Chapter#6
HISTORY OF PAINTING IN SOUTH ASIA

Painting in the South Asian Subcontinent dates back to the pre-Indus Valley time when it was used to colour the crafts and artifacts e.g. jewelry and pottery. Painting as an individual art form, in this region, emerged during the Buddhist period, when it was attempted on the walls of the Ajanta Caves. The art of painting reached its glory during the Mughal era in the form of book illustrations and fresco paintings. The British colonization of the region resulted in the western influences in painting, greatly changing the art trends. The post-partition paintings are the by-product of the ingenious traditional art and influences of the western art movements.

6.1. The Ajanta Cave Paintings

Figure 6.1 A view of Ajanta Caves horseshoe shaped rocks, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/242

Figure 6.2 Ajanta Caves, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/242

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It is said that two thousand and two hundred years ago, the work began on these extensive series of cave monuments in Maharashtra, India. Over a period of hundreds of years, thirty one monuments were hewn piece by piece from a horseshoe shape rock. It is situated about 3.5 miles away from the village near a mountain stream of the river Wagura, which flows along the bottom of the narrow valley. Then around the year 1000AD, they fell into disuse. Dense jungle grew around, hiding the caves away from human eyes. During the next centuries, the forest grew back and the caves were hidden, unvisited and undisturbed, although the local population was aware of at least some of them.

On 28th April 1819, a British officer for the Madras Presidency, John Smith, while hunting a tiger, accidentally discovered the entrance to one of the caves deep within the tangled bushes. There were local people already using the caves for prayers with a small fire, when he arrived. Captain Smith explored the first cave, since long it was a home for birds and bats and a den for other

larger animals. He scratched his name and the date on the wall. Within a few decades, the caves became famous for their exotic setting, impressive architecture, and above all their exceptional but unique paintings. In 1861 this became the nucleus of the new Archaeological Survey of India. The Nizam of Hyderabad built the modern path between the caves to make the site easy to visit.[19]

Now the Ajanta Caves have been designated as a World Heritage Site which depicts the history of Buddhism between 200 BC and 650 AD. The caves were mainly built as a worshipping and residing place for the Buddhist monks. The beautifully carved sculptures and paintings on the walls of these structures depict Buddha's life and also his lives in the previous births as detailed in the allegorical Jataka tales. Other images such as court scenes, street scenes, animals and birds have also been skillfully made. Five of the caves are chaityas (prayer halls) and the rest are viharas (monasteries).

Mural Paintings

Inside many of the caves the mural paintings are frescoes. Frescoes are paintings which usually are done on wet plaster in which colours are applied as the plaster dries. The Ajanta Frescoes have a special importance of their own. They are found on the walls and ceilings of the caves. These paintings present different phases of Buddha's life. The themes of court life, feasting, processions, men and women at work, festivals, and various natural scenes including animals, birds and flowers are also painted. The artists used shading to give a three-dimensional effect.

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Figure 6.3 Fresco painting *Ajanta* Caves, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/242

Figure 6.4 Fresco painting *Ajanta* Caves, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/242

[19]Jonathan Glancey, Ajanta Caves: Discovering lost Treasure, 23 February 2015, http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20150223-uncovering-caves-full-of-treasure, (Accessed on September 2017)

Ajanta paintings are one of the few surviving examples of earliest mural painting. Its decorative style provided inspiration for the Buddhist art of Tibet, Nepal, Central Asia, China, Japan and South-East Asia.

Sculpture

The sculpture of Ajanta caves belongs to 4th century AD. These are remarkable for its grace, elegance and serenity. However, the general characteristics of Ajanta sculptures have a certain heaviness of form. Every sculpture was plastered and painted. But most of the plaster is now lost.

Figure 6.5 Sculptures in Ajanta Caves, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/242

Figure 6.6 Sculpture in Ajanta Caves, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/242

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6.2. Mughal Painting

Mughal painting is a particular style of painting, generally known as miniatures either as book illustrations or as single works to be kept in albums. It emerged from Persian miniature painting and later on developed as a blend of Indian Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and European influences, and flourished largely in the court of the Mughal Empire (16th - 19th centuries), and later spread to other Indian courts, both Muslim and Hindu, and later Sikh. [20]

[20]The Information about different periods of Mughal art taken from Annemarie Schimmel's book The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, art and culture. Reaktion Books, 2004.

Figure 6.7 Basawan and Chetar , *Emperor Akbar chasing Ran Bagha across the River Jumna,* illustration from the Akbarnama, opaque watercolour and gold on paper, 33 x 30 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur's period (14 February 1483 – 26 December 1530)

Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur was a conqueror from Central Asia who succeeded in laying the basis for the Mughal dynasty in the Indian Subcontinent and became the first Mughal emperor. He was a direct descendant of Timur. He was greatly influenced by Persian culture and this affected both his own actions and those of his successors, giving rise to a significant expansion of the Persianate ethos in the Indian subcontinent.
No miniatures survived from Babur's reign, nor did he mention any commissioning in his diaries, the Baburnama. Copies of this were illustrated by his descendents, Akbar in particular, with many portraits of new animals that Babur encountered when he invaded India, which are carefully described.

Humayun's period

When the second Mughal emperor, Humayun (reigned 1530–1540 and 1555-1556) was in exile in Tabriz in the Safavid court of Shah Tahmasp I of Persia, he was much interested in the miniature painting practice of Persian courts. When he returned to India, he brought with him two accomplished Persian artists, Mir Sayyid Ali and Khawaja Abdus Samad. Both Persian masters started an atelier of court painters under the patronage of Humayun. Humayun's major known commission was a Khamsa of Nizami with thirty-six illuminated pages, in which the different styles of the various artists are apparent.

Akbar's period

Mughal painting developed and flourished during the reigns of Akbar (son of Humayun). During the reign of Akbar (1556-1605), the imperial court also emerged as a centre of cultural excellence. Akbar inherited and expanded his father's library and atelier of court painters, and paid personal attention to its output.

A number of books were illustrated during this period. Some of the famous illustrated books of that period were; Akbarnama (Book of Akbar, is an official biographical account of Akbar, written in Persian by Akbars court historian Abul Fazal. It includes vivid and detailed descriptions of his life and times). Baburnama (the memoire of Babur), Tutinama (Tales of a Parrot), Dastan-e-Amir Hamza (Adventures of Amir Hamza, the uncle of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Gulistan of Saadi, Khamsa of Nizami, Baharistan of Jaami, Daraabnāma (story of the Persian king Daraab) and Razamnāma (a Persian version of the Indian Mahabharata). Mughal style during this period was continuously flourished. It is said that during Akbar's reign more than one hundred artists were associated with his court. Some of the prominent artists of Akbar's period were Dhan Raj, Kesu Das, Abul Hasan, Basawan, Daswant, Manohar, Bishan Das, Mir Sayyid Ali, Khawaja Abdus Samad, Sharif, Mansur and Farrukh Beg Qulmaq.

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Jahangir's period

Like his father, Jahangir too had an inclination toward arts, which proved beneficial for the growth of Mughal art. The Mughal painting continued to grow under his reign and this era is considered as golden period of Mughal miniature paintings. Jahangir was largely inspired by European painting, he ordered his painters to follow the single point perspective used by European artists. This gave a whole new perspective to the Mughal painting. During this period the paintings had finer brush strokes and lighter colours. One of the prominent books commissioned by Jahangir was the Jahangirnama. It was an autobiography of Jahangir and it consisted of several paintings that included unusual themes, such as fights between spiders. Several individual portraits of Jahangir were also made by his painters. However, he also commissioned many paintings of birds, animals and flowers which were portrayed in a realistic manner. Overall, the Mughal painting continued to flourish and also continued to evolve under Jahangir's rule.

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Figure 6.8 Miniature painting from Jahangir's period, A Court scene, Opaque watercolour on paper, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/60050385

Figure 6.9 Miniature painting from Jahangir's period painted by Mansur, Painting of Peacocks,1610, Opaque watercolour on paper, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/60050385

Shahjahan's Period

Mughal painting continued to expand during the reign of Shahjahan, the paintings were becoming increasingly rigid and formal. However, he commissioned a large number of paintings meant to be his personal collection. These paintings were based on themes like gardens and pictures

that gave great aesthetic pleasure. One of the most important works produced during his reign was the Padshanama.

Aurangzeb's period

Aurangzeb did not support or encourage any form of art, including painting, but the Mughal painting remained popular among the public and was supported by a number of patrons other than the Mughals. However, some of the best Mughal paintings were created under Aurangzeb's reign. While Aurangzeb did not order these paintings, it is said that seasoned painters created a few paintings on their own in the workshops that were maintained by earlier Mughal emperors. When painters were certain that Aurangzeb would order the closure of these workshops sooner or later, they decided to work either by their own or went to Rajput courts for patronage.

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Figure 6.10 Aurangzeb holds court, Shaistah Khan standing behind Prince Muhammad Azam, Source: Imperial Mughal Painting, by Stuart Cary Welch (New York: George Braziller, 1978), p. 112.

6.3 Master Painters of Pakistan
i. Haji Muhammad Sharif (1889 – 1978)

Haji Muhammad Sharif belonged to the family of court painters from Patiala. He himself is known as a court painter of the Maharaja of Patiala. He received the training in traditional miniature painting and worked at the court till he was aged sixty. Afterwards, he moved to Lahore where he was appointed as a teacher of miniature painting at the Mayo School of Art till the next eight years.
Miniature painting is the traditional watercolour technique of Persia and South Asia. Haji Sharif has mostly used the gadh rung (opaque watercolour) technique of miniature painting in his works.

Besides replicating the miniature paintings of the old masters, he also created several original paintings. Because of his training in traditional miniature painting, a great influence of it is seen in his original works. He has painted the portraits of the Mughal Emperors decorated with lavish jewels and floral borders inspired by the paintings of the Mughal court.

He was also fond of painting equestrian portraits of the emperors e.g. Emperor Jahangir riding with Nur Jahan. The posture of the horses is natural. The king and queen, though out for hunting, are dressed in royal clothing and with ornate jewelry. The landscape with mountains and trees is quite feeble but the mosque in the distance is painted according to the proper perspective.[21]
Jahangir facing a Tiger during a Hunt is another example of equestrian portrait.

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Figure 6.11 Haji Muhammad Sharif, Jahangir facing a Tiger during a Hunt, opaque watercolour on wasli, a traditional miniature painting

[21]S. Amjad Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 1st ed. (Islamabad: National book Foundation, 2000), 90.

His paintings of the royal procession with elephants are also famous e.g. Prince Aurangzeb attacking a wild elephant. The elephant is placed in the center of the composition with the horsemen emerging from the left and from the foreground. The sky is painted blue with white clouds.

Figure 6.12 Haji Muhammad Sharif, Prince Aurangzeb attacking a wild elephant, opaque watercolour on wasli, a traditional miniature painting

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All the paintings are executed in the traditional technique recalling those done at the time of Jahangir.

ii. Abdul Rahman Chughtai (1894 – 1975)

Abdul Rahman Chughtai was among the prominent artists since before the independence of Pakistan. He is famous for the watercolour paintings composed of successive washes. The subjects matters he portrayed were mostly poetical, literary, mythological and legendry. [22]

His figures are characterized by exaggeration and stylization. His drawing quality is remarkable because of the flowing and rhythmic lines. The colour schemes are harmonized.

His paintings are delicately sketchy with a two-dimensional quality. The figures seem to be weightless and floating because of the un-natural light effects. A great focus is laid on the folds of the drapery with fine and free flowing line work. The paintings are imbued with soft light overall. The colours are applied layer upon layers. The flat colours of uniform tones are accentuated by the line work in relatively darker tone. He did not use the pure colours, instead mixed them to make them softer and darker.

[22] Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 62-74.

Figure 6.13 Abdul Rahman Chughtai, Untitled, Watercolour painting on Paper, 56.8× 45.1 cm, https://www.artsy.net/artist/abdur-rahman-chughtai

Figure 6.14 Abdul Rahman Chughtai,A Painting from *Muraqqa*-e-*Chughtai* Watercolour painting on Paper

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Chughtai's most celebrated illustrations were published in 1928 in the form of album called *Muraqqa-e-Chughtai* which was the illustrated edition of *Diwan-e-Ghalib*.[23] The fantasy of the poetry of *Ghalib* is represented through the imaginary dresses, fanciful flowers and trees, and historical architecture. The rhythm of the verses is captured in the rhythmic lines of the figures and drapery. Likewise, the emotionality of the poetry is apparent in the dreamy eyes. Greens, blues and browns mostly dominate the paintings of the *Muraqqa.*

In 1968, another publication *Amal-e-Chughtai* came, which comprised of the illustrations of the verses of *Allama Iqbal.* Bright yellow and green is used in most of the landscapes in the background. Some of the paintings have striking and contrasting colour schemes. Contrary to the illustrations of the *Muraqqa,* the figures of *Amal-e-Chughtai* are alert and wide-awake corresponding to the poetry of *Iqbal* which inspires the action. Upraised heads and confident looks are the characteristics of the figures of this album e.g. *Will and Power and Job and Leadership.*[24] Though in most of the paintings, the architecture with decorative motifs is painted as a frame to provide firmness, yet the illustrations of this album are simpler than the decorative paintings of the *Muraqqa.* The technique here is also different which employed an undercoat of tempera.

With his unique quality of delicate drawing, figure stylization and rhythmic colours, *Chughtai* has established such a place in Pakistani art scene which is unparalleled upto this time.

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Figure 6.15 Abdul Rahman Chughtai, A Painting from Amal-e-Chughtai, Watercolour painting on Paper

[23]Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 62.
[24]Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 74.

iii. Allah Baksh (1895 – 1978)

Ustad Allah Bakhsh was a most prolific and versatile artist of Pakistan. He got the title of Ustad (the maestro) because of his skills and command on the realistic depiction of different characters and landscapes. He belonged to the province of Punjab and born in a small town Wazirabad. He was a prominent artist of pre and post partition period of the Subcontinent of India and Pakistan. He produced a large number of paintings on Hindu mythology before the inception of Pakistan and was famous for depicting Krishna character in his paintings. His style and technique was western in nature and can be compared with the realistic landscape paintings of an English painter John Constable 1776-1837.

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Figure 6.16 Allah Bakhsh, *Bull Threshing Corns,* oil on canvas

After the independence of Pakistan he quitted the paintings of Hindu themes and his subject matter of paintings was totally changed. He started painting landscapes of Punjab villages along with the figurative paintings related to the life in Punjabi Villages and folk culture. There was not any parallel artist to him in early days of Pakistan for the depiction of landscapes, atmospheric effects and Punjabi Characters. A very impressive collection of his paintings is displayed in Lahore Museum's Art Gallery. His Bulls Threshing Corns, Aandhi and *Talism-e-Hoshruba* are some of the finest examples of his paintings in the collection of Lahore Museum.

The name of Allah Bakhsh will be remembered whenever the paintings relevant to the folk culture and Punjab village life will be discussed. He was the artist who commemorated the Punjab rural life and the landscape of Punjab through his large size paintings.

Figure 6.17 Allah Bakhsh, *Aandhi* (the dust strom), oil on canvas, in the collection of Lahore Museum Lahore

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iv. Shakir Ali (1916 – 1975)

Shakir Ali emerged in the mid twentieth century as a pioneer of modern art in Pakistan. He was trained in Oriental painting at Sir J.J. School of Art in Bombay, where the principal was an Impressionist painter, Charles Gerrard. After graduating, he went to Paris and joined the studio of a Cubist painter Ander L' Hote. The practice at this studio majorly transformed his painterly style which he later introduced in Pakistan. He joined the School of Industrial Arts in Prague where he got training in textile design. The trainings at these institutes helped in shaping his individualistic style.[25]

Figure 6.18 Shakir Ali, Still Life, oil on canvas

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The paintings of Shakir Ali are characterized by the figures reduced to simple geometric forms like the paintings of the Cubist Painters Picasso and Braque. Lines and curves in his paintings create the naturalistic forms of the humans and animals, mostly including the bull, cow, birds and woman.

His study of the frescoes at the Ajanta Caves and traditional miniatures influenced his works. His colour palette was strikingly bright consisting of primary and secondary colours, of which reds, oranges and blues are the most prominent.

[25] Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 116.

Figure 6.19 Shakir Ali, Painting with Striking Colours, oil on canvas.

He was especially fond of painting still-lifes. Still-life with Apple and Still-life with a Bottle are among the distinctive works. The compositions consist of divisions of different colours overlapped with straight and curved lines, in which the objects were almost hidden.

The figure compositions do not consist of realistic figures rather depict the naturalistic forms constructed with the help of geometric shapes. In the Woman and Bull and Leda and the Swan the figures are defined by the use of black outline and dark background respectively.

Figure 6.20 Shakir Ali, Woman and Bull, oil on canvas.

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His paintings of women with birds are of great significance. The body structure in most of these paintings is made up of textured lines. The size of the head is small with no features, while the body is elongated with the legs tapering downwards. The Girl with Caged Bird is best example of such style.

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Figure 6.21 Shakir Ali, *Girl with Caged Bird,* oil on canvas.

Birds in his paintings symbolize "his deep concern and emotional involvement with man's desire to be free and his fear of losing his freedom in this hostile world."[26] Other symbols that appear in his paintings are flowers, moon and sun which represent universality.
He had a great command to paint the figures with the least possible lines. He was an exceptional colourist. His Cubist inspired paintings with the bright and rich colours of his choice marked the developmental phase in the Pakistani art.

He was a source of inspiration for a great number of artists working at that time. Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq is one of his most prominent followers.

[26] Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 120.

v. Sadequain (1930 – 1987)

After migrating to Pakistan, Sadequain first emerged on the art scene with an exhibition titled "Exhibition of an Unknown Artist" at the residence of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. He was a self-taught artist and never got any training form any art school.

Sadequain is famous for large murals installed in various public and government buildings, some of which are Time's Treasure, Mangla Mural, Mural on the Ceiling of Lahore Museum and Mural at Sadequain Gallery, Frere Hall, Karachi.

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Figure 6.22 Sadquain, Mural Painting on the Ceiling of Lahore Museum.

Sadequain's style of painting is very unique in terms of the treatment of figures. He was capable to paint realistic figures, but he did not because he thought them to be very straight-forward. To add modern element in his works, he introduced thorny cactus forms. Women and men are painted in poetical and dancing poses in the S shape having flowing and rhythmic outlines. The figures are distorted and elongated.

Figure 6.23 Sadquain, Line Drawing

The cactus forms appear repeatedly in his various paintings. Human figures are composed of the cactus like spikes. Moreover, he also uses the shapes like blades and curved pointed shapes e.g. in his painting The Last Supper, he has used curved pointed blades for the sitting figures. The feet are suggested by long pointed triangles, heads by diamond or triangle shapes, while the laps are indicated by elongated crescent shapes. For the depiction of ribs small strokes are applied across the breast.[27] The spikes and cactus forms are inspired by the fact that the cactus plants survive and continue to grow in harsh circumstances of the desert. His paintings symbolize the man's struggles who strive in the tough social scenario.

Figure 6.24 Sadquain, *The Last Supper*

[27]Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 104

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The Hope Series consists of the figures with the spikey outlines and distorted figures. The sun is used as a symbol of hope. The figures are painted laying headless on the ground with a hand raised up holding his own head on which crow has made nest and laying eggs. The crows in his paintings represent that the mankind has been immobilized by the technology.

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Figure 6.25 Sadquain, A Painting from the Hope Series

His drawings and paintings are characterized by fine line quality. The colours used are very limited. Most of his works are dominated by black and white colours. The application of colours is flat.

He was a "socially conscious artist who felt acutely the ills and evils, the tragedies and sufferings of life."[28] Through his art, he promoted the positive aspects of life.

[28] Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 259.

vi. Zahoor-Ul-Akhlaq (1941 – 1999)

Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq, a prominent conceptual painter, joined the National College of Arts when Shakir Ali was promoted as a professor. At that time a new wave of abstract art brought by Shakir Ali from the West was an influential factor for the upcoming generation of artists. Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq inspired by Shakir Ali, became a great follower of his art.

Zahoor's early work is a combination of contemporary design, modern texture and traditional elements. He has painted the old faded manuscripts with "illegible patterns that look like calligraphy."[29]

His style developed more after his graduation from Hornsey College of Art and Royal College of art, London. The miniature paintings in the collection of the British Museum provided the next source of inspiration. He started using the format of traditional miniature painting with borders in his easel paintings.

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Figure 6.26 Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq, Easel Painting inspired by the format of Traditional Miniature Painting

In some of his paintings, he has used the grid pattern in the background. One of the most famous of these is a three-paneled painting with the portraits of national heroes in each square of the two panels, and a large Quaid-e-Azam's portrait in the central panel.

[29] Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 168.

Figure 6.27 Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq, Portraits of National Heroes in Grid Pattern

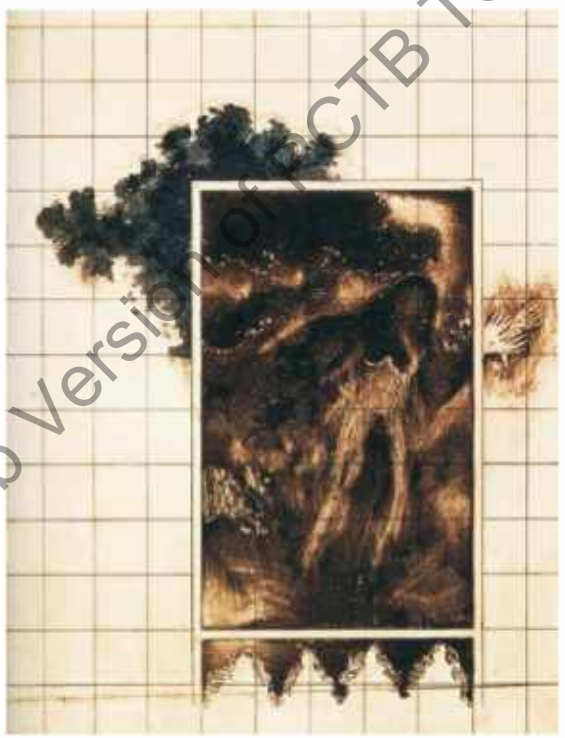

Figure 6.28 Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq, Painting in the Miniature Format, with Grid Pattern

He has paid honor through his etchings to Dr. Abdus Salam for his contribution towards nuclear power activities. One of the etchings shows atomic explosion with dark clouds with two figures emerging, which are considered to be the figures of Adam and Eve being expelled from the heaven. The composition is set within the boarders inspired from traditional miniature paintings.

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A rectangle or a window set in an outer rectangle along with the incorporation of his random linear patterns became his signature style. Most of his works are monochrome.

Figure 6.29 Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq, Farman II , Rectangle within Rectangle, with Random Linear Patterns

Figure 6.30 Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq Views through Window

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Window in many paintings are deeply recessed and are painted "in perspective in such a way that the window, one moment seems to be receding and the next moment projecting."[30]

The two main factors apparent in his works are the geometrical shapes with teasing perspective and the overall monochromatic effect, where the darker tones gradually tend to be lighter. The human forms mostly emerge in silhouettes in a harmonious way.

vii. Anna Molka Ahmad (1917 – 1994)

Anna Molka Ahmad is one of the first female artists of Pakistan, who rose to prominence because of her contributions as an art educationist. After completing her art education from Royal College of Arts, London, she came to Pakistan in 1940. At that time she had converted to Islam. She founded the Fine Arts Department in Punjab University and worked hard especially for female art education.

The vibrant colours and a personalized technique of the Anna Molka Ahmed make her prominent among the artists of her time. The way of visual communication is very well adopted by her in the exuberant and expressive

[30]Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 171.

compositions. Most of her paintings represent the materialistic life around us, as well as the inspiration from her own life and the religion.
Her paintings are characterized by rough and thick brush strokes which are applied with palette knife without mixing with other colours. The use of bright colours along with the impasto technique makes her paintings bold and expressive of her firm personality. Instead of using the different tones of the same colour for the lights and darks, she used complementary colours to create the effect of light and shadow.

Everyday life, culture, festivals and rituals of Pakistan are the subject matters of her paintings. The versatility of her artistic talent is obvious from the landscapes, portraits, figure compositions, war paintings, religious paintings, philosophical paintings, partition riots paintings, drawings and sculptures.[31] Her landscapes depict common rural life scenes with realistic approach but expressionistic technique unlike the poetic landscapes practiced at that time.

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Figure 6.31 Anna Molka, Punjab University Landscape, oil on board with pallet knife, collection of Lahore Museum Lahore

She painted a number of portraits including self-portraits and portraits of various artists with the same impasto technique. The colour tones are limited in portraits with dominating flesh tint. The drawing lacks details as the rough strokes are more emphasized.

[31] Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 96.

Figure 6.32 Anna Molka, Self-portrait.

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Her figure compositions are of great significance because of the idea and subject matter. They are larger in size in which the figures are arranged in harmony with the background. She has addressed the issues faced by the common people e.g. in the paintings The Refugees, Muharram and The Flood. The sufferings of the people are apparent through their ragged condition.

The Flood is a composition of figures with curvilinear lines. It creates a feeling of grief and disaster because of the colours used in it i.e. blues, purples, greys and black, and because of the composition with curvilinear lines of the flood in which the figures are almost sinking. The application of colours is rough and spontaneous, and the composition is very strong and dynamic. The impression of figures is created without focusing any character. It shows the misery of people in flood.

Figure 6.33 Anna Molka, *The Flood,* oil with palette knife on board, in the collection of Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Islamabad

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Her belief in life after death was so strong that she painted a series of large sized paintings in her later years. She wanted to paint the themes from the Quran before her death. This series include Dance of Death, Hell, Heaven and Day of Resurrection.

Qiyamat or the Day of Resurrection consists of three panels, and each panel is complete in itself. The Day of Judgment is depicted crowded with dead bodies and skeletons rising from their graves and moving towards the vanishing point where the judgment is going to take place, which is depicted in the central panel. The sound of Soor is painted in the first and third panels. She has tried to translate the verses of the Quran in the form of a painting. The colours are bright and sharp. The orange yellow circle in the center is dominating. Background is painted in rough strokes of blues, skeletons in blues and grays, while the nudes in tones of oranges. Horses with their riders, with no facial details, can also be seen in the left background. "Almost everything is painted conceptually and not realistically."[32] She raised a whole new generation of artists among which the most prominent are Colin David and Khalid Iqbal.

[32]Ali, Painters of Pakistan, 101.

Figure 6.34 Anna Molka, *Qiyamat* (Day of Resurrection)oil on canvas, in the collection of Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) Islamabad

Figure 6.35 Anna Molka,*International War* (1960) oil on canvas, in the collection of Mrs Tahira Ayaz Pakistan Lahore.

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