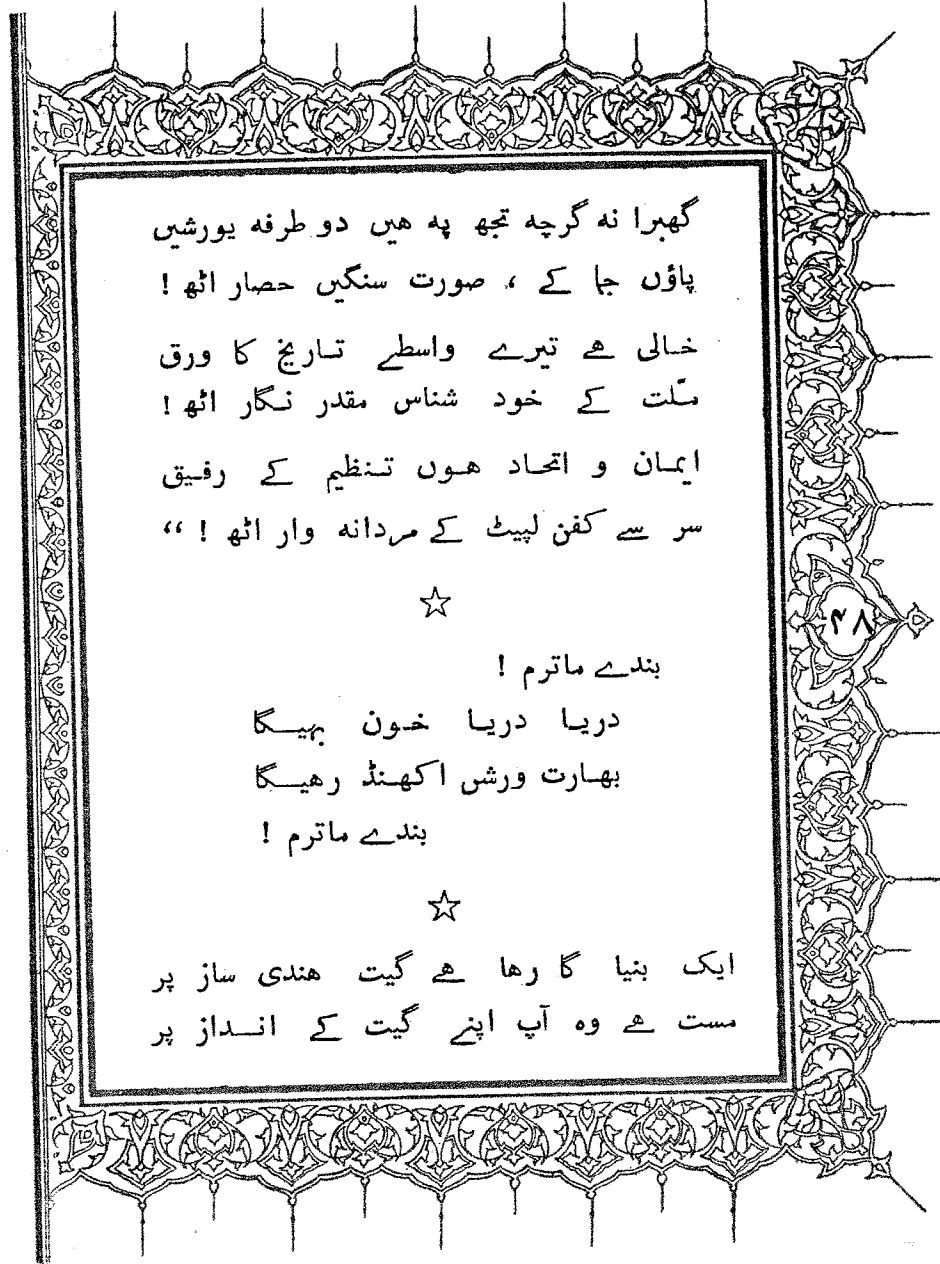
Muraqqa-i-Chughtai



7. Chughtai, nagash panels,

Muraqqa-i-Chughtai





گھبرا نہ گرچہ تجھ پہ ہیں دو طرفہ یورشیں  
پاؤں جا کے ، صورت سنگیں حصار اٹھ !  
خالی ہے تیرے واسطے تاریخ کا ورق  
مّت کے خود شناس مقدر نگار اٹھ !  
ایمان و اتحاد ہوں تنظیم کے رفیق  
سر سے کفن لپیٹ کے مردانہ وار اٹھ !“



بندے ماترم !

دریا دریا خون بھیگا  
بھارت ورش اکھنڈ بھیگا  
بندے ماترم !



ایک بنیا گا رہا ہے گیت ہندی ساز پر  
مست ہے وہ آپ اپنے گیت کے انداز پر

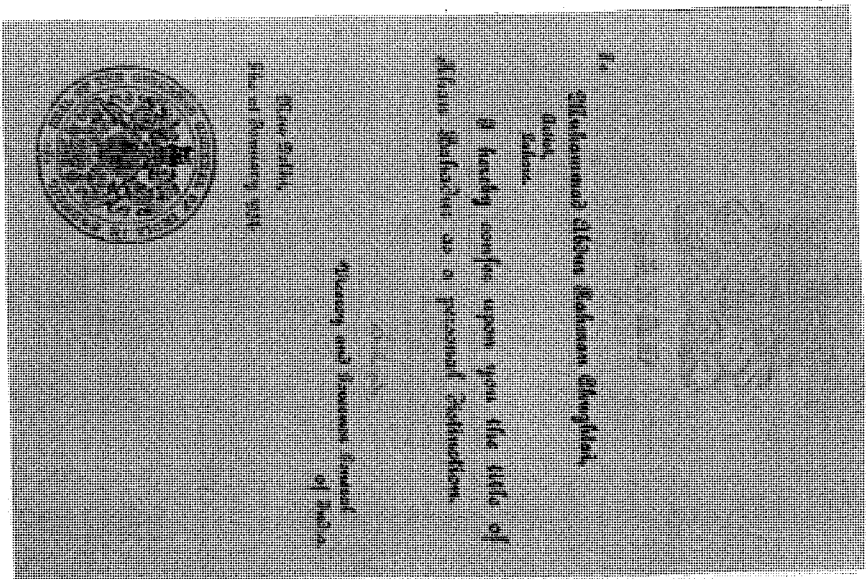




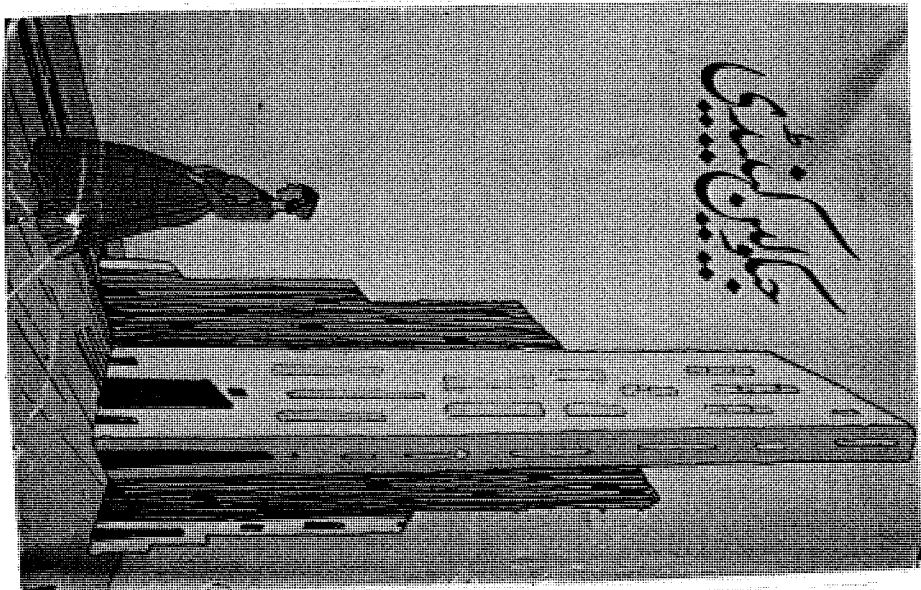




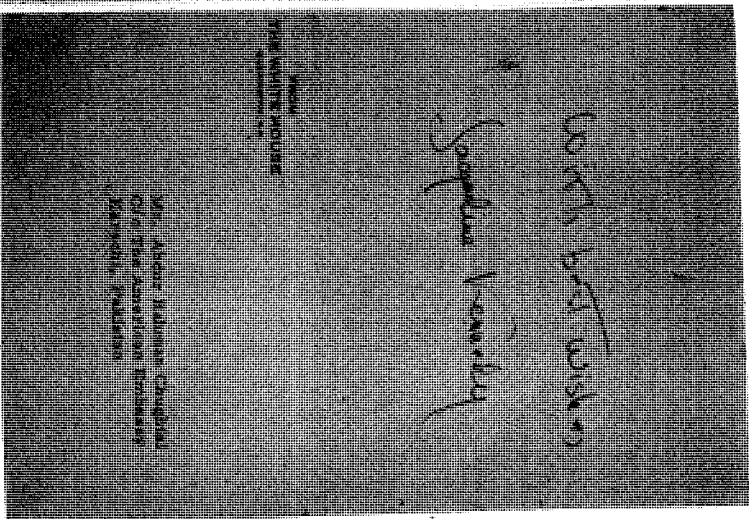




12. Khan Bahadur award, 1934



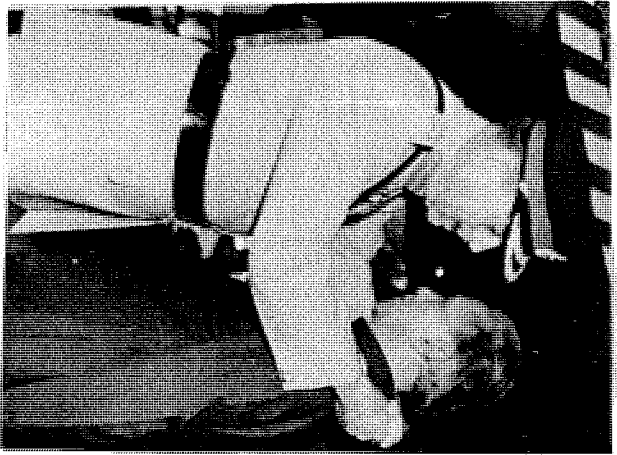
13. dust cover for Jaqueline  
Kennedy book



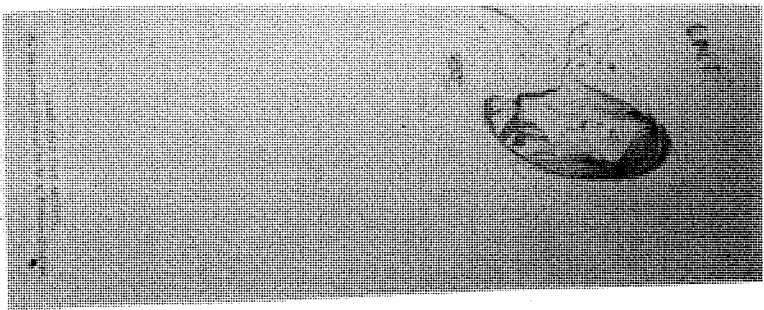
14. thank you note  
from Jaqueline Kennedy



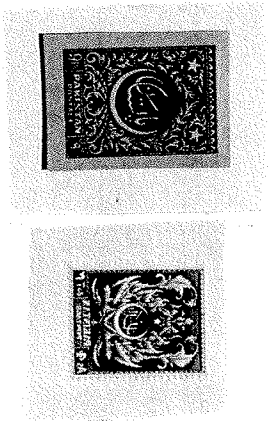
15. Photograph of Chughtai,  
wife, and daughter



17. Chughtai receiving award  
Hilal-i-Imtiaz



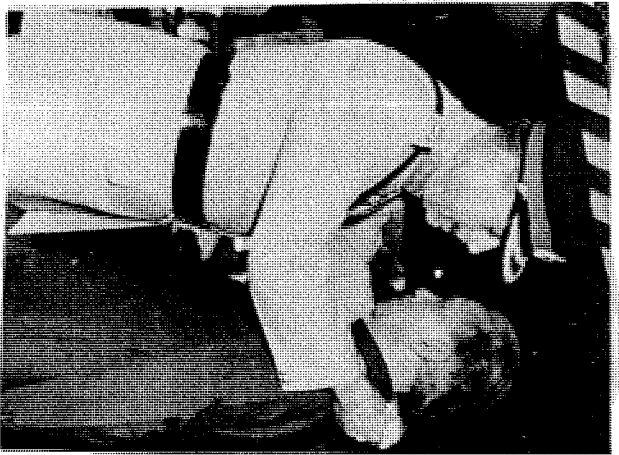
18. Chughtai,  
The Lamp and the Moth



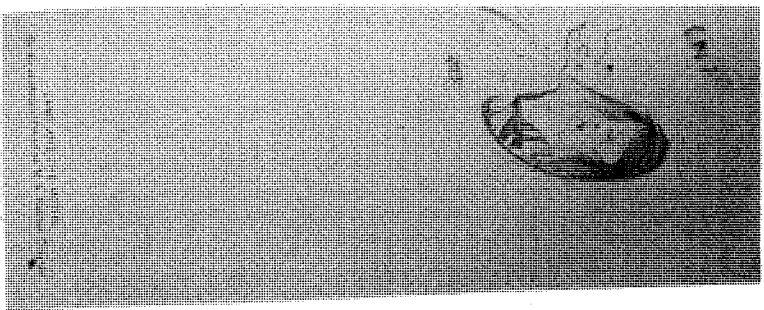
16. Chughtai's first postage stamps



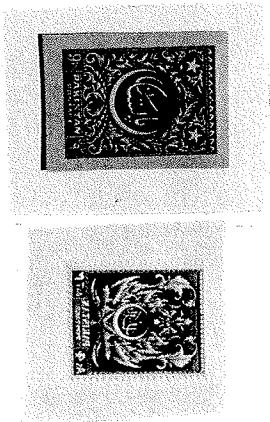
15. photograph of Chughtai,  
wife, and daughter



17. Chughtai receiving award  
Hilal-i-Imtiaz



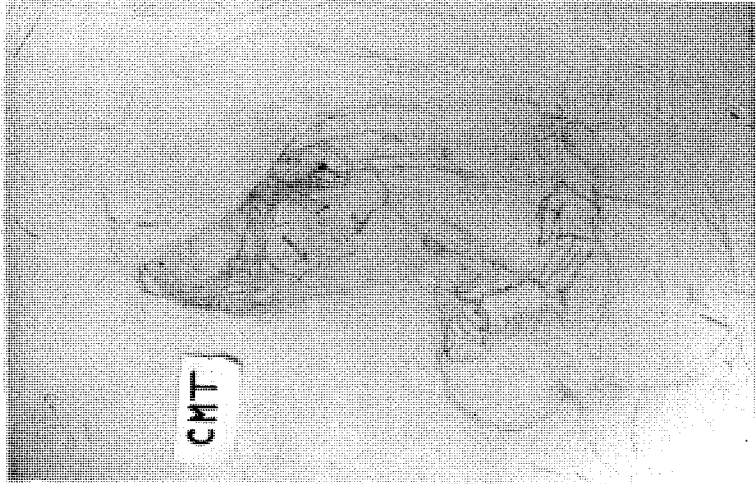
18. Chughtai,  
The Lamp and the Moth



16. Chughtai's first postage stamps



19. Chughtai, two women



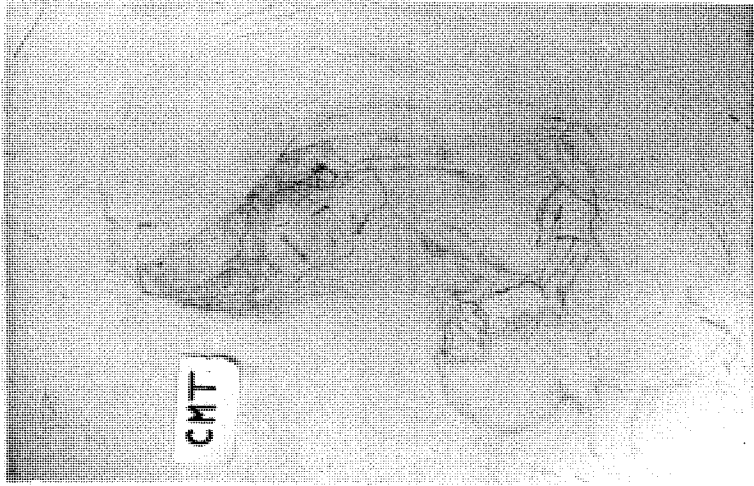
20. Chughtai, sketch of  
nursing mother



21. Samarendranath Gupta,  
Kajri Dance and Music of the  
Rainy Season in Hindustan



19. Chughtai, two women

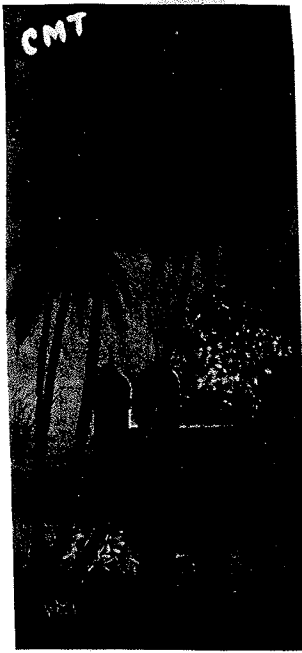


20. Chughtai, sketch of  
nursing mother



21. Samarendranath Gupta,  
Kairi Dance and Music of the  
Rainy Season in Hindustan





22. Chughtai,  
The Better Land



23. Chughtai, A Flower  
That is Once Blown  
Forever Dies



24. Samarendranath  
Gupta, Broken String



25. Charuchandra Roy,  
My Lamp Goes Out Every Time

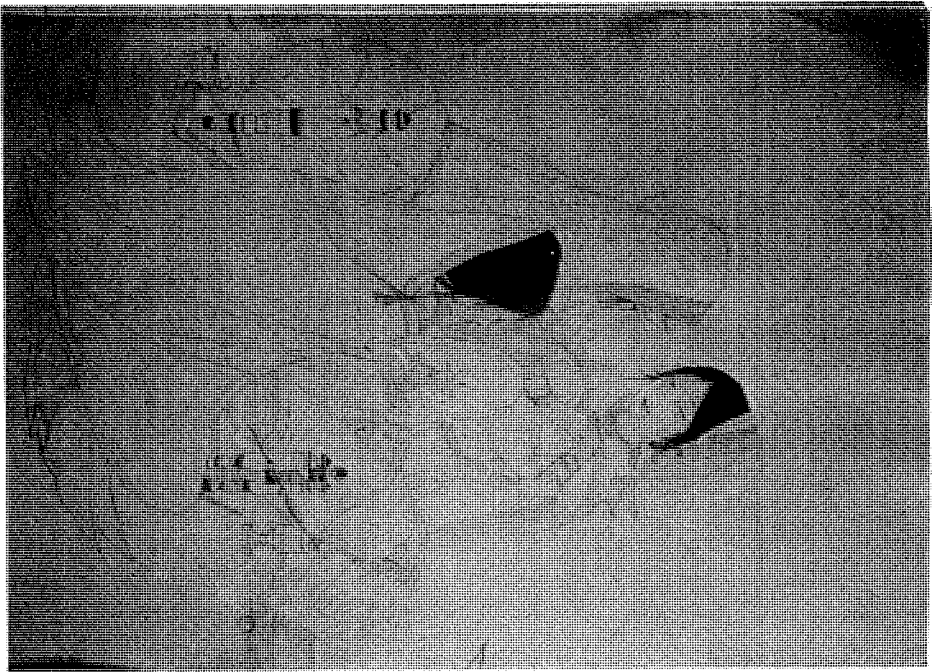


26. Chughtai,  
The Rose and the Wine Cup

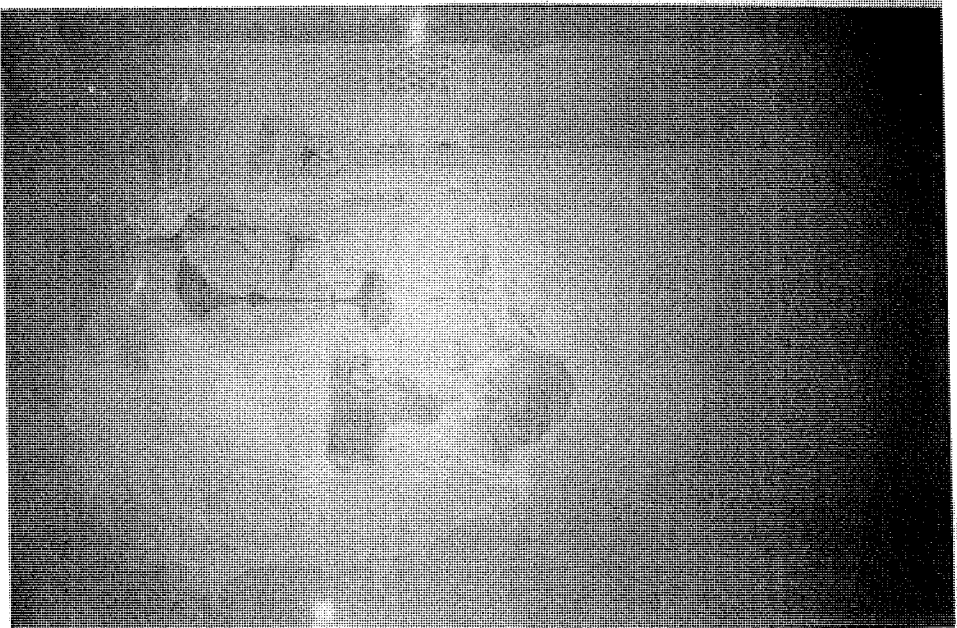


27. Chughtai, Returning from the Dargah

28. Chughtai, three women spinning



29. Chughtai, Jealousy







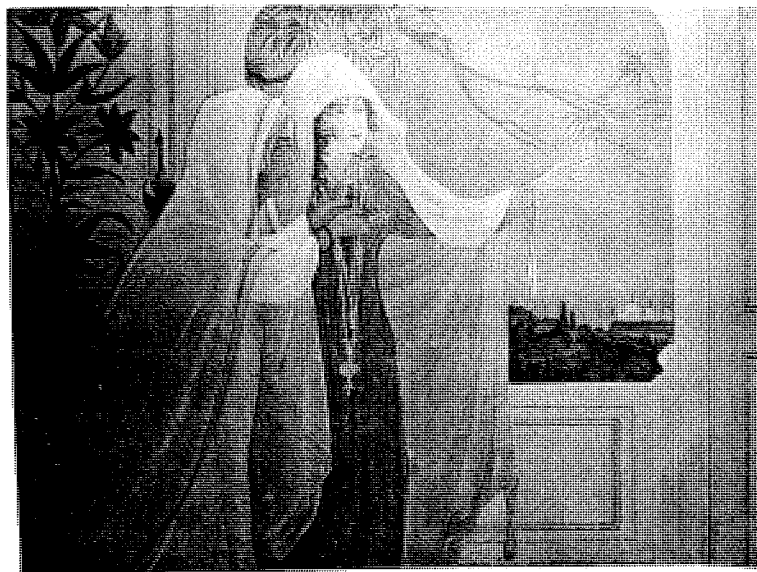
30. Chughtai, Radha-Krishna



31. Chughtai, Son of a Warrior



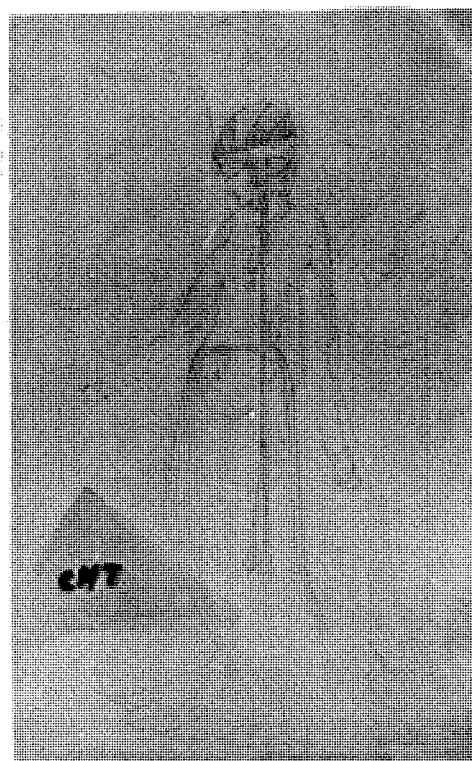
32. Chughtai, Charm of the East



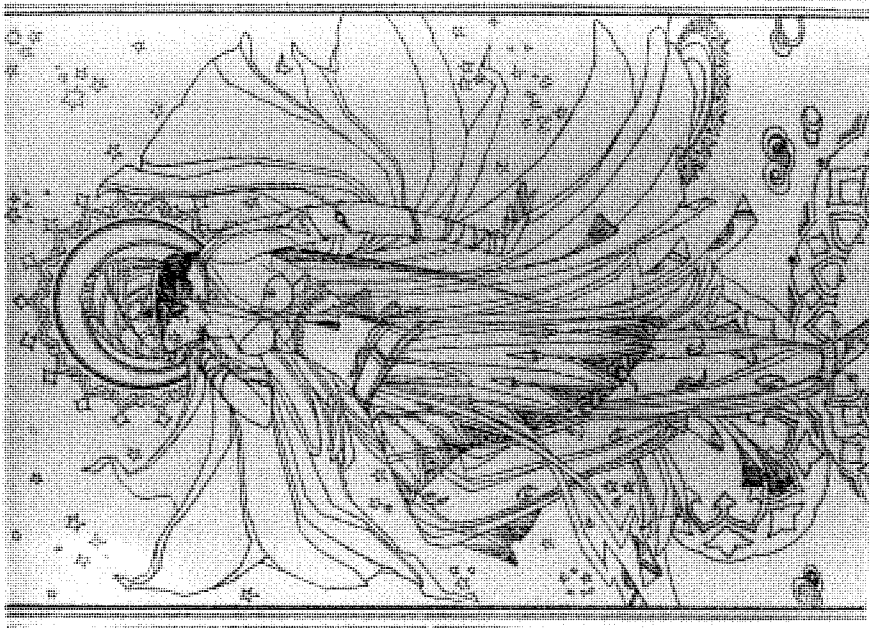
33. Chughtai, Moon at Id



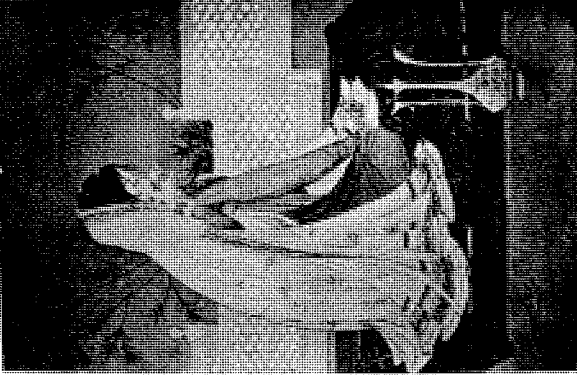
34. Chughtai, two lamps



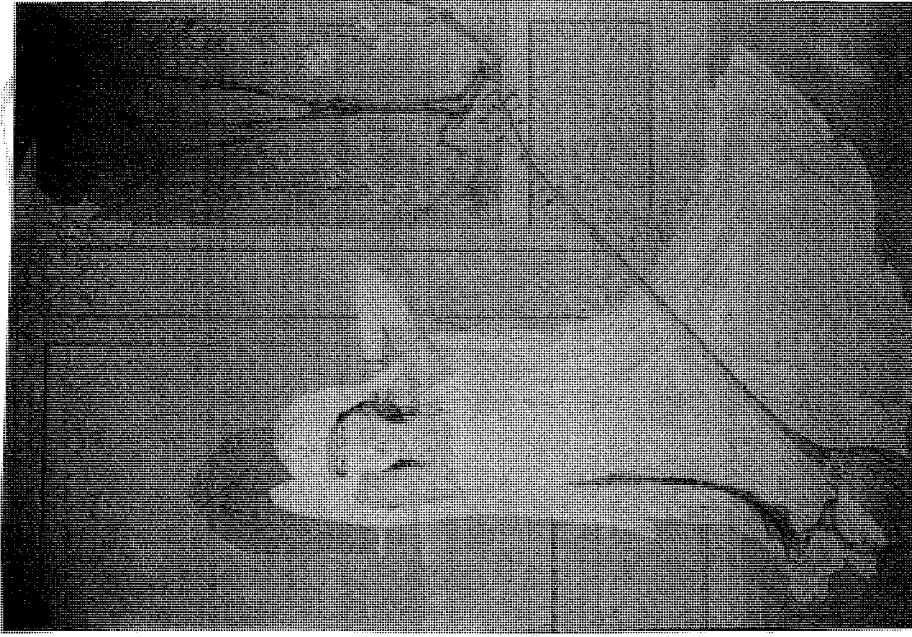
35. Chughtai, dancing stars



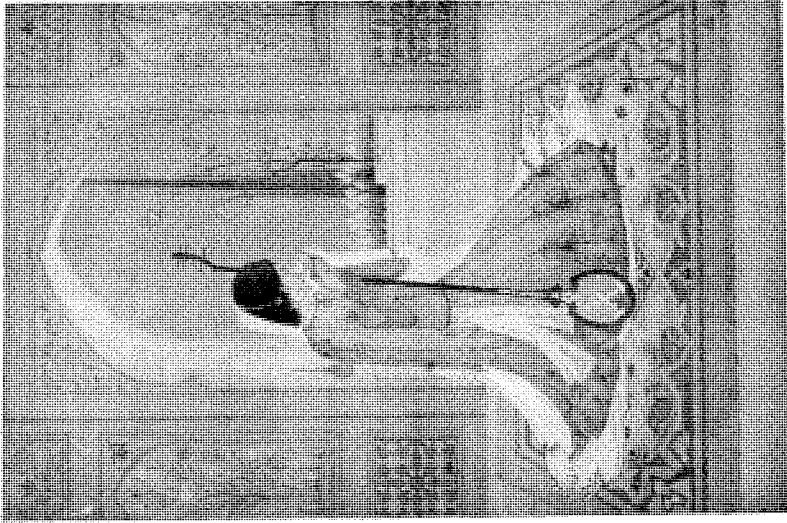
36. Chughtai, Dancing Stars.



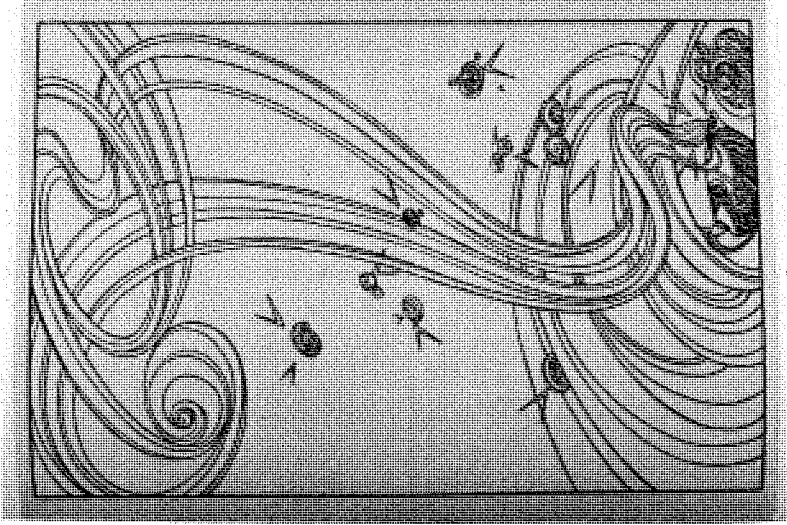
37. Chughtai, Expectation.



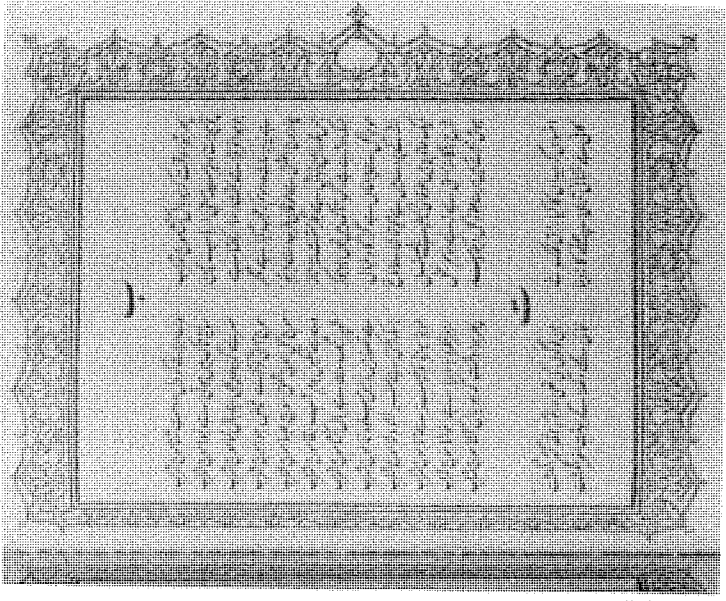
38. Chughtai, Anarkali.



39. Chughtai, Persian Idol

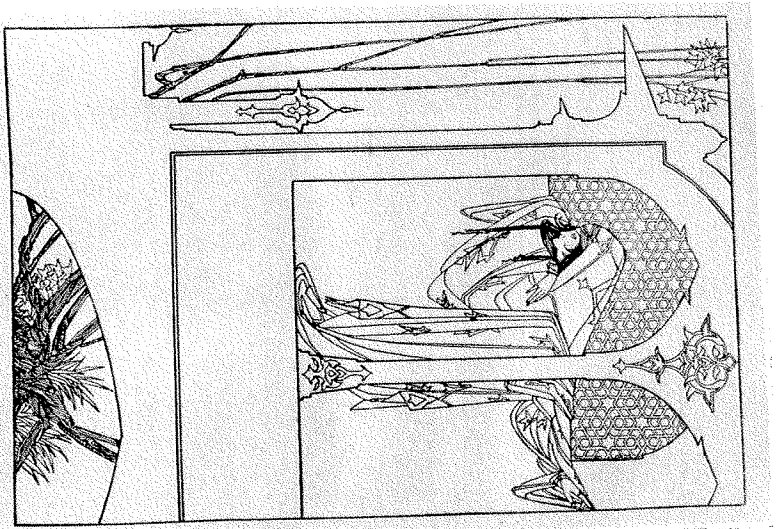


40. Chughtai, Around the Beloved

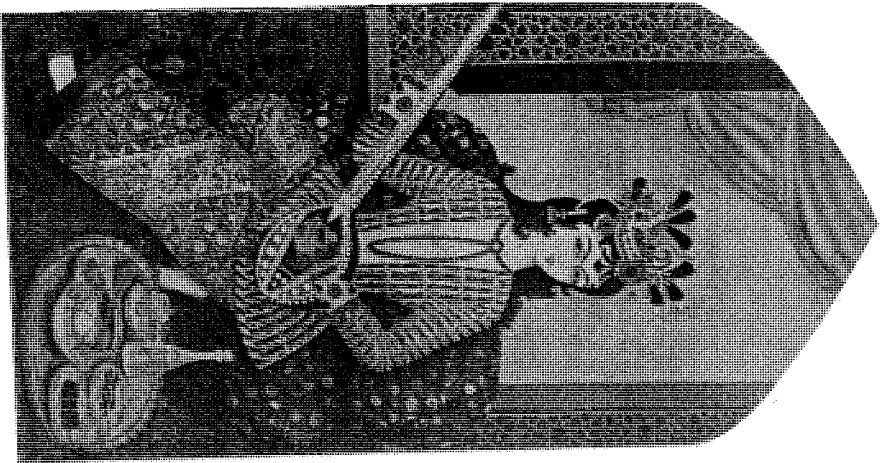


41. Chughtai, hashia,  
Muraqqa-i-Chughtai

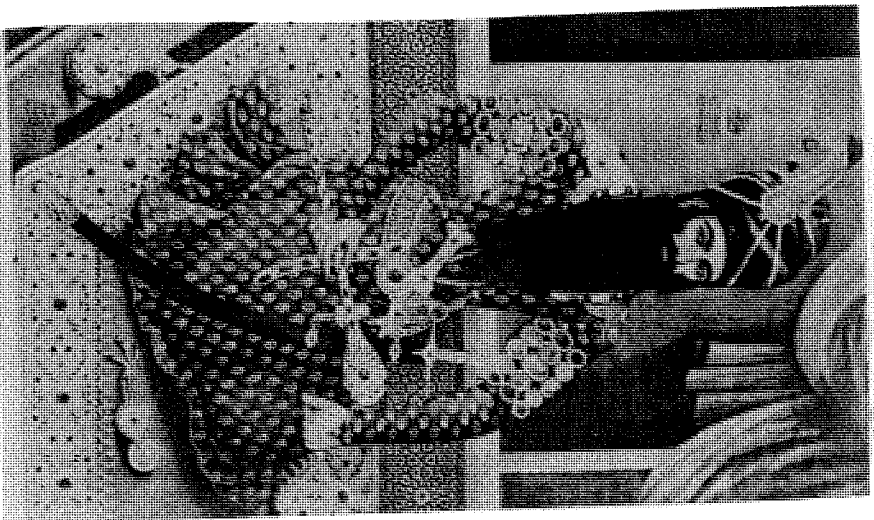




42. Chughtai, From the Balcony



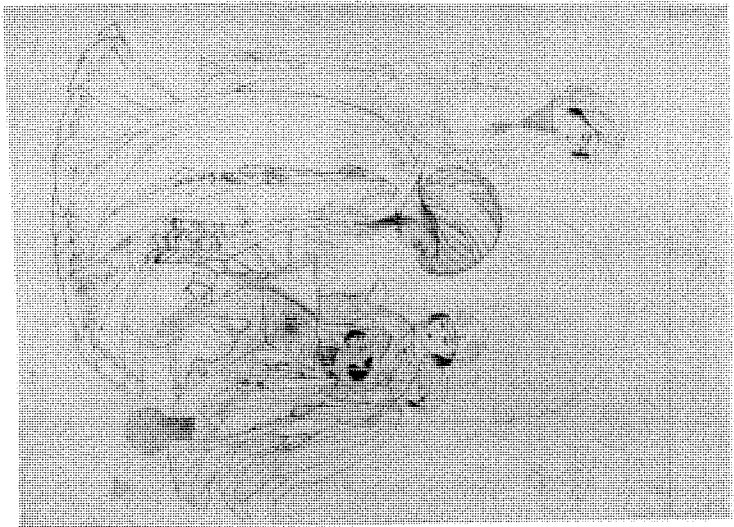
43. A Girl Playing a  
Mandolin, Qajar Period



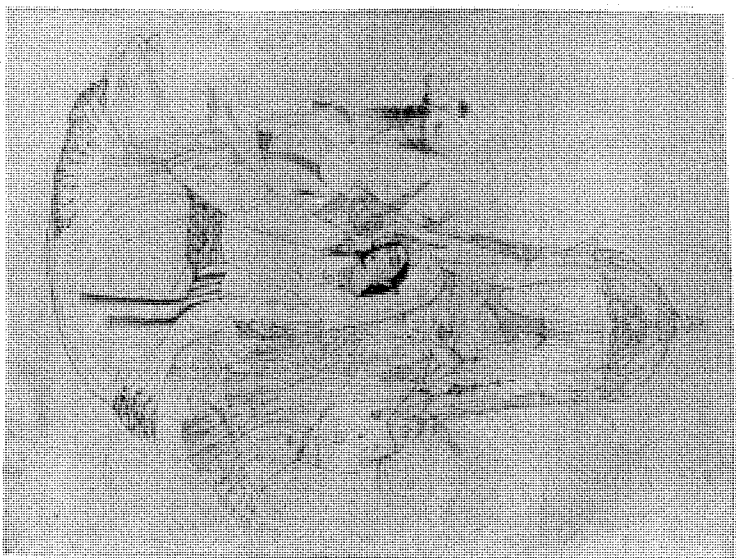
44. Mirza Baba,  
Fath 'Ali Shah, Qajar Period



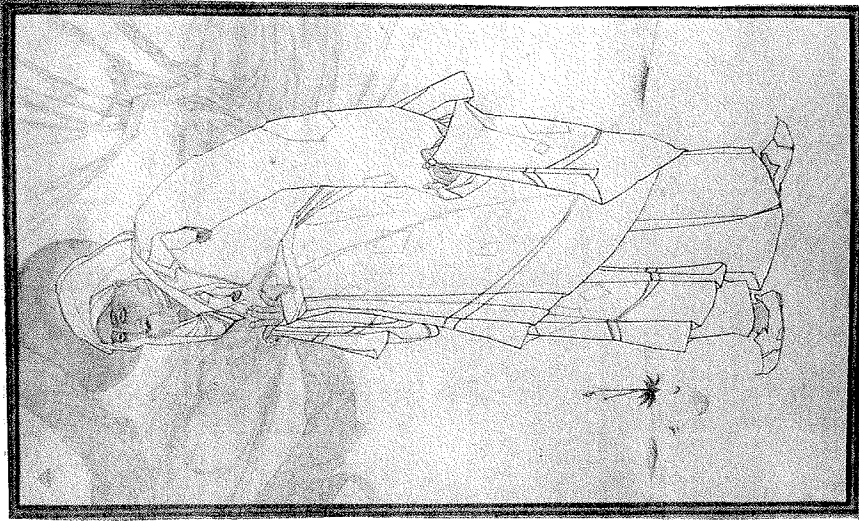
45. Chughtai, Omar Khayyam



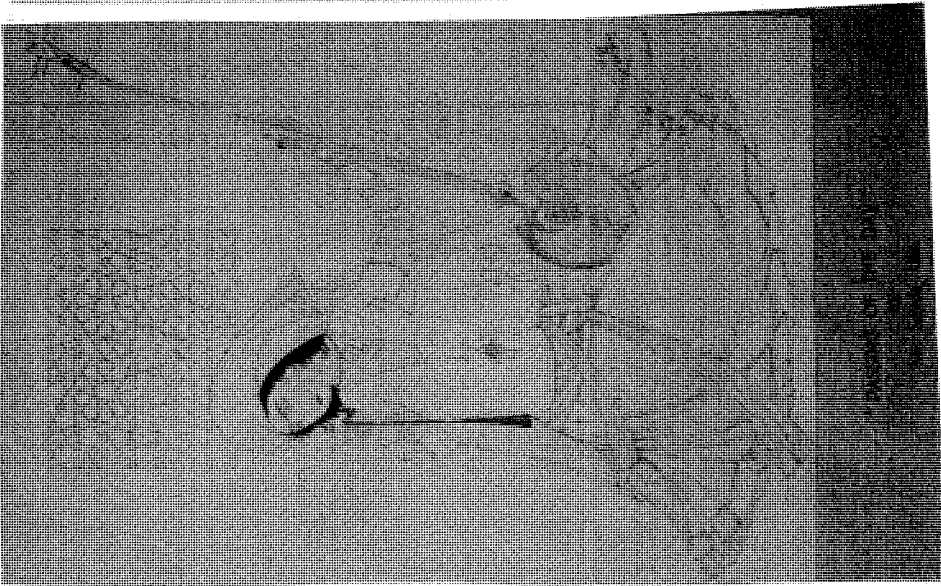
46. Chughtai, The Tutor



47. Chughtai, Princess of Sahara



48. Chughtai, This End



49. Chughtai, Passing of the Day



50. Sarada Ukil, Past Memories

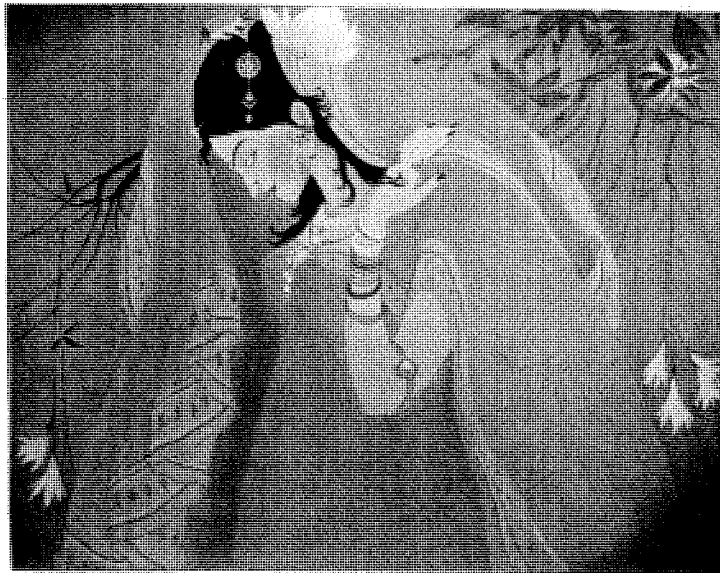




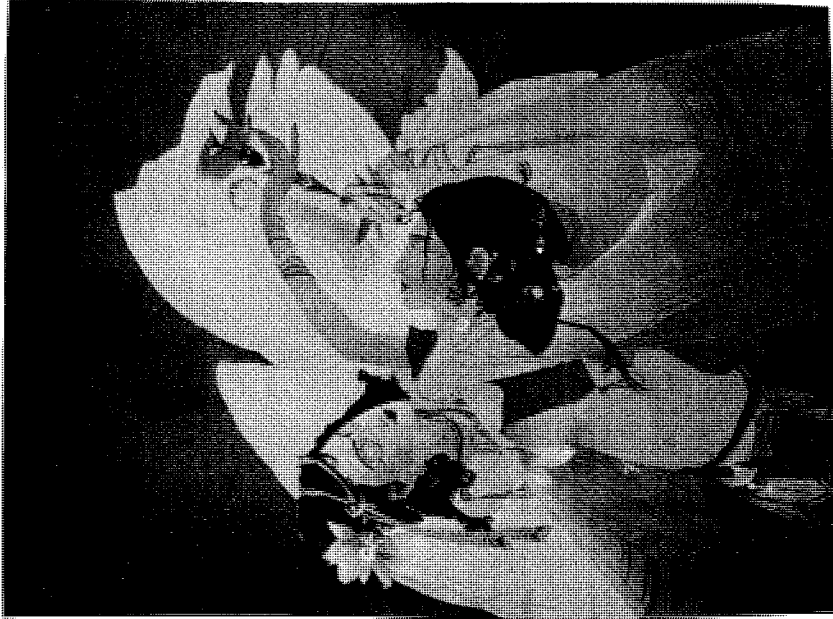
51. Chughtai, Recollections



52. Chughtai, Captive Bird



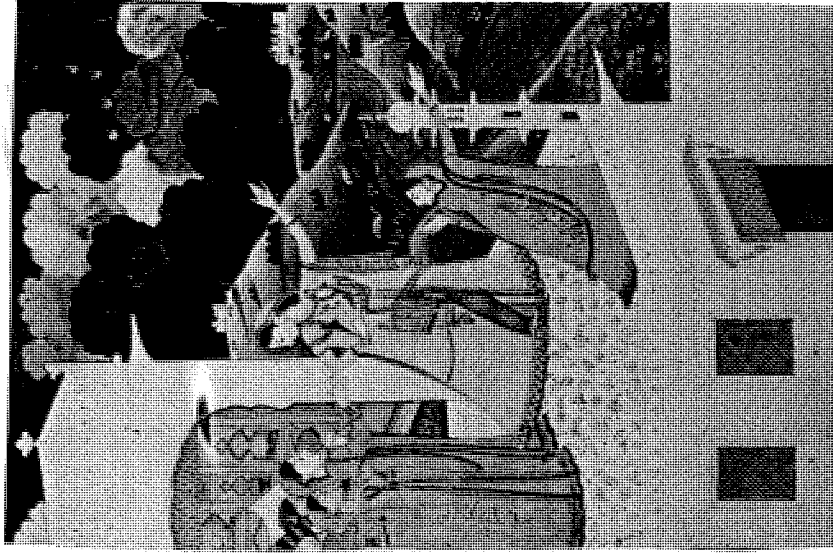
53. Chughtai, Gloomy Radha



54. Chughtai, Holi Dance



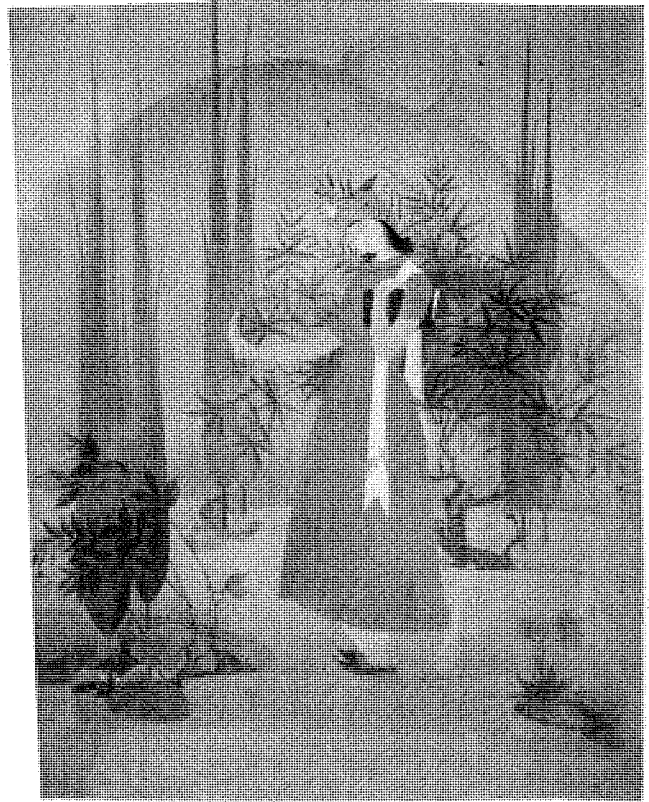
55. Chughtai, Radha-Krishna  
(Sunder Valley)



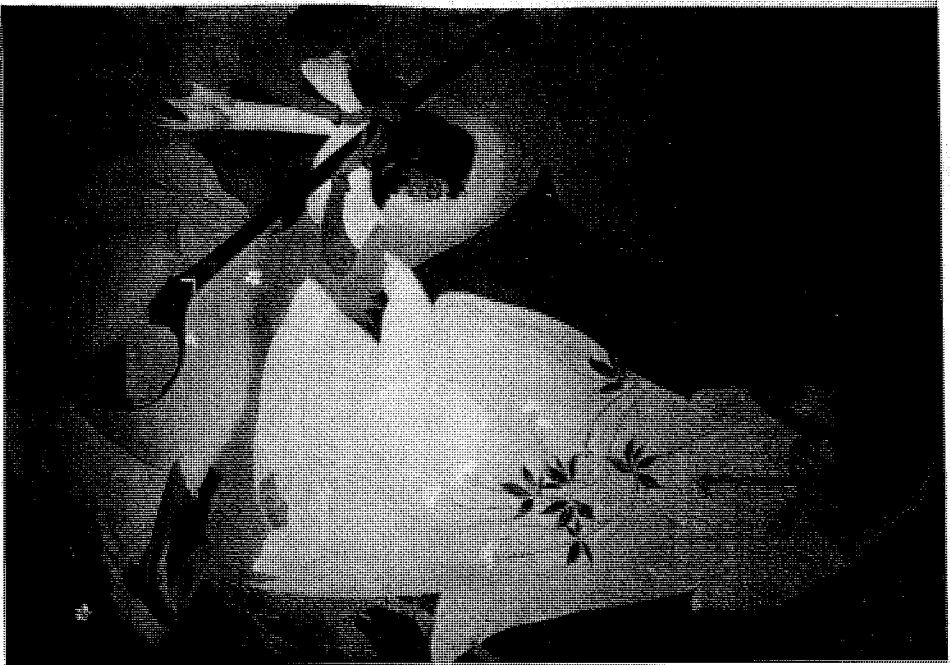
56. A Gathering Storm,  
Mandi miniature painting



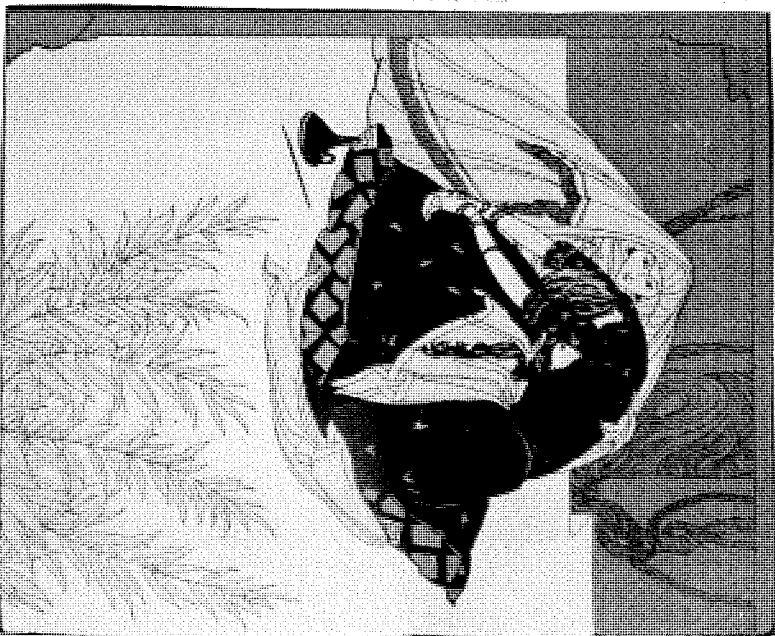
57. Chughtai, Salim-Anarkali



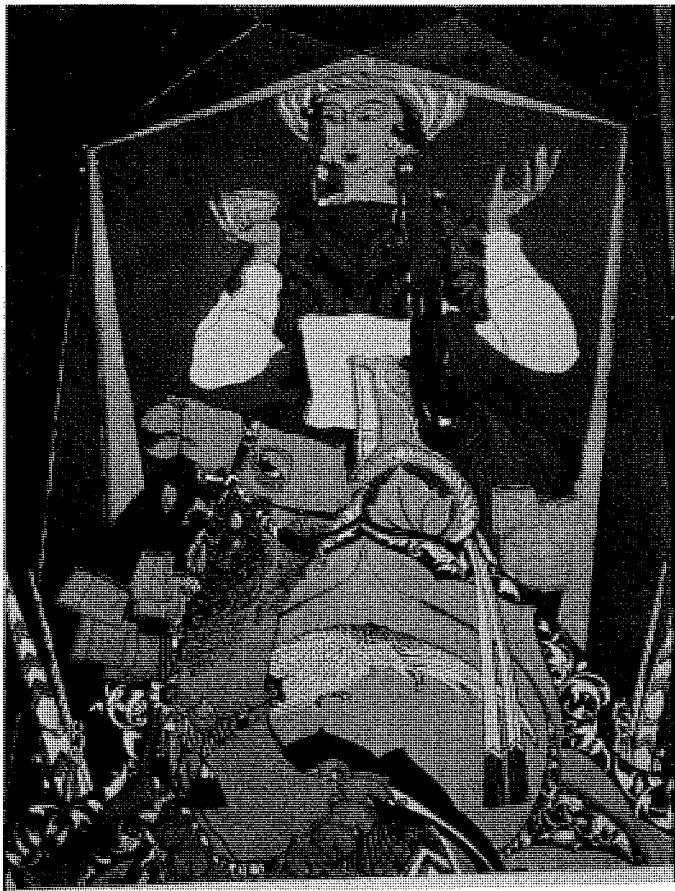
58. Chughtai, Reverie



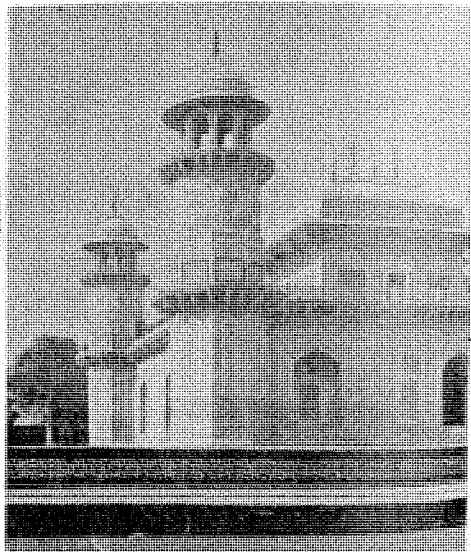
59. Chughtai, lady in a tree



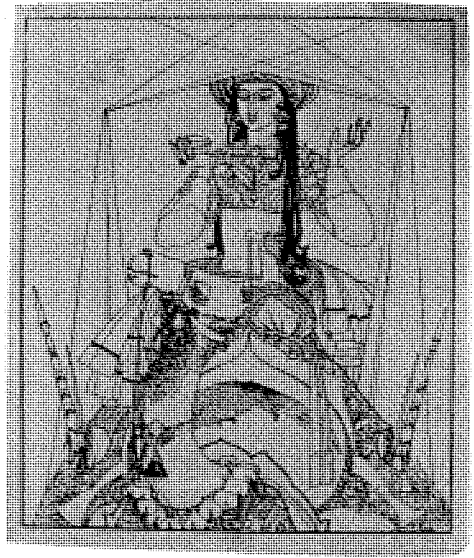
60. Chughtai, two women



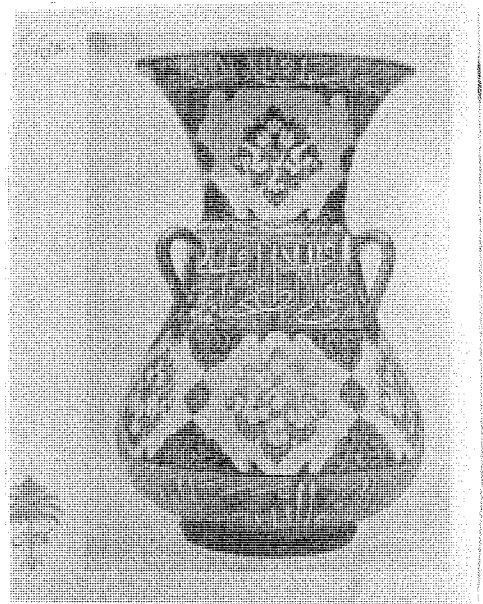
61. Chughtai, camel rider



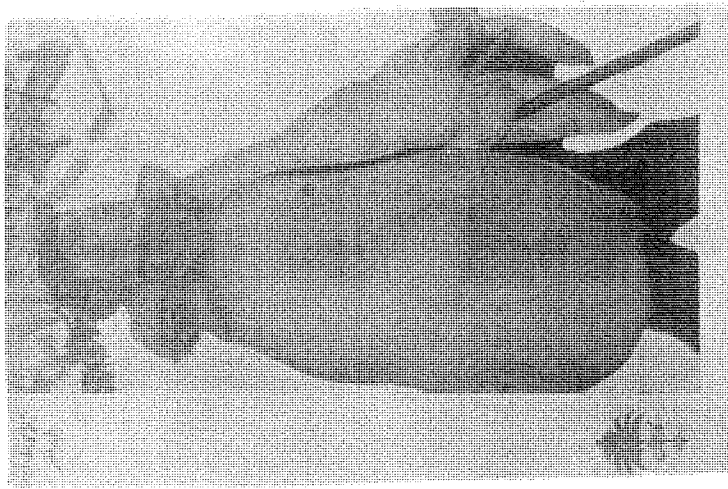
63. photograph of tomb  
of Itamad ud daula



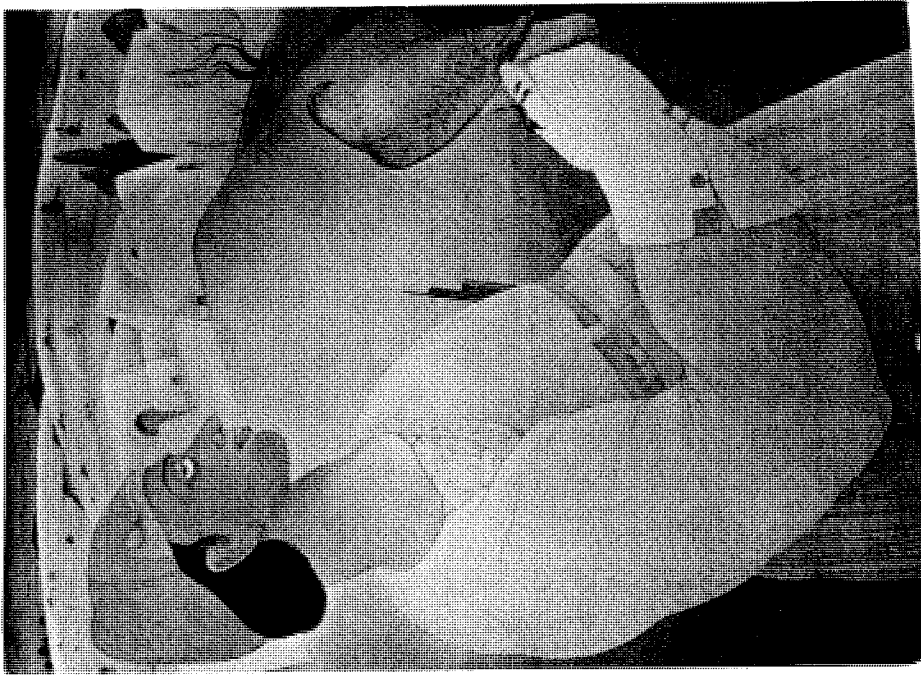
62. Chughtai, camel rider



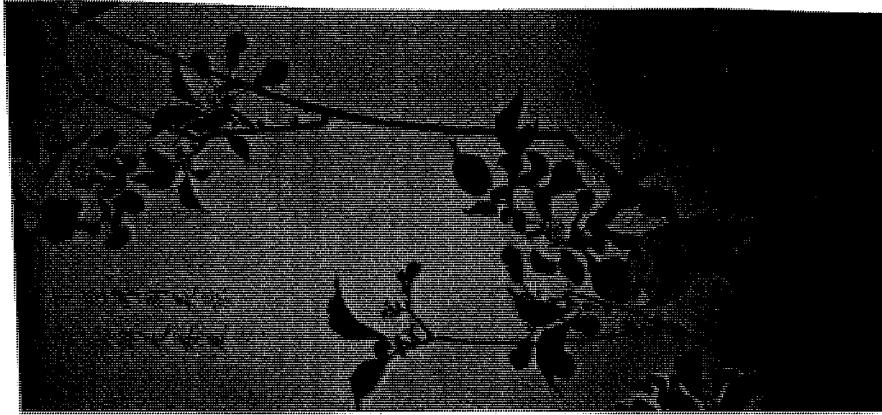
64. photograph of Persian vase



65. snow scene with blind man

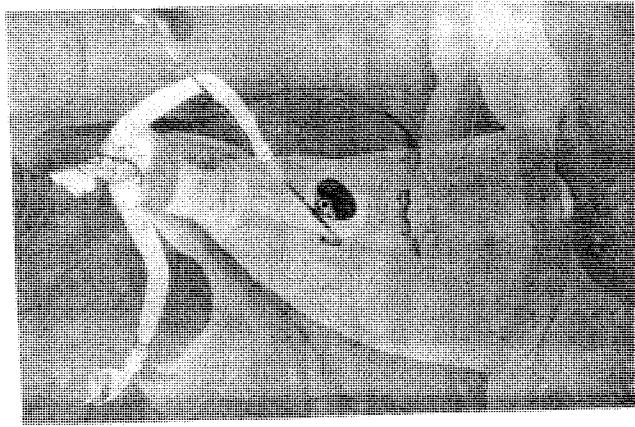


66. Chughtai, Self Revelation

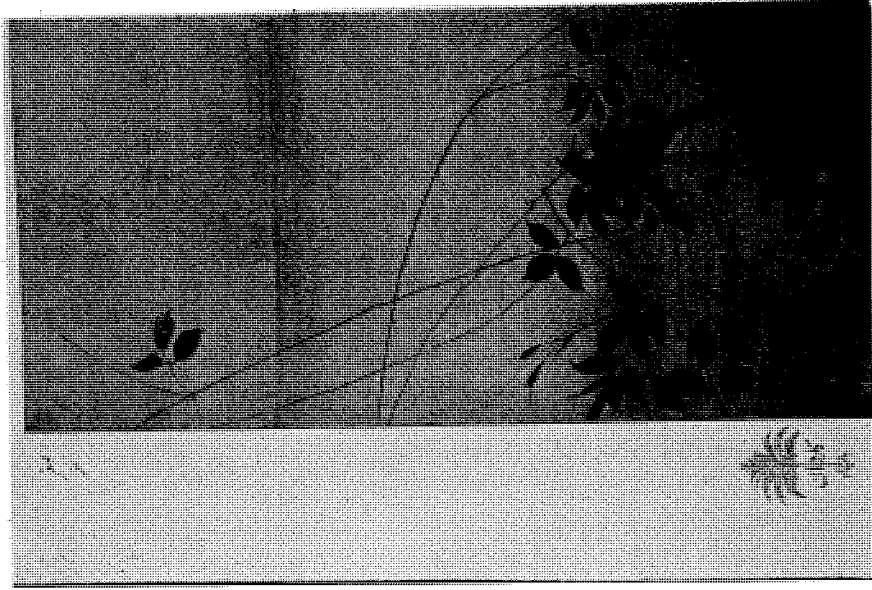


67. Ando Hiroshige,  
Bird in a Cherry Tree

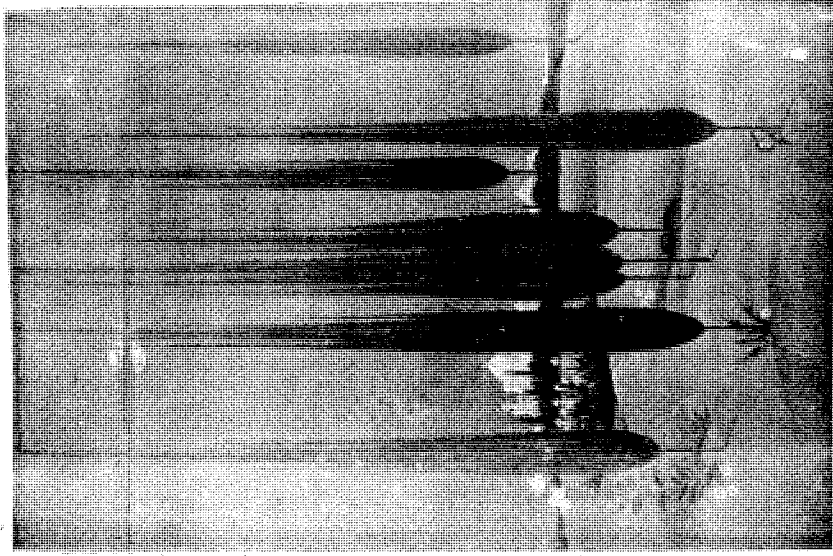




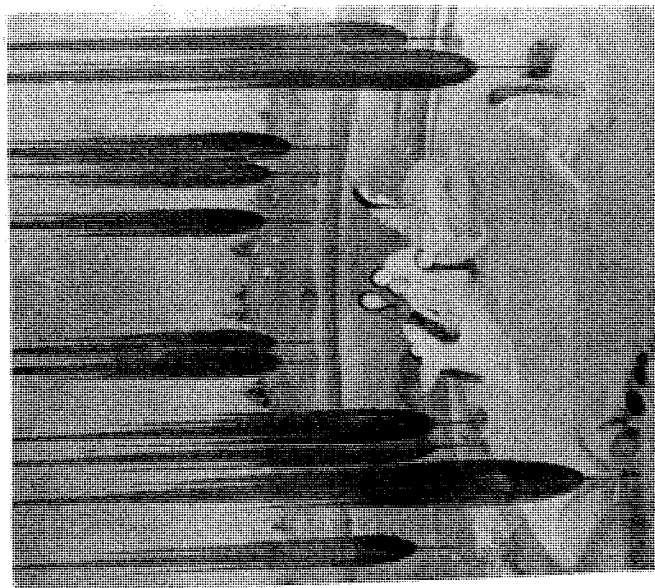
68. Inayat Ullah, Ragni



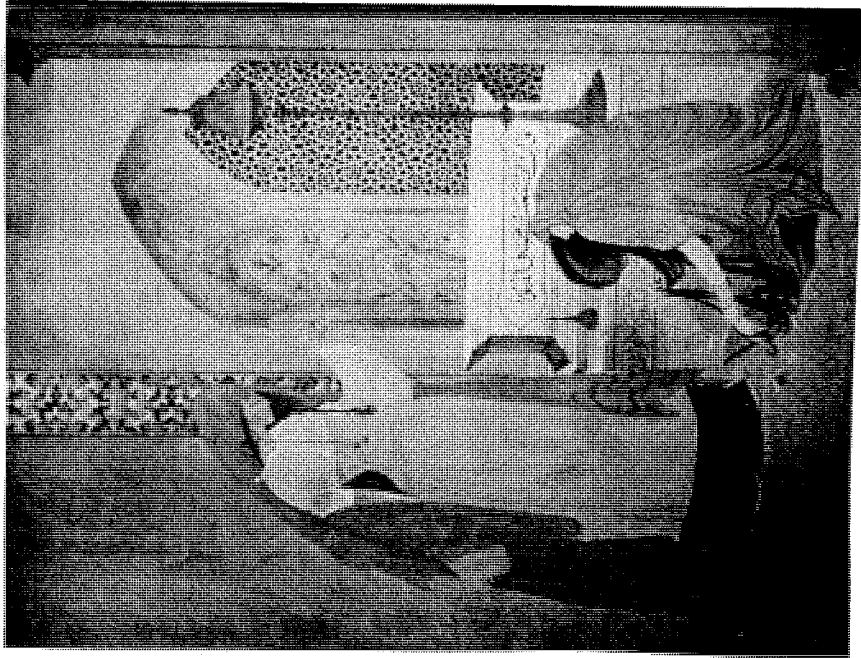
69. Ashgar, Song



70. Chughtai or Ashgar, Night of Shiraz

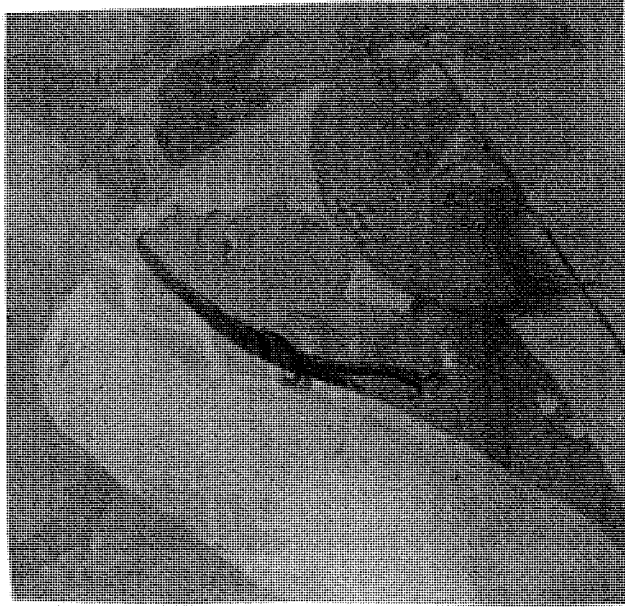


71. Chughtai, ladies among cypresses

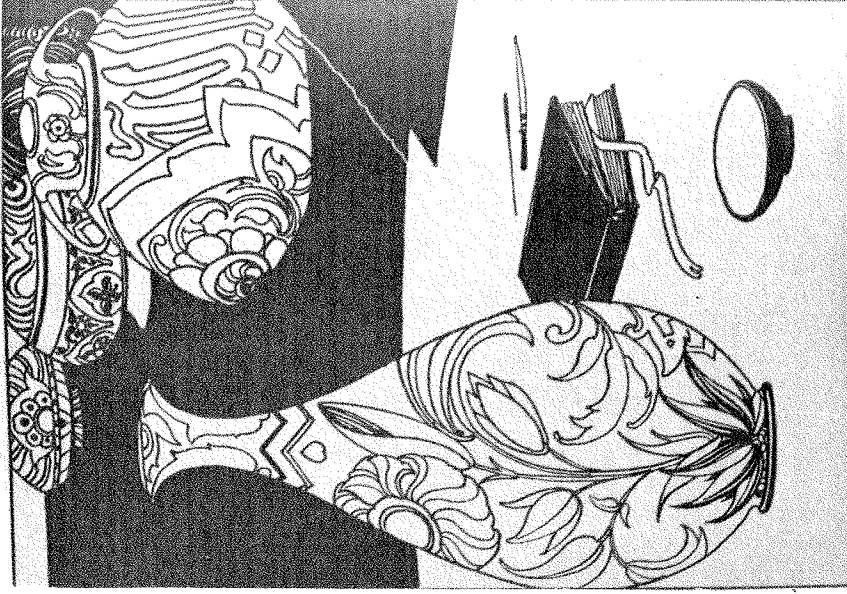


72. Chughtai, Soz o Sauz





73. Chughtai, Maryan



74. Chughtai, still life

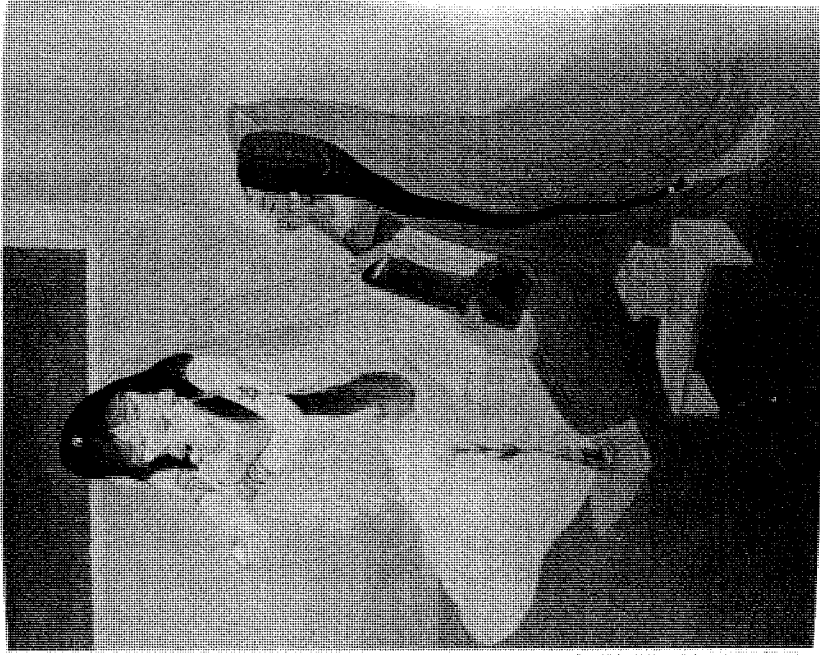


75. Henri Matisse, Joy of Life

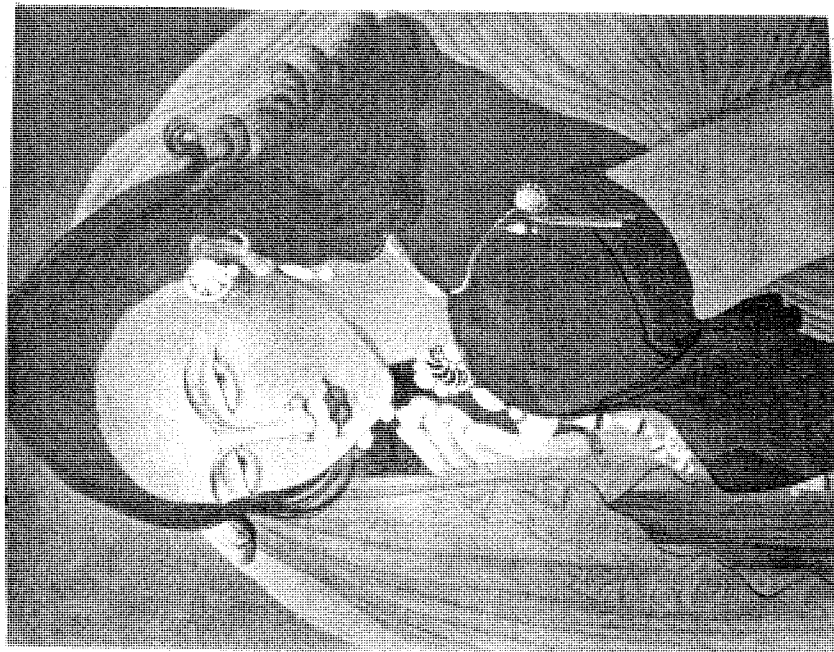
76. Chughtai, landscape with deer



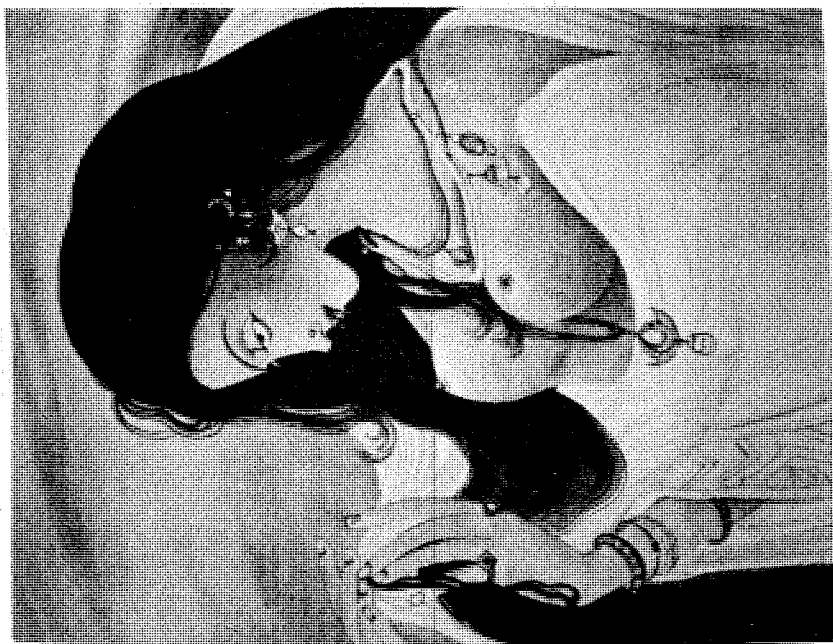
77. Chughtai, At Toilet



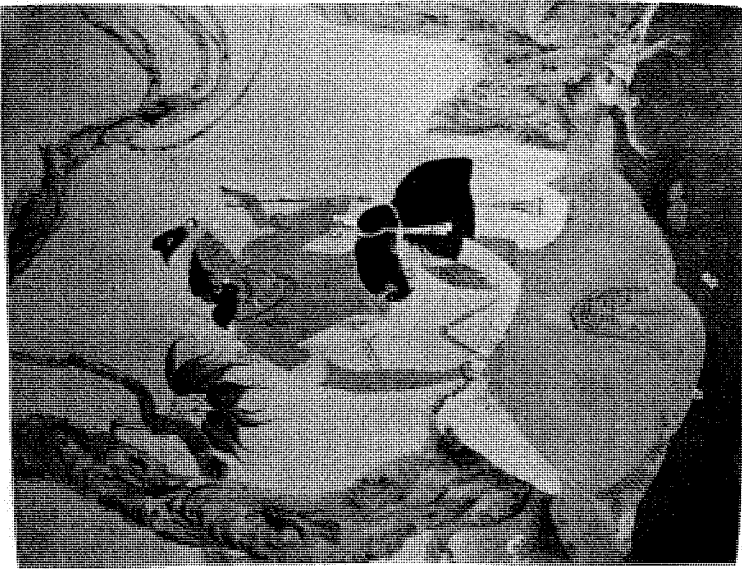
78. Chughtai, At Toilet



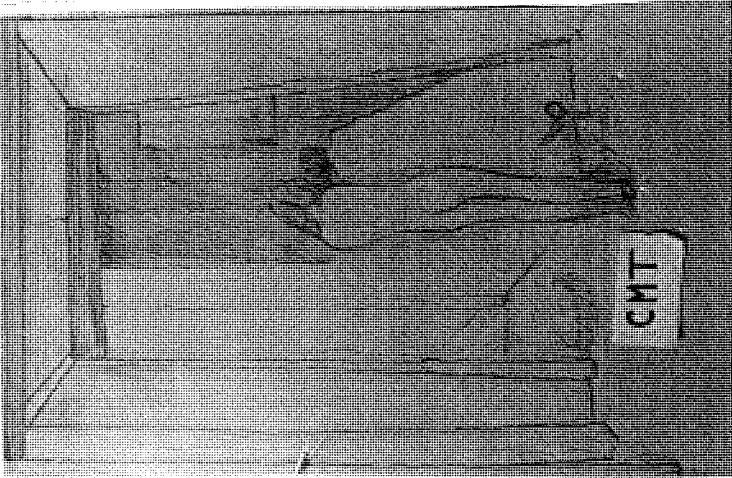
80. Chughtai, woman with dupatta



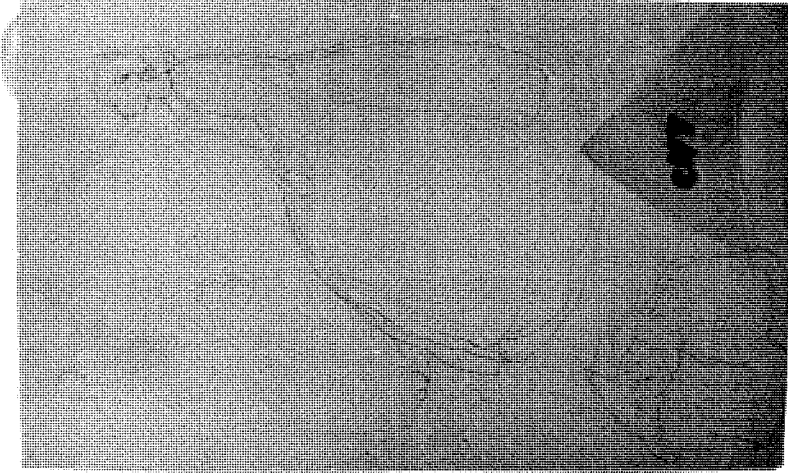
79. Chughtai, woman in profile



81. Chughtai, Bond of Love

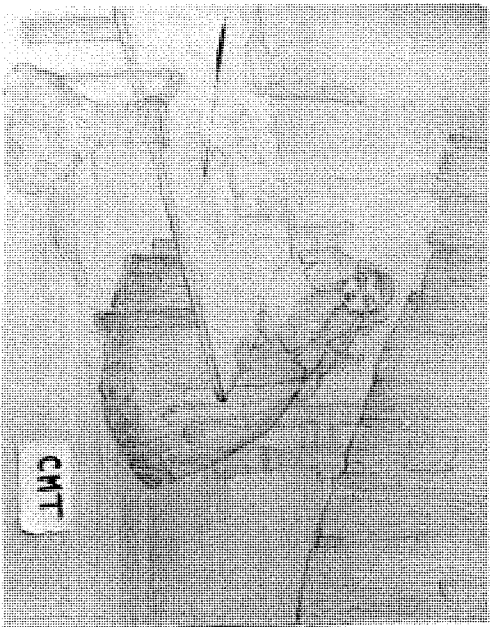


82. Chughtai, child in doorway

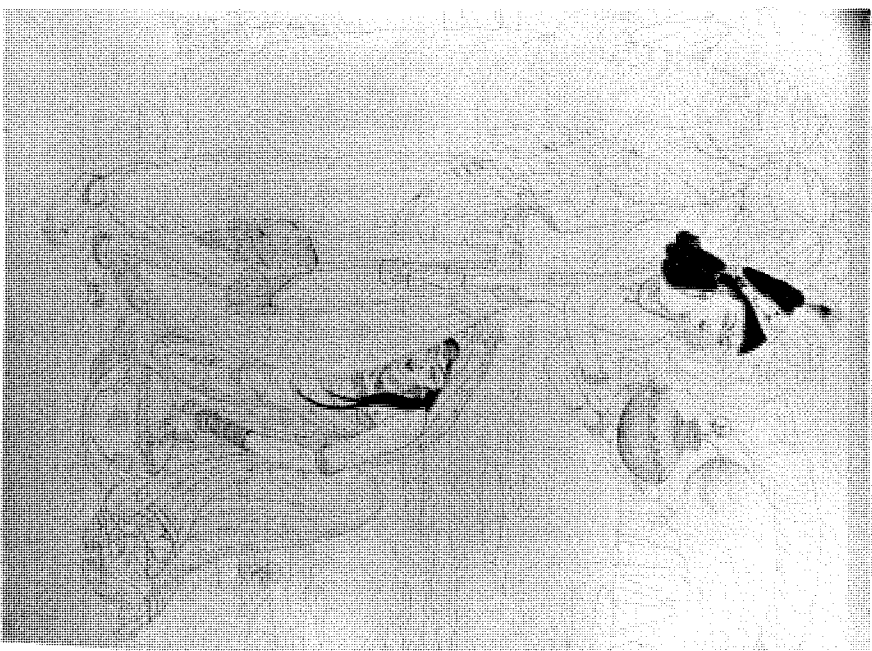


83. Chughtai, seated figure





84. Chughtai, woman seated at a table



85. Chughtai, Amrit Jai



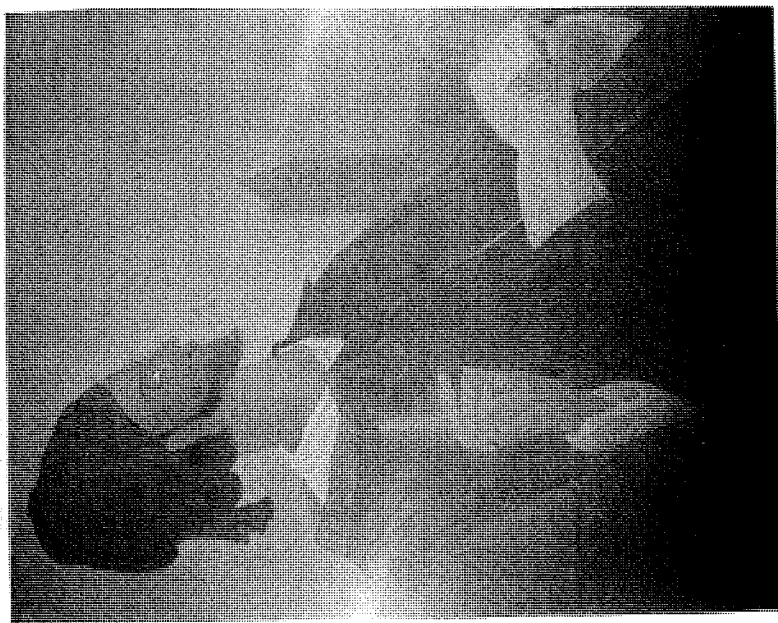
86. Chughtai, On the Window Sill



87. Chughtai, mother nursing her child



89. Chughtai, The Poet.

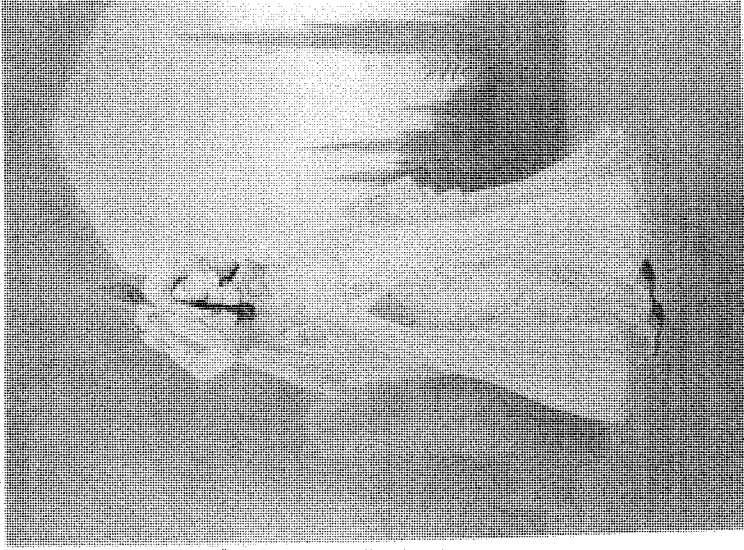


88. Chughtai, The Poet.





90 Chughtai, a long necked couple

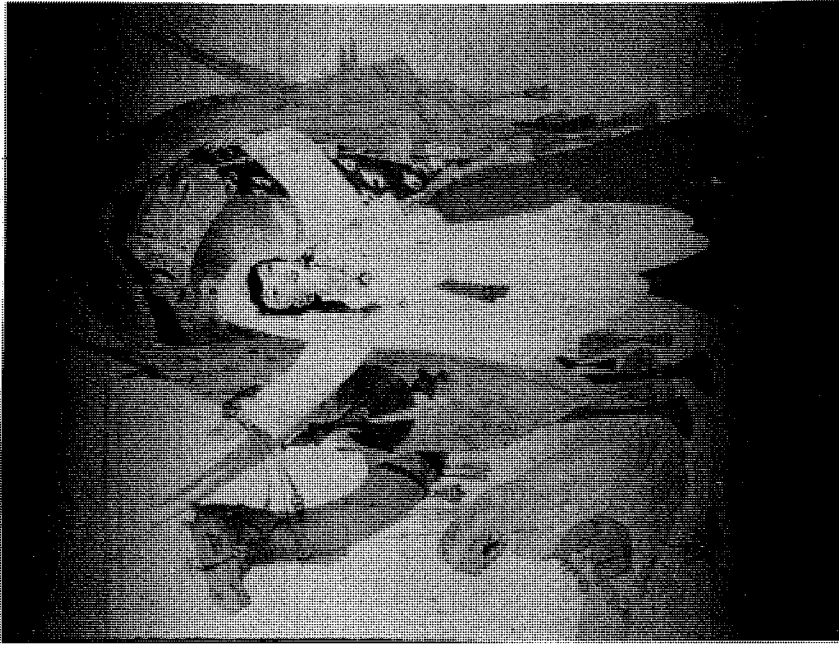


91. Chughtai, a Mughal lady



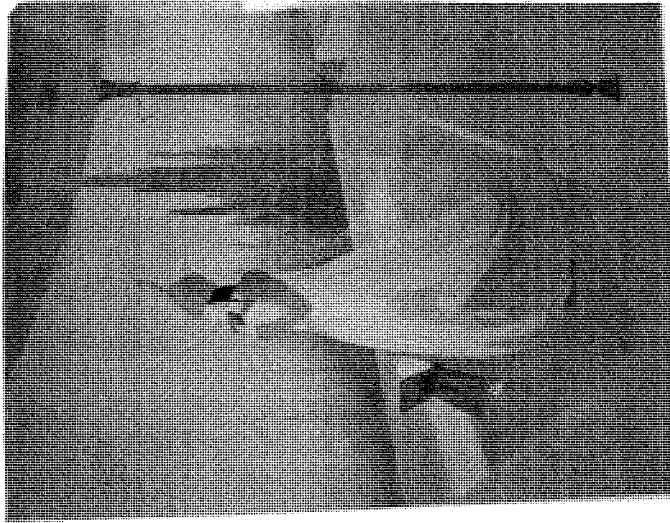
94. Chughtai,

Leila with Camel



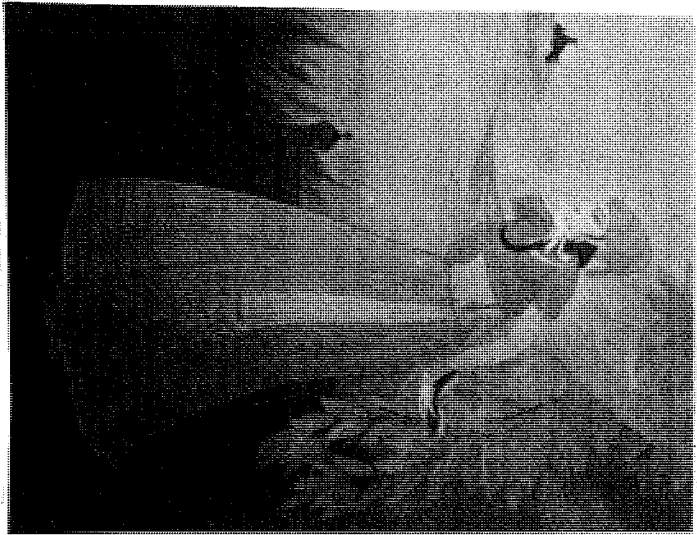
93. Chughtai, Leila with Camel

Leila with Camel

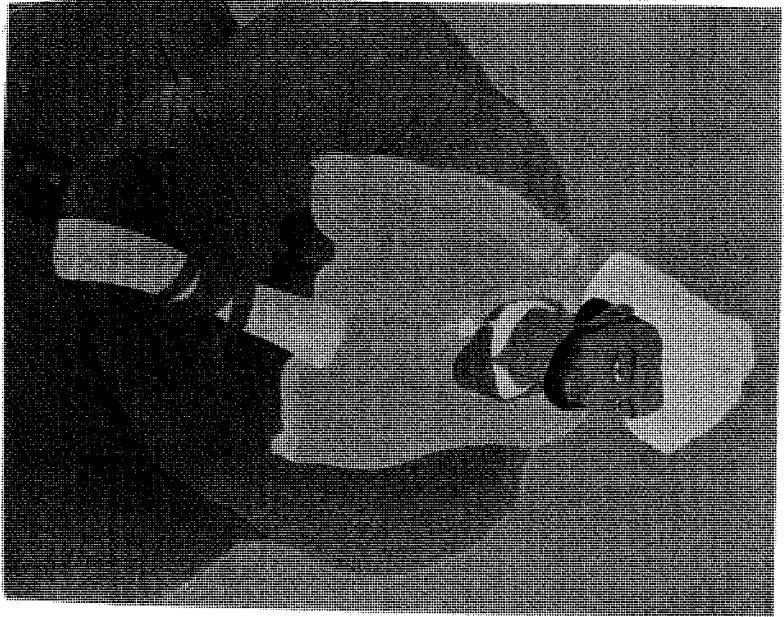


92. Chughtai,

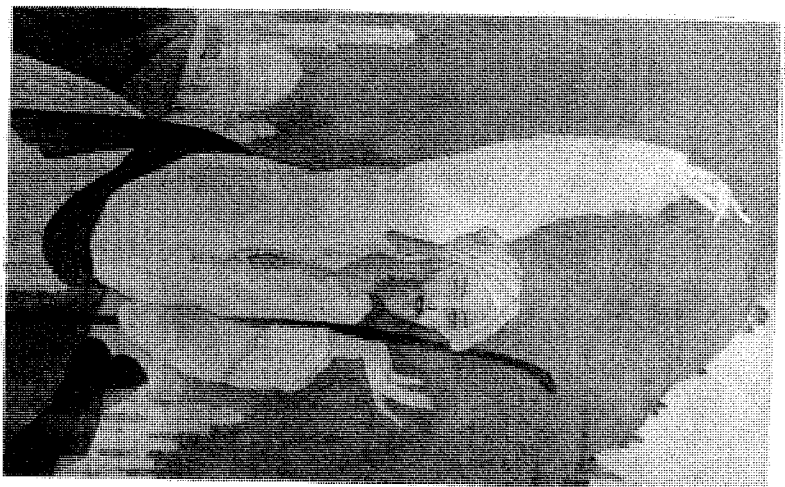
the Ameen ceremony



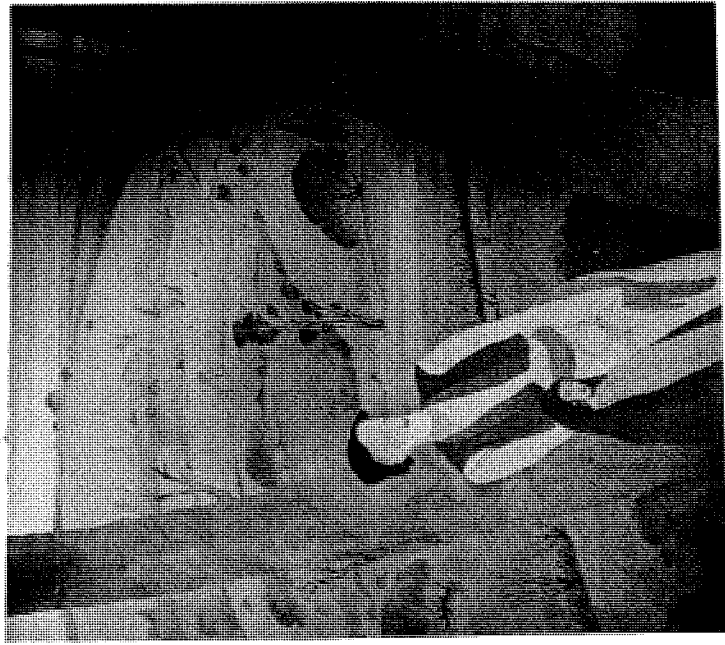
95. Chughtai, Romance



96. Chughtai, Ambassador



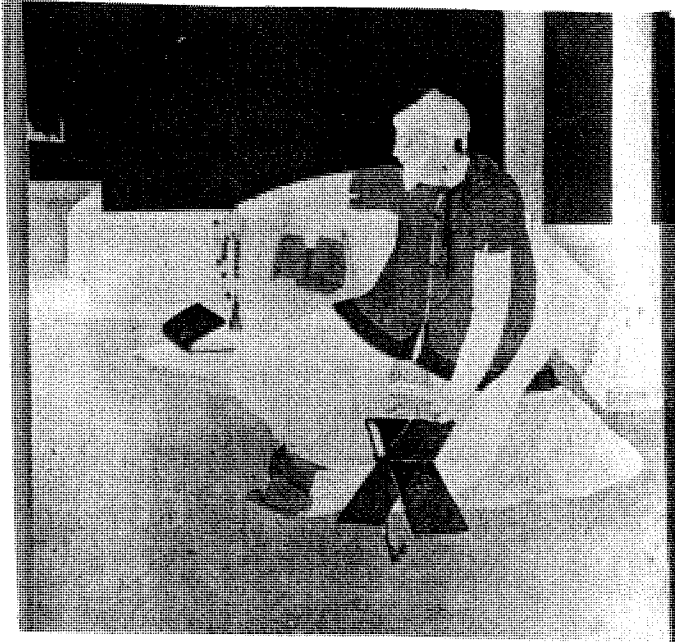
97. Chughtai,  
old man with a staff



98. Chughtai, Green Field



99. Chughtai, Mourning for Baghdad



100. Chughtai, Shah Jahan



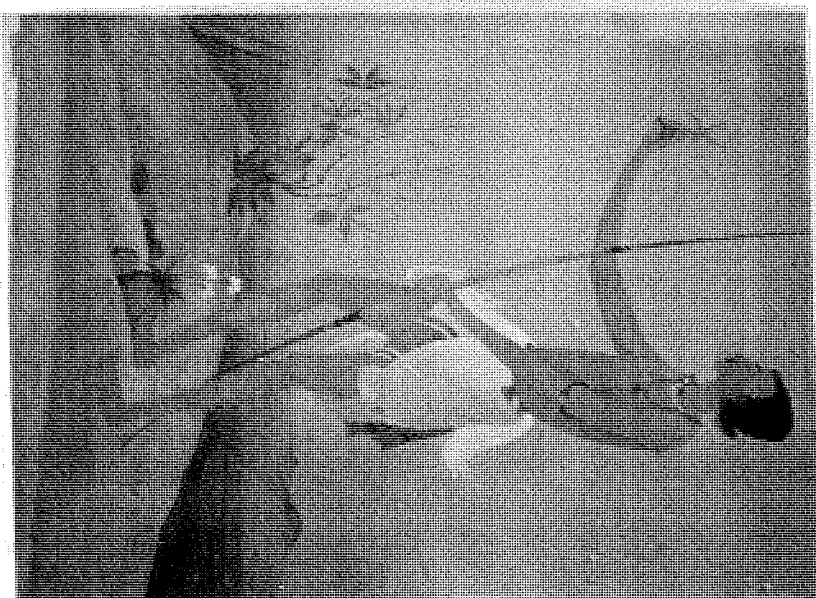
101. Chughtai, a Hindu



102. Chughtai, Bengal Boats

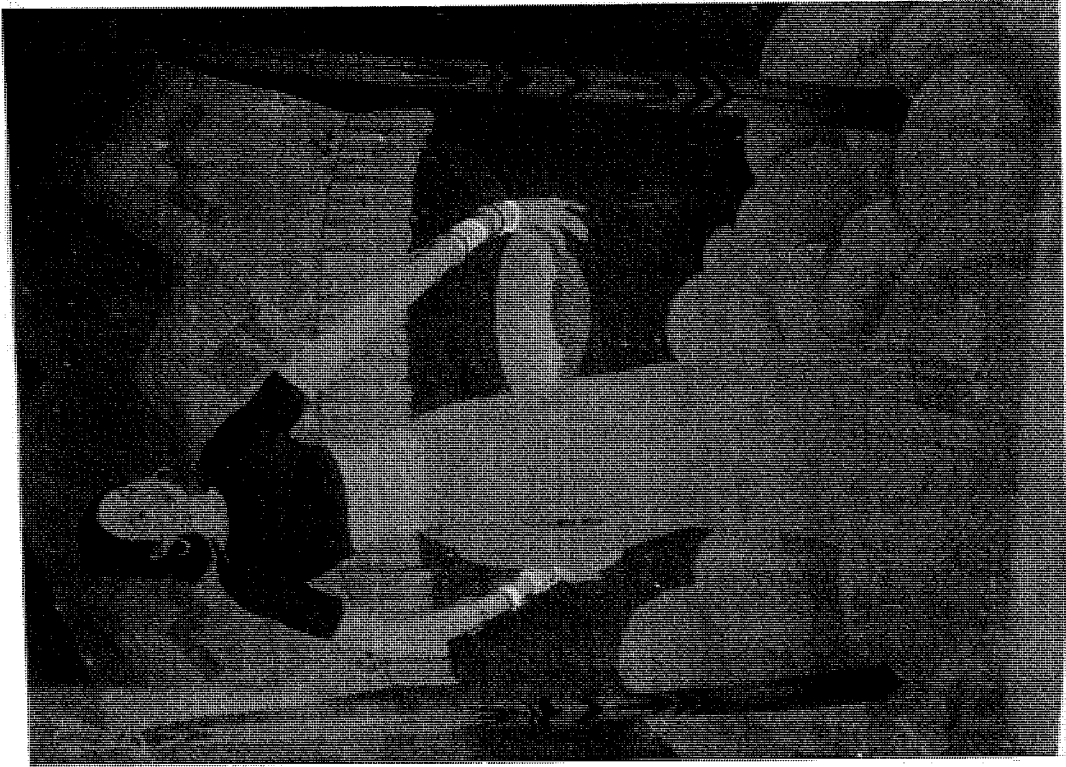


103. Chughtai, Mother of the Twin



104. Chughtai, Young Bhil

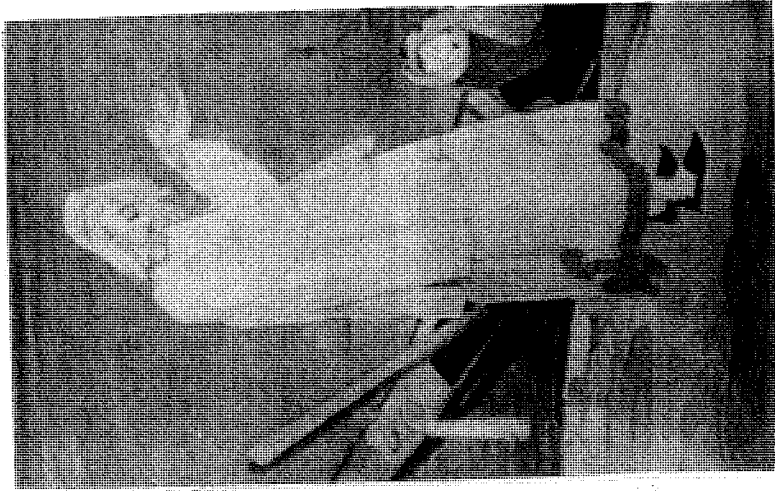




105. Chughtai, Dasi



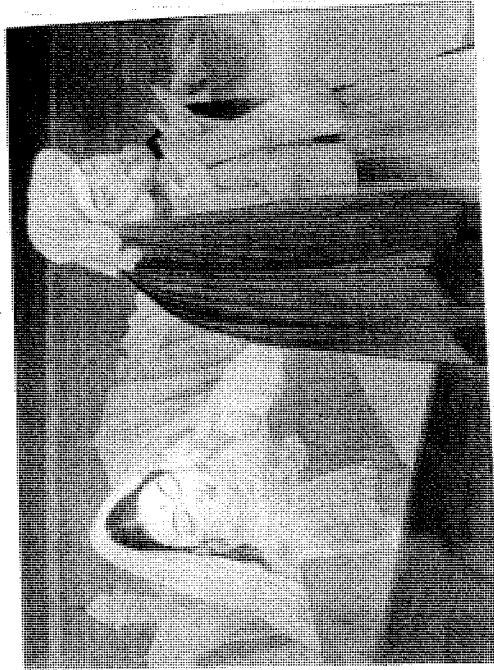
106. Chughtai, Mainun



109. Chughtai,  
refugee at river

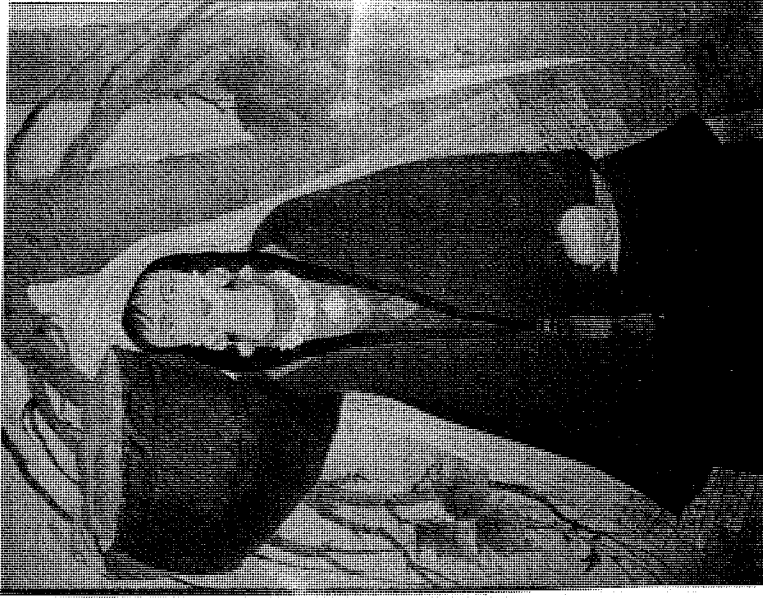


108. Chughtai,  
handing over the child



107. Chughtai, man and woman

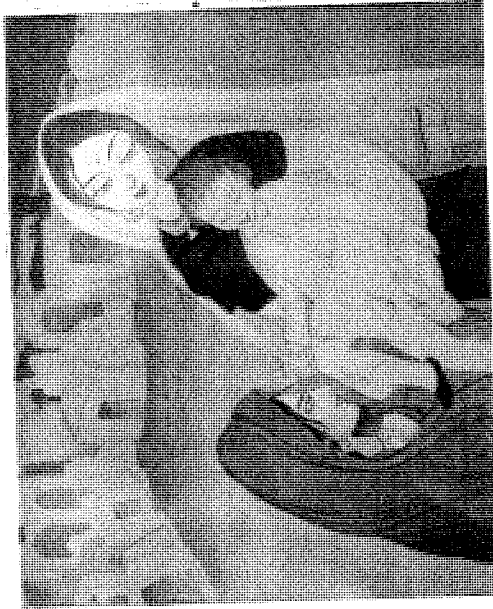




112. Chughtai, The Apple girl



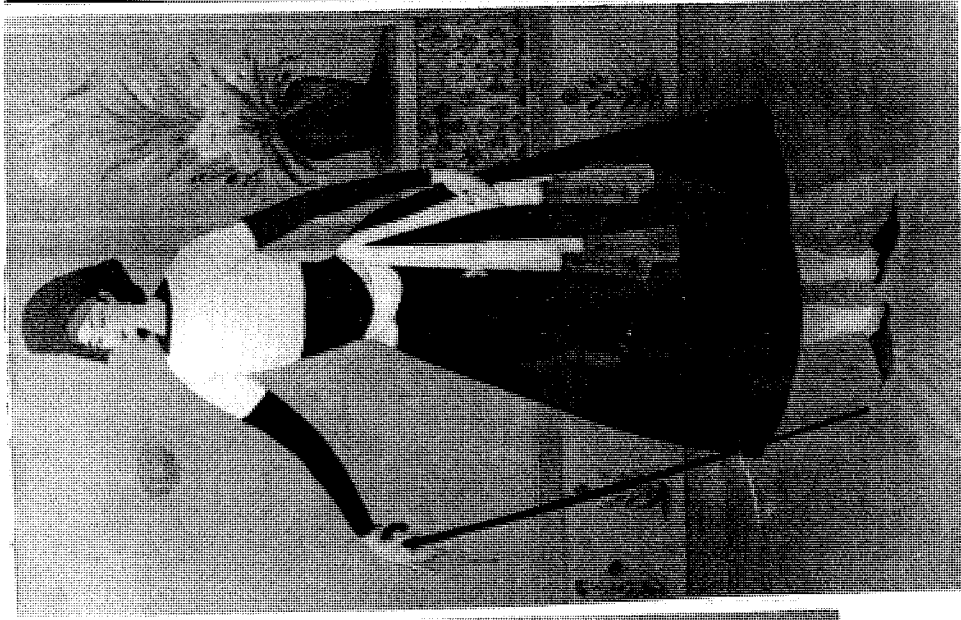
111. Chughtai, girl with  
a bee on her finger



110. Chughtai,  
extra Safar painting



115. Chughtai, Determination



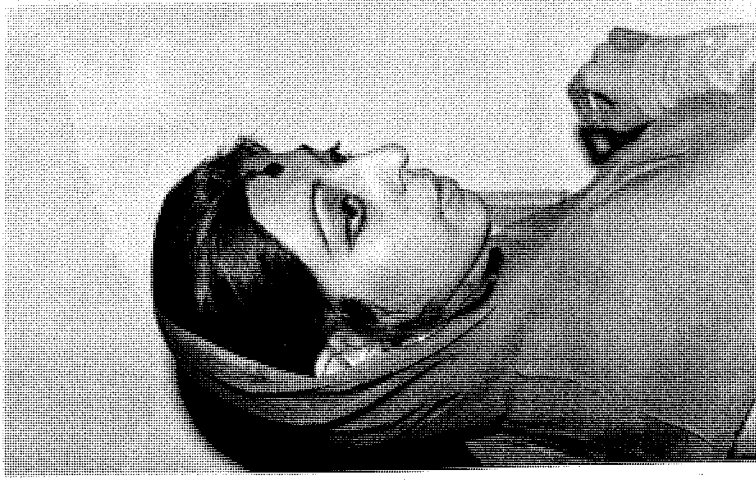
114. Chughtai, a splay-footed Mughal



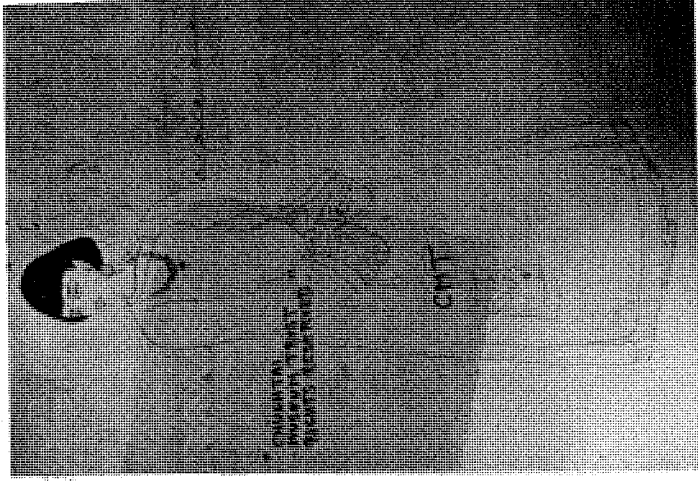
113. Chughtai, Apple Girl



116. Chughtai, Nadra with jug



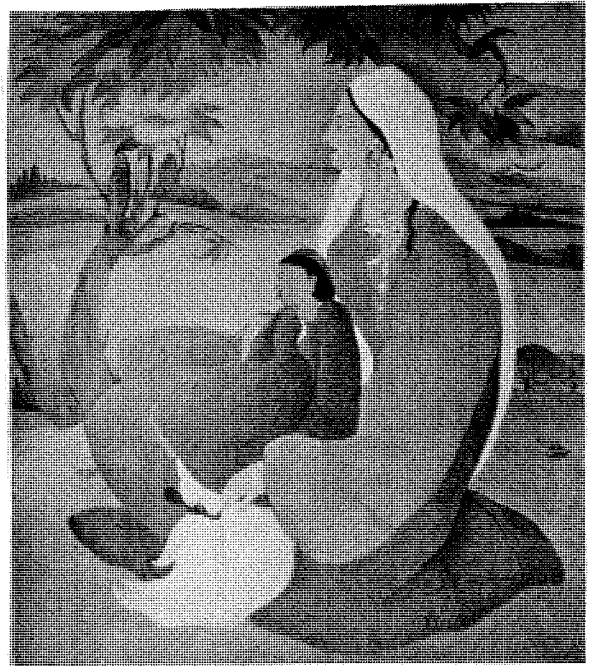
117. photograph of Nadra, 1978



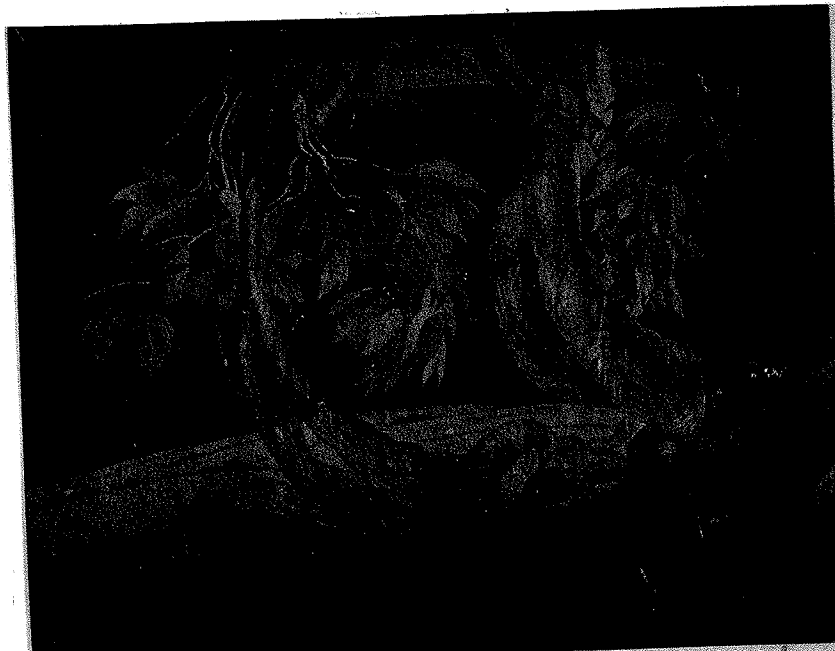
118. Chughtai,  
standing woman



119. Chughtai, standing woman



120. Chughtai,  
Under the Apple Tree



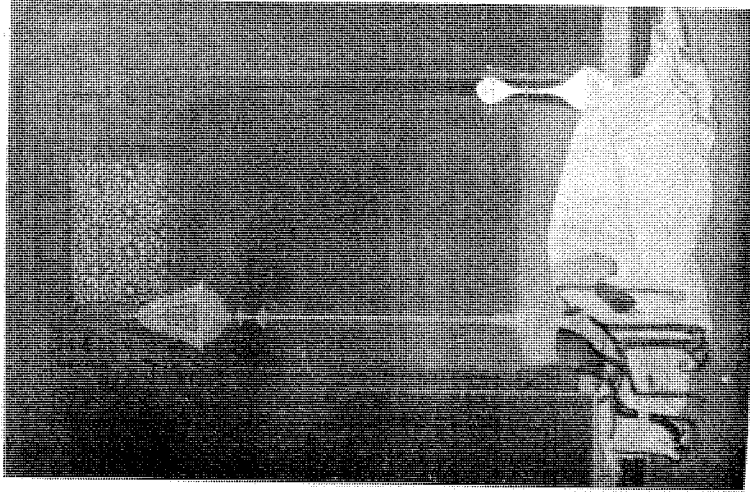
121. Chughtai, Landscape



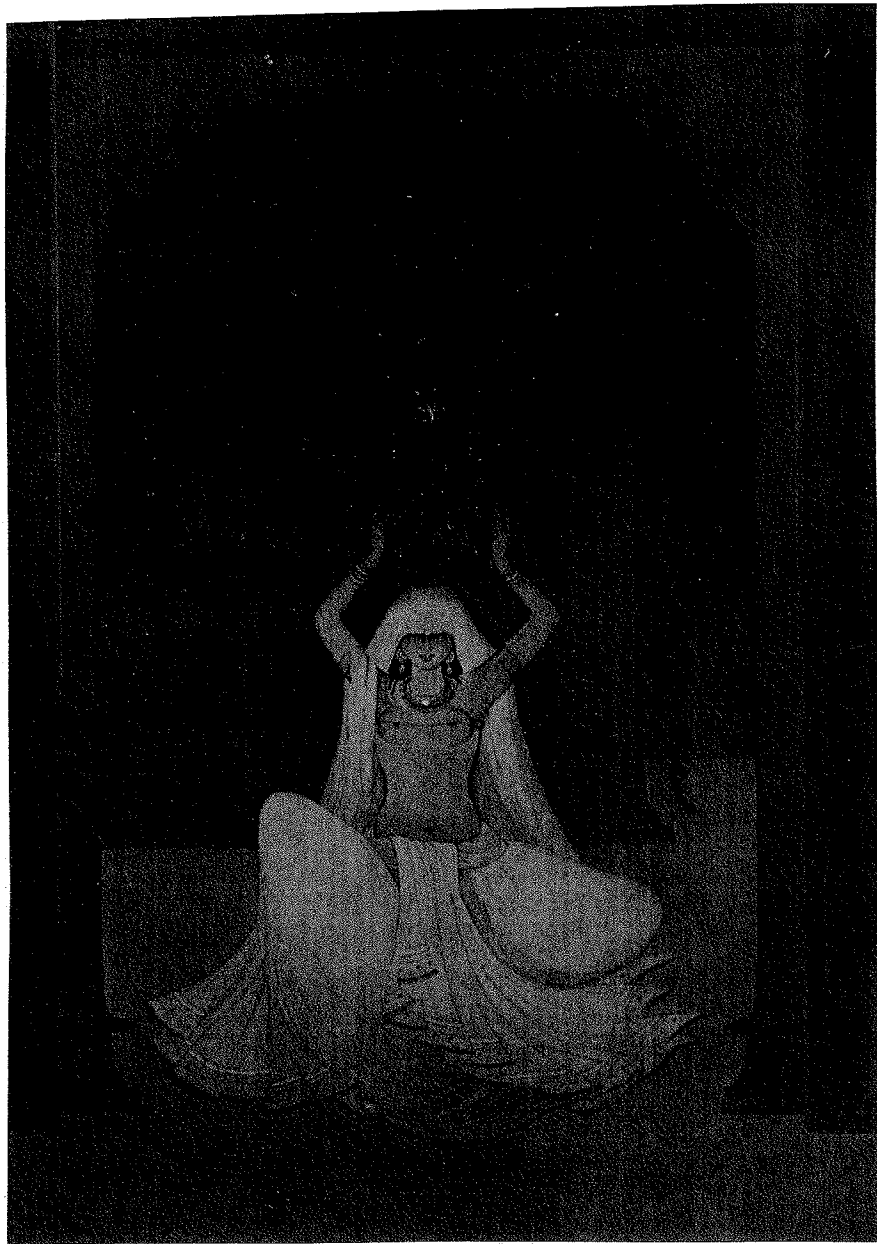
122. Chughtai, Scenery



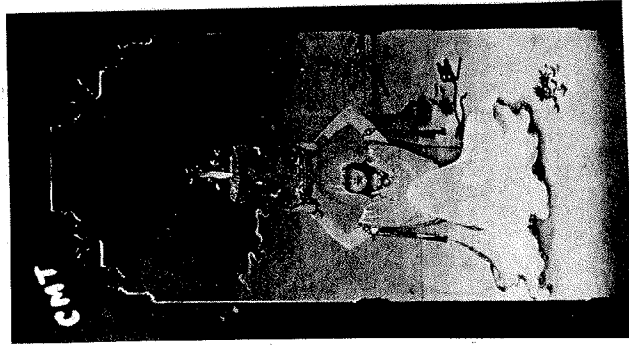
123. Chughtai, Green Valley



124. Chughtai,  
The Extinguished Flame



125. Chughtai, Leadership (Votress).

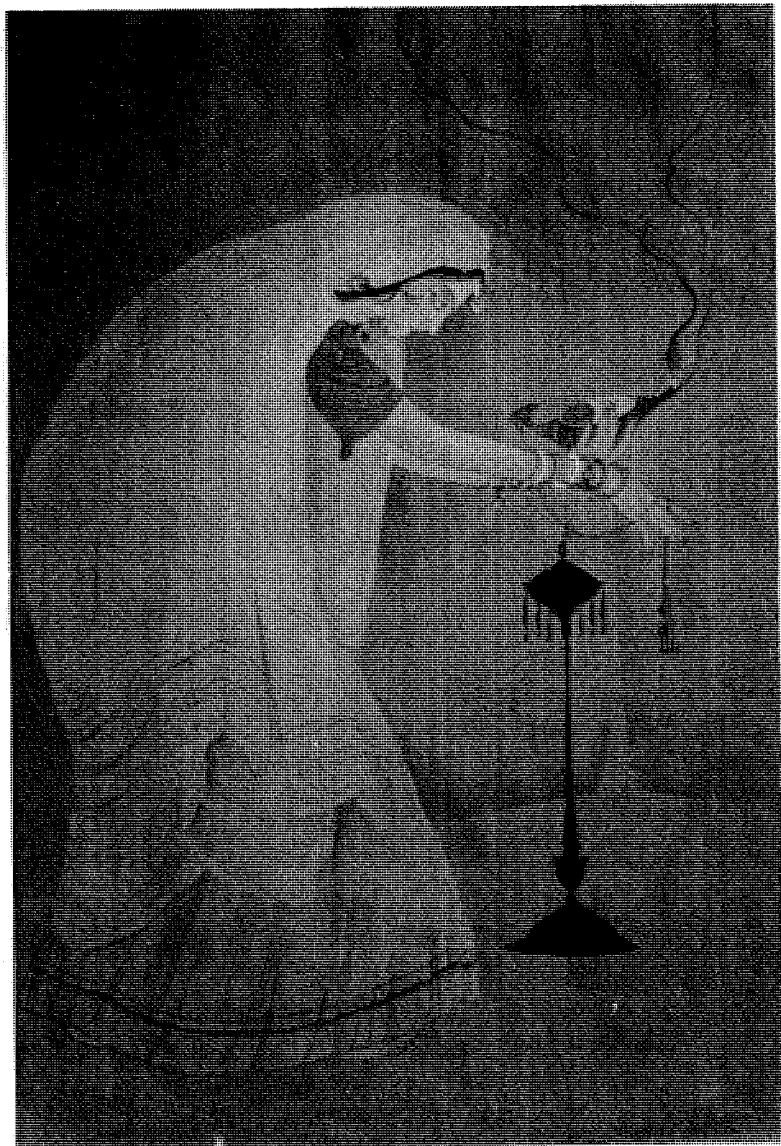


126. Chughtai, Fame



127. Chughtai, Dipak





128. Chughtai, For Love





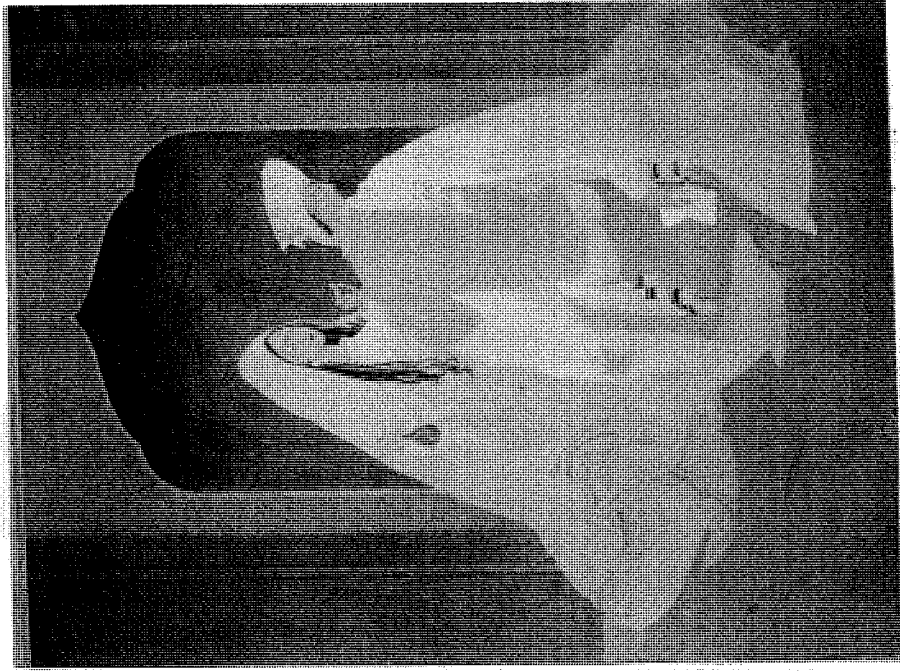
129. Chughtai, Divine Light



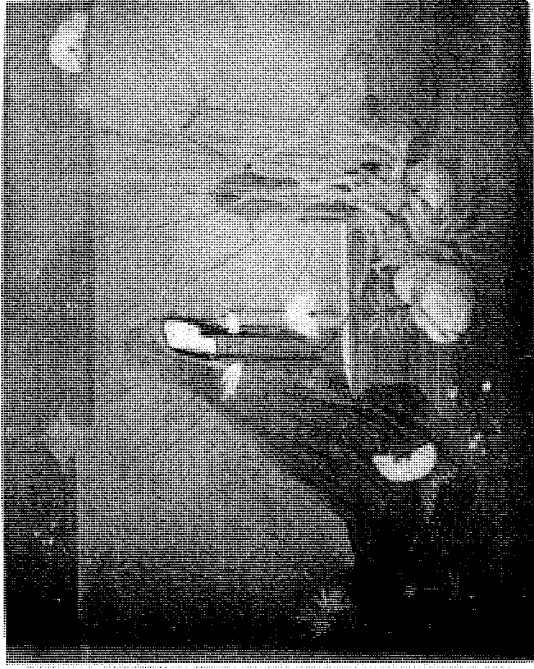
130. Chughtai, Bulbul



131. Chughtai, Poet's Vision



132. Chughtai, Romantic Scene



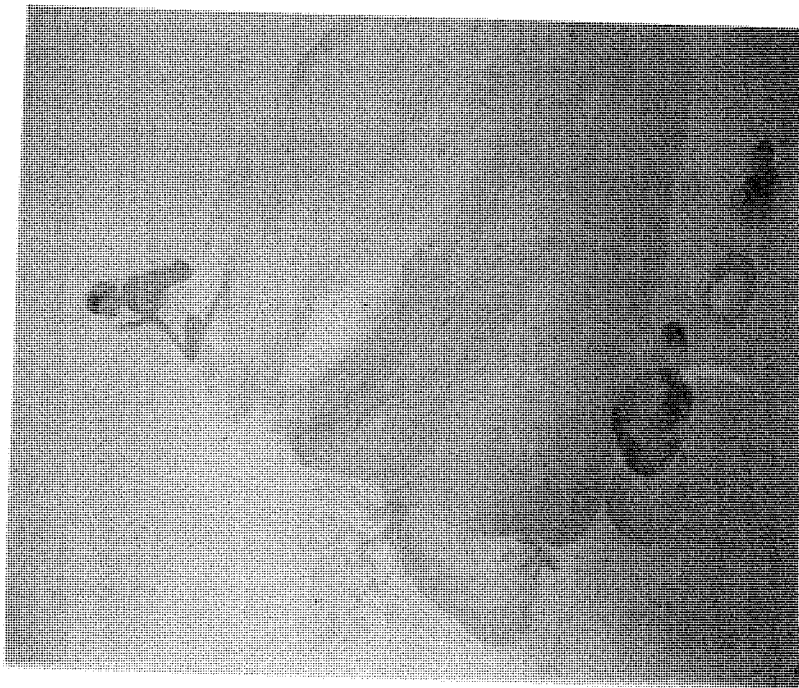
133. Chughtai, The Resting Place



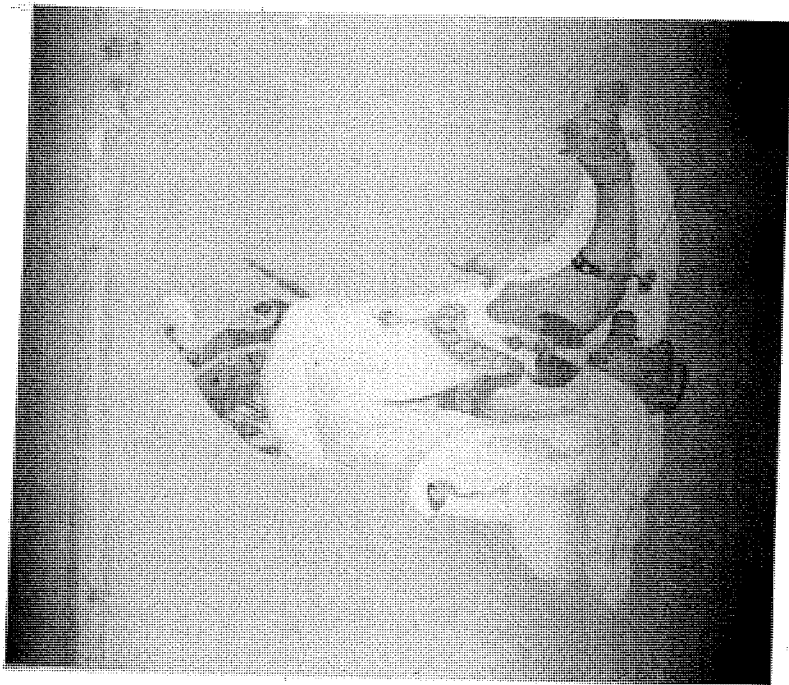
135. Chughtai, Laila-Majnun



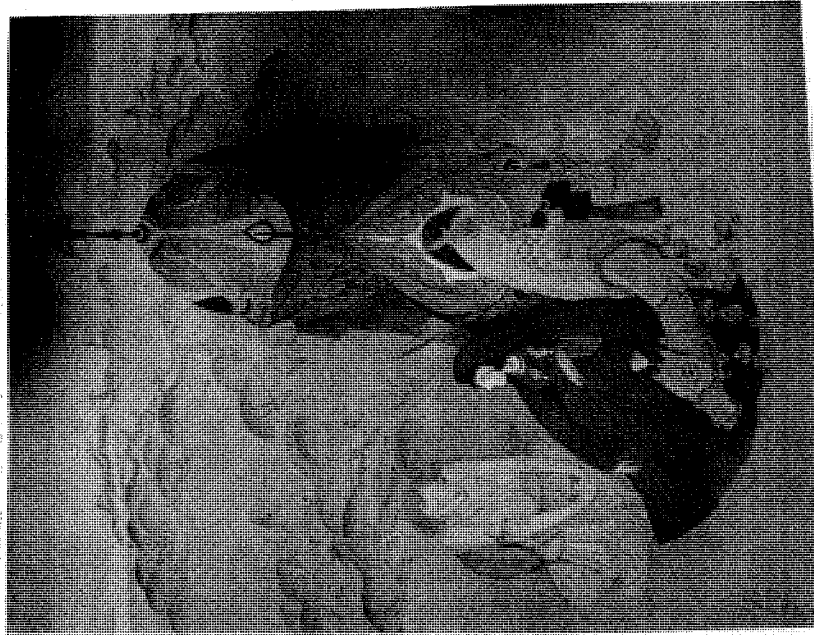
134. Chughtai, Life



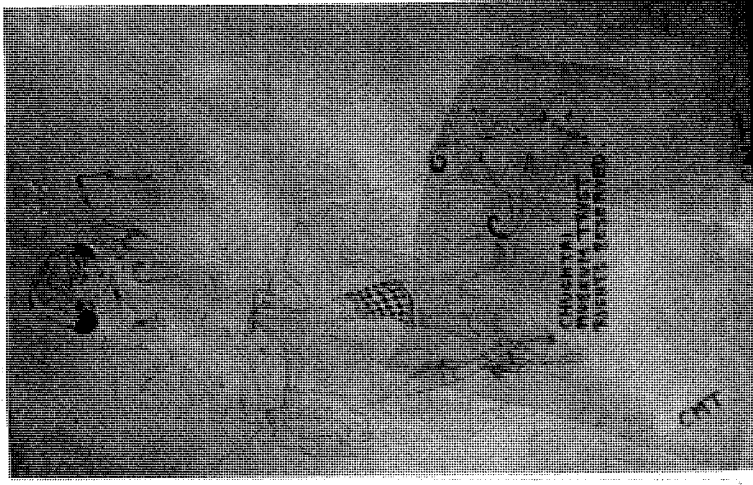
136. Chughtai, Majnun



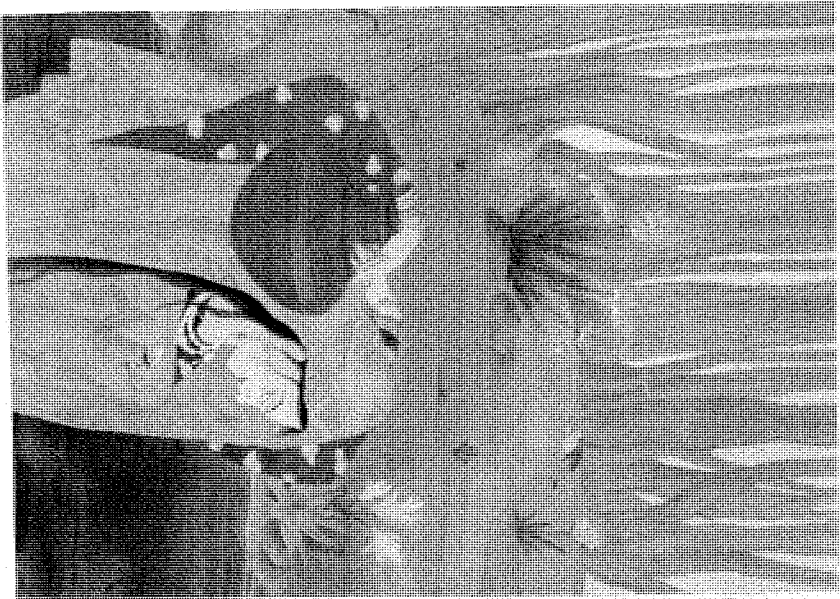
137. Chughtai, Leila



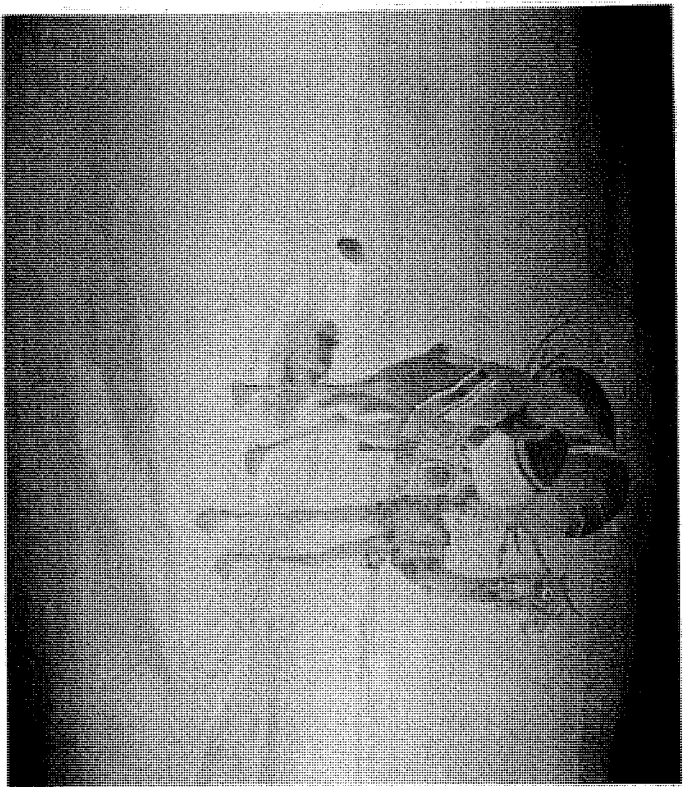
138. Chughtai, The Desert in Love



139. Chughtai, Rajnha on Cow



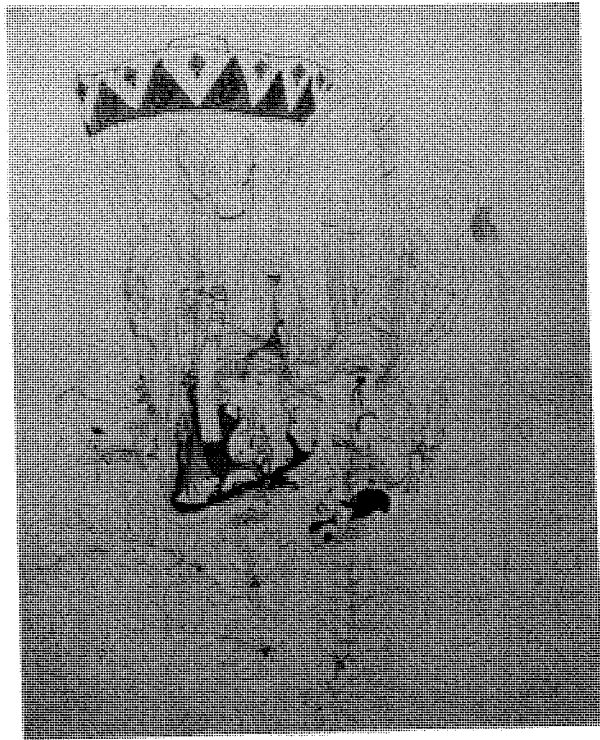
140. Chughtai,  
Sohini at the River Chenab



141. Chughtai, End of the Day



144. Chughtai, The Divine Cowherd.

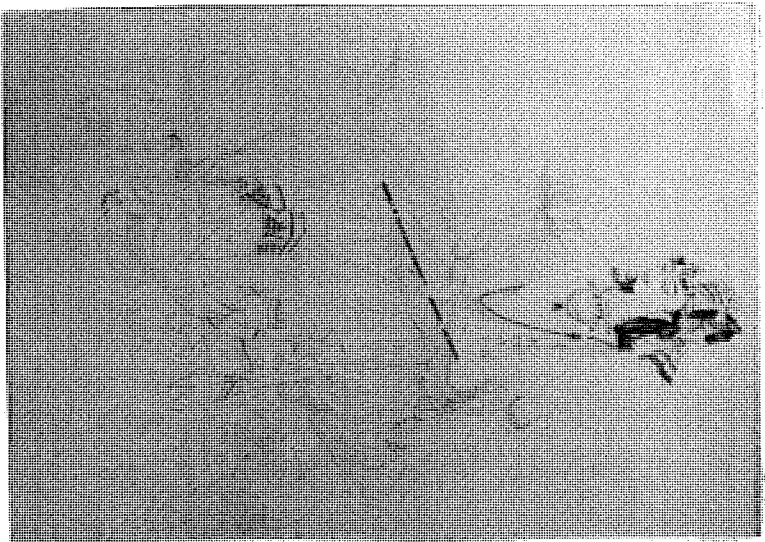


143. Chughtai, Charm of the Valley.

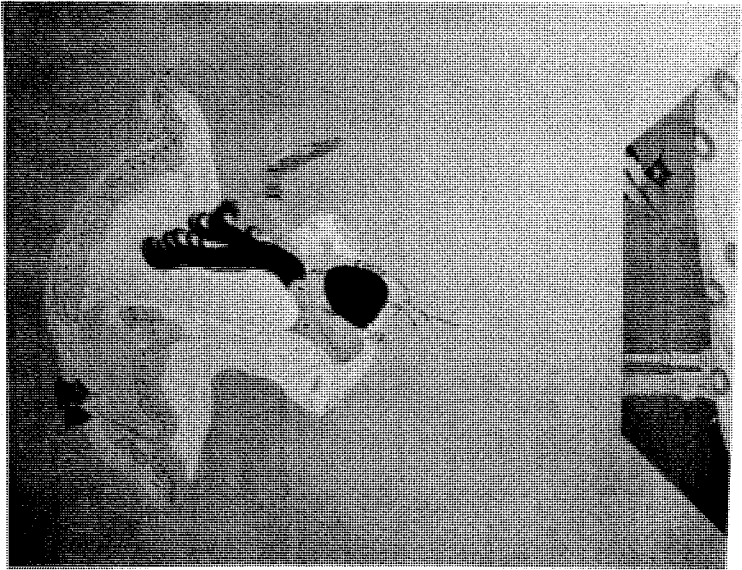


142. Chughtai, Holi.

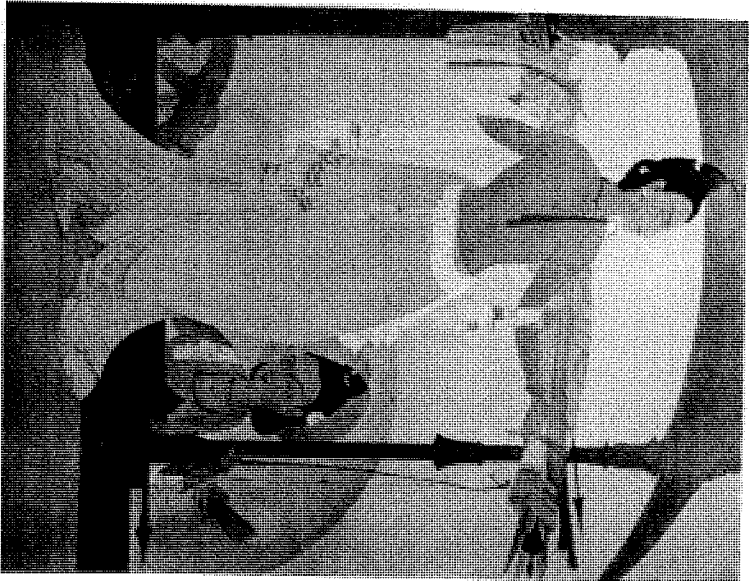




145. Chughtai, With the Flute

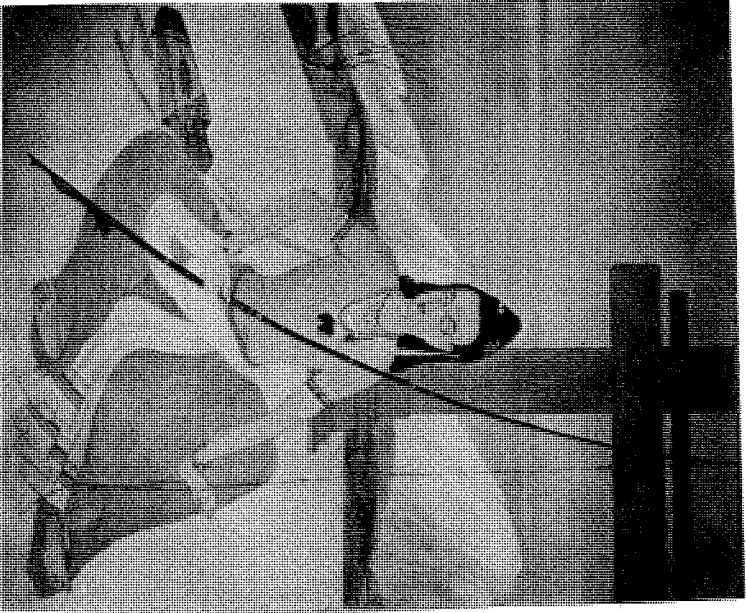


146. Chughtai, Chitarlekha

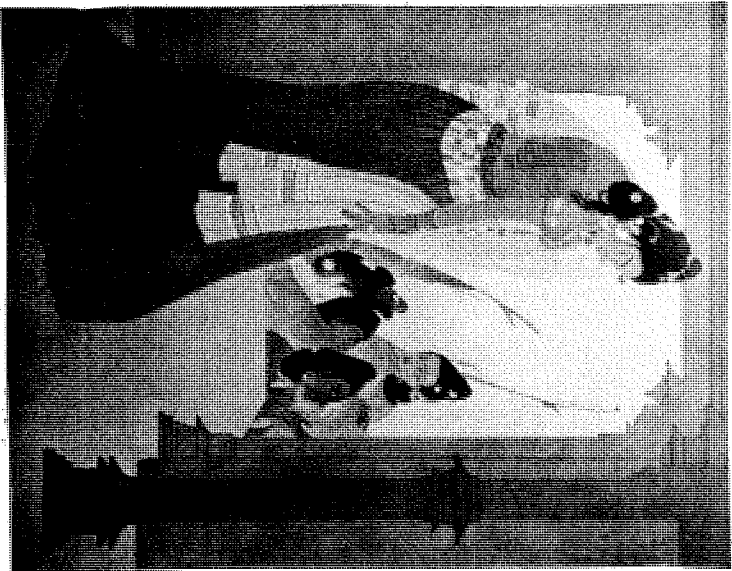


147. Chughtai,  
Krishna Instructing Arjuna



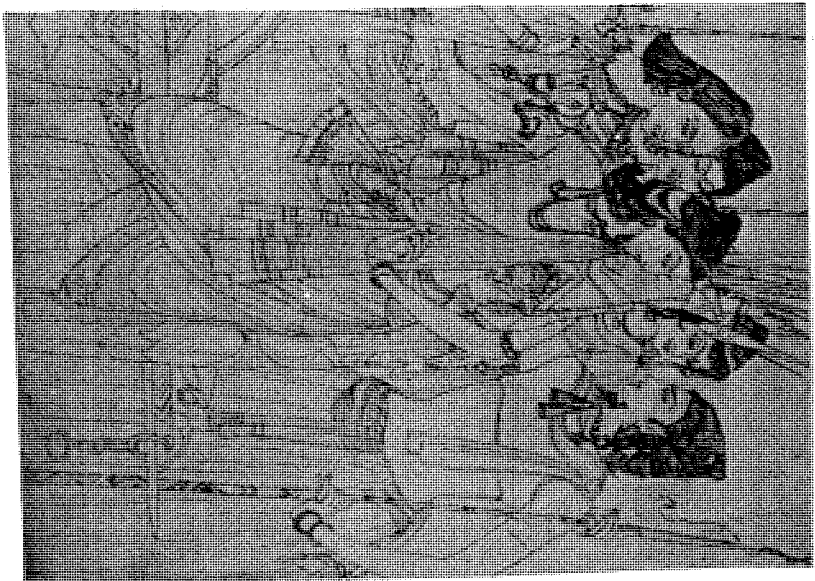


148. Chughtai, Arjuna

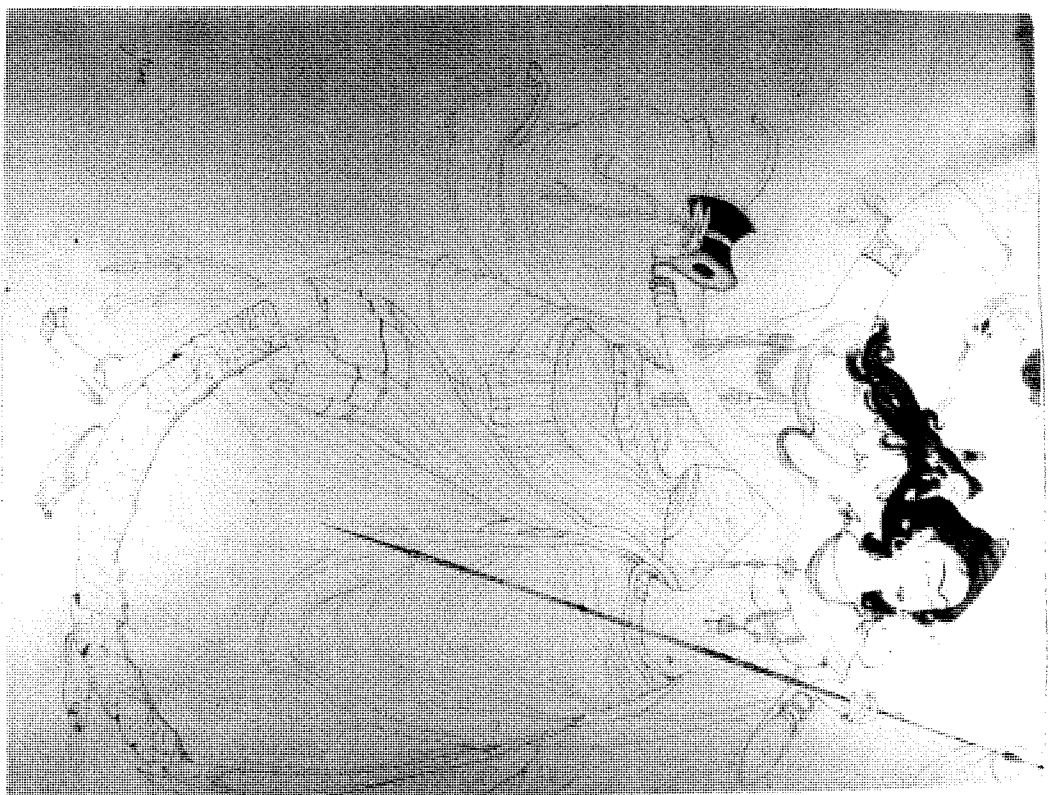


149. Chughtai, Draupadi and Pandavas

150. Chughtai, five Pandava brothers

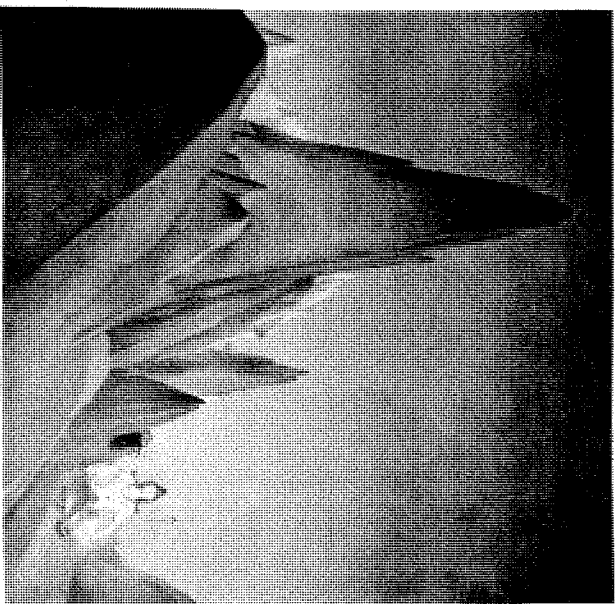


151. Chughtai, Nat-Raj





152. Nandalal Bose, Siva's Dance of Destruction



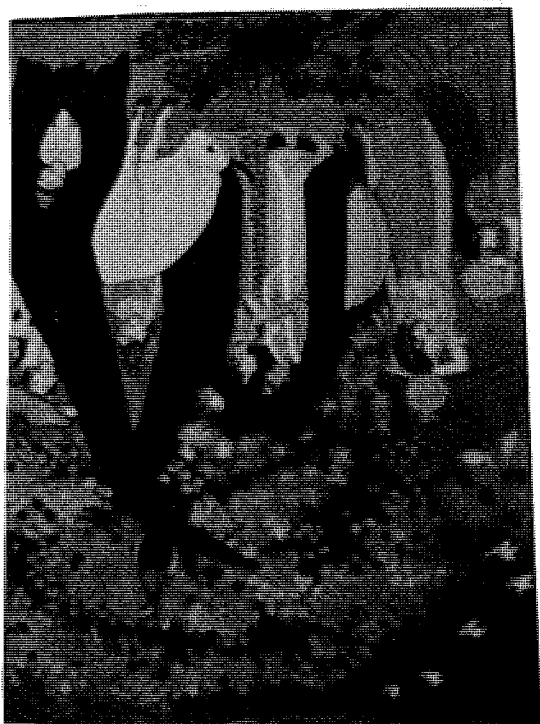
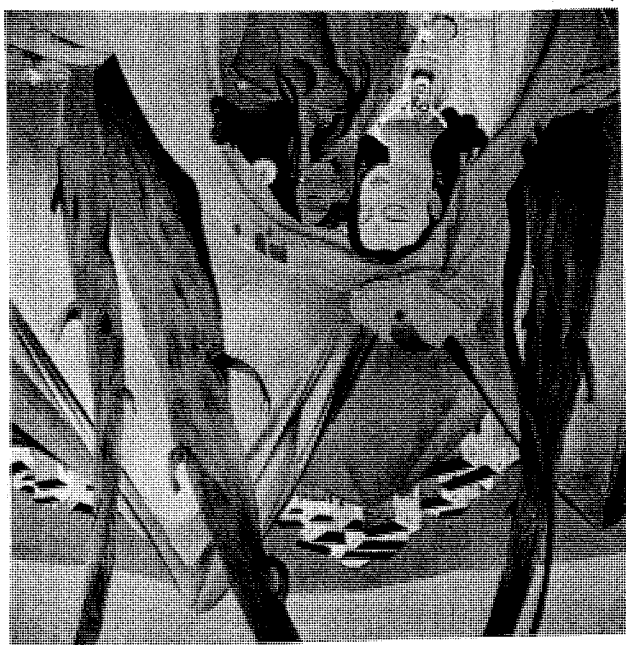
153. Chughtai, Shakti-Devta

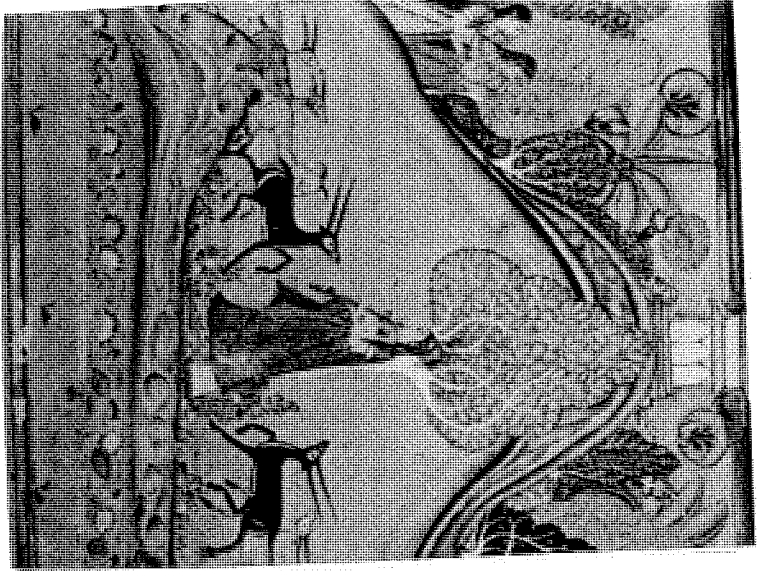
156. Chughtai, Ragni



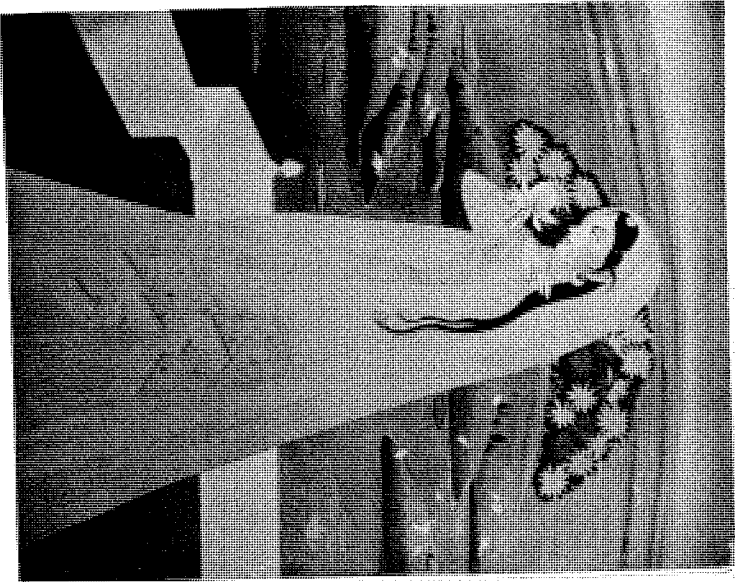
155. Radha-Krishna,  
Pahari miniature

154. Chughtai, Behind the Mountains

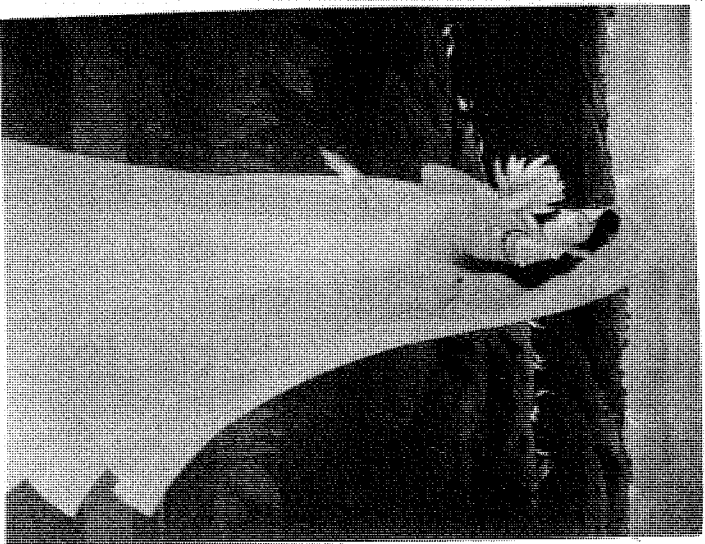




157. Todi Ragini, Central India

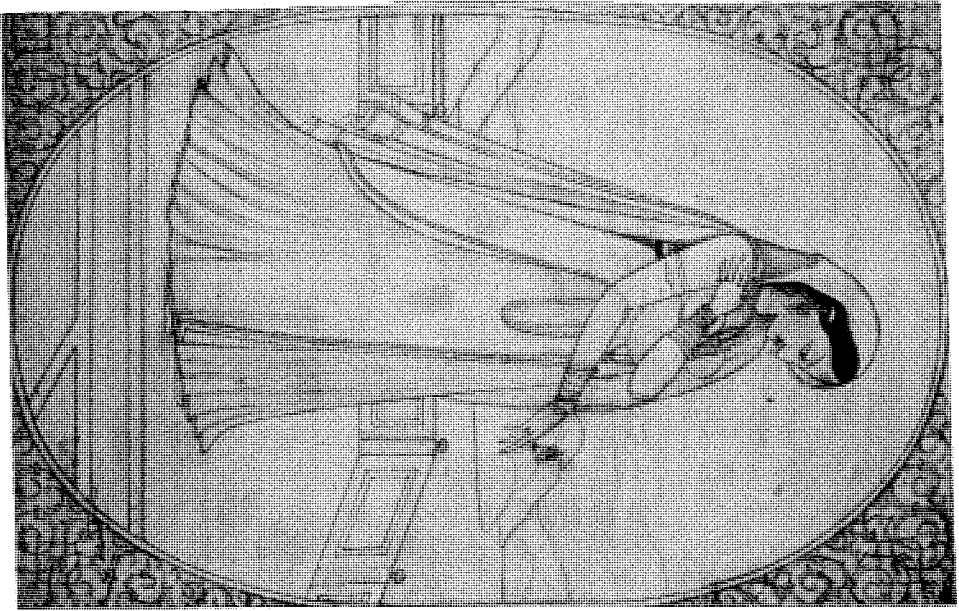


158. Chughtai, Usha

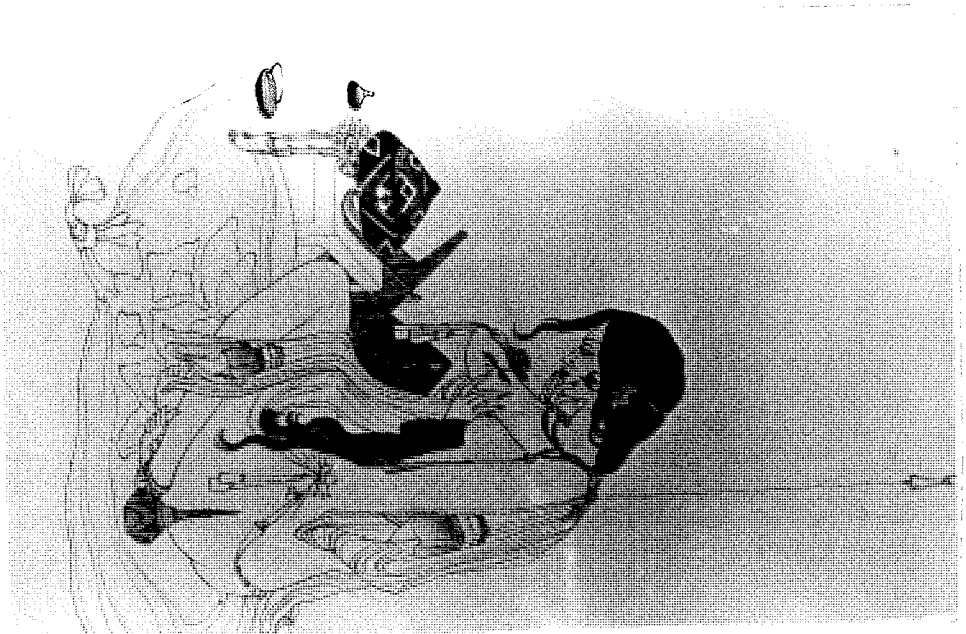


159. Chughtai, Lady in Yellow

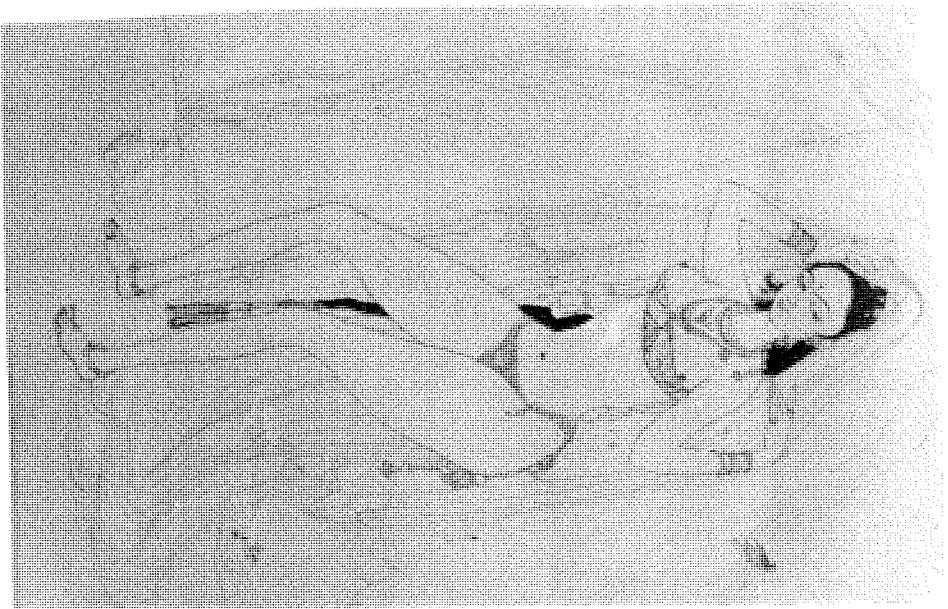




160. Lady with Nosegay  
Pahari miniature



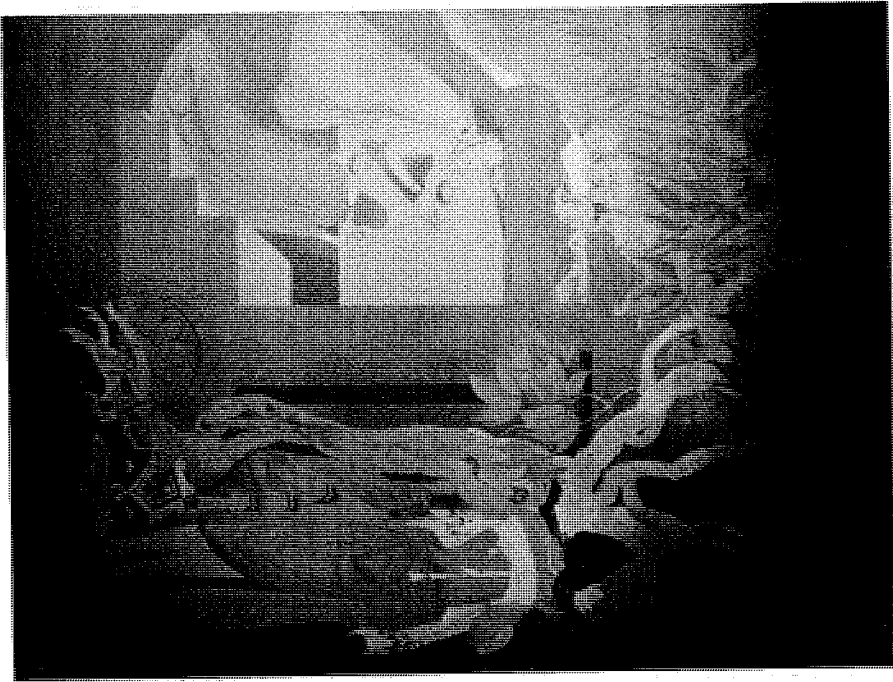
161. Chughtai, Toilet Scene



162. Chughtai, Yakshi



163. Chughtai, Ambapali



164. Chughtai, Ambapali



165. Chughtai, Three Monks

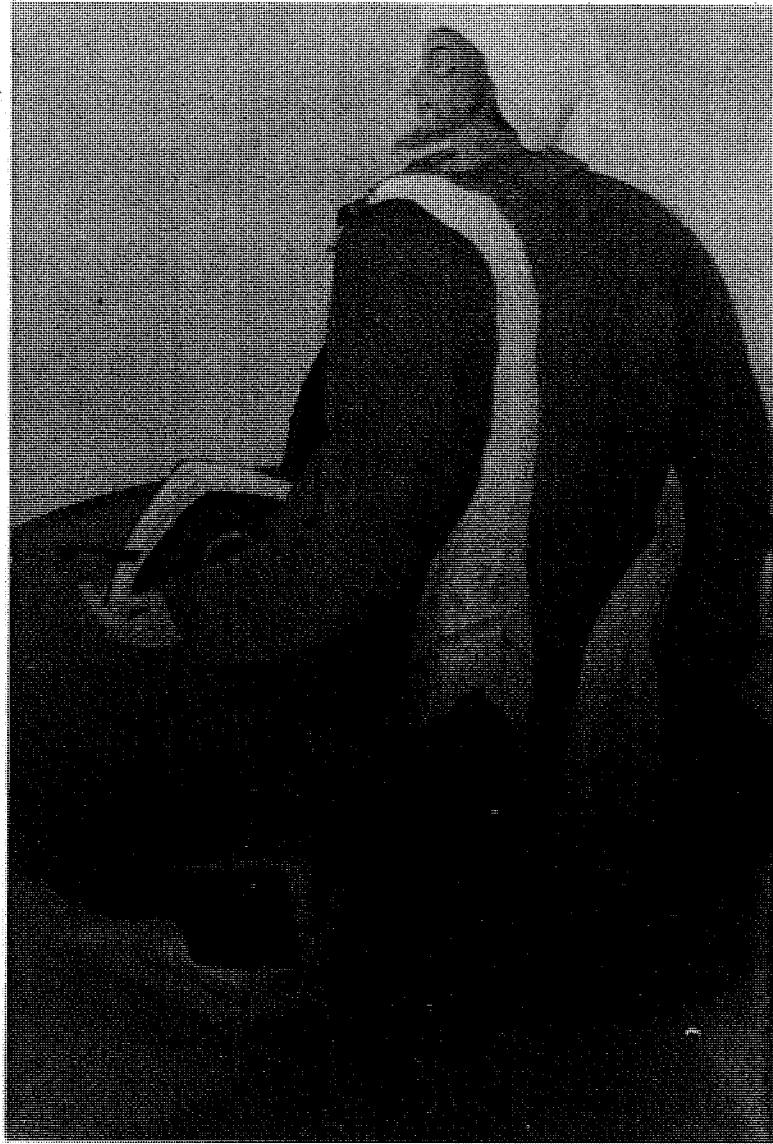




166. Chughtai,  
Buddha and Temptress

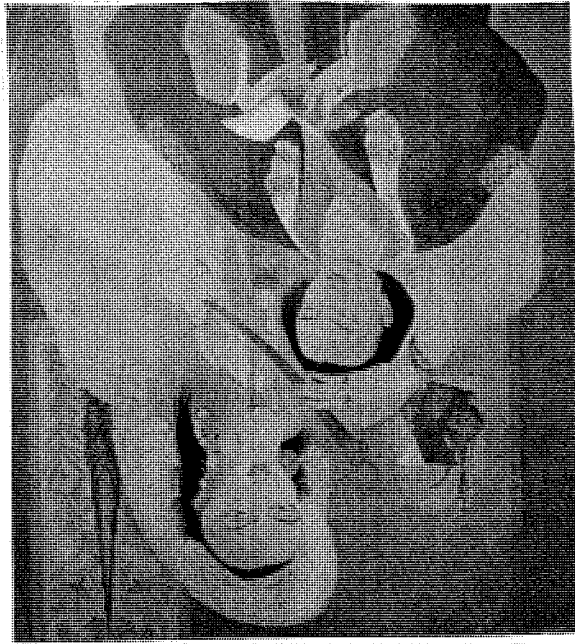


167. Chughtai, Temptation

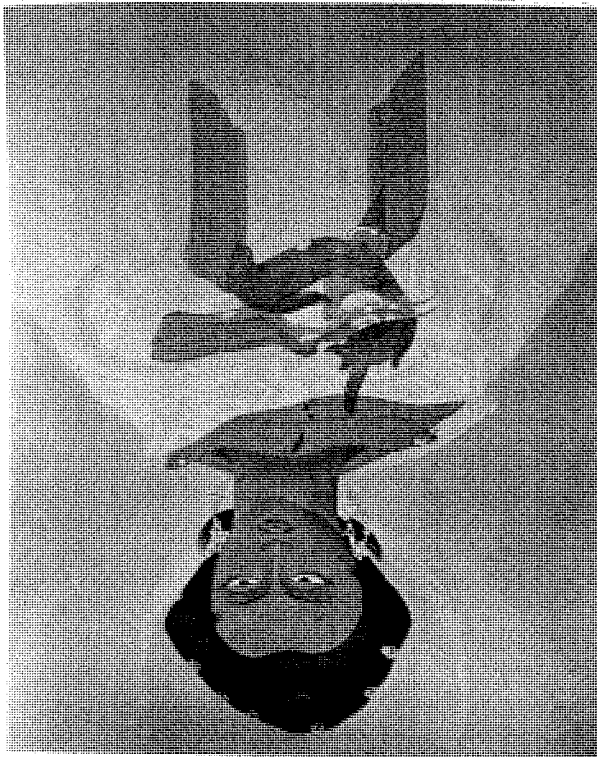


168. Chughtai, Wisdom and the Wise

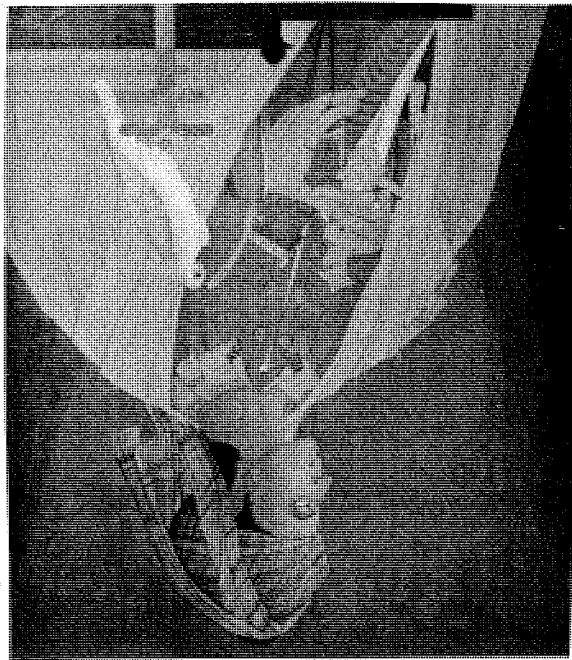
171. Chughtai, National Emblem



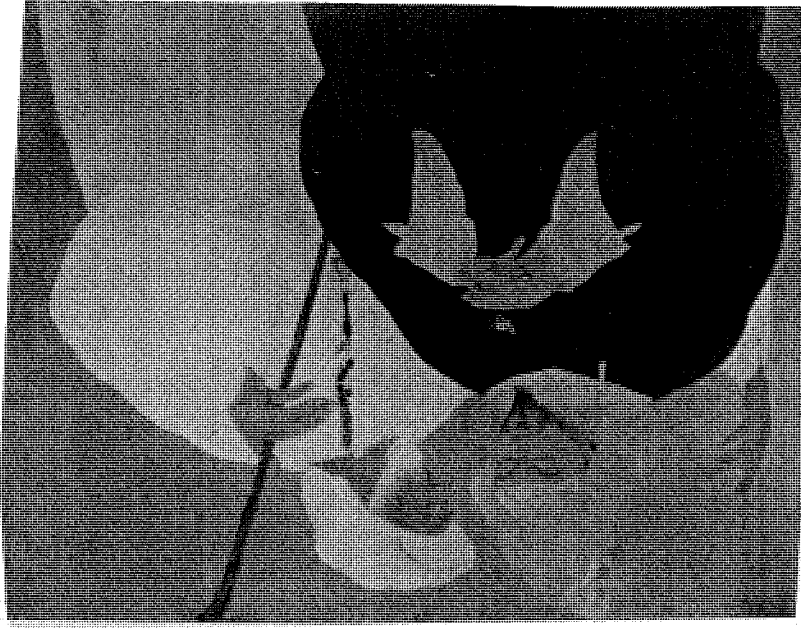
170. Chughtai, The Slave Girl



169. Chughtai, Marde-Mujahid



173. Chughtai, Sultan and Saint

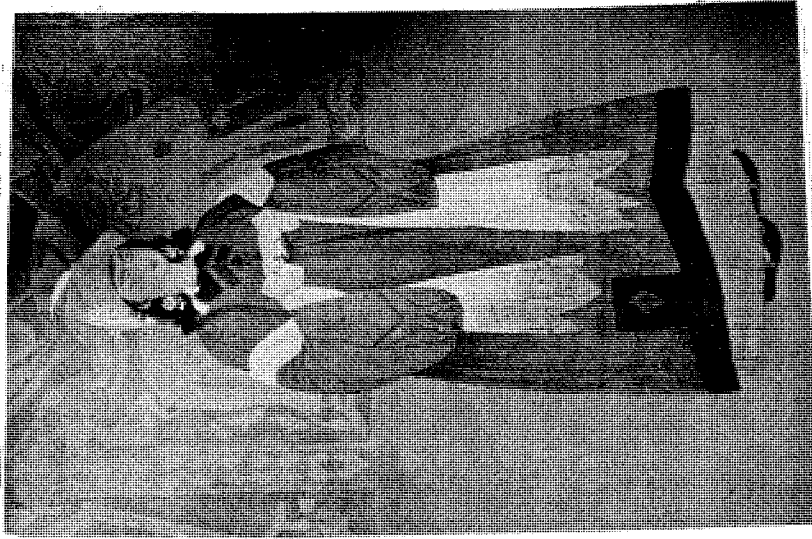
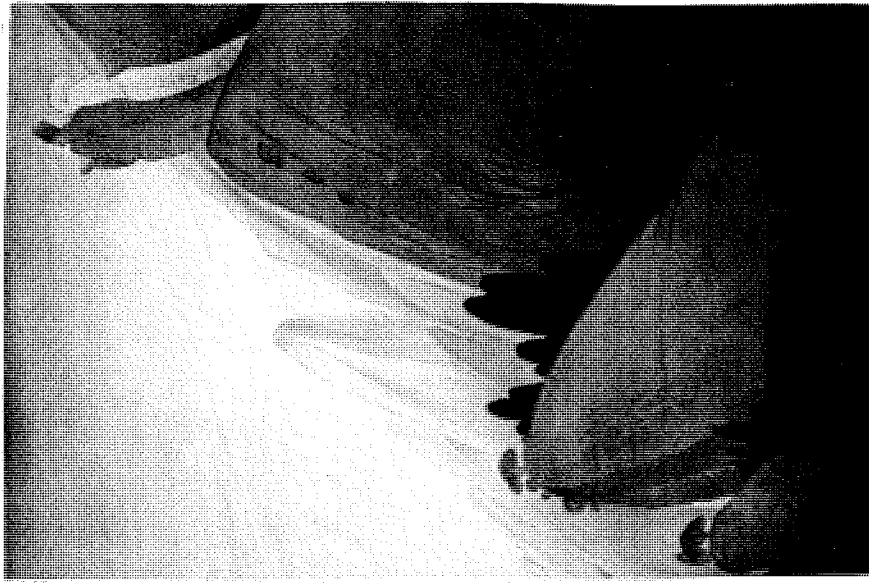


172. Chughtai, The Young Farmer

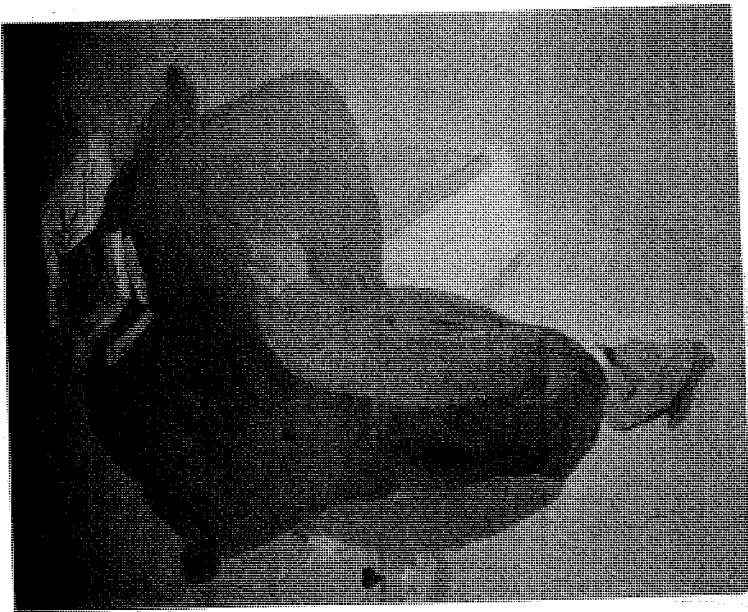


174. Chughtai, Kalifa Harun alRashid

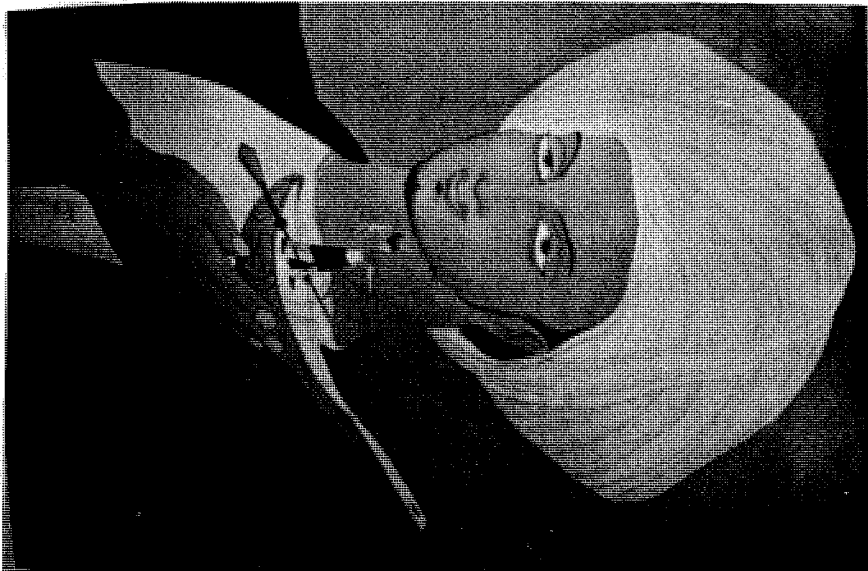




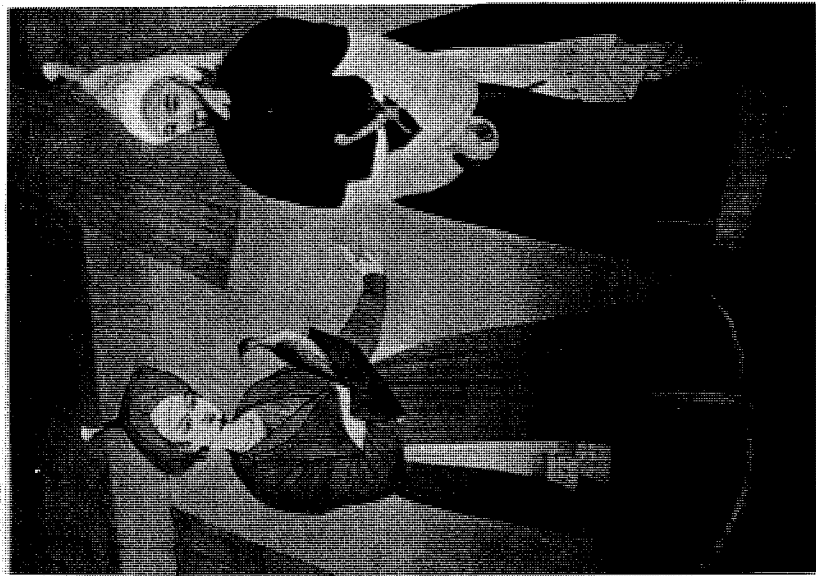
175. Chughtai, Zabeda Khatoon 176. Chughtai, Mansur al Hallaj 177. Chughtai, Iqbal and Rumi



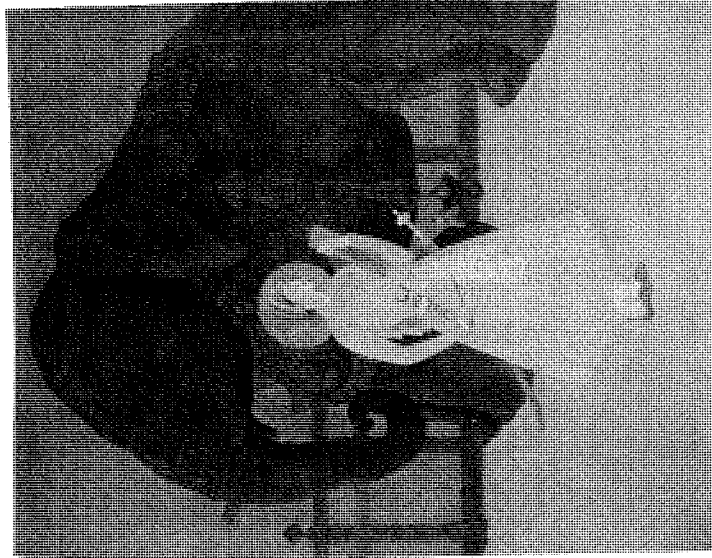
178. Chughtai, Poet Firdowski



179. Chughtai, General Taraq

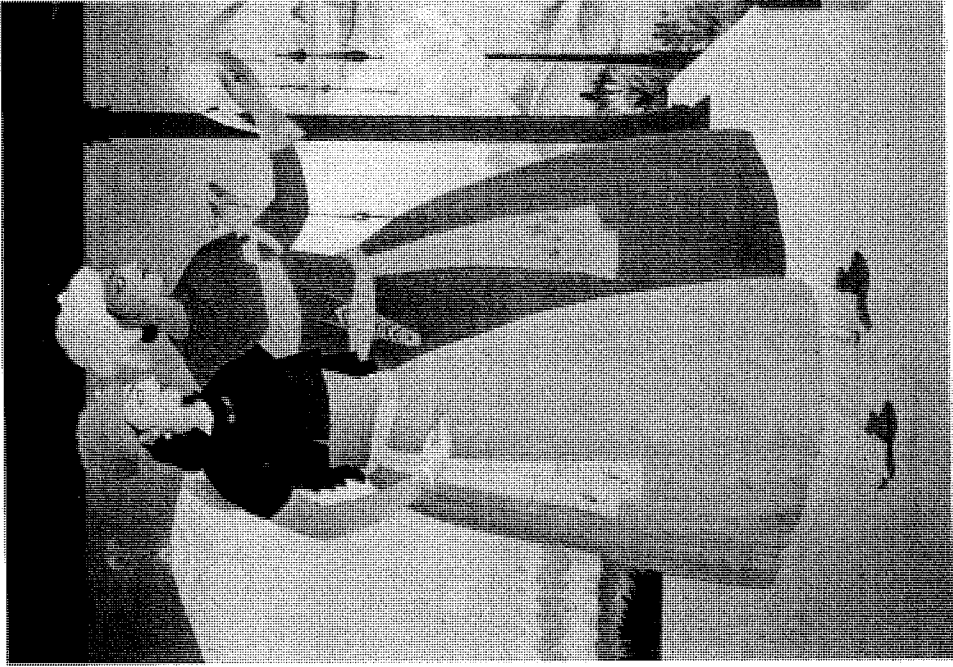


180. Chughtai, Babur and Humayun



181. Chughtai, Prince Salim





182. Chughtai, Jahangir and Nur Jahan

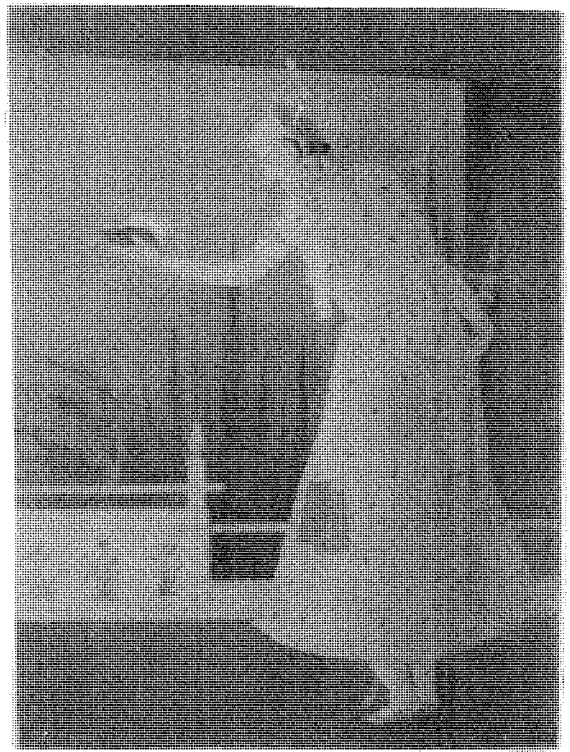


183. Chughtai, Jahangir and Nur Jahan





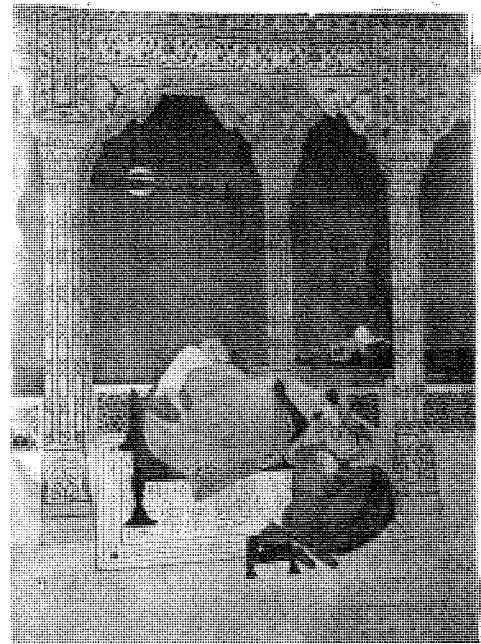
184. Chughtai, Nur Jahan



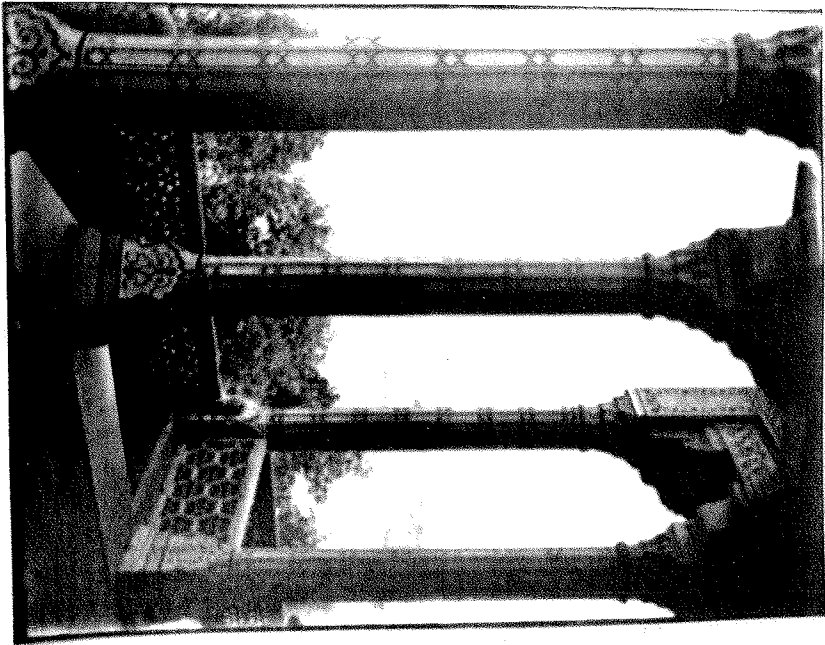
185. Chughtai, Jahangir



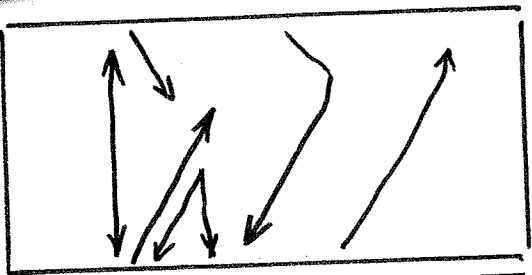
186. Chughtai,  
Last Days of Shah Jahan



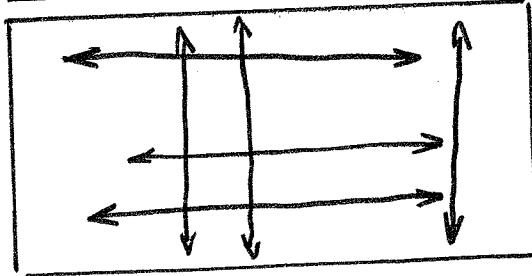
187. Abanindranath Tagore,  
Passing of Shah Jahan



188. Chughttai, Mussaman burj,  
photo

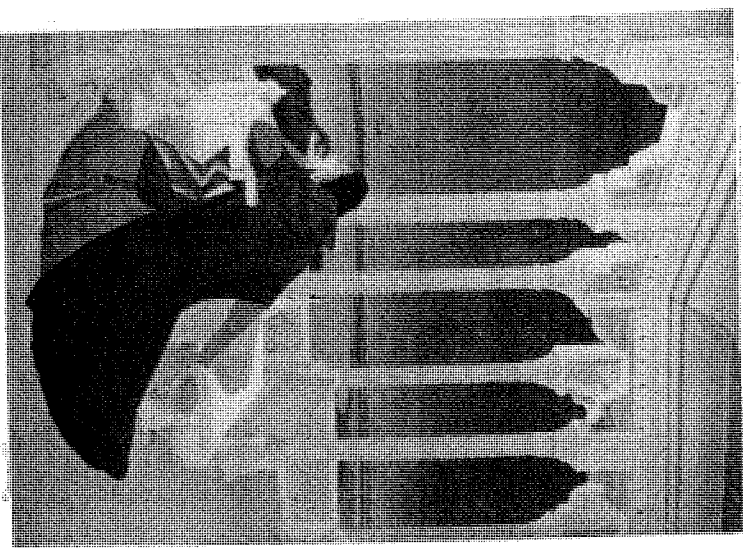


Chughttai

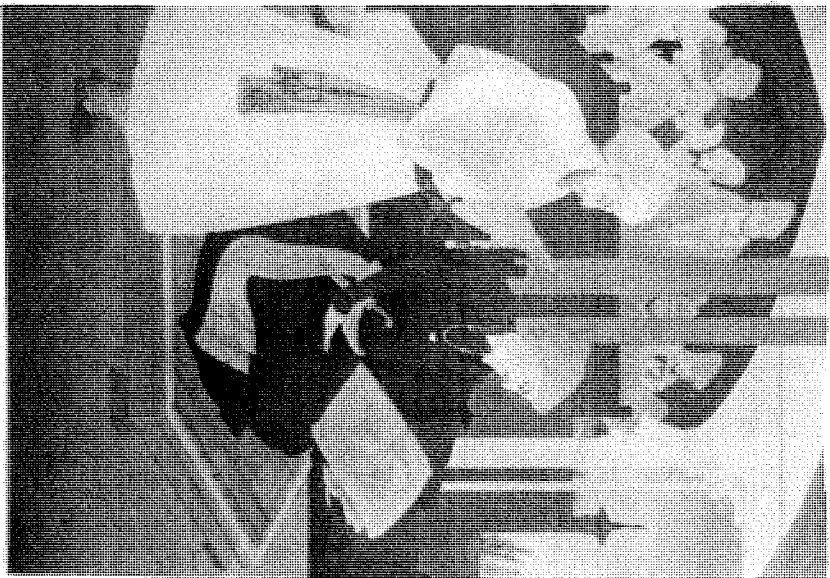


Tagore

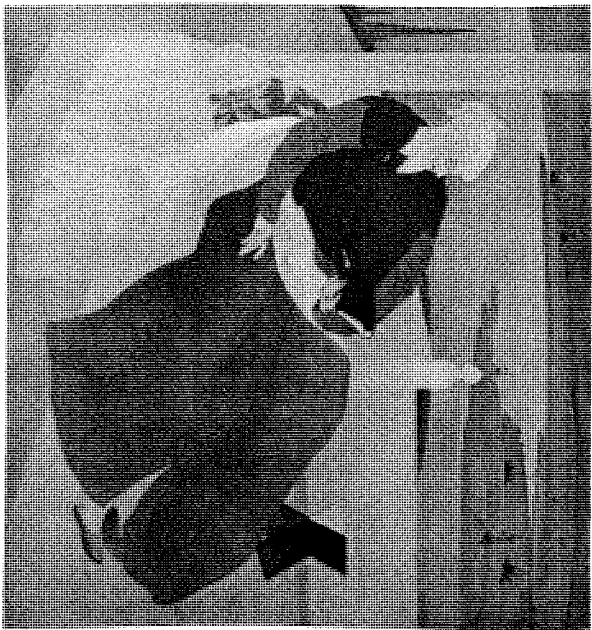
189. diagrams of Shah Jahan  
paintings



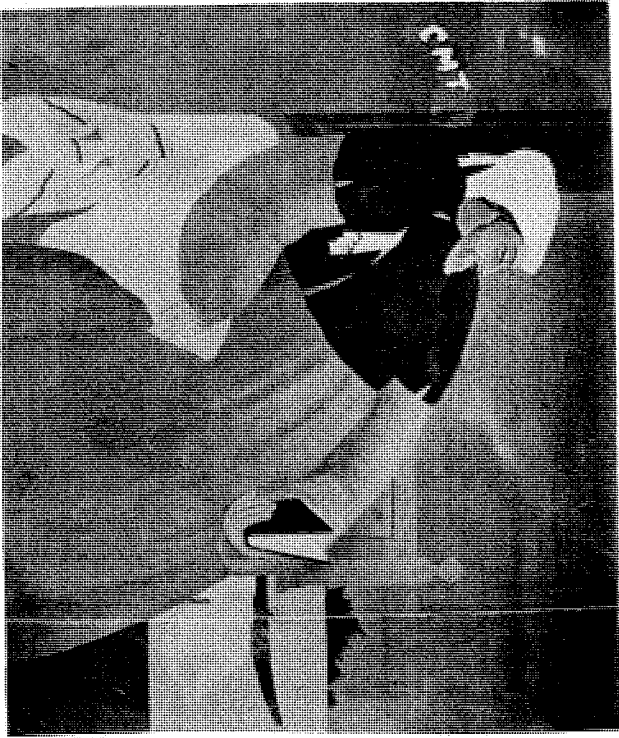
190. Chughttai,  
Jahanara at the Tai



191. Chughtai, Ustad Ahmad Mimar  
presents the design of Tai  
to Emperor Shah Jahan



192. Chughtai, Aurangzeb

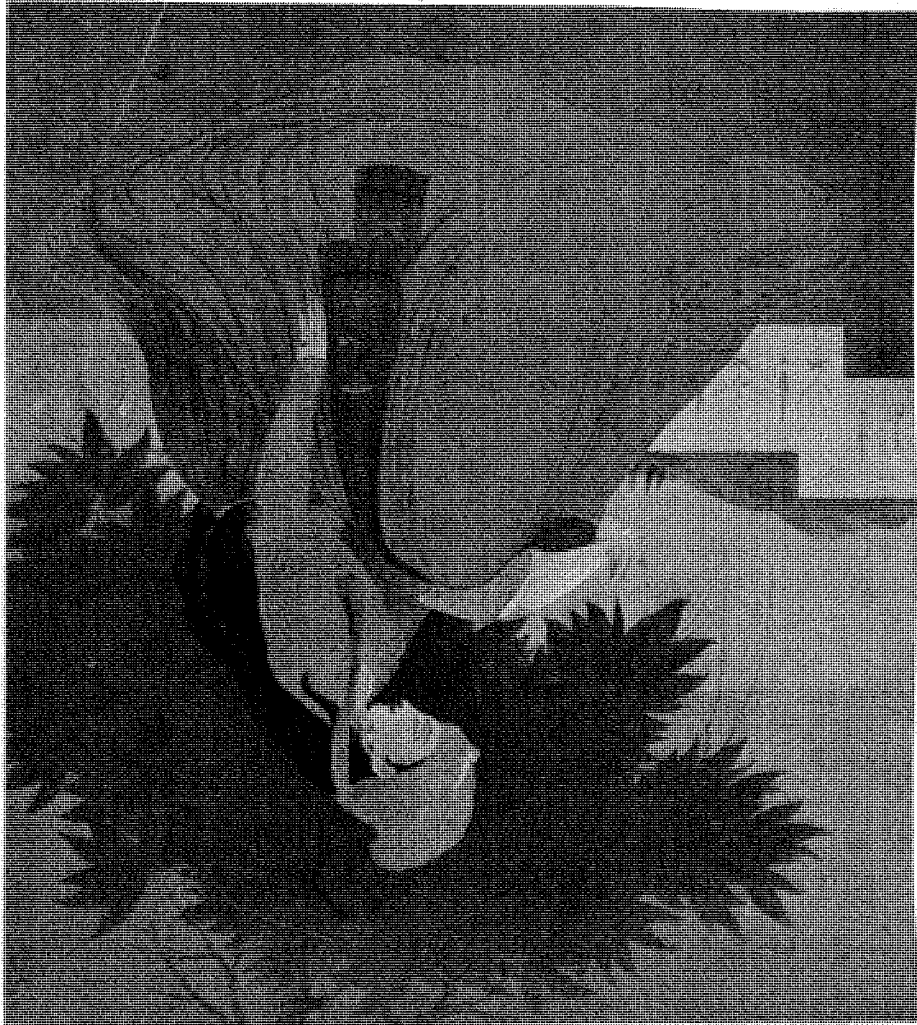


193. Chughtai, Aurangzeb

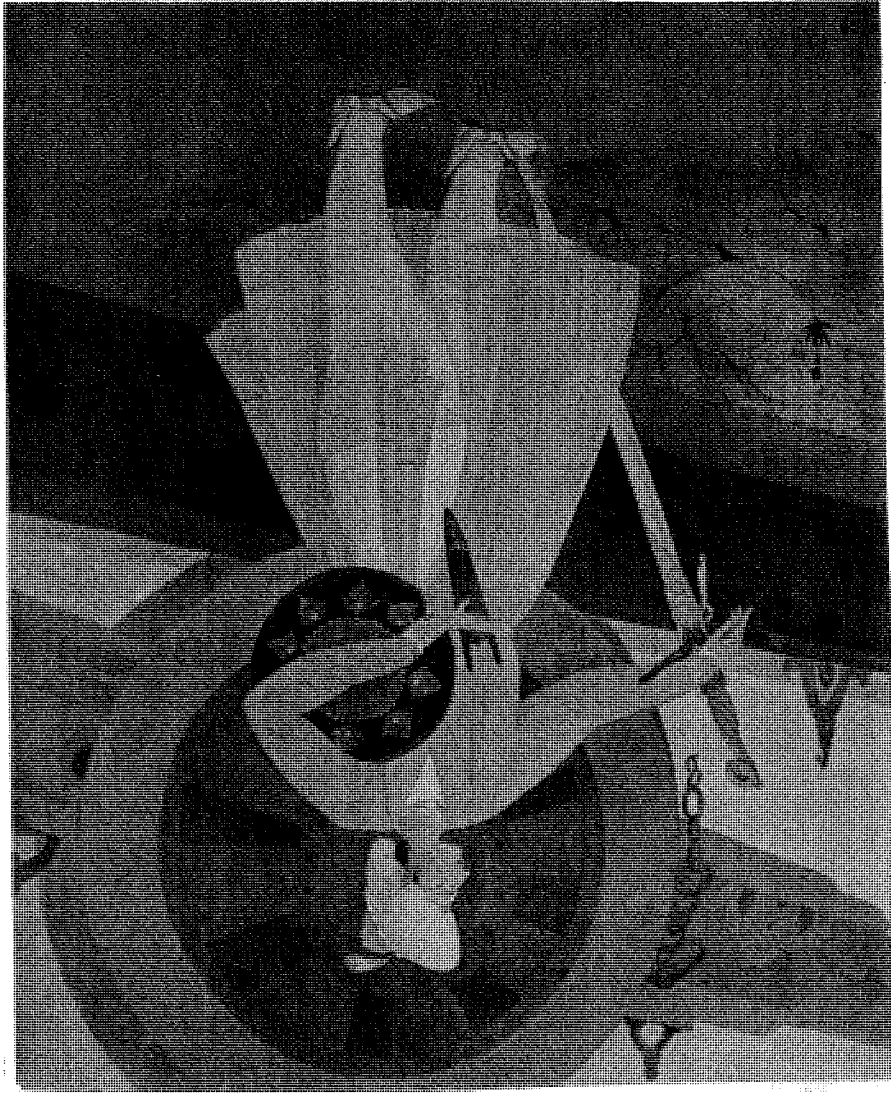


194. Chughtai, Aurangzeb and Zebunnissa

195. Chughtai, The Virtuous



196. Chughtai, Sultan Shahed





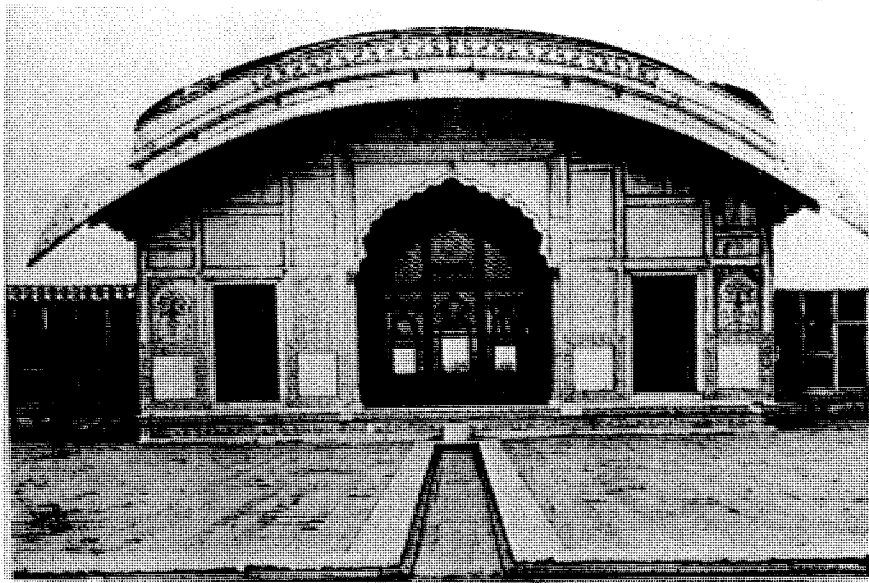


197. Chughtai, Chand Sultana

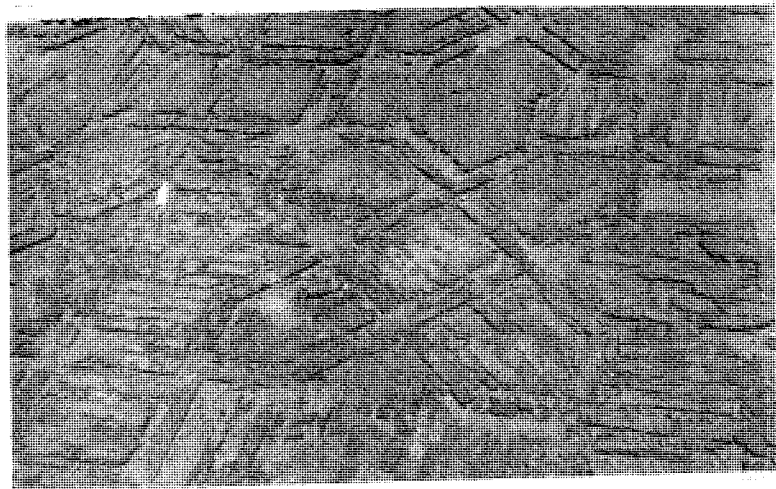


198. Chughtai, The Fragrance

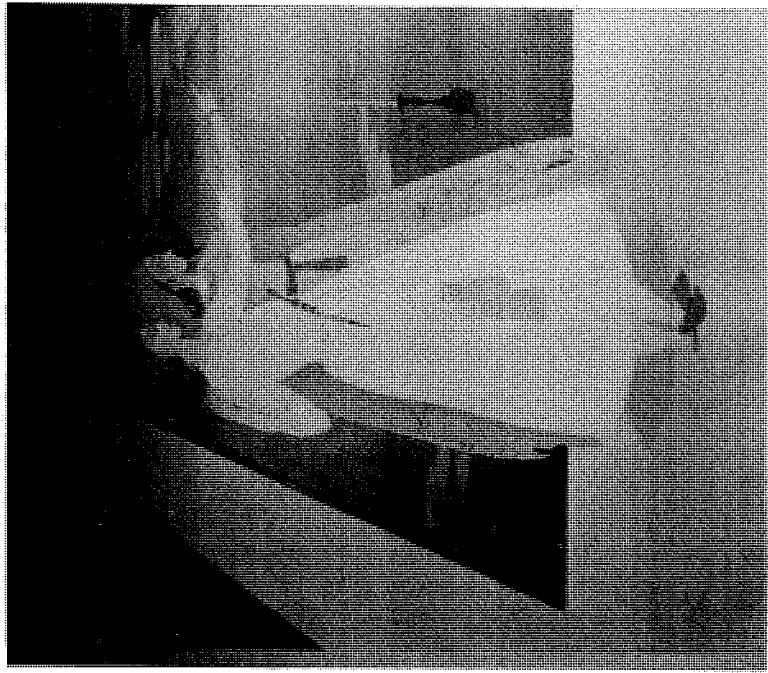




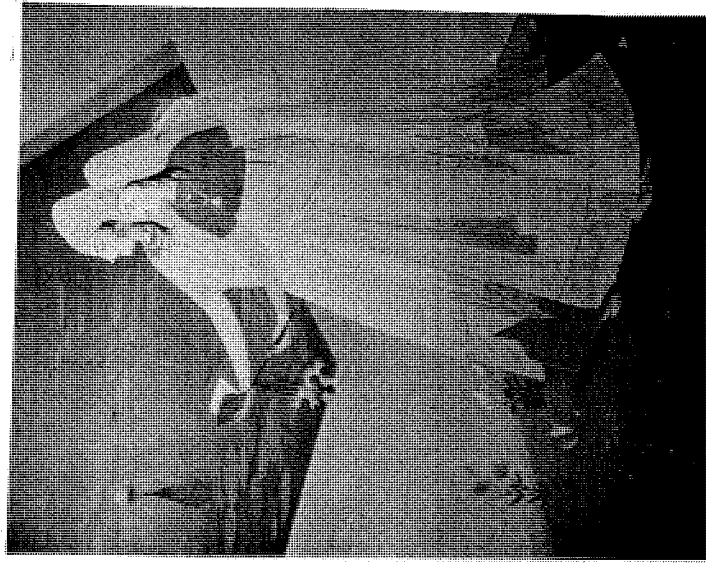
199. Naulakha, Lahore



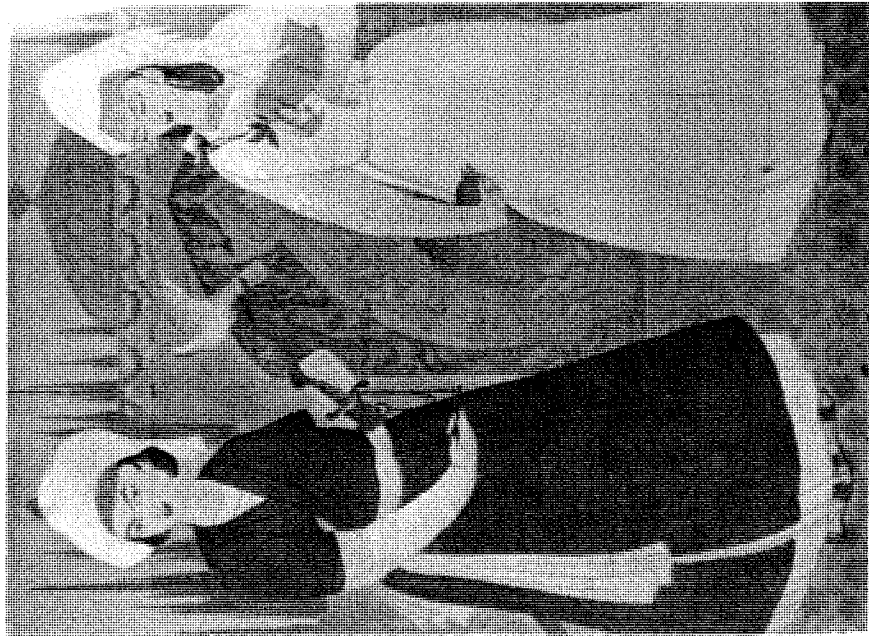
200. photograph of brick work at  
Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore



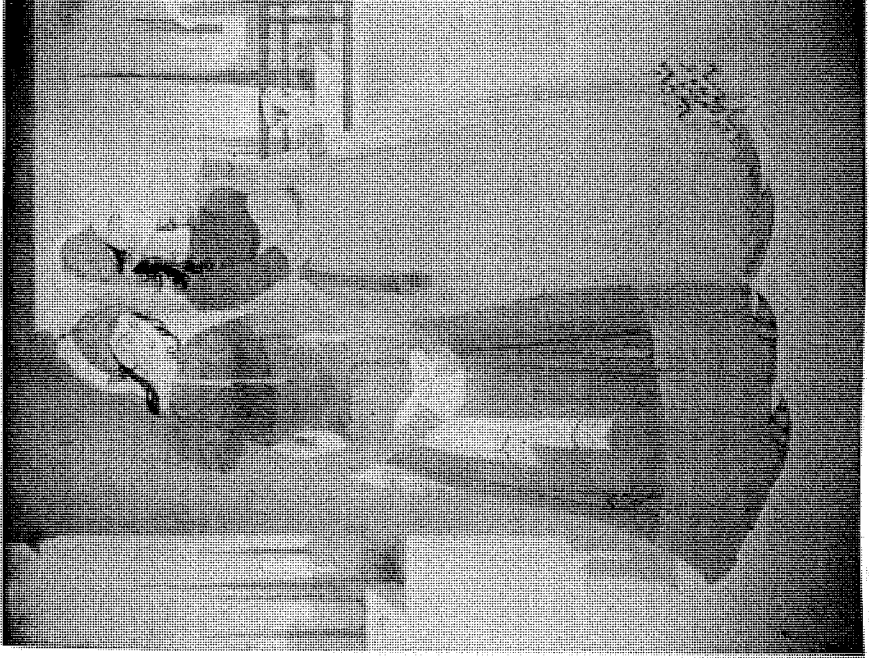
201. Chughtai, Mughal couple by a pond



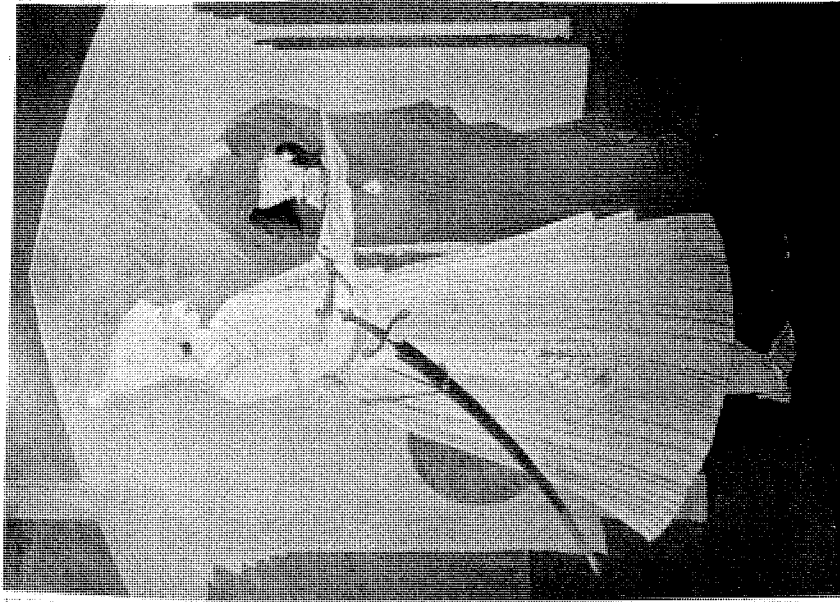
202. Chughtai, Mughal Princesses



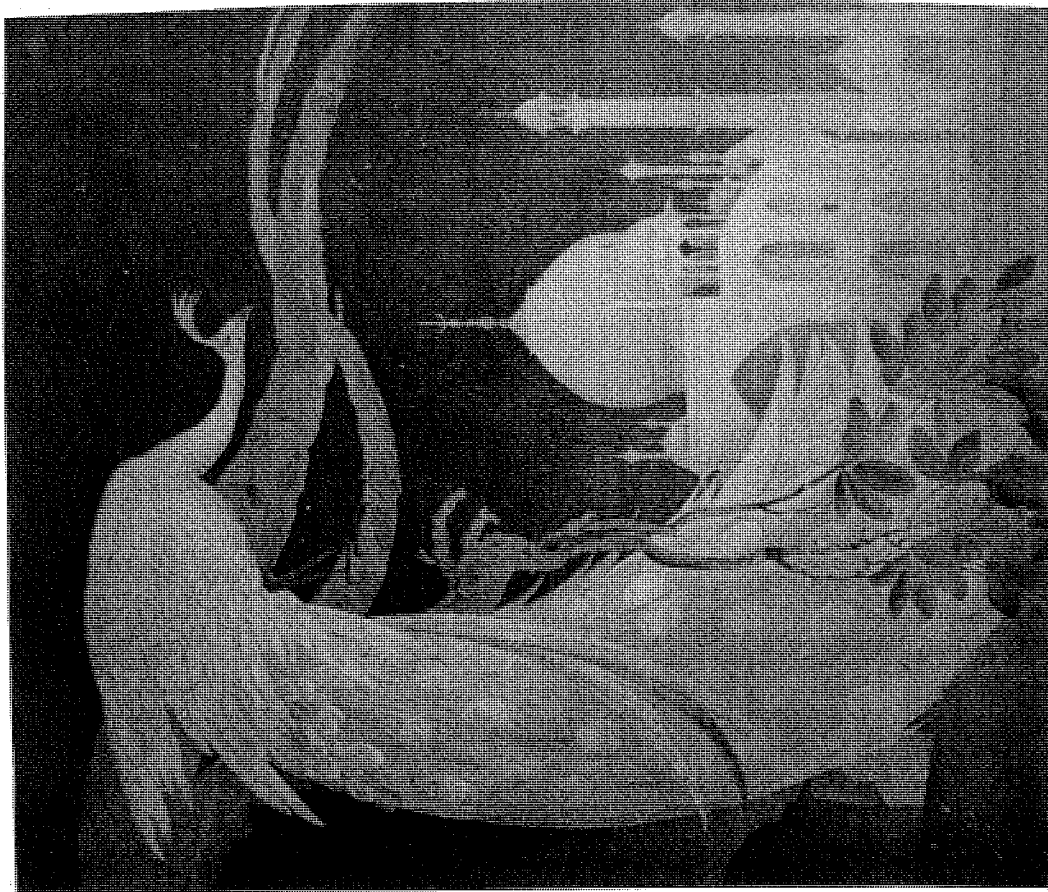
203. Chughtai, Melody of Life



204. Chughtai, Wazir's Daughters



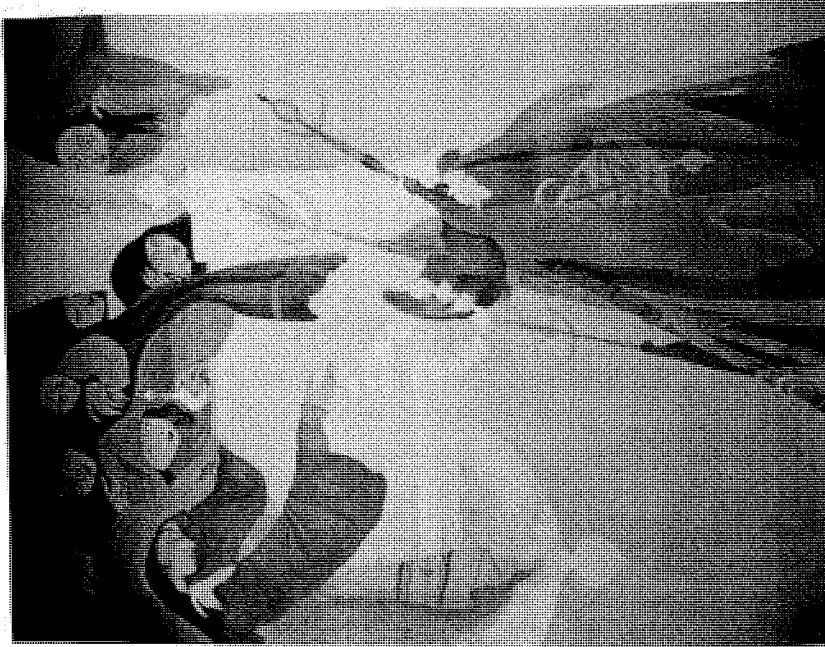
205. Chughtai, Bound of Love



206. Chughtai, Story Teller



207. Chughtai, Symbols

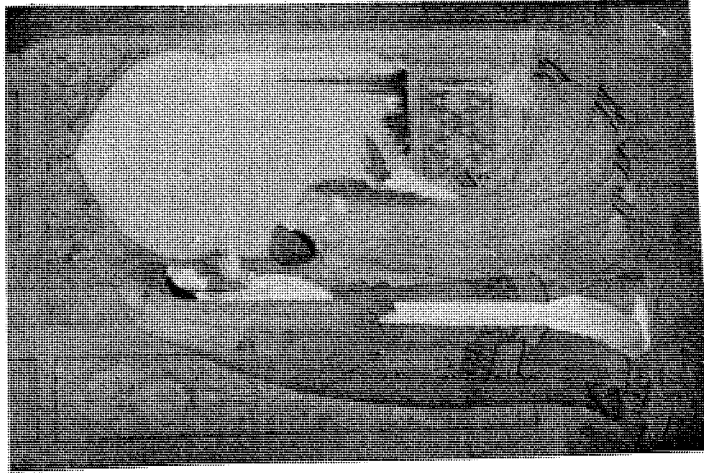


208. Chughtai, Muharram Festival

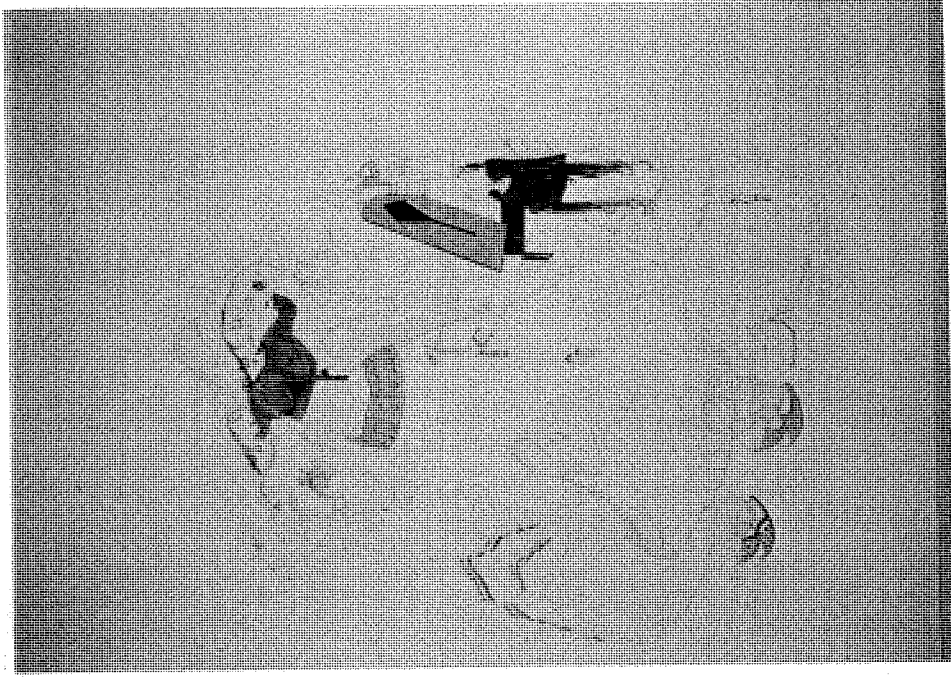


209. Chughtai, Eid Message

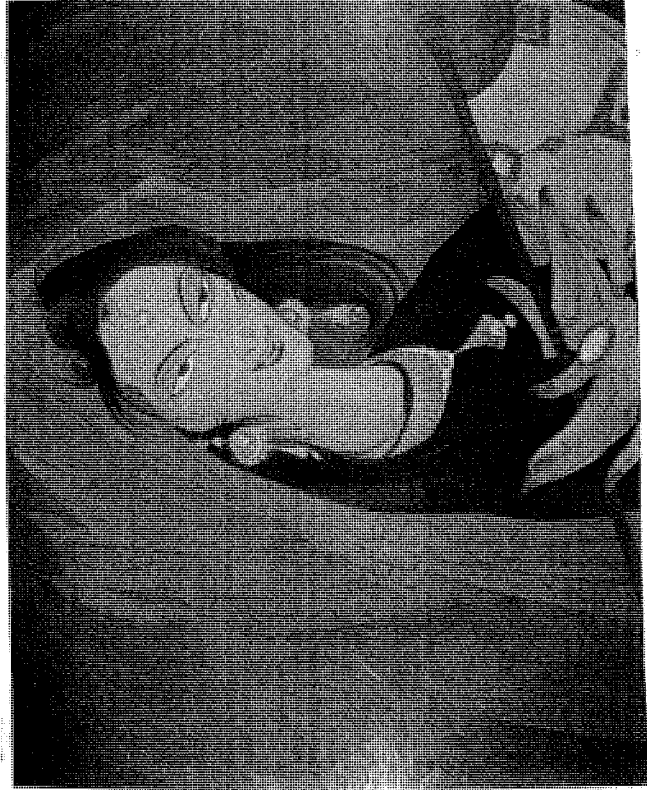




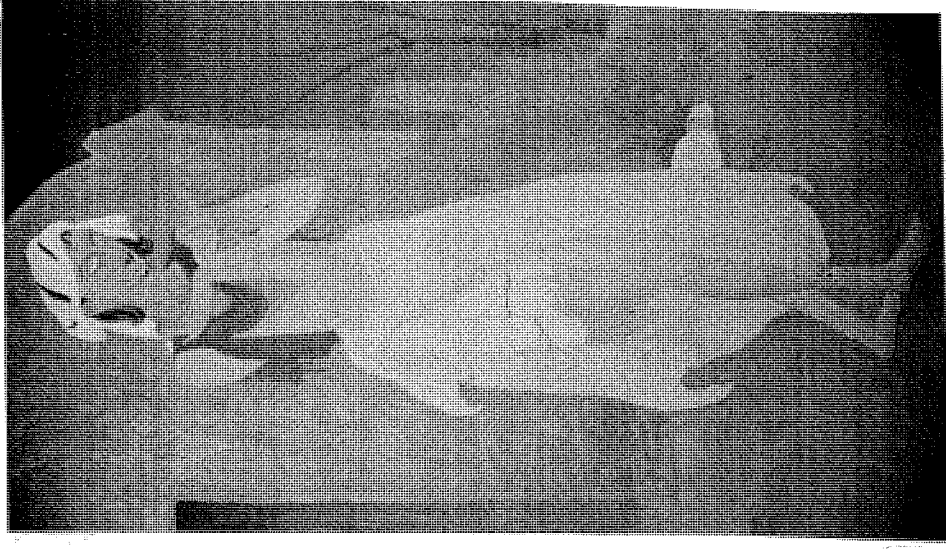
210. Chughtai, Ed Moon



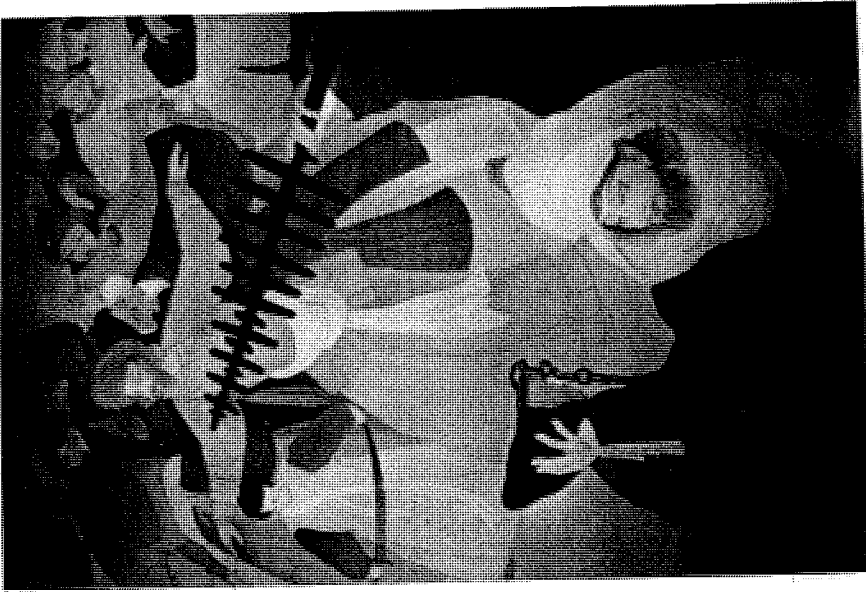
211. Chughtai, The Bride



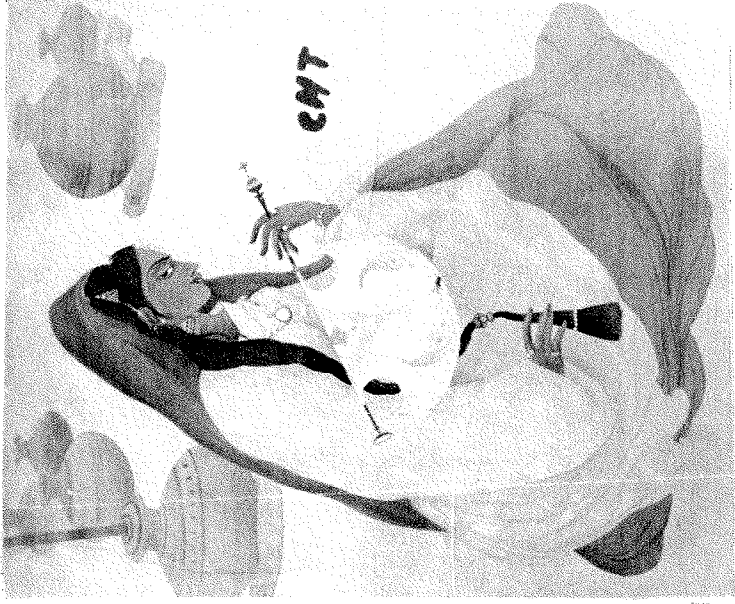
212. Chughtai, Two Hands



213. Chughtai, Qalandar

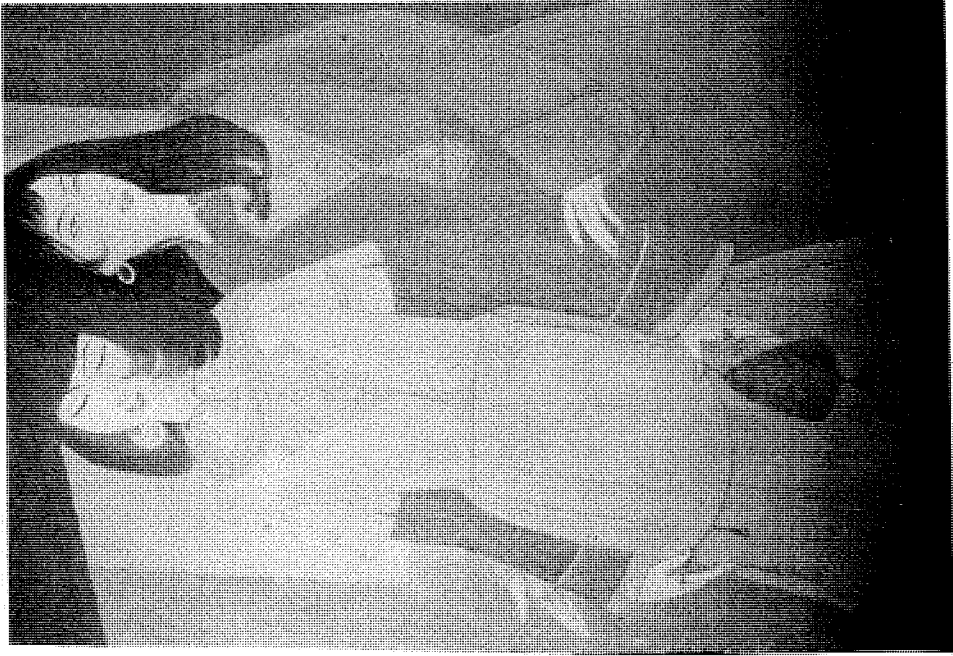


214. Chughtai, Dance of Darvishes

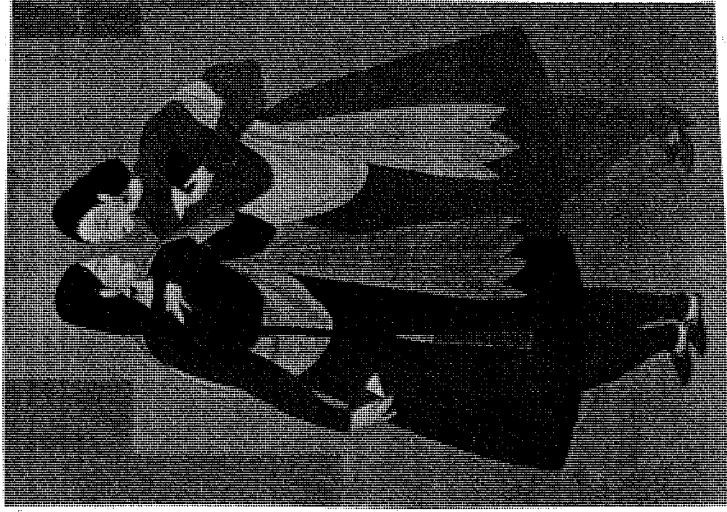


215. Chughtai, The Village Maiden

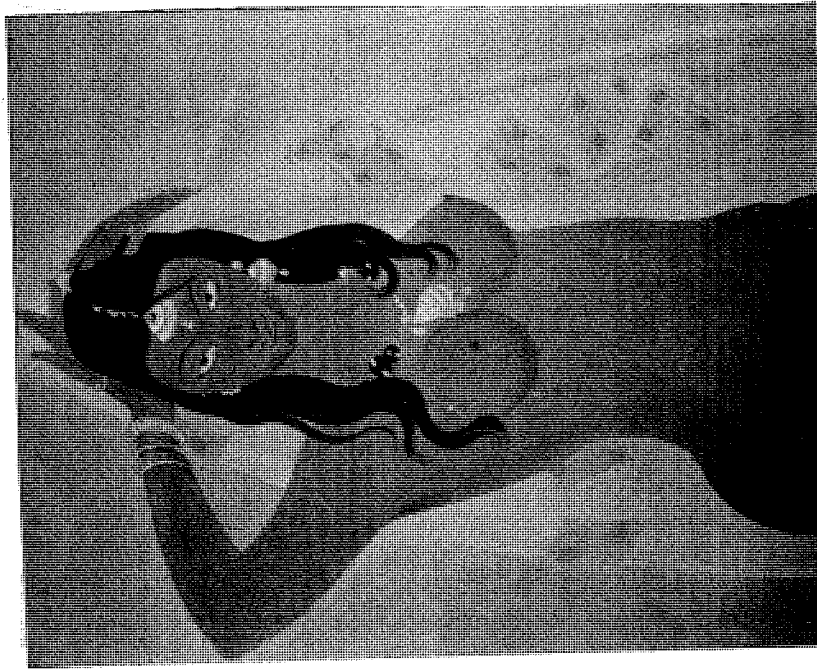




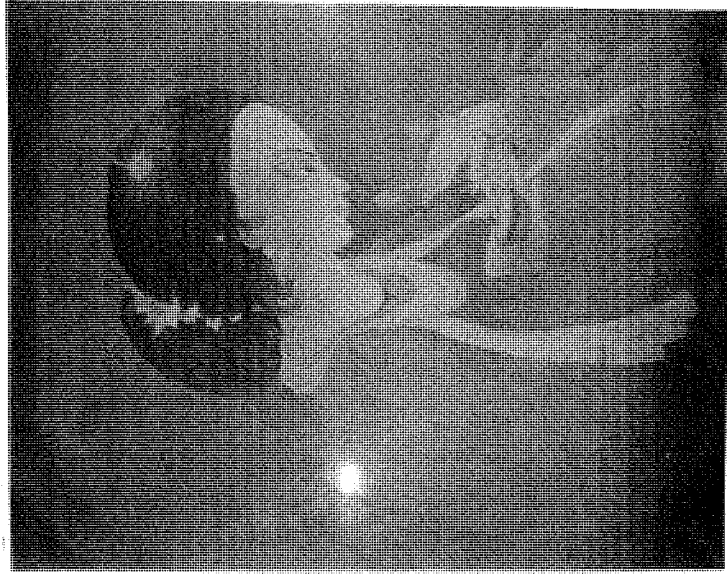
216. Chughtai, two modern girls



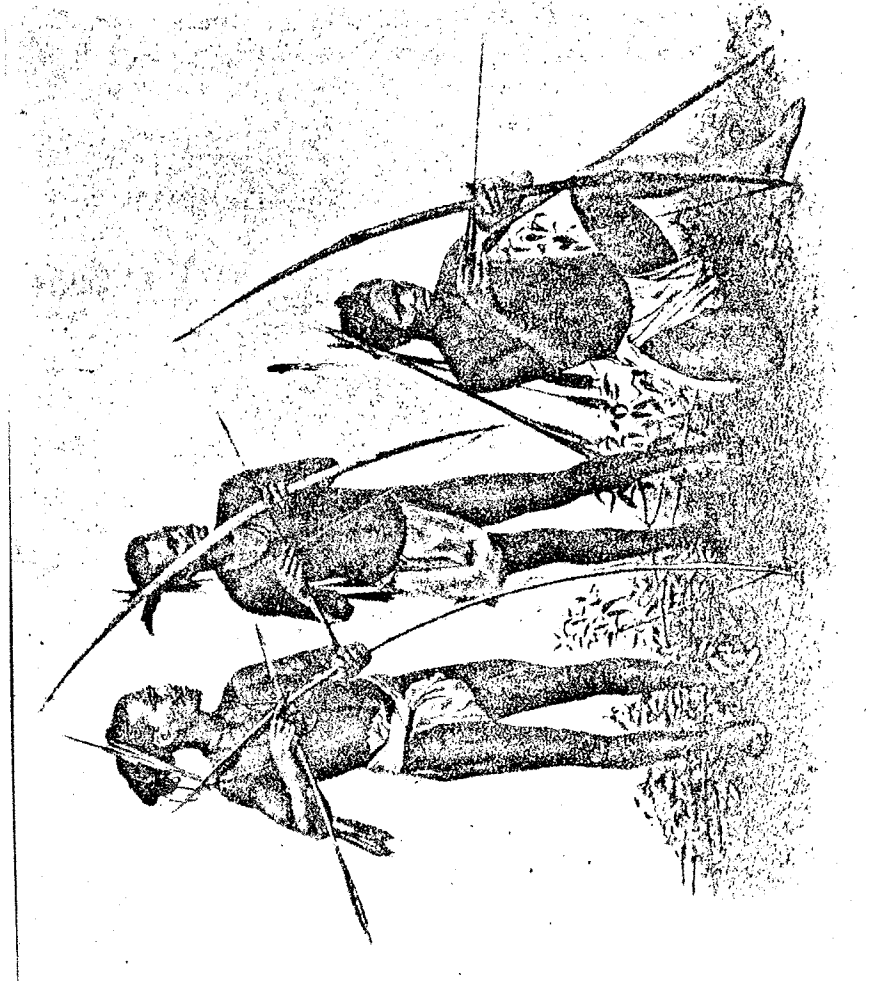
217. Chughtai, College Girls



218. Chughtai, Brown nude



219. Chughtai,  
Pregnant woman with pet dove



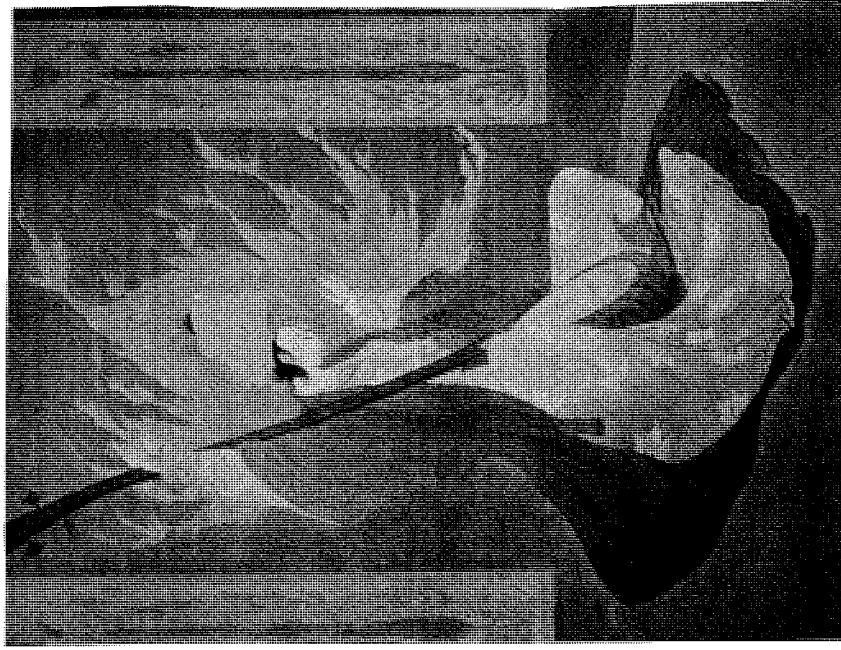
220. Korwas, The People of India, H. Risley



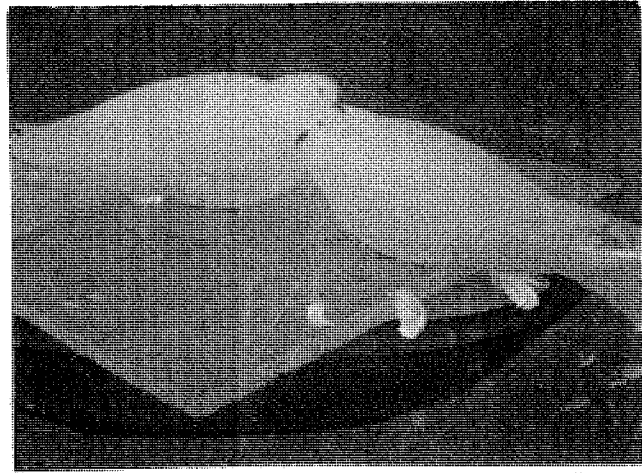
221. Chughtai, Tulip of Kashmir,  
or Lilly Girl



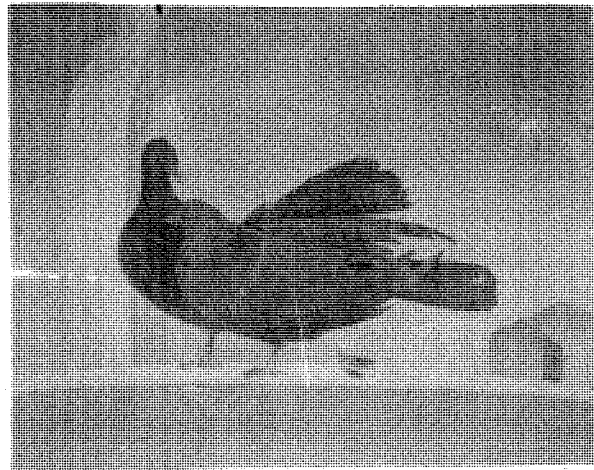
222. Chughtai, Milk Maids



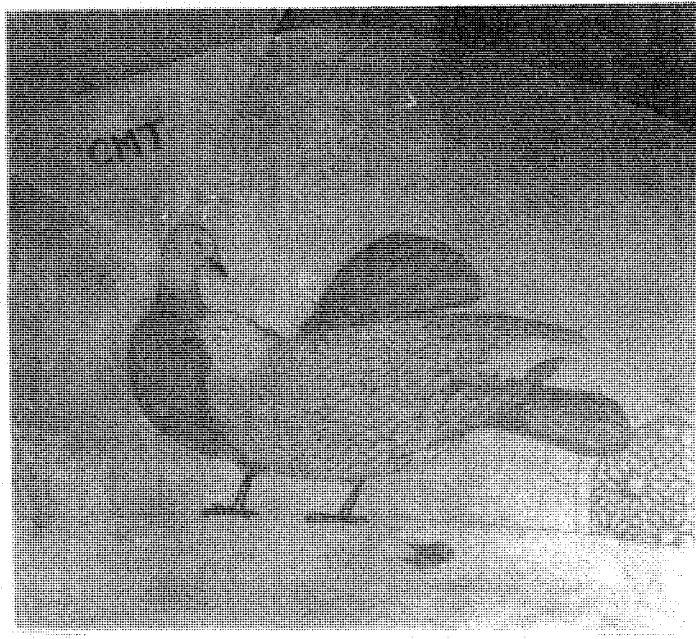
223. Chughtai, Musician



224. Chughtai, two white pigeons



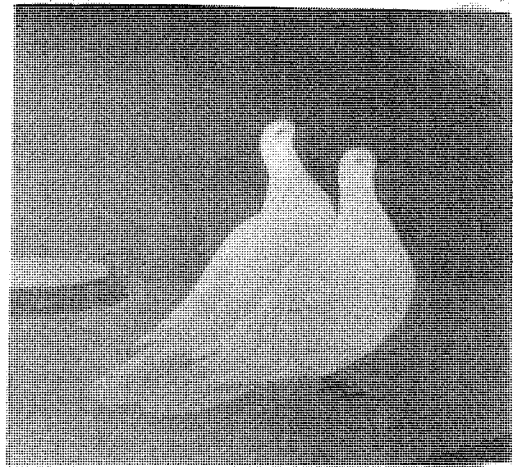
225. Chughtai, quarreling pigeons



226. Chughtai, two pigeons



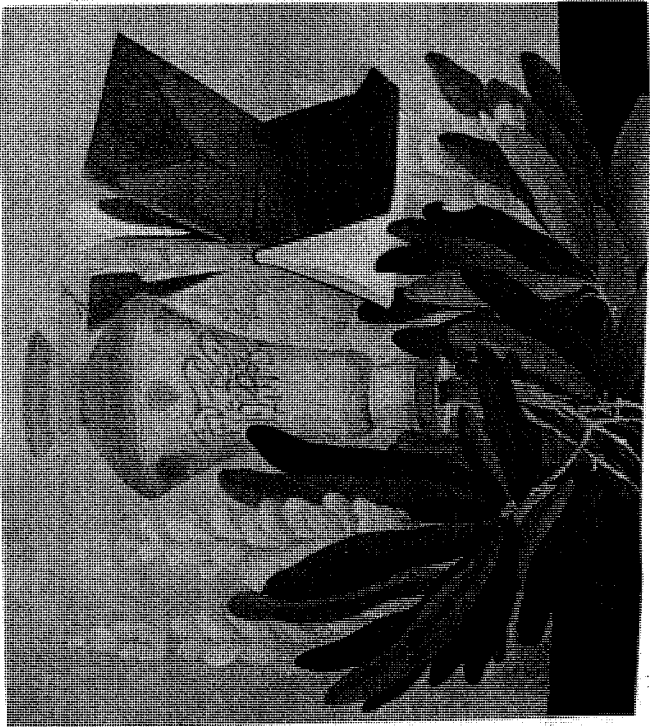
228. Chughtai,  
two black pigeons



227. Chughtai,  
two white pigeons

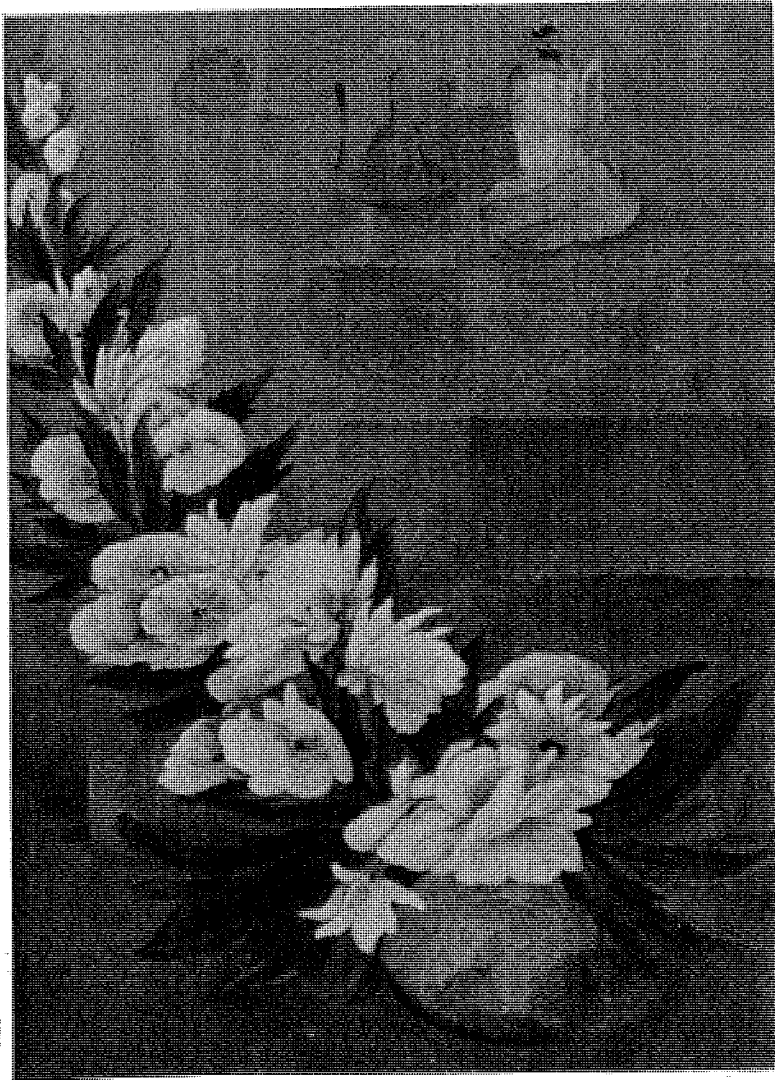


229. Chughtai,  
landscape with tombs



230. Chughtai, The Still Life



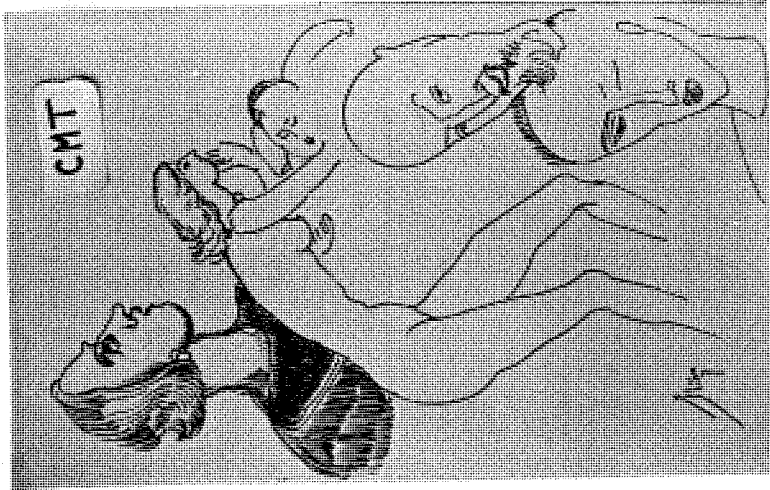


231. Chughtai, Spring Flowers



232. Chughtai, sketch





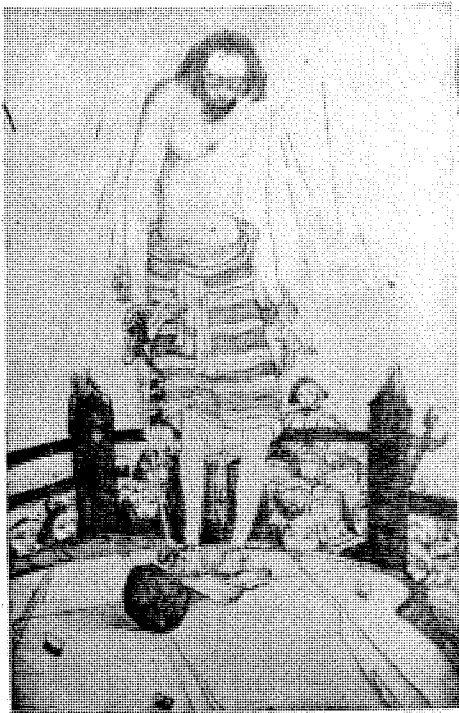
233. Chughtai, drawing



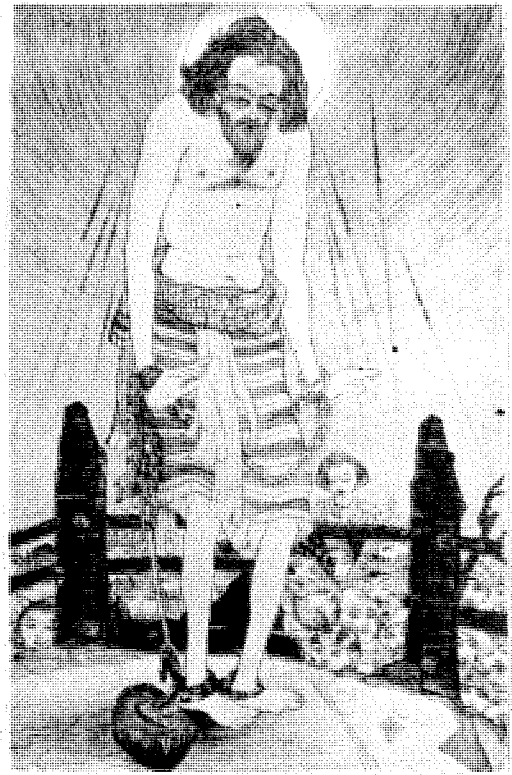
234. Chughtai, two birds



235. Chughtai, Sharfunissa



236. Chughtai, Mujahid



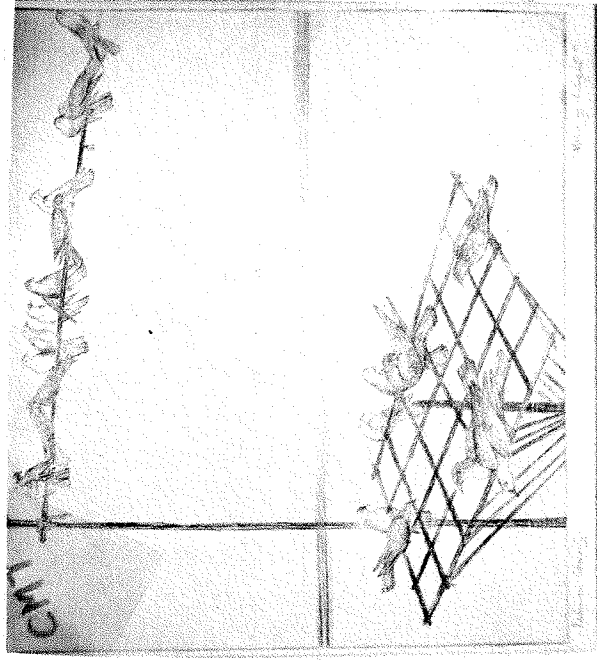
237. Chughtai, His own Passion



238. Chughtai, Under the Arch



239. Chughtai, Under the Arch



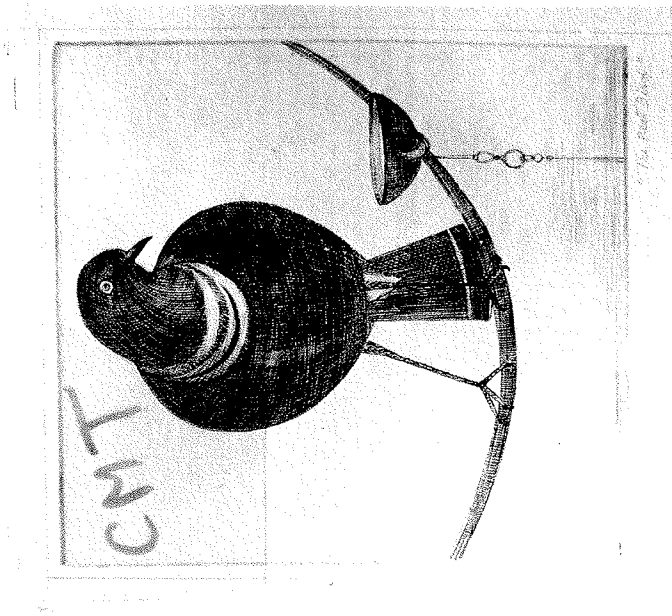
241. Chughtai, Morning Flight



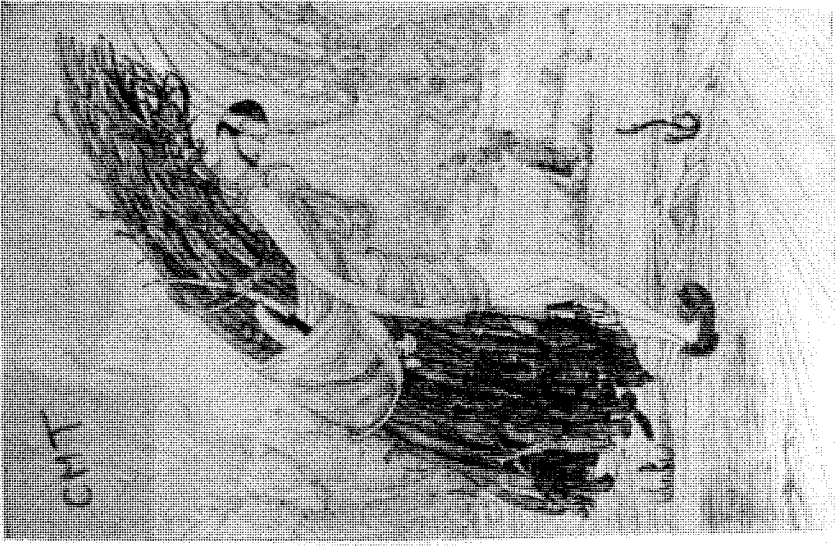
240. Under the arch (detail)



242. Chughtai, In the Rain



243. Chughtai, The Pet Bird



246. Chughtai,

Kashmiri Woodcutter



245. Chughtai, Fishing Day



244. Chughtai, Spring Breezes

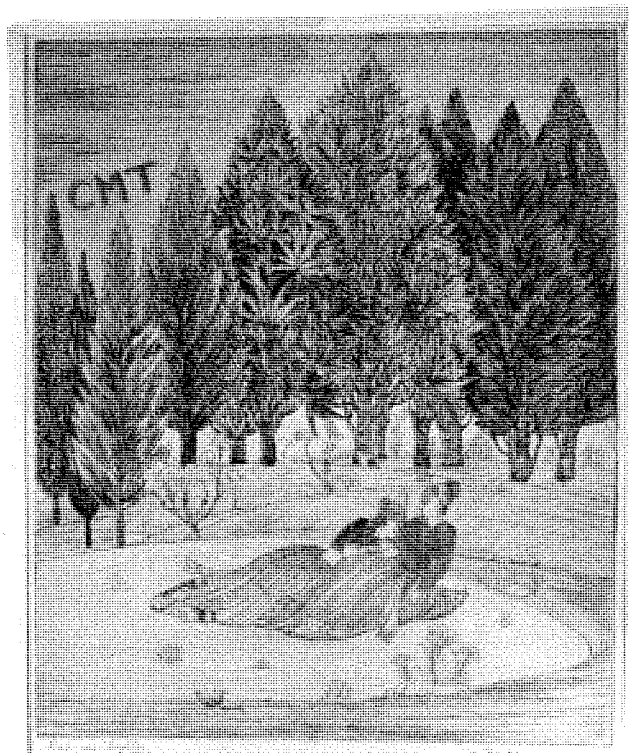




247. Chughtai, Golf Ground



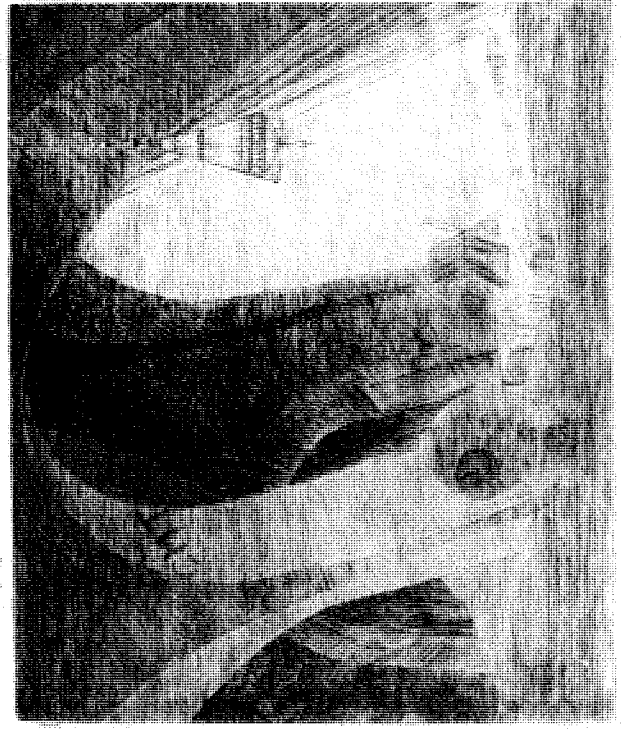
248. Chughtai, Carpet Seller



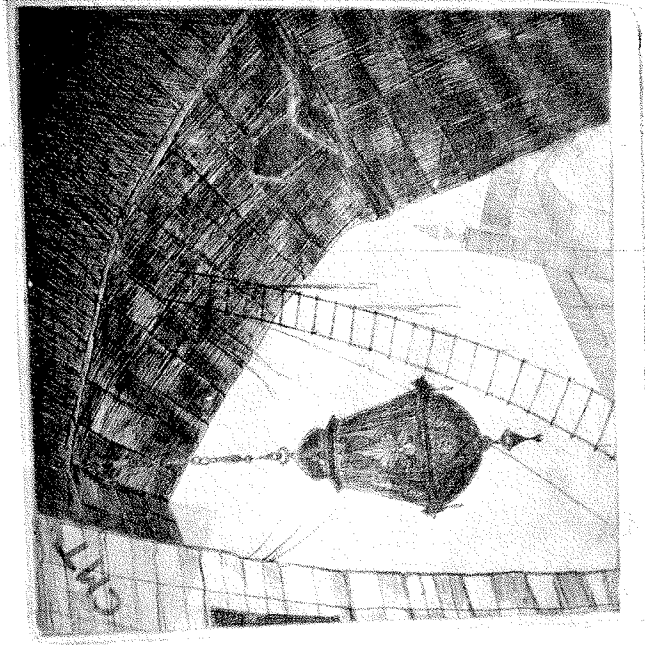
249. Chughtai, The Romance



252. Chughtai,  
The Earth

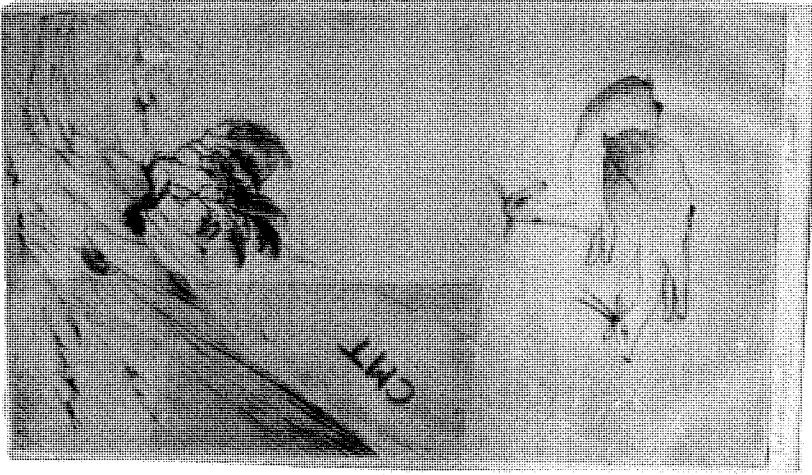


251. Chughtai, The Leaning Corridor

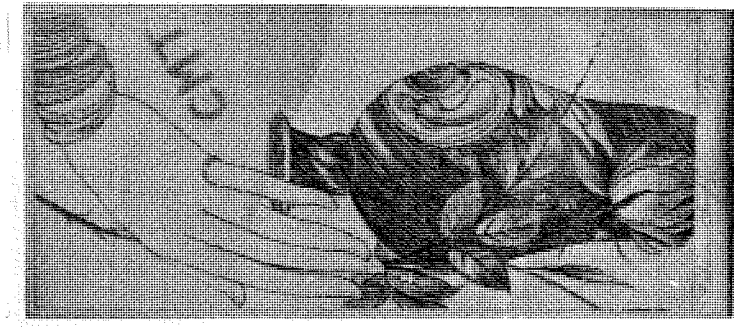


250. Chughtai, Lamp of the Mosque

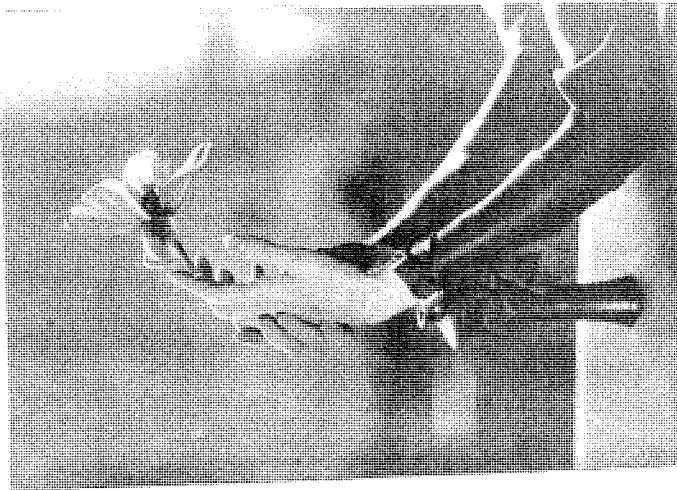




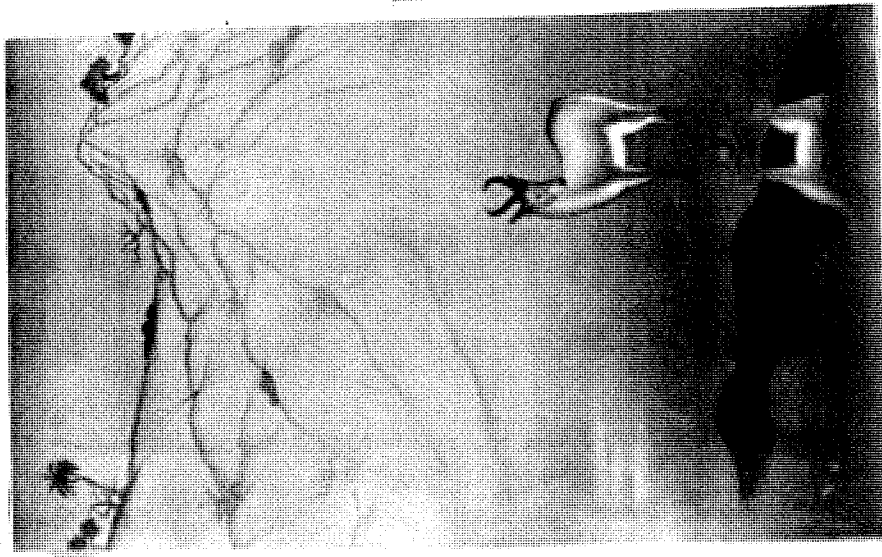
255. Chughtai,  
Beneath the Mountains



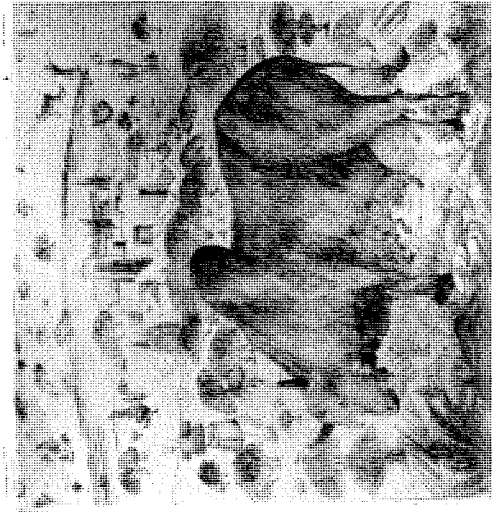
254. Chughtai, Vase



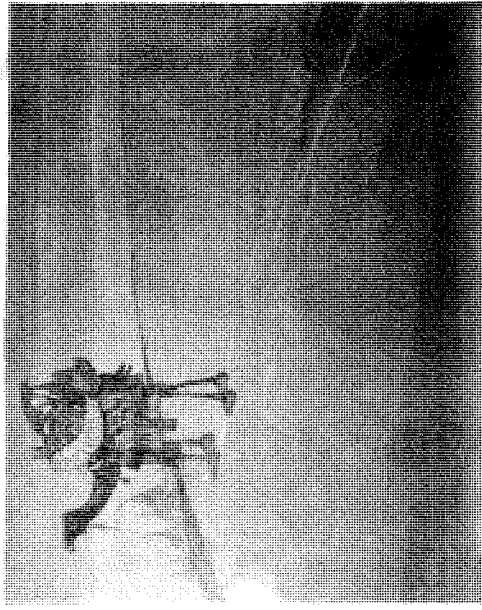
253. hand and vase



256. K. Venkatappa, watercolor?



257. Chughtai,  
Brahma Bull



258. Chughtai, Camel



259. Chughtai,

The Endless Horizon

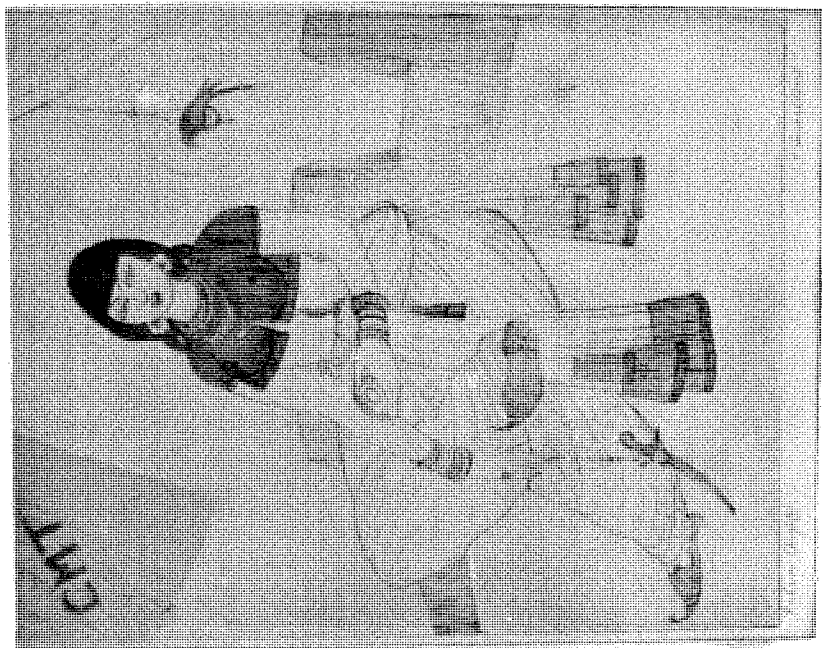


260. Chughtai, two females

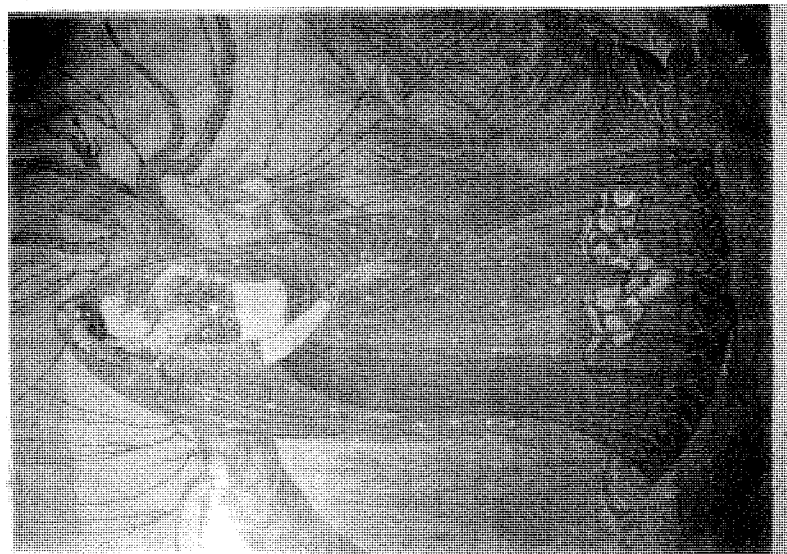


261. Chughtai,

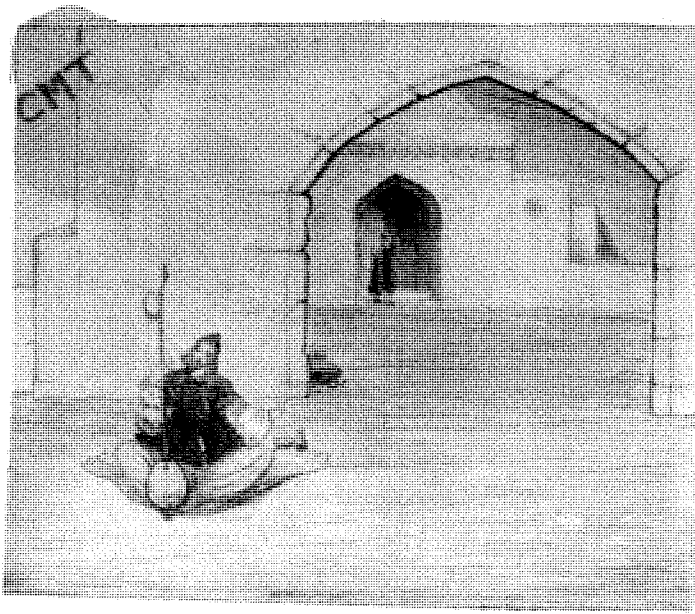
nude with peacock feather



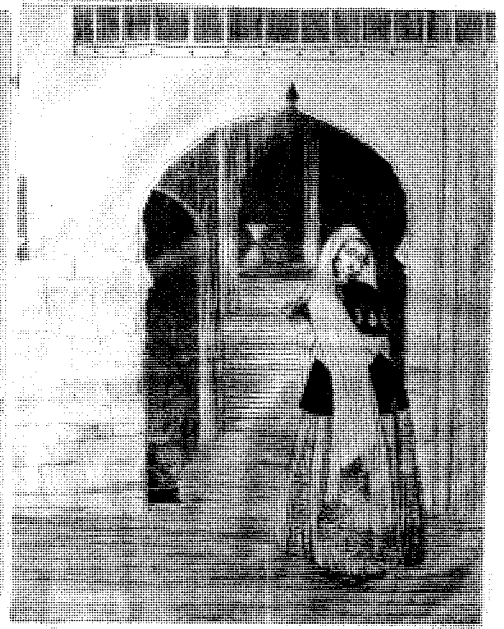
263. Chughtai, Sweetheart



262, Chughtai, Village Maiden



264. Chughtai,  
musician in front of a mosque



265. Chughtai,  
exiting a mosque

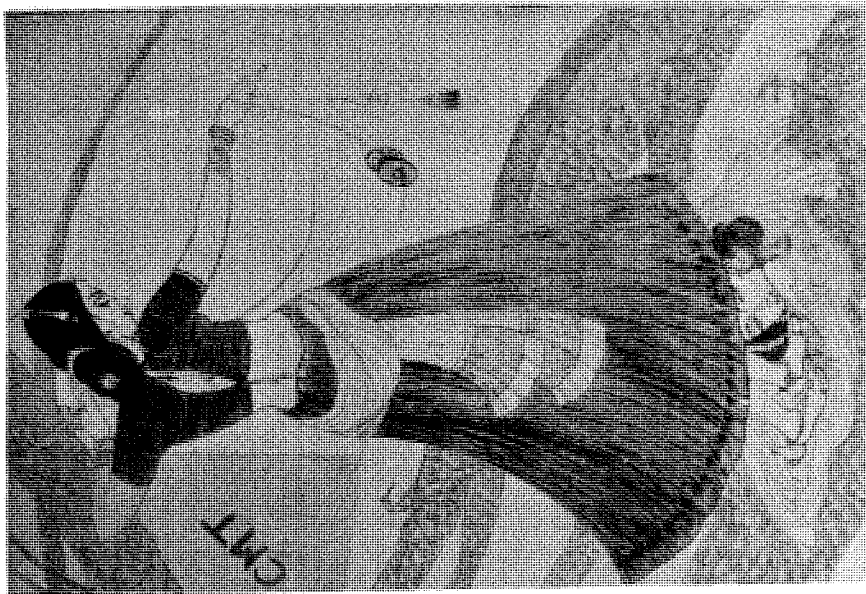


266. Chughtai, old man with oyster shell





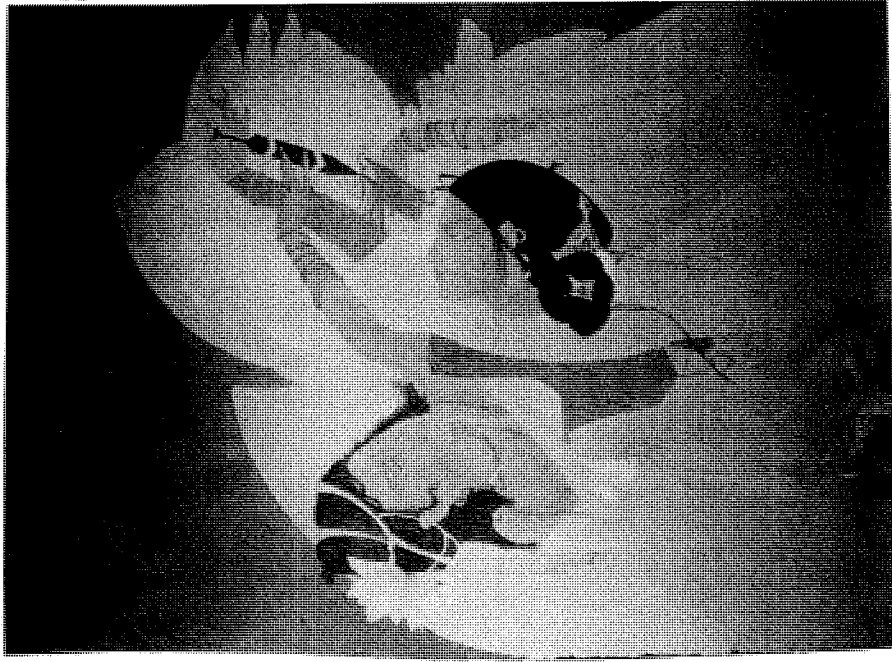
268. Chughtai, two people sitting



267. Chughtai, On Her Feet



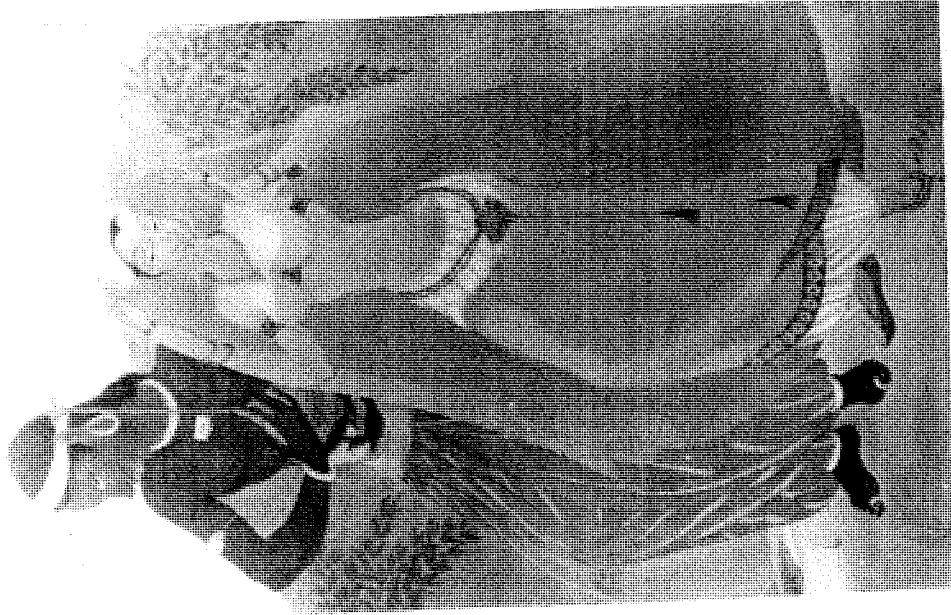
269. Asit Kumer Haldar, Omar Khayyam



270. Forgery artist, Holi Dance



272. Forgery artist, Bride



271. Forgery artist, Couple