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2004/34

The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

A Study of an Indian Muraqqa^c from Dar al-Kutub

A Thesis Submitted to

Department of Arabic Studies

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

The degree of Master of Arts

in Islamic Art and Architecture

by

Shereen Mohamad Rashad El-Mitainy

B. Sc., Faculty of Fine Arts, Helwan University

Under the supervision of Professor Bernard O'Kane

May/ 2004

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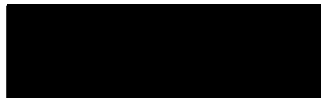
The degree of Master of Arts

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has been approved by

DR. BERNARD O'KANE

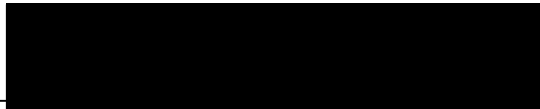
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To the memory of my Mom.....

To my Dad

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Abstract

University: American University in Cairo.

Thesis Title: A Study of an Indian Muraqqa[°] from Dar al-Kutub.

Student: Shereen Mohamad Rashad El-Mitainy

Adviser: Prof. Bernard O'Kane

This thesis is a study of an unpublished Indian Album from the Dar al-Kutub al-Masriyya (Egyptian National Library) collection, tarikh farisi, no. 66. The album consists of 70 pages, all with paintings; 36 of them are flower and plant depictions painted especially for the muraqqa[°] (album) and 34 are pasted-in paintings from different origins. It is undated and has no signatures or attributions presented on the pages.

Indian painting is an art that had been only recently studied, although it has long been appreciated for its beauty and fanciful iconography. The mid-twentieth century was the beginning of scholarly interest but it was not until the late decades of the century that these studies started to become widespread.

The muraqqa[°] can be called "The Twin Muraqqa[°]" as it presents most of its subjects in two facing paintings. The thesis attributes the different paintings to a date and provenance whenever possible, through studying the paintings' styles, colors and subject matter and comparing them to similar paintings. A copy of all the muraqqa[°] paintings is attached to the study as well as comparable paintings for the ease of the reader to.

Studying the different paintings suggests that ten of them were done by the

the album and execution of most of the paintings. The question of a specific patron is discussed, as is that of how the muraqqa^c reached Dar al-Kutub.

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the album and execution of most of the paintings. The question of a specific patron is discussed, as is that of how the muraqqa^c reached Dar al-Kutub.

List of Abbreviations:

OMPb: Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books, British Library.

IOLR: the India Office Library and Records.

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Chapter 1

1.1. Methodology

The study of a particular muraqqa^c, in this case Dar al-Kutub, tarikh farisi 66, does not start and finish with its beautiful leather binding. "Muraqqa^c" is the Persian word for album which was usually used to identify a collection of different fragments bound together with illuminated borders around. Our study concentrates on all its paintings; comparative examples are discussed whenever possible. Being undated and unsigned; the paintings are studied individually to determine the date and the iconography of each. An artist or a place of execution for each painting is suggested whenever possible.

The paintings in this muraqqa^c are divided into two groups, figure and flower studies, and studied in separate chapters. The binding and illuminations also had an important role in book making and muraqqa^c assembly.

There has been no published study concerning our muraqqa^c. This thesis throws light on the basic questions concerning it. When and where were the paintings executed? Were all the paintings contemporary with each other? Who commissioned it? When and where was it assembled and bound? Who was its original owner and how did it reach the Dar al-Kutub collection?

These questions with other details are discussed in full in the following four chapters. Sometimes probable answers can be given, in other cases a number of

1.2. Literature

The study of Indian and Mughal painting is a fairly recent field; previously it had been studied as sub-Persian painting. The twentieth century was the beginning; as in 1918 Percy Brown's *Indian Painting* appeared, but the second half of the twentieth century saw the real beginning of these studies. They were usually catalogues of certain collections but with little analysis.

A number of studies of different libraries and museum collections have now been published. One of the most comprehensive studies is Linda Leach's *Indian Paintings from the Chester Beatty Library* (1995), in which she discusses a large number of Indian paintings including their iconography, style, history, origin and comparable examples. Her approach is followed in this study. Another comparable study to ours is the reproduction of the St. Petersburg Muraqqa^c (1996). A number of authors worked on the study of the paintings, including Welch who has written a number of books discussing Indian paintings. Matches for our paintings from the St. Petersburg muraqqa^c are used in this study. One of the most important scholars of Mughal and Indian paintings is Seyller who has used different methods and technologies to make new discoveries. Some of his studies were used in our thesis whenever relevant. His close attention to codicology, the condition of the paintings and their colors and the way they were pasted to the manuscript pages, was useful for this study.

1.3. Arrangement

Following this chapter, four chapters and three appendices are presented

till the late 18th – early 19th century, concentrating on album-making whenever possible.

Our muraqqa^c consists of 70 pages of paintings that are studied in chapters 3 and 4. A Summary of these chapters is given with comparative analysis in chapter 5, and in conclusion a possible date, location and patron are discussed.

Three appendixes are attached to the study. Unfortunately, in some cases the reproduced paintings lack some of the details of the originals; colors might slightly change due to printing or photography. Appendix A has 75 figures which are all the muraqqa^c pages. Figs. 1-70 are the paintings arranged as they are placed in the original muraqqa^c. Figs. 71-75 are of the leather binding and the last page of the muraqqa^c. At the beginning of the muraqqa^c there are two almost empty pages that have been discussed but are not presented in the figures. Appendix B has 9 plates; 1-3 represent depictions of upper corners of flower paintings. Plates 4-6 are depictions of the lower corners of the flower paintings. Plates 7-9 represent the upper part of the illuminations around the paintings for a closer study and comparison. Appendix C represents paintings that are comparable but do not belong to our muraqqa^c; the numbering starts at plate 10.

Chapter 2

History of Book Making in Muslim India

2.1. Beginning

Islam entered India with the conquests of the Muslim ruler Mahmud of Ghazni (r. 986-1030). The real founder of Islamic rule in northern India was Muhammad Ghuri (d. 1206). After conquering Ghazni in 1173, he moved down into the subcontinent and by 1192 he had brought much of the Gangetic valley under his control by defeating and killing Jaichand of Kanauj. For the next three centuries and a quarter much of northern India was ruled by Muslim rulers known as *Sultans*, and hence the period is characterized as the Sultanate period.¹

2.2. The early Sultanates

The art of the book was already known to Muslims by this time. Persians had their highly qualified book making ateliers and Mamluks in Egypt had their highly illuminated Qur'ans. The art of the book including calligraphy, painting and illumination were developed under Islam to help preserve and transport the Quran, hadith and sunna from one place to another especially since Islam was being spread among non-native Arabic speakers. The sultans of the new *Dynasty of Slave Sultans* – as they were known in history – looked back to their Persian and Turkish origins where book making and patronage of arts were signs of royalty.

Although India was already familiar to books it was not familiar to either paper or Arabic script. The Muslim rulers therefore found it quite easy to introduce their concepts of the book and new styles. But it was not until after Timur's invasion in 1398² that Muslim Indian sultanates started to promote their own ateliers.

Surviving examples from this period are very rare. They are mainly text books with many illustrations. Manuscripts on astrology, mathematics, language and music were ordered to be translated and copied with their illustrations by Firuz Shah Tughlaq (reigned 1351-88).³ Almost a century later, Iskandar Lodi (reigned 1489-1517) had Indian books translated to Persian, especially the Sanskrit medical books.⁴

2.3. The Mughals

In 1526 Babur established himself as the founder of the Mughal dynasty.⁵ The next period of Indian history, stretching from 1526 until 1857, is generally referred to as the Mughal period. Derived from the word *Mongol*, the expression *Mughal* is applied to the dynasty founded by Babur, who traced his decent from the Mongol Chingiz (Genghis) Khan. A Timurid prince from Ferghana in Central Asia, he defeated Ibrahim Lodi in 1526 and occupied the throne at Delhi until his death in 1530.⁶

2. Losty, *Art of the Book*, 38.

3. Seyller, *Workshop and Patron*, 13.

4. Ibid

Babur as a ruler followed the princely Persian custom in maintaining a small library of books, some of which were acquired as spoils of war.⁷ But unfortunately no traces of his library remain other than historical evidence and Babur's own memoirs, the *Baburnama*. Originally written in Turkish during Babur's lifetime, his grandson Akbar had it translated to Persian and illustrated in his atelier in the late 16th century. Four copies are known to have been made under his orders in his atelier.⁸

Humayun, Babur's son (reigned 1530-1542, 1550-1556), was defeated and expelled out of the Indian lands and became a refugee in Persia. He had to adopt Shi'ism to get the support he needed from the Persian ruler Shah Tahmasp. Although he was a refugee, he had painters and artists under his authority⁹. Humayun's wife and Akbar's mother Hamida Banu Begum too was known for her love of arts and was a patron of book as several books bear her seal¹⁰. The translation of Indian compilation of animal parables, the *Hitopadésa*, to Persian is attributed to Humayun.¹¹

After Humayun's death Akbar was a young prince who inherited an unstable dynasty with all its troubles. His reign of almost 50 years (1556-1605) helped the stability of dynasty and gave it the power to patronize different types of arts. His painting atelier had Persian artists among it like Mir Sayyid 'Ali and 'Abd al-Samad who joined the Mughal atelier when it was still under Humayun. They accompanied him on his return to India, thus they became the founders of the Mughal atelier.

7. Seyller, *Pearls of the Parrot*, 25.

8. Losty, *The Art of The Book*, 89.

9. Beach, *Early Mughal Painting*, 26.

The official Mughal court language was Persian, into which many Indian philosophy and literature books were translated. Akbar showed interest and love for painting and book making, this probably raised the value of illustrated books at his court. As a child, Akbar studied painting with Abd al-Samad.¹² A large book project was commissioned by him, the *Hamzanama*,¹³ a book of the heroic fables of Hamza, the Prophet's uncle. Literary books were the most frequently illustrated type in Akbar's atelier. Individual paintings appeared too, but no albums were yet made.

Under Jahangir (reigned 1605-27), a major change in the atelier products took place. The painting style changed from having Hindu subjects to depicting Jahangir's own fancies in his allegorical paintings. The range of illustrated texts was limited; individual paintings replaced them. Replacing the execution of huge book projects under Akbar by individual paintings caused a change of style.¹⁴ From then on, albums became familiar and were appreciated by different patrons, not only at the Mughal imperial court.

Albums gave the artists more freedom to depict what they wanted, or what the patron wanted, without being forced to follow a text. Jahangir's allegorical paintings became famous for their political meanings and the innovative compositions. Upon his orders, flowers and plants in Kashmir were studied and painted by his naturalistic painter Miskin, as discussed later.

Jahangir's artists were also commissioned to reproduce the European paintings that arrived in India with the Jesuit missionaries or European ambassadors. He took

12. Beach, *Early Mughal Painting*, 109

pride in showing off the excellent work of his artists and enjoyed identifying their unsigned works. His love of and interest in paintings made album making flourish under his patronage.

His son, Shah Jahan, was not as interested in paintings as his father was. He was more concerned with architecture and decoration; he even supervised the garden elements himself. Album making continued but at slower rate of production in the imperial Mughal atelier; it was now widespread among other Muslim Indian territories.

Some of the albums started under Jahangir were finished under Shah Jahan's reign, where individual paintings and portraits of the court were appreciated. Shah Jahan was interested more in personal portraits, as he ordered his artists to paint many of his court members either in individual paintings or in the margins of other paintings. He had the portraits of his officers who helped him rebel against his father and also those who turned against him. Hunting, war scenes and important events in the court were painted.

2.4. Late Mughals and Sultanates in the 18th century

The imperial court tradition was completely neglected under Aurangzib who was not interested in paintings or the arts in general. He tended to hold to the Sunna and forbade the joyful parties that used to take place under his predecessors' reigns. When he let the artists leave the court and almost closed the atelier. The imperial artists found other courts to employ them.

Smaller sultanates that once dreamt of having a huge atelier like the Mughals

to the dispersion of these artists and their working under different circumstances; some of them worked in formal ateliers and others established their own ateliers working on a limited scale because of the shortage of funds.

Deccani artists were well established at this time and their paintings were of the highest quality at the beginning of the 18th century. Their paintings are identifiable by the wide black eyes and the striking bright colors that they used.

In the mid 18th century, Oudh became the center for commercial album making. Lucknow, (see map, plate 10) being the capital, was known for its paintings illuminated with gold and of good quality. Album making was developed and executed there under the patronage of higher Indian officers or Europeans who were interested in Indian paintings. Being made for commercial distribution; the Lucknow production was mostly copies of earlier themes. Innovations in the paintings were found not so much in the iconography as in the style and setting.

In the early 19th century, Indian paintings intermingled with contemporary European ones. The figural depictions became realistic and lost the fanciful touch that identified them for centuries. Portraits and daily activities were more appreciated than the traditional painting style of yore.

Chapter 3

A Study of the Paintings

3.1. Description of the Album

This Album consists of 34 paintings, each two opposite one another representing the same or a related topic. Alternating with the paintings are 36 very colorful stencils of flowers, animals and birds. These stencils have 18 designs as the same design is represented in two opposite pages. The stencils and their designs will be studied and discussed in the following chapter.

The Album has no inscription indicating the date of its assembly or the patron. It has a leather cover with a pressed and gilded medallion on the front cover which will be studied in detail in the following chapters. It opens from right to left as with Arabic, Turkish and Persian books.

3.2. Arrangement of the Paintings

The paintings in this album have different topics as well as different styles. They are of different sizes and probably different dates and provenances too; but the way they are arranged is very interesting.

Each two paintings are placed facing each other and in most of the cases illustrate the same topic. In five times they appear to be copies of the same painting or a contest between two artists who were aware of each other's work, perhaps in an atelier. All of the paintings have one or more margins surrounding them. Some of

geometric or flower designs or freely scattered flower designs acting as backgrounds. The patterns and styles are different on every page; either the design is different or the size is. The designs are rarely repeated, and when they are, they vary in size from the previous examples.

The album pages have been numbered in a red pencil at the upper right corner of right-hand side pages, and on the upper left corner on the left-hand side pages. The pages with flower paintings have additional numbering, in a series of their own, on their lower right corner for right-hand side pages and the lower left corner for the left-hand side ones. This is an addition that – most probably – took place in the mid twentieth century when the Persian manuscripts at Dar al-Kutub had been arranged and documented in the index by Nasr Allah Mubashshir al-Tirazi.

In the following study; the numbers mentioned for the paintings are the page numbers indicated in red pencil. This is to reduce the numbers cited and to help eliminate confusion.

This chapter will cover 34 pages out of the 70 total pages of the muraqqa^c. These are the pasted-in paintings while the 36 remaining flower and plant depictions will be studied in the following chapter.

3.3. Study of the Paintings

The study is arranged according to: 1) the subject of the painting, 2) number of paintings on the subject and their sizes in centimeters (width x height) then sizes with margins included, 3) style of the paintings, 4) iconography of the painting, and 5) matches for the paintings in other manuscripts and collections.

3.3.1. Krishna playing flute with the gopis (cow girls) around him in a forest.

Number of Paintings

Two paintings; figures 3 (painting size; 11.5 x 18 cm, size with borders: 18 x 25 cm) and 4 (16 x 27 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 30.5 cm).

Iconography and description

Krishna is one of the most frequently illustrated gods of Hindu, Rajput and popular Mughal paintings of the early 17th century. The Krishna paintings were popular earlier under the Sultanate reign and continued to be so throughout the Mughal period¹. Having fun with the gopis (cow girls) around him was also a very familiar topic frequently illustrated as part of *Bhagavata Purana* which gives Krishna's history in one of its chapters. Krishna and his beloved Radha became a symbol of devotional as well as secular literature in Indian history, where it became a subject not limited to a certain religion or dynasty.

In these two opposite paintings, Krishna is placed in a focal point where gopis on his left are more numerous than the ones on his right. In both paintings he holds a flute, but in fig. 3 he plays the flute while dancing and hopping.

At first glance, the viewer gets the feeling that he is looking at two paintings of the same subject and quality. On a closer look; the difference in quality between the two paintings becomes clearer. Figure 3 seems to be a copy of fig. 4 which is of higher quality and has more details. It may be the other way around too, as fig. 4 could be a copy of the unfinished painting in fig. 3, and the painter wanted to show the patron his excellence in making a higher quality finished copy of the same painting. We can be certain at least that the two paintings are a copy of each other.

such as the women's hair styles show this too. In fig. 3 the woman standing to the left of Krishna holds a fly whisk in one hand and a counting bead in the other one, while in fig. 4, she holds only the beads in her hand. The second woman to Krishna's left has her hair knotted under her veil in the two paintings; a detail that cannot be noticed easily as the dark trees act as a background for their black hair. Another small detail is the water pot that one of the gopis is carrying; in both paintings it has the exact same design which in fig. 3 was never finished while in fig. 4 it is well depicted.

The depiction of the characters in fig. 4 is more detailed and the proportions are more preserved than in fig. 3 where the heads are a bit larger than they should be in relation to the body sizes. In fig. 4 the artist added some features to the painting to show his capabilities and to complete the setting different from the ones by the artist of fig. 3. Two white cows appear behind the bush at the lower right corner of the page. A beautifully depicted peacock is represented in the background perching on one of the trees. He also had the imagination to add three seated gopis on the ground gazing at Krishna with enchantment. On the other hand the artist of fig. 3 did not put much focus on the foreground, but he painted a distant city landscape behind the trees giving the same atmosphere as the other painting, showing a party concealed by their surroundings.

The painting in fig. 4 is clearly finished, while fig. 3 appears to be more a preparation for the painting rather than a finished one. It is difficult to tell for certain which painting is the copy of the other. Another possibility is that they are both copies of a higher quality imperial style painting, like most of the paintings of this muraqqa^c, as will be discussed later in this study.

the mid-18th century, because of Aurangzib's loss of interest in painting and the subsequent patronage by Europeans and provincial rulers of high and good quality paintings, as will be discussed later. Oudh and especially Lucknow were the source for many of the album paintings scattered in different collections all over the world. Some of the paintings executed there had artists' signatures or at least attributions; others do not have any such indication except the historical narration of the owner or someone who was present during the commission of the paintings who gives the history of the album. Comparing the style to similar paintings is essentially the only way to attribute these paintings to a certain school.

3.3.2. Laila meeting Majnun in a forest.

Number of Paintings

Two paintings, figures 7 (16 x 27 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 31 cm) and 8 (16 x 26.5 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 30.5 cm).

Iconography and description

Laila and Majnun is one of the famous stories in Arabic literature and was a well-known theme in Persian literature and one of the five stories in the famous *Khamsa* of Nizami and then the Indian *Khamsa* of Amir Dahlavi. It was also an inspiring topic for many poets and writers later on. Under Indian Mughal rule patronage of art of the book continued as they adopted the Persian legacy of arts and literature, where Laila and Majnun was one of the commonly depicted themes.

"Majnun visited by Laila in the forest and surrounded by his tamed animals" is a frequently illustrated scene of the story. Although the two facing paintings have the

her. In the two paintings; Majnun reacts with Laila and is aware of her presence; he even talks to her and gestures in fig. 8.

In fig. 7 light colors are used; white sky with gray strokes of clouds and Persian-style rocky defiles are drawn to give a mountain-like view. A tall tree with a white trunk and scattered leaves is between Laila and Majnun. The composition of the painting was familiar and repeated with slight alterations to fit different subjects. Our painting slightly resembles an illustration from the famous manuscript "The Emperor Akbar's *Khamisa* of Nizami",² that by Farrukh Chela dated to 1595, in the British Library [OMPB. Or. 12208 f.123a (17.1 x 11 cm)],³ (plate 11). The Mughal style of the 16th century is clear in the British Library painting; the stiff drapery with European influence, the Persian style of the trees and rocky defiles together with the highly studied animals and the shadows giving a three-dimensional quality to the painting. All these features are not represented in our painting indicating that it was not a direct copy of it. Perhaps our painter had seen it some time during his training or his work in an Imperial atelier and remembered it when he had the chance to do the same topic. He might also have copied his painting from another based on the British Library Mughal one, explaining the obvious differences between them as our painting is not as dramatic and certainly not as richly painted.

Our artist puts in his painting the most common features of the loving couple, such as the animals tamed by Majnun and the parrot peacefully standing on his knee – a symbol of desire as Brend states in her description.⁴ Laila's camel is also included; it was usually depicted to indicate the desert atmosphere where the events took place.

2. Brend, *The Emperor Akbar's Khamisa*, 32.

Laila in this painting, in her highly decorated Mughal dress and head-cover, resembles a Mughal princess and not an Arab lady. This was how she was usually depicted, in the style of the painter, not of the real location of events.

Majnun's depiction in this painting is interesting as his features are different from the usual skinny man with long hair and loose ragged clothing. In Mughal paintings, he was usually half naked with short hair and a skinny body. In this painting, Majnun is still skinny and with a naked chest; what is different is his head, beard and hair-cut. He has a shaggy head with a small beard and light whiskers. Laila is represented in a rich Mughal dress. Majnun's wrap-around waist-cloth is depicted in soft white folds showing a mastery of drapery.

Our painter might have studied Miskin's style or even copied it. His way of depicting animals and their different position resembles that of Miskin in "The Assembly of Animals", in the *Anwar-i-Suhayli* of Husain ibn 'Ali Vaiz Kashifi, dated AD 1596,⁵ (plate 12). In Miskin's painting animals are very well studied and realistic colors are used.⁶

In Laila and Majnun's meeting, the page setup is almost the same as Miskin's animal paintings. There is a leopard sitting by Majnun's hand, its size, position and drawing angle being almost a copy of Miskin's leopard. Our painting has a tree moved a little from the center which also resembles Miskin's usual plan of animal paintings, the main difference here being the details of the tree trunk and leaves. Miskin made a very detailed study of both the trunk and tree leaves while our artist here used simpler colors and shades to give a three-dimensional effect to his tree.

Many animals surround the two human figures in the painting, but none of them stands out as they all seem to be resting calmly beside the two human figures (they are supposed to be tamed or enchanted by Majnun). It is worth noting that in Miskin's paintings there were no camels, but according to the text of the story Laila's camel was present, indicating her mode of transport to reach Majnun. Only the head of the camel is drawn; the howdah it is carrying on its back is shown but the rest of the body is hidden behind rocky defiles. The camel's representation does not give any realistic feeling as its size and position do not fit in with the rest of the animals, in the Emperor Akbar's *Khamisa* of Nizami only the camel's head is represented at the edge of the page. This is more evidence that our painter was aware of this painting.

Another interesting feature in this painting is the water depiction; it goes back to the Chinese style where parallel small curved lines indicate water waves. This too might be taken as evidence of the wide training of our painter and his access to different painting styles.

On the other hand, fig. 8 is less crowded than fig. 7. It only has Laila and Majnun with Laila's camel in the lower right corner. The couple is seated among blossoming flowers of different kinds and colors. Between them is a book on a stand which Laila seems to point at, while Majnun gestures towards it with his right hand; this is probably the book of his poems. The book is opened and has tiny writing in nasta'liq; they are just letters arranged together but actually do not form words; they also do not carry a signature as one might have expected to see here in the painting. Behind the couple, heavy trees are represented; they are almost in the same arrangement of the unfinished fig. 3. Dark parallel tree trunks block part of the ground,

blue cloudy sky with orange and gray strokes. At the top of the painting a dark bluish-grey band seems to be added to fill in an empty space, although it seems to be painted on the same paper as the painting. It also might have been added to cover an inscription. In this case further study should be done to reveal what is beneath the paint, but this is not possible for the time being.

The painting as a whole is dark; only Laila in her golden costume and Majnun in his light skinned body provide a contrast. Majnun's interaction with Laila is unusual; he gestures towards the opened book and looks at her. Having no animals at all around Majnun is strange especially since he is meeting Laila in a forest or a garden where animals are normally present. Laila is depicted in a beautifully decorated Mughal dress with a transparent cloak above her clothes. Her head cover is similar to Laila's of fig. 7, but here it lacks the black baton on top. This head cover was used mainly for depictions of princesses and angels probably since the beginning of the 18th century, but there is no complete study of when it started. Laila's hair is represented loose on her shoulders with wide curls.

The flowers all around them are very colorful and realistic, yet they do not follow a pattern but are scattered all over the plane. Very thin white lines grow out of the ground behind Laila, possibly representing weeds, echoing the high dark trees behind Majnun. Although the painting as a whole is simpler than that on the opposite page; the details are still very well drawn.

This painting is certainly from a different atelier than fig. 7 and probably from a different region too. It is probably the work of the late 18th with its new iconography of a very well-known subject. The usual presentation had Laila and Majnun meeting

look of the latter is unlike fig. 8; where he seems to be talking and gesturing to Laila, showing her his book of poems.

The place of execution is uncertain here, although it is clear that this was the work of a high standard commercial atelier. The painting could have been executed upon the orders of a European collector who would not have noticed that the artist wrote meaningless letters in the opened book. A possible range for this painting is 1770-80 when the making of albums and paintings to be sold on their own was highly common, especially in Oudh.

The features of fig. 7 indicate that it has been executed some time in the early 18th century and certainly earlier than fig. 8. 1710-20 is a possible range for the execution of this painting, yet its indications of influences of previous imperial Mughal masters make it difficult to indicate the place of its execution. The painter was highly trained and had access at some time to imperial paintings. He may have been trained at an imperial atelier, yet this painting was not made for an emperor. The light colors and the simple details together with the limited palette indicate that the painting was probably made for a commercial atelier.

3.3.3. A visit to a Sufi Sheikh.

Number of paintings

Two paintings each one is slightly different. In fig. 11 (12.5 x 18.5 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 31 cm) a Sufi sheikh is visited by a prince, while in fig. 12 (7 x 11.5 cm, with borders: 17.5 x 23.5 cm) a Sufi sheikh is being visited by two women.

Iconography and description

Visiting holy men is a very frequently illustrated subject in Indian painting. It was continued by the Mughals when the emperor Akbar had his painters draw him visiting the Sufi sheikh Salim for blessings and to ask him to be granted a son. This tradition of visiting Sufi sheikhs and having it as a subject for paintings was continued by Akbar's descendants and spread among the elite of the community as well as the commoners, but of course it was represented by those who had their own atelier, or at least could afford high quality artists.

In fig. 11 a young prince with a Mughal turban and clothes visits a Sufi sheikh. A shining halo surrounds the youth's head, while he has his sword placed on the ground beside him. The young prince cannot be identified with any of the known Mughal princes. The prince attracts the viewer's eye as he is the only highly detailed person in the painting, with golden clothing and a halo around his head.

The Sufi sheikh is seated with his meditation band around his knees and waist opposite the young prince on a terrace in front of a simple building. The colors around are very simple, and the door curtain lacks any decoration. Simple vegetation is represented in the background on a lower level appearing behind the terrace railing indicating the elevated level of the sheikh's house and terrace. The sky is blue, almost the same hue as the door and curtains. A small plate and other fine objects are placed between the two men, but it is difficult to identify them. The carpet covering the terrace floor has a thin decorated border of the same color as the background itself.

This may belong to the late 18th century paintings that attempt to recreate the glories of the Jahangir and Shah Jahan era.⁷ Although it is not of a quality equal to the

imperial style, yet it represents a subject frequently depicted in albums, as mentioned earlier.

In fig. 12 the Sufi sheikh is seated in a courtyard with two women seated opposite him. It seems that only one of them – the older one – is consulting the sheikh while the other sits calmly listening. Behind a high wall appears a distant forest with a couple of pine trees. The house in whose courtyard they sit is all in off-white or light-gray color and has two levels. It is not highly decorated but it is drawn in the Mughal architectural style. It has the curled up curtains over door and windows with the scalloped arched niches. The sky is depicted in light-blue and white strokes representing the clouds.

What is interesting in this painting is that it is one of the smallest paintings in the whole album (7 x 11.5 cm); still it has a lot to offer to the viewer. It has three characters, a building two levels high and a courtyard, together with a forest in the background and a bright summer sky with light clouds. Another interesting feature is the rounded eye-glasses the sheikh is wearing. As the sheikh is depicted in white clothing with light skin it is very hard to see these small thin glasses. On a closer look it becomes clear that the sheikh wears the glasses because he is writing something on the white paper he is holding on his knee. This point raises more questions; why should a Sufi sheikh take notes; could he be a physician rather than a sheikh?

The unusual setting of the sheikh wearing eye-glasses and holding a pen and paper reminds one of the mid-16th century early Mughal painting of an old man holding a scroll, who is identified as Mir Sayyid °Ali's father holding a petition recommending his son to Emperor Akbar's atelier⁸ (plate 13).

The unusual characteristics of this painting make it very difficult to place and date; it could belong to the mid-18th century or later. It does not belong to a known text and therefore was probably designed as an album painting. The simple clothing style indicates that it is the work of a provincial atelier copying some features of the Mughal atelier. Lucknow again could be a possible place for the execution of such a painting.

The two paintings facing each other here are probably by two different hands and therefore have two different dates and places of execution. This is suggested strongly by the differences in representation of the two Sufi sheikhs and also by the different representations of the human figures; the artist of fig. 11 had a better sense of proportion. On the other hand the painter of fig. 12 had a better sense of body movement as he represented the figures variously seated in a very small space within the painting.

3.3.4. A woman stepping forward.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 15 (14 x 21 cm, with borders: 17 x 24 cm) and fig. 16 (9.5 x 12.5 cm, with borders: 16.5 x 19.5 cm).

Iconography and description

In almost the middle of the two pages a young woman in Mughal dress, wearing her jewelry, is represented stepping forward towards a door. In both paintings the women represented are identical in size and position although the sizes of the paintings themselves are different. The woman – in both paintings – has her left foot

shoulders, raising it with her left hand while holding a small oil lamp in her right one. Both women have loose hair under a transparent veil and wear the traditional Mughal top with a long wide skirt. They do not represent women of a high status, but probably two upper-middle class women.

The differences between the paintings make each of them distinctive. First of all they are different in size, fig. 15 being larger than fig. 16. The first one is a night scene; the only glowing elements are the woman and the simple white building with scalloped arch entrance where she enters. A woman servant is at the left side of the page holding a candle or a little oil lamp in her hand. She wears a green nontransparent veil and a lilac skirt, the same color as her mistress's front part of the skirt. Other than that the whole scene is dark. Some trees appear behind the high wall surrounding the building; they are dark with touches of lighter color. Some scratching of the dark color appears in parts of the painting, but it did not affect the opposite page.

In fig. 16 there is no other main character except the woman heading to the door. A Hindu ascetic and a yogi are represented in the background in a simple hut. Contrasting with the simplicity of the background in fig. 15, a city scene is represented here behind the woman through what seems to be the main gate to the house that she has just entered. A small part appears of the door to which the woman is heading. She is holding a small oil lamp in her right hand; its effects of light were not successfully captured by the artist. The scene has many light colors and does not indicate the night effect as in the previous painting. The door has a rolled-up red curtain with a golden border, and a lantern window above it. Trying to give an

3.3.5. A woman and her confidant, or two women.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 19 (9.5 x 15.5 cm; with borders: 17.5 x 23.5 cm) and fig. 20 (12 x 23.5 cm; with borders: 19.5 x 31 cm).

Iconography and description

Although these two paintings share the same subject, they are very different in style and in the way they are represented. In fig. 19, in a late Mughal style, the two women are seen within a window frame; the lower edge of the window is covered with textile and the curtain is rolled up. Framing within a window became a familiar way to depict portraits. In our painting, a curtain is rolled up with textile; covering the window railing is another curtain echoing the upper one. "Window-portraits" became popular in the late 17th century.⁹ A portrait of a young woman at a window (plate 14) dated to 1660 and painted by Raghunandan, is a part of British Library collection [IOLR. Johnson Album 4 no. 5v (5.1 x 7.3 cm)],¹⁰ having only the lower curtain covering the railing. Two other portraits of women in windows from the Indian Office Library albums are identified as Mughal. The first has an unidentified seated princess holding a flower in her hand with the upper rolled-up curtain over her head (plate 15), and it is dated to c. 1740.¹¹ The other painting (plate 16) also has a seated princess holding a flask and a cup. It only has a rolled-up curtain like the previous example. The painter is Aqil Khan and dated to c. 1760.¹²

9. Losty, *Indian Book*, 42.

10. Ibid.

As can be detected from the similar examples; the "window-portrait" setting was used for more formal personal portraits. In our painting the portraits are not formal, on the contrary they represent two women after bathing or dressing. The subject itself is not rare; a similar painting is in the Indian Office Library collection (plate 17), labeled "an imaginary courtesan"; a naked woman wearing only jewelry is depicted holding a transparent sheet of cloth over her body. It is attributed to Mihr Chand and dated around 1765-70.¹³ The woman in this painting is fully depicted with a plain background behind her; the two women in our painting are represented naked from the waist up as their lower halves are hidden behind the railing which is covered with the colored curtain. The woman on the left is a little bigger than the one on the right and holds a transparent sheet of transparent cloth with little white flowers in front of both their bodies. She holds a branch with little flowers in her left hand. They both wear their jewelry – like the courtesan in Mihr Chand's painting – and lace crowns over their heads with their hair falling loose along their backs. A plain light brown background is behind them, a successful simple background which helps the viewer concentrate on the details of the painting itself.

Since the window-portraits belong to a style that started in the 17th century and continued for more than a century, it is difficult to use this feature as a dating criterion. The beautifully depicted faces of the two women in the painting with the realistic depiction of their loose hair make it possible to attribute it to a highly trained artist, probably from an imperial atelier. Their head covers and the lace details are of high quality, yet this style of head covers is unusual. This painting is probably the work of the late 18th century and may belong to Faizabad as it was a center for later finely

executed paintings. It also could belong to Lucknow as does fig. 16, and have the same painter too.

The painting opposite, fig. 20, is different in its general layout. It represents a couple of women on a picnic in the open fields or on a terrace, drinking wine. Both figures have a glowing halo around their heads indicating that both of them are of the royal harem or princesses. The woman on the left has European features while the one to the right has the usual wide eyes with arched eyebrows with a European touch in the shading around her face. The two women are placed in the lowest third of the page while the rest of the background is dedicated to the open green plain with trees. Right behind them are depicted some dense leafy high tree tops, indicating that they are probably seated on a terrace without a railing. What appears to be a river is represented behind the high trees. The other bank of the river has an open plain with scattered trees and bushes, but no architectural presentations or faraway city scenes as one would expect to find in such an open view. The light blue sky and the orange and white horizon indicate it is probably dawn.

An interesting feature in this painting is the transparency of the woman in lilac who is nearer to the viewer yet smaller in size than the woman in green. Her transparency is limited to her legs which are supposed to hide a part of the other woman but strangely they show the other woman's back and bent dress beneath her. We cannot be sure if this transparency was meant to indicate a ghost or a dream or more probably just an uncompleted painting. A band of brighter green than the one used for the rest of the painting was added to the lower edge, perhaps hiding an artist's signature or just giving an open space in front of the two characters. Another hint of

glued-on part. Perhaps this painting was cut from a larger one or from an older album necessitating the added parts. Another possibility is that the borders were already prepared and the artist responsible for placing the paintings had to complete the empty parts between the painting and the borders.

The two women are sitting on a carpet or a terrace with wave design and decorated borders. A tray is placed in front of them with transparent bottles and wine glasses. The style is late 18th century with European influence in the eyes and features of the Indian women. It is also clear that it is a commercial style and probably had no relation to any specific text.

Another painting with two women sitting on a terrace is in the India Office Library¹⁴ (plate 18) where the two women are having refreshments on a delicately painted carpet, with a view of lotus pool behind them. The painting has a note saying "the work of *Rai Anup Chattar*", is dated to 1710 and is identified as Mughal. The style of the Indian Office Library painting is not Imperial Mughal, but it is still of a higher quality than our painting in fig. 20. Fig. 19 is of the same quality or even a higher one than the Indian office Library one, and certainly higher than that of fig. 20, but still not of Imperial Mughal quality. Our examples can be dated to a little later, c. 1770-1780 when the same non-Imperial Mughal style continued.

3.3.6. A full figure portrait of a traveling ascetic; opposite is a portrait of a traveling dervish.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 23 (9.5 x 16 cm, with borders: 13.5 x 20.5 cm) and fig. 24

Iconography and description

In figure 23, a yogi is represented holding a spear and a little bundle. The yogi wears nothing but the cloak which covers his shoulders and arms while his legs and feet are bare. Some of his hair is tied up and the rest is loose on his shoulders, in the usual way of representing yogis. The painting has no background except some light green touches on the ground beneath the yogi's feet and the portrait itself has barely any colors. Some light red touches are added to the line drawing, and yellow to the inside of the bundle he is carrying and on the head of his spear. The painting is a lightly tinted brush drawing, simply executed but with delicacy and care.

Figure 24 is another full portrait of an ascetic or a dervish traveling with his dog. He leans on a long stick in his left hand and holds another smaller stick and a little bundle in his right hand. He wears a piece of cloth around his waist and what is probably a leopard-skin on his back and covering his head. There is some stretching in the dervish's proportions. His back is bent a little and his features are not carefully represented unlike the ascetic painting opposite. The background is very simple and most of it is uncolored. A thin tree, probably a willow, is represented to the left of the page behind the dervish; its leaves and branches fall from the top of the page. Simple brown and green brush strokes indicate the sky and ground.

A lonely traveling Jain ascetic was represented earlier in a painting ascribed to *Basawan*, one of the great painters in Akbar's atelier. It is dated to c. 1590-1595; the topic was common due to Akbar's predilections.¹⁵ A number of other paintings of the same topic are either ascribed to or signed by Basawan who painted many sadhus, yogis and other religious personages. They usually had the same features of the stick,

A painting with the same iconography (plate 19) is dated to c. 1700, Bikaner.¹⁶ The painting is probably much earlier than ours, yet the same skinny ascetic with his dog are represented in an open scene similar to our painting setting. It has more movement than our static painting and is probably more colorful, as it has flowers on the ground, shading and a cloudy sky with little birds; still it is an indication of the familiarity of the topic and its frequent depiction.

The story of the *Raj Kunwar*, a prince who goes on a journey to seek his beloved after loosing her, has a part where he starts his journey dressed as a yogi (plate 20).¹⁷ This manuscript was done for Prince Salim in Allahabad in late 17th - early 18th century. The yogi represented in this manuscript is originally the prince who is dressed like a yogi. The yogi in fig. 23 is not a part of this story but simply represents a yogi on a trip. The painter might have had access to Prince Salim's *Raj Kunwar*, his inspiration could be also from a Hindu or Mughal painting representing the same theme.

The artists of both our paintings saw previous similar paintings. The different styles of the two paintings indicate that they were probably done by two different ateliers. Fig. 23 is simply painted but the artist concentrated on little details of the hair and the creases in the yogi cloak along with its design and trim. On the other hand, the artist of fig. 24 ignored important details such as the eyes and features of the dervish and painted in a much simpler style.

Although the subject of these two paintings is well known; dating them is difficult. They do not have an identifiable style and, like all of the paintings in this muraqqa^c, they do not have signatures or any attributing inscriptions. The second half

of the 18th century is the latest date they can belong to, in accordance with the other paintings among our muraqqa^c.

3.3.7. A full figure portrait of a European woman.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 27 (6 x 9 cm, with borders: 17 x 23 cm) and fig. 28 (7 x 12.5 cm, with borders: 15.5 x 22.5 cm).

Iconography and description

Full-figure portraits became fashionable after the arrival of the European expeditions to India, as they brought with them a number of full-figure portraits of kings, queens and saints. Under Emperor Jahangir full-figure portraits became very popular and also allegorical paintings; before him the paintings were usually planned for a certain manuscript and not for albums.

Figure 27 represents a female musician holding a musical instrument with strings and a bow, maybe a *pena* (bowed lute from Manipur) or a *mayuri vina*, another traditional Indian instrument. She wears a European dress and her hair and features clearly identify her as European. The painter of this portrait has done a good job of copying the European original although he added some of his own touches such as the long hands and fingers and the shading of her clothes. He faced a problem representing the right eye since the face is represented in three-quarters which was known but not very usual in Mughal painting. It seems that he painted and repainted it till it became impossible to correct the heavy eyebrow over her right eye and the white beneath it..

On the right hand side of the painting there is a border of the same style as the top one with the same colors but different motifs. Both borders seem to have been added to the painting after its execution or maybe when it was attached to the album. The first suggestion is more likely as the album has other more fitting paintings for the border than this one. The small size of the painting, since it is the smallest painting in the entire album, might be also a good reason for adding such borders to enlarge its size and to enrich it with colors.

There is no background, which strengthens the idea that it is a copy of a European print. The painting is in brush touches and simple color wash in pink for skin and brown. A striking white band holding her clothes around her body surrounds the woman's waist. This white stripe contrasts with the lack of color of the rest of the painting; it might have been a correction of some artist's mistake like the right eye. Also the woman's foot that comes out of her dress wearing sandals is not executed realistically as all the toes are of the same length, unlike the Mughal depictions which gave better attention to such details.

All the careless details previously mentioned indicate that this is the work of a lesser or young artist in a bazaar or commercial atelier. It might be dated to the mid-18th century.

There is an interesting feature in this painting; it is the only one with an inscription. A cartouche with a nasta'liq inscription is pasted above the borders around the painting. It is an addition to the page and has nothing to do with the painting in the middle of the page. Unfortunately this piece of inscription cannot give us any clues about the painter or the place of execution or even the date. It just has a

Hafiz Shiraz is one of the most famous poets in Persian history, but still which beloved girl does our painting represent is not easy to find out. Our painting represents a musician who could have been in any poem not just those of Hafiz Shiraz.

Figure 28 is another full-figure portrait of a European woman. In this painting the Mughal artist did a better job copying the European painting than did the painter of fig. 27. The woman stands in the middle of the page holding a flower in her right hand while putting her left hand on her waist. She wears a European dress with a high collar and a semi-transparent skirt showing orange shoes, she also wears long open sleeves with small unbuttoned buttons decorating the length of the sleeve; a pair of other tight sleeves appears beneath with creases around her wrist. A tight sleeve with creases around the wrist was a feature used by the Mughal artists and copied from the European style since the late 17th century. An unusual feature in this painting is the boar behind the woman's right leg; an animal that was not usually depicted in Mughal paintings and not in European ones either, but in our painting it must have been copied from the European original.

Other than the boar, there is another mysterious feature among the painting. A small word is inscribed at the bottom of the page beside the light-brown rocks. It reads قل (qul) or "say" in Arabic; it is not a Persian word on its own, but a part of many words that can make sense if they were inscribed to our painting here. One of these words is قلابي است (qalabi ast) which means fake or forgery which might be describing this painting as copied from another. Another Persian word is قلم (qalam) which means pen and could have been a note for the artist or a signature added by him. No scratches around this word or over painting suggest that the rest of the sentence

maybe was on the outer edges and was cut off or covered with the gold lining added when the painting was mounted in the album.

A simple landscape acts as a background for the painting; some little rocks, green grass beneath the woman's feet and a faraway rocky mountain at the horizon represent the ground in white shades with simple brush touches and light green and brown, while a simple white cloud with blue touches represents the sky. The background is most successful around the pale colored woman where it does not hide the delicate details of the main figure. Still the appearance of the boar beside the woman as a domestic pet that she seems not to notice is a representation that I have not come across in other Mughal copies of European paintings, yet it might have an origin in the European paintings.

The second painting is certainly made by a different artist than that of fig. 27. It has many tiny delicate details and more attention to colors and shades; although the proportions and position are not done with the same accuracy, this might be copied from the original too. It is also the work of a commercial atelier, reproducing European paintings. These two provincial paintings are difficult to date as they represent a tradition that started in the second half of the 17th century and continued through the 18th on a limited scale as it became less fashionable for Mughal collectors. These could have been executed in the late 18th century upon the orders of a collector who was in contact with English officers and wanted to have a copy of their paintings, or maybe it was the other way around where an English officer wanted to give a present to an Indian officer without losing the originals and so ordered them to be copied. They also might be the work of artists who wanted to continue a tradition of

Many more suggestions can be given for these paintings yet none of them can be chosen as the only explanation for them to be in this album.

3.3.8.a. A royal ascetic with musicians and servants.

Number of paintings

One painting, figure 31 (17.9 x 28 cm, with borders: 20 x 31 cm). Lucknow, c. 1760-80.

Iconography and description

This painting is a reproduction of another painting with the same subject and the same setting, painting no.2 in the Johnson Album 19 in the *India Office Library*,¹⁸ dated to 1660 and identified as Mughal. A royal ascetic with a golden crescent halo around his head is seated on a tiger-skin with worshippers or attendants around. The worshippers in the Indian Office Library painting (plate 21) are five young women and an old one approaching from the left with musical instruments, two youths waving fly whisks stand behind the ascetic to the right of the painting. The ascetic of the India Office Library is seated on an elevated terrace overlooking a pond with swimming ducks. A fire, some fruits and vases of narcissus are placed around him. He wears an orange cloak and his sword is slung at his side. He is represented larger than the rest of the characters. The background has one large tree trunk to the right, slim pine trees and different thin trees continuing the forest view; a sky with scattered clouds fills in the empty space above the trees, and some birds flying above.

In the painting we are studying here, the setting is almost the same as that of the India Office Library. A royal ascetic in the right half of the painting sits on a tiger-

worshippers approach from the left of the painting, holding musical instruments; only their upper bodies appear from behind the terrace railing. A young man waves a fly whisk behind the ascetic while another one sits opposite him. A dense tree is represented to the right of the painting while the rest of the background is covered with plain green and the horizon has a dark indication of faraway trees. A pale blue stripe with a dark mauve stripe above it represents the sky.

In our painting the artist tried to change some details that did not affect the whole scene. The way the ascetic is seated has been changed slightly and instead of carrying his sword, it is represented beside him on the tiger-skin. Also the ascetic's hands' positions are slightly altered; instead of spreading them relaxed on his lap, they are a little raised and facing upwards in our version. Strangely, our artist here makes an unexpected mistake: the ascetic has two left hands. He moved one of the young men from behind the ascetic to the front of the painting, changing his function. The representation of the tiger-skin mat and the youth behind it gives an effect that the ascetic is levitating. Whether this was meant by our artist or was a mistake is not clear. All five young women are represented in profile, looking towards the ascetic; while in the India Office Library painting a couple of the women were represented in three-quarters portraits. Our painter moved the railing from the front of the scene to the back, thus eliminating the pond and adding a green area with different shades but no details which were perhaps added at the time of pasting the painting to the album. He tended to simplify the background too; he copied the large tree in the same position, but filled the rest of the background with areas of green for the ground and light- and dark-blue and dark-mauve for the sky. He extended the size of the painting, thus

Our painting seems to be more of a provincial style than that of an imperial atelier. It is simpler in details and setting. Some details are not realistic, such as the right hand youth's *jama* that appears from beneath the tiger-skin which is supposed to be on the ground, or could be giving the levitation effect, but if the ascetic is levitated, why is his sword resting half on the tiger-skin and half on the ground. The two left palms of the ascetic can also be mentioned in this context. The India Office Library painting has a golden border added on top and bottom, presumably in Lucknow, c. 1780,¹⁹ which can be taken as the date and place of the reproduction of our painting and at the same atelier.

3.3.8.b. A royal youth meeting angels in a forest.

Number of paintings

One painting, fig. 32 (17.9 x 27.5 cm, with borders: 18 x 31 cm).

Iconography and description

A high officer or a youthful prince sits on the ground beneath a tree, holding his sword and shield under his left arm. He is surrounded by four angels – or fairies – who are offering him presents. A number of similar offerings are placed on the ground beside him. A tiger is represented in the foreground drinking from a pond. Although it is supposed to be closer to the viewer, the tiger is depicted smaller in size than the prince and the angels in the painting.

The background has a variety of colors yet is very simple; the artist kept away from any details which would require more effort during the work, as is typical of commercial style paintings. A huge tree – which seems smaller than it should be in

Behind the gathering is another pond and beyond it there are some yellow and light-green rocky defiles which give more intimacy and privacy to the gathering.

Architectural silhouettes appear behind the high mountain. The sky is also simply depicted in different shades of yellow behind the buildings, probably indicating dusk. Above the yellow sky is a sky of light-blue wash.

The prince's clothes are simply depicted; he wears a white *jama* with narrow stripes and puts a lilac shawl around his shoulders. On his head, he wears a golden Mughal turban. The angels' costumes are the most decorated items in the whole painting. Each angel has two green and gold wings on her back; they all wear golden crowns but of different styles which probably indicate their different ranks. Although the artists did not use many colors in the angels' depiction yet he used his limited palette wisely to give each of them a unique character. The one standing to the right of the painting wears an orange dress with a short-sleeved dark blue tunic. Like the ascetic on the opposite painting, our angel here has two left hands. The angel standing at the back also wears a dark-blue tunic but with a lilac dress, the same color as the prince's shawl.

Identifying the iconography of the painting is difficult in this case, as the visit of angels and their offering presents or blessings is a topic that occurred frequently in texts of Arabic, Persian and Indian-Islamic literature.

It appears clearly that the painter tried to get the best quality he could with the least expensive and materials. As with the previous painting, this can also be ascribed to Lucknow where the artists tended to use gold extensively to enhance the paintings. The color distribution of the painting is like that of the previous one, especially the

the fly whisk behind the ascetic in the other. The two figures with two left hands may also indicate that it was the same artist.

3.3.9. A woman with her servants and attendants.

Number of paintings

Two painting, fig. 35 (14 x 24.5 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 30.5 cm) and fig. 36 (14 x 20.5 cm, with borders: 17.5 x 24 cm).

Iconography and description

Both paintings have almost the same composition where a woman is laying down on a bed with a servant massaging her feet, perhaps after a bath. The two women in the paintings lie in distress with an empty look upon their faces. Another servant stands beside the bed fanning the woman. The setting is a terrace.

In figure 35 the woman lies on the bed crossing her arms in front of her chest; two servants attend her. The bed is highly decorated and little flower motifs scattered all over it. A beautiful carpet covers the ground of the terrace. The painting has many details in the architectural features. A hexagonal fountain is at the bottom of the painting; behind it are two steps which lead to the terrace. Behind the bed there is a finely decorated one-storey white house, partially seen. The frieze around the upper edge of the house is decorated with a crenellation-like design of the Shah Jahan flower style. The same style decorates the dados around the door, with a couple of white baluster columns surrounding a wider entrance leading to a room where a decorated dado appears. Above it is a wall painting of a plate of fruits. Both the door and the wide entrance are covered with highly decorated rolled-up curtains. The

The background appears behind the terrace railing in simple brush strokes; it consists of a pond followed by greenery, a river and a faraway dark bank. The sky is simple like the rest of the background.

An interesting feature appears in figure 35: the dark colored servant sitting at the woman's feet. The painter not only made this character identifiable by her darker color, he also gave her different features from those of the other servant. She has narrower eyes and a delicate nose unlike the other two women in the painting. The artist here was able to give each character a different identity.

In figure 36 the same subject is depicted where a woman lies on a bed with two servants attending her, one massaging her feet and the other fanning her. A third servant sits away from the bed preparing or folding something. A group of three women enters the painting from the right side, staring at the woman sleeping on the bed, one of them holding a covered plate which seems to be a present. The woman lying on the bed seems to be distressed as the three visiting women are looking at her sympathetically.

Unlike the painting opposite – figure 35 – there is a deep forest in the background with tall trees and a carelessly colored light-blue sky above them. The ground beneath the characters is black with a wave-like motif, resembling the ground design in figure 20. Some transparent bottles and glasses are placed on the ground in front of the servant, also resembling those of fig. 20. The features of the women are also very similar, leading one to conclude that figs. 20 and 36 are the work of one artist.

The bed and the canopy over it are the only geometrical representations among

white. The pillow too is represented in gold beneath the main character's head, matching her skirt and the fan behind her. The canopy above the bed, poorly drawn, is raised on four thin red columns and represented in white.

The colors used for the whole painting are limited; gold is concentrated in the middle around the woman who is the main character of the painting. The forest has delicately depicted leaves with light- and dark-greens.

This painting is of a lesser quality than that opposite. They might have been selected for the album on the basis of the similarity in the subject and composition, even if they were from two different ateliers. Although the painting depicts a distressed woman, it is difficult to identify to which story it belongs. It could be from a scene when Radha awaits Krishna, or it might be attributed to one of the *Ragamali* series. Another possibility is that it is of a woman awaiting her lover; a topic that was very common in Indian literature.

The relation between the two paintings is unclear; they do not even share the same color palette. The late 18th century is a probable date for the paintings, and the provenance is probably Lucknow, the center for album making in the second half of the 18th century, at least for the second painting.

3.3.10.a. A woman and her confidantes watching a solar or a lunar eclipse.

Number of paintings

One painting, fig. 39 (17 x 27 cm, with borders: 20 x 30.5 cm).

Iconography and description

This painting has a main figure consisting of a lady who sits in a kiosk-like

step lower. Opposite the woman are two women, one holding a musical instrument (a *vina*).

All the figures in the painting – except the musician – point towards the sky. There, a dark circular cloud surrounds another darker circle and in the middle is a very dark circle indicating either a lunar or solar eclipse. A few birds are flying in the sky indicating more disorder and the presence of something unusual.

The portico-like space where the woman sits is supported on a white decorated marble column; above white eaves surround the roof which is decorated with *pietra dura* flowers. A decorated curtain is rolled up allowing the woman to enjoy the view. The wall behind the woman has a dado decorated in the *pietra dura* style. A high white wall surrounds the courtyard where they sit. Outside it is a white building which was probably added to balance the building that is on the right of the page. A beautifully decorated carpet is on the floor where the woman sits. The sky is colored in different tones of gray to indicate the eclipse.

The painting is an example of the same style found in figures 16, 19, 32 and 35. It can be attributed to the same painter as it is clear from the architectural design and decoration. The patterns and motifs used in the figures' clothing also indicate the same painter, as does the color palette.

It is worth noting that the artist here represented some details which could have been omitted yet neglected others that one might expect to see in such a scene. Perhaps he concentrated on the characters and neglected other details to emphasize the eclipse at which he had all but one of them looking anxiously, to concentrate more on the main theme of the painting.

fig. 39, the representation is different; it deals more with the reaction at the women's court or *zenana* and their anxiousness to watch what happened to the sun. Earlier examples of the same iconography are not familiar. This painting could be from the artist's imagination after he saw an eclipse and wanted to record it. The painting could also have been executed under the orders of the patron of this *muraqqa*^o, who might have witnessed the event and wanted to have it recorded for the viewers of the album.

As it is almost certain that we have one painter for this painting and figs. 16, 19, 32 and 35, the same date and location are to be assumed; Lucknow and c. 1770-1790.

3.3.10.b. Women having a party on a terrace.

Number of paintings

One painting, fig. 40 (15.5 x 20 cm, with borders: 18.5 x 24 cm).

Iconography and description

The first thing that draws attention to the painting is how busy the composition is, the wide palette used and the extensive details represented. It represents a woman wearing a crown; another woman sits besides her wearing a transparent veil, an attendant is by their side and a female musician with another attendant is in front of them. A servant stands at the back waving a fly whisk at the seated gathering. All five seated women are represented in almost the same size, while the servant standing at the back is smaller in size giving a feeling that she stands far away, even outside the terrace; this is probably due to the lack of space to put her in a proportional size in the standing position. The trees at the back were reduced in size too to fit in the page

At the foot of the page, a musician sits cross legged holding a sitar on her left shoulder, with her face represented in profile. The woman sitting opposite her leans against a cushion under her left elbow while holding a bottle in one hand and a cup in the other. Her face is represented in three-quarter view, with the shading on her face adding to her beautiful depiction. Both characters have darker skin than the other three sitting behind them. They are represented wearing jewelry and transparent veils while sitting on a highly decorated blue and orange carpet. They are very close to the edges of the painting; seemingly the painter did not have a clear setting of the whole painting before he started. The darker woman on the right has the same colors and facial features of the young woman in fig. 35 who is represented as a servant on duty.

Behind the cushion, at the bottom right corner, there is a black and white animal; it might be a little monkey or a domestic cat with a long tail. Either way, a monkey or a cat is an unusual animal representation in such gatherings where a peacock on a tree or flying birds were normal.

On the yellow carpet sit three female figures. At the left is the woman wearing a red and gold crown; she holds a blue flask in her hand and offers a cup to the woman sitting to her left. She kneels against a red cushion supported by the red terrace railing behind her back. To her left, in the middle of the painting sits a kneeling woman taking the cup from the woman on her right and supporting her left hand on the knee of the woman to her left. She is represented in profile. Behind her is a big white cushion with stylized flower motifs. On her left sits the third woman with her face represented in three-quarter view like the one to the far left. She kneels forward with a sad look on her face.

their ears, necks, arms and feet. In between the sitting women are two blue and white flasks and a fruit bowl together with other refreshments.

Three pine trees, a mango tree in fruit and another tree represent a garden behind the terrace railing in the background indicating the elevated level of the terrace. Just behind the trees is an open clear yellowish ground. Perhaps a river depiction – as was usual in such scenes – was planned to fill this area and was not completed. At the farthest end of the yellow ground is a simple village scene in black pen. At the horizon, a cloudy sky is represented in blue covered in some parts with light- and dark-gray clouds and in other parts with clear white clouds. The simple uncolored landscape acts as a contrast with the heavily detailed foreground of the painting.

The painting style is unmatched in the previous examples of the album. The only close comparison is the face of the woman at the right foot of the page, very much like that of the servant in fig. 35. The two women might have been retouched at the atelier responsible for binding the album. This was not uncommon especially if the artist was seeking to improve the paintings. This woman has the most detailed portrait of all in the painting. All the women in the painting have some red on their hands, feet or fingernails, which might have indicated celebration of *holi*, yet they are all sitting calmly. The *holi* celebration was usually accompanied by spraying colored water. The other explanation of this red color is that they were still celebrating an event with their hands and feet colored with *henna*. Also the *henna* could be a sign of their luxurious life where they had servants working for them while they enjoyed painting their hands.

The domestic cat or the little monkey at the corner of the painting is also

through the 18th century to have women's gathering or parties as a subject for album paintings.

The women's clothing, jewelry and arrangement indicate a date for this painting in the second half of the 18th century. The background suggests the style of Lucknow, like most of the album paintings. An exact prototype for this painting was not found, yet its iconography was very common. A number of paintings with the almost the same iconography are represented here in the same *muraqqa*^c (figs. 55-56, 59-60, 63-64); they are studied in detail later in this chapter.

Although the two facing paintings here do not have exactly the same iconography, both show a gathering of women. Two different occasions are represented in each of them following the main theme which is the women's private court or *zenana* activities.

3.3.11. A yogini in front of her cottage receiving visitors.

Number of paintings

Four paintings, fig. 43 (10.5 x 17 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 31 cm), fig. 44 (11 x 17.5 cm, with borders: 20.5 x 28.5 cm), fig. 47 (14 x 22 cm, with borders: 18.5 x 26.5 cm) and fig. 48 (12 x 18 cm, with borders: 20 x 31 cm).

Iconography and description

For the first time in the album we find four paintings representing the same subject with almost the same composition. The paintings throughout the album were arranged in the pattern of two paintings facing each other followed by two pages of stenciled flower composition. These four paintings – of the same composition – are

All four paintings have almost the same composition and the same subject, that of women visiting a female ascetic, a familiar topic in the 18th century for paintings.²⁰ In the first two, figs. 43-4, the yoginis face the left, while in the other two paintings, figs. 47-8, the yoginis are facing right and they have blue skin, like Krishna. Figs. 43-4 will be described and studied together, and then the following two other paintings. The comparison between the four paintings will then follow.

Female saints were and are admired in India. During the 17th and 18th century many pictures depicted decorous, well-born women aspiring to liberation or knowledge by visiting contemplatives.²¹

In figs. 43-4 a yogini is presented sitting in front of her cottage. She raises one knee while the other rests on the ground with her arms crossed in front of her chest resting upon her raised knee with an upright stick in her hand. Behind her and in front of the simple yellow cottage a partial depiction of a plane tree growing from a flower box is shown hiding part of the cottage roof. The visitors in the two paintings sit opposite the yogini and look towards her. A faraway architectural landscape is in both paintings.

Figure 43 is a daylight scene. The yogini is visited by a female musician holding her vina. They are seated on a white marble terrace with a white railing. It overlooks a river whose bank has rocky defiles with a few trees and a village in the distance. At the top of the page, darker blue indicates the sky with some finely painted white clouds and birds.

Between the yogini and her visitor are a mango, a fan of peacock feathers, a fly whisk, a stick and a round brown bundle that probably belongs to the musician as

it is closer to her. At the bottom of the page a small fire is lighted. The tree behind the yogini and in front of the cottage covers a huge area of the painting. It grows out of a plant-box and only part of its trunk appears inside the painting. The leaves cover a rectangular area starting from the cottage roof and all the way up till the upper end of the page. Some of the leaves are realistically presented giving a lively touch to the tree. Both the yogini and her visitor have a red spot on their foreheads. The yogini's hair is tied up, while her visitor has her hair loose on her back and shoulders.

Figure 44 unlike figure 43, is a night scene, and the yogini's visitor is a yogi or one of her students wearing the yogis' cloak. All the tones are very dark except for the yogini, her cottage and the visiting yogi. She is depicted in front of her cottage exactly in the same position as the yogini in figure 43, but instead of the white terrace she is represented sitting on a carpet in a forest by the river bank. The plane tree in front of the cottage is not as big as the one opposite. Depicted in the dark night, the tree has only a few gray touches representing branches appearing between the leaves.

At the foot of the page, a narrow stripe indicates a river running in front of the cottage. In front of the yogini is a small fire that glows in the dark. Since the darkness surrounds the whole painting; one would have expected a strong illumination from the fire, yet the only lighted parts of the paintings are the yogini, her cottage, the yogi and the carpet she sits on. Most of the background is in a very dark green representing the forest at night. A faraway scene on the horizon represents a village at a river's bank and some trees behind. The sky is depicted in very dark gray.

The yogini in this painting sits almost exactly like the one in the opposite page, but with the stick supporting her arm a little tilted. She has in her right hand a rosary

in this painting have no details shown in their clothes or hairstyles. Unlike the opposite painting, there is almost nothing in between them, only a small jar beside the yogi.

Both figs 43-4 are probably works of one atelier but with two different artists. The assumption mentioned before of having a competition between artists or apprentices of the same atelier could be applied to these two paintings. Also one could be a copy of another, or both might have copied a third version. The two paintings share exactly the same subject which probably is "a yogini and her student" while the following two paintings have "a yogini visited by a royal figure for blessings". The different styles in depicting the features show the work of two different painters.

Figure 47 is compositionally a very busy painting. At the left side of the page sits a blue yogini in front of her cottage, on a simple carpet. She is visited by a royal figure who seems to be a princess; with a halo around her head. Accompanying her are three attendants who carry offerings and presents for the yogini. To the left of the yogini a figure, probably one of her students, sits cross legged smoking a hookah.

A small part of a river or a lotus pool is represented at the bottom of the page, where some ducks and lotuses float. A tree trunk – with green leaves almost the same color as the ground – is at the right of the page on the river-bank. Behind the yogini's cottage is a plane tree with large leaves that cover part of the cottage roof.

Behind a green hill appears a shepherd looking after his sheep in the Flemish landscape style. A Flemish- style city landscape with hills and trees fills the rest of the background. Different tones of green dominate the painting; the painter used them to

The style of the trees here is different than these of the other paintings in the album. This style of depicting the leaves is very close to the Bikaner style.²² Although comparable examples from the *India Office Library* are probably earlier than our painting, they are the nearest match. Unfortunately their reproduction is in monochrome which makes it impossible to compare the color schemes.

The yogini and her student are depicted in simple clothing as usual, but the princess and her accompanying women are dressed in a highly decorated manner. This painting was certainly executed by a painter different from that of the previous works in this album, but a later painting (fig. 67) might be by the same painter, as will be discussed later. There are no other paintings with this Flemish background which probably indicates that it was brought to the collection from another atelier.

It could be dated to the late 17th century or early 18th century when European style and Flemish backgrounds still were common in Indian paintings, or an 18th century reproduction of a late 17th century painting. Its style indicates that it was probably produced in the north of India or in a Mughal atelier, but if it is a later reproduction – which is a strong possibility – then it could be still attributed to Lucknow, the center of reproductions and album-making in the 18th century.

Figure 48 has a very simple composition resembling that of figs. 43-4. On the other hand, its iconography resembles that of fig. 47. A yogini sits cross legged outside her cottage on a tiger-skin with one of her students by her side holding a walking stick. She receives an honorable woman and a servant who carries a present for the yogini. A sleeping dog curls beside the student's knee, while a peacock

Behind the cottage is a light-green bush with a river behind it. The other bank is yellow with some simple vegetation and a faraway architectural landscape. Behind the cottage-roof leaves of a tree appear, but the trunk is hidden by the cottage itself.

The page opposite – figure 47 – has green as a dominant color for the painting; in figure 48 yellow and simplicity of design are dominant. The yogini here has blue skin like that of painting 47; here she wears a pink costume instead of the usual orange cloak. Her student wears a yellow cloak with an unusual brown hat on her head. The visiting woman is dressed in a darker-hued yellow while her servant wears a pink skirt of the same color as the yogini's clothes. The yellow cottage is simple like the three previous ones in the other paintings. Yet the cottage in figure 47 is slightly different as it has a smaller arched door; the other three have a rectangular door. It also has a dark brown roof while the other three have yellow roofs of the same color as the cottages themselves.

Figure 48 is probably also a single painting by an artist unrepresented elsewhere in the album. It was probably unfinished and was retouched for the album. Although slightly different from the other ones, this painting is probably a reproduction of an older one of the late 17th century. The late 18th century is a possible date for such a quality reproduction although it does not belong to the same atelier to which most of our paintings here belong. A nearby atelier in Oudh is a possible provenance.

After studying the four paintings it seems possible that figs. 43-4 belong to the same date and atelier and were executed by two competing artists under the same master. They can be dated to the second half of the late 18th century and ascribed to

details and the usage of clear white for the architecture. He depicted a couple of yogis in the background of fig. 16, which indicates his familiarity with the subject.

Figures 47 and 48 are probably of an earlier date or copies of earlier originals executed in different ateliers than the atelier which supplied most of the paintings for our muraqqa^c.

3.3.12. Baz Bahadur and Rupmati ride together at night.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 51 (9.5 x 12.5 cm, with borders: 19 x 24.5 cm) and fig. 52 (11 x 18 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 31 cm).

Iconography and description

The two paintings represented in figures 51 and 52 are mirror reproductions of each other. Fig. 51, on the right hand-side page, is depicted with the horses heading towards the left while fig. 52, on the left hand page, is represented with the horses heading to the right; hence the couple in both paintings is represented facing each other.

The paintings represent the Malwa sultan Baz Bahadur of the 16th century riding with his mistress Rupmati at night through a barren landscape with rocky outcroppings.²³ Both ride horses with Rupmati on that closer to the viewer, hiding most of Baz Bahadur's horse and body. Behind the rocky hill appear a river and the faraway bank with small trees. A crescent and stars are represented in the dark sky identifying a night scene.

her left hand, which she hands over to Baz Bahadur. He rides on a horse while gesturing forward as he looks to his left talking to Rupmati. The horses are very well represented although the two human figures are smaller than expected compared with them.

Baz Bahadur's face is depicted in three-quarter view which was not the regular way to depict an important figure in Indian painting. This and the strange proportions together with the static representation (although the scene is supposed to be in motion), suggest Persian influence. Although the figures are wearing Indian clothes, their features do not belong to any of the different Muslim Indian schools of painting, but represent Persian features which might have been copied from an original or a Mughal painter influenced by the Persian school in the 16th century.

The rocks behind them are simply represented in gray with lighter touches on the edges indicating the effect of moonlight. The sky is a very dark blue while the river is in a lighter tone. A dark green bush on the left of the page balances the rocky hill behind the figures covering most of the background. Most of the painting is dark representing a night scene, but the two figures on their horses are light in color. Gold is used on their saddles and head covers to add light to the couple. Rupmati's veil is the only green accent in the whole page.

The painting seems to be cut off at the top as the top of the rocky hill is missing and it is a bit shorter than the painting opposite although the characters are almost of the same size. It might also have been trimmed at the right side, as the horse's tail seems too close to the edge. Whether it was trimmed also at the left and

Baz Bahadur rides the white horse with henna colored legs. What appears to be a defect in the painter's work here is Baz Bahadur's position; he appears to be somewhere between the two horses rather than above one of them. Here Rupmati holds in her hand a green stick that might be a candle; while in the opposite figure she was handing Baz Bahadur a small red bundle.

This scene is also a night one with a crescent in the dark-blue sky and a few white dots that indicate stars around. A dark river is represented behind the rocky hills. A grayish-brown rocky hill covers almost three-quarters of the page with a black hill appearing from behind it. Above the grayish-brown hill is a small architectural representation, probably of a palace. A couple of dark bushes indicate the foreground with a pond-like spot of grayish-blue at the right corner of the page.

As mentioned before in the study of figs. 15-6, this might be the work of two artists at an atelier where the master painter drew the outline of the main figures and gave the young apprentices the freedom to color and indicate the background and details. He might have also indicated the setting for the scene and the colors to be used as we can tell from the white horse and the dark one in the two paintings. The other possibility that the two paintings are two separate copies from the same original is not that likely here. The two paintings are so similar to each other that one of them probably copied the other.

These two paintings have the same composition as a painting from *The Album of Shuja' al-Daula* at the Chester Beatty Library collection (plate 22), which is attributed to Faizabad, c. 1770. As Linda Leach in the Chester Beatty Library

At first glance one might think that our paintings were a poorer quality copy of the Chester Beatty Library image, but after a detailed study, it can be assumed that the master painter had access to this image - or a similar version – and drew it for his students. The clear Mughal influence in the Chester Beatty Library painting cannot be mistaken, and the characteristic Deccani wide black eyes are very different from the treatment of figs. 51-2, but the setting indicates that they have a common prototype.

The poor execution and the limited palette make one almost certain that this is the product of the same atelier, probably Lucknow, in which gold was favored and was used to enlighten paintings. The simple details of the landscape and the defiles behind the heroes indicate the work of the late 18th century; on the other hand, the Persian features of the heroes show that the painting was a copy of a painting with Persian influences.

3.3.13. Noblewomen and servants listening to music.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 55 (15.5 x 21.5 cm, with borders: 19 x 30.5 cm) and fig. 56 (17.5 x 16.5 cm, with borders: 24.5 x 37 cm).

Iconography and description

Figure 55 depicts a woman sitting on a chair with her attendants standing around her while one of them plays a sitar. The woman in the middle might be a princess as indicated by her fine clothes. Her position, sitting on the throne-like chair, indicates her high social level. She is depicted larger than her attendants; even being

dress contrast with the dark green background. At the bottom of the page is a green stripe probably indicating grass, this part like the other stripe over the sky is pasted onto the painting. Behind the women are some rounded white and gold flowers. The dense vegetation covers a wide range of the whole page where the artist concentrated on the non-realistic details of the leaves and the use of different shades of green.

The sky is depicted in light blue filling in the empty space between the nearby tree and the distant forest trees. It has no clouds, allowing the details of the trees to appear. A gold band separates the top of the painting from the added bluish-green stripe, which was probably added to fill in the space as the painting did not fit exactly inside the planned borders.

The facial features of the women in this painting are close to the style of the artist Mihr Chand, who worked in Faizabad around 1770 (plate 23). He was known for the wide variety and innovations of his style.²⁵ The delicate features, fine jewelry and shading on the face are characteristic of his style. Our painting cannot be attributed to him as his style was even more detailed and his paintings were of higher quality than this. The painting can be attributed to a student of his atelier or the work of a lesser atelier where his painting was copied.

Another painting with the same iconography and almost the same setting is in the British Museum, Department of Oriental Antiquities,²⁶ where a lady is seated with four attendants around her (plate 24). Jewelry-like flowers are, as in our painting, represented in the background with dense trees above. It is identified as Provincial Mughal; Oudh, and dated to the 18th century. The lady in the painting is identified as Nur Jahan, Jahnoir's favorite wife, by a Persian inscription above the character

The painting could be dated to the period that Mihr Chand executed his works or slightly later, c. 1770-1800. Although Faizabad would be a possible provenance; Lucknow is more probable as the paintings executed there are closer in style to our painting.

Fig. 56 is a copy of a painting from the *St. Petersburg Muraqqa'* (plate 25), having the exact setting and outlines except for some little details.²⁷ The *St. Petersburg Muraqqa'* painting is composed of two different night scenes, one above the other on one page.

A little girl stands with a woman resting a hand upon her shoulder while a servant stands behind them. Another servant holds something in her hand. A female musician holding a sitar stands while playing music. The whole set is in a white marble terrace with a dense forest in the background.

The *St. Petersburg Muraqqa'* painting is a night scene, all the characters being on a terrace with a garden and a dense forest near them, while ours is a day scene. Viewing both our painting and the original *St. Petersburg Muraqqa'*'s, one gets the feeling of viewing the same painting before and after completion. Our copy lacks one of the two servants standing behind the woman and the little girl. The background of flowers is replaced here by a white marble railing. The sky in our copy is not colored at all, unlike the *St. Petersburg Muraqqa'*'s night scene. The detailed study of the tree leaves in the *St. Petersburg Muraqqa'*, contrasts with the simple color washes in our copy.

The characters in our copy, probably unfinished, have some limited colors on their faces. Their black hair is the densest hue of all, while all the other colors are in

green, yellow and white. The women's skin is delicately painted and the figures' jewelry finely depicted.

The *St. Petersburg Muraqqa*^c painting is dated to c. 1720. The date of compilation of the *St. Petersburg Muraqqa*^c is uncertain, but it might be suggested that our copy was executed about the same date but was never finished.

Our painting, fig. 56, has another unique feature, namely the colorful stylized flowers arranged around it in bands and cartouches. The borders will be discussed in full in the following chapter, but it is worth noting here is that the lightly colored painting is complemented by a very colorful border. The purple flower border was directly painted on the paper where the painting is pasted. An unusually colorful border was used similarly once before with the painting in fig. 27 with the lightly painted female musician.

The common features of our two facing paintings are the noble girl or woman on a terrace listening to music and the green dense vegetation. Other than that, the two compositions and arrangements of figures are different in each painting. The highly colored characters in fig. 55 contrast with the almost uncolored ones of fig 56.

3.3.14. A noblewoman and her confidante on a terrace.

Number of paintings

Two paintings, fig. 59 (15 x 23.5 cm, with borders: 19.5 x 30 cm) and fig. 60 (9.5 x 15 cm, with borders: 12.5 x 18 cm).

Iconography and description

On a terrace, a woman sits on a bed with a cushion behind her back holding a

gray sky behind it having heavy clouds and flying birds provides the simple background for the painting. A geometrically planned garden represents the foreground together with steps leading to the terrace. Two brown bands, one on top and the other beneath the painting are colored directly on the album paper to cover the unpainted space between it and the borders.

The composition and details are very simple. All the attention is drawn to the woman sitting in the center of the painting concentrating on the details surrounding her such as the bed or sofa on which she sits. The woman's clothes are rendered in detail, but the bed and cushions around her are given more limited attention. The highly decorated woman and her bed contrast with the plain white marble terrace and railing.

The woman and her attendant are delicately represented, the transparent clothing and style of their depiction matching those of figs. 16, 19, 32, 35, 39 and 43. This painting was probably by the same painter. The limited palette and the white marble terrace are typical of his style, as are the stylized details of the tree.

The subject represented here may be derived from a *Ragamala* series where *ragas* and *raginis* were often represented as waiting for a lover or sometimes just meditating. It might also be a representation of a noblewoman at leisure or simply waiting for her lover.

In figure 60 the same subject is repeated, but in this case the painting is almost a quarter the size of the painting opposite; yet the characters are depicted larger than the ones on the page opposite. Two noblewomen, with golden haloes around their heads, sit on a terrace having refreshments. The one on the left dresses like a man

woman on the right has a transparent veil around her loose hair and wears the traditional sari.

A little green stripe at the bottom of the painting indicates a garden outside the terrace, with one step leading to it. The two women sit on the terrace leaning against the cushions behind their backs. A footed-tray in front of them contains some colored bottles.

The floor of the terrace is depicted in bright orange, while the background is green. The golden haloes behind the figures highlight their faces. A thin greenish-blue stripe on top of the page, painted on the backing paper and not the original painting, indicates the sky.

The palette here is shocking with its unexpected spaces filled with clashing colors. Instead of the bright green, a light blue area indicating a sky would have been expected. Also a white terrace is the normal coloring in such a composition. The strong colors indicate that this painting belongs to a different school than most of the other paintings. The style of the features and the depiction of clothes are also unmatched in the whole album.

The subject of our painting, two women on a terrace, does not make it easy to identify its date and place of execution as it is a very familiar topic. The simple composition and coloring is an indication of provincial style of the painting. Plain backgrounds were used in album paintings mainly for portraits and plant and animal studies, yet they did not have such clashing colors. The simple monochromatic background certainly contrasts with the highly decorated and finely depicted clothes of the characters and the small objects around them: this shows that this simplicity

3.3.15.a. A woman being revived by her confidantes.

Number of paintings

One painting, fig. 63 (12.5 x 18.5 cm, with borders: 16 x 22 cm).

Iconography and description

In this painting a woman is supported by a worried servant who holds a cup for her to drink. Another attendant offers the woman some refreshment which she stretches her right hand to receive.

The composition and painting style are mostly different from the previous paintings in the same album, but it shares some features with fig. 28, a full-figure portrait of a European woman. The simple coloring of the two paintings is similar, but the different iconography and setting of the two scenes make it hard to tell if they were by the same artist. The whole painting is executed in ink with very fine details in the background and in the characters' representation. The woman is seated on a carpet leaning backwards on her confidante. The confidante holds the woman with her left hand; her tilted head looking down and her veil indicate European influence as this position was depicted in many European engravings of the Virgin Mary looking at the infant Jesus. Offering the woman something on a small plate, the other confidante sits on her knees leaning forward. At the right corner of the carpet is a small animal looking curiously at the company. It could be a domestic cat or a squirrel.

The busy background is filled with a building of two stories. A door with the curtain pulled is flanked by two colored dados and two arched niches with blue water flasks. Above the door is a line of bottles in niches with a bowl in the middle. Eaves run around the building edge and then a second story appears on top. Attached to the

The curtain covering the main door is rolled up showing a part of a pine tree that reappears above the wall, with two birds perching on its top. An accompanying flowering tree is depicted with much care having lilac flowers contrasting with the uncolored sky behind them. The sky has a simple brown wash and an outline of clouds and faraway birds.

Although strong colors like blue, red, green and purple are used in the painting, they are limited, with the extensive use of brown giving the whole scene a monochromatic effect. Fine details such as the bricks of the wall, decoration of the carpets, of the walls and the lining of the eaves increase the monochromatic effect. European engravings, sometimes printed in sepia, could be a prototype, yet our artist mixes the European monochrome with Indian style making it one of the most beautiful paintings in the whole muraqqa^c.

The iconography of this painting is difficult to deduce. It could be a woman waiting in distress for her lover, or fainting after hearing bad news. She could also be one of the ragas of the Ragamala series but these were usually depicted in the Indian style.

The small animal at the corner of the page appears here for the second time in our muraqqa^c; fig. 40 also has a small cat-like animal at the edge of the painting. This unusual depiction may not be symbolic, but it still gives a lively touch to the scene. One of the raginis, *Dhanashri Ragini*, is depicted patting two rabbits. This ragini represents the sound of the hare and that is why she was depicted sometimes with hares around.²⁸ In our paintings, the animals are depicted away from the main character making their significance unclear.

each man (raga) has a number of raginis belonging to him; in music they represent low (masculine) and high (feminine) notes played together in harmony. The series consists of about six ragas each with five or six raginis.³² When these musical notes were translated to visual depictions, the representations became a mixture of the entire Hindu legacy where ragas were associated with deities, colors, stars and other natural and super natural phenomena culminating in the *rāga-mālā* paintings in which the *ragas* and *raginis* are represented in symbolic form.³³

The figure represented in these two paintings is raga Bhairava, the early morning; he is either described as the god Shiva, the lord of the river Ganga (Ganges), or as a demanding lover seated within a palace and pampered by female companions.³⁴ In our paintings, Shiva is shown in a landscape. According to legend, he had the river Ganges channeled through his matted locks to avoid flooding the earth.³⁵ White water can be seen streaming out of his hair with the celestial regions behind him, which were the original cause for the river formation. In fig. 67 his wife Pārvatī and his favorite bull Nandi are watching his powerful skills in admiration, while the river continues to flow in front of the bull to the foot of the painting. Shiva sits on a tiger-skin, with a beautifully depicted tree with colorful birds behind him.

This can be considered of the highest quality paintings of our muraqqa^c, with the beautiful, colorful tree with perching birds, and the finely depicted rocks in white and gray with green tufts growing out of them. The colorful tree copies the Rajasthani painting style while the rest of the painting continues the provincial Mughal style

32. Jairazbhoy, *The Rāgs*, 91.

33. Ibid, 122.

followed in most of the paintings. The beautiful details and the way the eyes are depicted make it possible to attribute this painting to our muraqqa^c artist (the ninth attributed to him). Although the setting is different than the previous ones, his colors and soft lines are characteristic.

The painting opposite, fig. 68, has the same iconography of god Shiva with the river Ganges coming out of his head and his wife Pārvaṭī sitting beside him in admiration. He sits on a tiger-skin while his wife sits on a lotus flower, on a green plain with celestial regions and rocky defiles represented behind them. A walking stick is behind Shiva with an hour glass tied to it, probably to indicate the time before the river floods the earth, and a flat glass plate or a mirror hangs on the mountain behind. Scattered trees or bushes are represented on the rocky mountain with an architectural representation at its top.

This painting is simpler than the previous representation, fig. 67, lacking the bull. The river itself is not represented except for the part coming through Shiva's hair. Although this painting is bigger than that opposite the figures are smaller and simpler. These two paintings were most probably executed separately as they are completely different in style. The similarity of their iconography can be explained by the familiarity of the subject.

Another painting with the same iconography is figure 349i in the Indian Office Library Catalogue (plate 28)³⁶ where Shiva is represented sitting on an elephant-skin and holding a stick similar to that in fig. 68. The painting is in Deccani style, unlike ours, but it shows the familiarity of the topic. Another example was probably made in Guler, c. 1725 (plate 29).³⁷ The Rajput style is different than our paintings. Instead of

just watching, Pārvatī, Shiva's wife, is standing behind him fanning while he collects the river. Shiva wears the tiger-skin instead of sitting on it.

Whether our paintings were copies of prior paintings or not is difficult to tell; our paintings could have been inspired by previous examples and not exact copies. They belong to the same possible dating as the rest of the muraqqa^c paintings, around 1780-1800 and Lucknow, but they were certainly the works of two different ateliers.

Chapter 4

Study of Flower Paintings, Illumination and Binding of the muraqqa^c

4.1. Plant, herbal and flower representations

Depicting flowers and plants in paintings was usual in different schools. On some occasions the plants were the main subject of the painting; usually this was in botanical or medical books. Plants were carefully and realistically illustrated in these books which were supposed to make them identifiable for viewers unfamiliar with them or their different names.

Herbal representations became a familiar subject for wood-engravings in Europe in the 16th century. The prints of these engravings were widespread and probably found their way to India with other European paintings and books that reached the Mughals.¹

Under the Mughals, the emperor Jahangir became interested in flower depictions and studies of plants. He states in his memoirs that he had more than 100 studies of flowering plants and herbals painted by his artist Mansur. Only three of Mansur's 100 plant studies remain, one of them depicting a Western Asiatic tulip that resembles an illustration of a lily in a French garden book of 1608.² Although European influence in representing flowers appears in Mansur's painting it was also a technique that Mughal artists adopted and developed.

Flower and plant designs appeared not only in paintings, but also were a main theme in palace decoration especially under Emperor Shah Jahan who adopted *nirota*

dura – marble inlaid with precious and semi-precious colored stones – to decorate his buildings. This increased their popularity in other media, such as carved marble, carpets, textiles, metal objects and small rock-crystals. All these flower and plant products from Shah Jahan's time and later on were depicted in a realistic style showing fine details especially in objects prepared for noble or royal family usage.

It was not just the Mughal artists who appreciated and painted their native flowers. European artists who came with the missionaries were also interested in painting flowers and plants of the East. They studied these flowers and plants not only for their beauty, but also for scientific and medical reasons. India was known for the wisdom of its people and their brilliance in the fields of astronomy and medicine. Scholars studied these plants and flowers to discover more about their beauty and uses.

Mansur's depictions of flowers, herbs and other plants, executed upon the orders of Jahangir, were not for scientific reasons but were originally initiated by the beauty that Jahangir found in Kashmir. A page of various flower studies by Mansur is in the *Muraqqa^c- i Gulshan* (plate 30).³ Another page from the same *muraqqa^c* has flowers, shrubs and birds and is attributed to Sadiqi (plate 31),⁴ probably another one of Jahangir's artists. Depicting herbs and flowers then became a trend that was followed by later artists. It developed in time away from realistic studies into a fantastic style more concerned with beauty and colorful effects.⁵

3. Semsar, *Golestan Palace Library*, 273.

Flower studies continued afterwards as can be seen in a Hibiscus study by Mihr Chand (plate 32) which is dated to c. 1760-70, Lucknow.⁶

4.2. Album arrangement

The albums of the late 18th century, as in our muraqqa^c, were commissioned by higher officers of the European missionaries, especially English officers and ambassadors. Most of these albums are scattered all over the world in private collections and museums or libraries collections, such as the series of albums in the India office Library and Records that were formed by Richard Johnson in Lucknow in the 1780s, some of which are now in the British Library collection,⁷ while some others are still in Delhi in the Indian Office Library collection.⁸ These albums, probably contemporary to our muraqqa^c, were usually arranged to have two pages of painting alternating with two of calligraphy. Flower representations were usually placed on the pages dedicated to paintings. In other cases, they were placed around the margins of different pages for illumination. In our muraqqa^c we find a different arrangement of the paintings. It does not have any calligraphy pages at all and every two pages with paintings alternate with two pages of flower paintings instead of the usual calligraphic ones.

Each pair of flower depictions is almost identical; sometimes mirroring each other, or sometimes close or almost identical copies. All of the flower pages have small corner paintings, mostly of birds. In three cases they have been replaced by

6. Leach, *Mughal and Other Indian Painting*, 690-1.

animals or butterflies. Some differences appear in the depiction of birds and butterflies accompanying the flower or plant representations, mostly due to their unfinished status.

4.3. Plant and flower paintings

Tracing an already finished painting with a sheet of thin gazelle-skin transparent enough to show the painting beneath was a normal technique used by different ateliers for reproducing older paintings. Under the Mughals this technique was used to enhance European engravings so as to give more of a Mughal style, or to prove the Mughal artists' capabilities of exactly copying or even bettering European artists. The painting was traced onto the transparent sheet then transferred to the painting paper either by pressing or by spreading black powder over the pierced layer leaving the outline on the paper beneath.

Unlike other painting ateliers, enough is known about the Mughal atelier and probably the same organization was found in many Indian provincial ateliers that usually copied the working policy of the capital, or were established by artists who had served for the imperial court originally.⁹ Mughal artists were known for their reproduction of previous scenes and famous paintings which they adopted from different contemporary or earlier schools of art.

4.4. Study of flower and plant depictions

4.4.1. Plant and flower paintings in the Dar al-Kutub muraqqa^c

There are 36 pages of flower and plant representations in the muraqqa^c, with 18 different designs. Each two pages facing each other have the same design; either the two opposite pages have the same position or they mirror each other. The plant representations in the middle of the page measure 13.5 x 22 cm, with a stylized polychrome flower 1.5cm border around them. Another border with almost the same stylized flower design surrounds the whole page, where each two pages have the same border design. The flower and plant depictions together with their borders are painted directly on the paper and not pasted on. The empty part of the page between the painting and the outer borders of the page is left uncolored, showing the ivory color of the paper. On this empty space on the lower middle of all the plant and flower pages there is the Dar al-Kutub blue stamp. It reads "*al-kutub-khanah al-khidawiyya al-misriyya* المكتبانه الخديويه المصريه" (the Egyptian Khedival Library) written in naskhi in a roundel. Most of the stamps are not readable as some parts are rubbed or were not stamped properly, yet all of them carry the same inscription.

Following the history of the stamp can help indicate the date of the muraqqa^c's arrival to the possession of Dar al-Kutub, yet it is not completely dependable evidence as it might have been added some time later than the actual date of purchase. It cannot be later than the early 20th century; the khedival title was used only until 1914 when the last Khedive of Egypt, Abbas Hilmi II was banished and Egypt was declared a Sultanate under British custody.

The arrangements of all the designs within the pages are almost the same: the

the four corners around the plant, there are bird, animal or butterfly depictions. All these corner birds, animals and butterflies are depicted on a very small scale compared to the plants, they are also non-realistic and sometimes of fantastical birds like the *simurgh*. They fill in the corners in a lively way that brightens the pages and adds movement to it.

All the plant representations are executed in opaque watercolors; very thin brushes were used for the small details of the leaves and petals. All of the plants and flowers are depicted in bright colors; red, orange, green, bright blue, light- and dark-purple, yellow and pink. The corner depictions too have the same bright colors, but due to their smaller size they do not distract the viewer's attention from the main plant represented in the painting. On all the pages the lower corner birds are standing on the ground while the two birds at the upper corners spread their wings in a flying position.

Pages with flower designs alternate with those which have paintings pasted on. All the pages of the album are numbered in red pencil on the top outer corners. The pages with the plant and flower designs have other numbers too, in dark blue pencil at the lower corner in consecutive numbers starting on the first page with 1 and ending by mistake at 37 (it should end at 36). The mistake happens between figures 62 and 65 where 32 is written on the lower corner of figure 62; the following flower painting should have the number 33, but figure 65 has 34 marked on its lower right corner.

Design I; figs. 1-2

This muraqqa^c does not have a frontispiece. When the viewer opens it he finds a pair of empty pages with faint traces of stamped flowers and small brush strokes of

It has a plant representation with thin green stems and broad leaves curled at the edge. The leaves are almost identical; they are placed in different positions, but all of the same size. The inner part of the leaf is in dark-purple with thin brush strokes indicating the veins. The main vein in the middle of the leaf is depicted in light orange like the edges. The leaf itself is light-purple; while the curled back of the leaf is brick-red with a darker hue of the same color outlining the veins at the back of the leaf.

As mentioned before; the depiction is not a naturalistic study of the plant but a stylized one; the artist used the leaf motif in a fantastic bouquet composition. Since the main design was so colorful and busy, the artist could leave the background of the painting and the whole page around it plain without any coloring.

The four corner birds are depicted in brick-red and brown with a yellow tail and blue striped wings. They have a long neck, a small head and a thin long beak. The upper two birds spread their wings while the lower two stand on their feet looking behind them, out of the page. In figs. 1-2, the two designs are in the same direction, not mirrored. The two paintings are almost identical; the birds are the same and the leaves are also placed on the same locations. The noticeable difference between the two pages is the position of the thin stems connecting the leaves. This difference is unnoticeable when one skims through the pages. The different treatment of the little green leaves attached to the stems possibly shows the different hands working on the paintings. Probably the two pages were designed by a master painter in the atelier and left to be finished by lesser artists as the designs were painted individually and not stenciled from one pattern.

Design II; figs. 5-6

The next pages with plant depictions are figs. 5-6 (3 and 4 in the plant numbering). In this case the design on fig. 6 mirrors that on fig. 5. A wooden trunk starts at the middle of the bottom of the painting and divides into several branches as it grows taller. Olive-green leaves grow out of the brown branches that carry the flowers. Most of the flowers are of the same design and almost the same size, only the buds being of different sizes. All of the flowers and buds have the same orange tones. The two paintings have slight differences in the stem depiction and some of the buds, yet they still follow the main outline prepared for them.

The two upper flying birds have a red body with blue wings and little crown-like feathers. They have long tails and thin necks, while the lower standing birds have red wings and blue bodies. They also have these crown-like feathers on their heads; they stand back to back facing outwards, with the tree in between them. The four birds have the same color scheme different from the main colors of the flowers, helping them stand out beside the painting.

Design III; figs. 9-10

Figs. 9-10 (5 and 6 in flower numbering) mirror each other with two large flowers with curled petals, three other smaller flowers and a bud. The fantastic flower depiction starts at the middle of the bottom of the painting and grows into two large leaves. They have a number of polychrome petals. White is used for the innermost petals, while the outer ones alternate between orange and lilac ones. Darker colors are

used for the inner parts of the petals. In this painting the differences are limited to

The upper flying birds are depicted in canary-yellow and red and bluish-green, resembling birds of the first design in shape but different in colors. The lower standing birds are depicted in red, blue and brown. Their short necks and short feathers on their heads make them look a little like a cock although they are too colorful to represent one. They stand facing each other looking towards the plant in the middle.

Design IV; figs. 13-4

Figs. 13-4, (pages 7 and 8 in flower numbering). This design is virtually symmetrical around the middle stem that acts as an axis. Although the painting is balanced around the axis it still has lively touches in the leaning flowers. The two facing pages mirror each other.

From a little tuft of grass grows the long stem from which branches grow carrying flowers, buds and leaves. On both sides at the beginning of the stem grow two leaves. These flowers blend purple carnations with a denser red flower. The red flower acts as the center while the purple petals surround it. Smaller purple buds are arranged to fill in the empty spaces.

The upper birds are darker than the lower ones, but they share the same color palette and have same colors as the flower design unlike previous examples. No clear differences can be pointed out in the two paintings, perhaps indicating that these two paintings were done by the same person and not two artists as in some other cases.

Design V: figs. 17-8

the petal tips. The almost symmetrical bouquet starts at the bottom of the page where a brown tree trunk grows from the middle of a tuft of grass. Green branches carry green and yellow rose-leaves. The two paintings mirror each other in the flowers' arrangement. They have similar trunks in the same position with some slight changes.

The fantastic birds on top of the painting are in green and red with white and purple touches, while the two standing birds beneath are purple with dark green wings. All the birds have a crown feather composition on their heads.

Design VI; figs. 21-2

Still following the purple and orange color scheme, the sixth design comes in an innovative fantastic design. It is represented in figs. 21-2 (11 and 12 in the flower sequence). Again mirroring each other, the composition starts with a thick brown trunk with green grass around it. The trunk branches into brown and green branches carrying flowers. A dense orange heart at the center is crowned by purple petals and supported by heart-shaped purple leaves. The branches here twist around the flowers breaking the rigidity that was characteristic of the previous designs. Some purple buds in different sizes fill in the free spaces between the blossoming flowers.

The four birds on the page are depicted lighter than the flowers in orange and green with little green feathers on their heads. The upper two birds open their wings flying while the lower two stand with their bodies facing each other and their heads turned outwards each catching a bright orange butterfly in its beak, adding more life and fantasy to the scene.

Design VII; figs. 25-6

Figs. 25-26, (13 and 14 in the flower sequence) represent the seventh flower design. The two opposite paintings are identical in the flower depiction, but they differ very slightly in the birds' depiction. From a thin stem grow two small leaves then two bigger leaves acting as the base for the design. In a less dense composition than previous ones, circular flowers, half-circular small ones and semi-opened buds are all attached to thin branches and stems carrying leaves. The flower hearts are in yellow and orange while the carnation-like leaves are in dark- and light-purple continuing the series of purple and orange flowers seen previously.

The birds on these two pages differ from the previous settings which were exact copies of each other regardless of the flower design. The two flying birds in fig. 25 are depicted standing on the ground at the lower corners of fig. 26, and the standing ones in 25 are flying at the upper corners of fig. 26. They are all depicted in the same palette as the flowers but with a different arrangement for each kind, which makes them identifiable by their own characteristics.

Design VIII; figs. 29-30

This design departs from the geometrical orange and purple designs that preceded it but follows the same main outlines of these designs; having green at the base and growing into a bouquet. Unlike the previous designs; this design is not an arrangement of the same kind of flower, it is more a composition of several kinds of flowers, fruits and herbs. Figs. 29-30 (15 and 16 in flower sequence) have more than five different kinds of plants represented arranged in a colorful bouquet.

A twin stem reaches the top of the design carrying orange pomegranates and red flowers. The other smaller branches carry blue and purple lilies.

Although this painting has more colors than the previous designs and a number of different plants, yet it appears to be the most realistic depiction of all the designs. Probably the realistic depiction was incidental to the artist's aim, as he added fantastic birds and animals around it. Two colorful birds perch among the flowers on the branches, being so colorful that they are difficult to recognize at first glance. One of them stands at the lower part of the composition with its head turned towards one of the pomegranate fruits on the tree. The other stands in the upper half of the composition dipping its beak into a flower.

Making it even more a fantastic depiction, the artist added two flying colorful simurghs with long feathery tails. On the bottom corners of the painting; the artist shows two simple rabbits or squirrel-like animals, which have long ears but with a long squirrel-like tail. They are depicted in light- and dark-brown with white touches. One of them stands on its hind limbs and tail raising its forelimbs to its mouth with some grass. The other rabbit leans to the ground eating from a small tuft of grass in front of it.

Design IX; figs. 33-4

Another fantastic bouquet is depicted in the next flower pages, the ninth composition in figs. 33-4 (17 and 18 in the flower representations). The stems are held together at the bottom of the painting with their lower edges bent outwards. Two different sets of leaves beneath the flowers act as a base and indicate the different

At the upper corners of the painting there are two blue and yellow butterflies which are larger than the two standing birds at the lower corners. These two birds look like ibises but are more colorful. They stand with their heads raised looking at the flower bouquet. There are very little differences between the two opposite pages, a missing leaf or a slightly moved flower stem; other than that the two paintings are almost identical.

Design X; figs. 37-8

Having a single flower type composition, the tenth design, figs. 37-8, (19 and 20 in flower designs) returns again to the one plant depiction. Again in a symmetrical composition; a throne-like flower and some buds in different sizes are depicted. Yellow is used for the main veins of the leaves and to brighten the flower centers; buds are scattered among the design filling in the empty spaces. The flowers are mainly in orange with smaller blue and purple petals.

The flower designs on the two opposite pages mirror each other, but the birds are almost identical. A short-necked crowned purple bird with black tail and wings is represented flying at the two upper corners of the painting. Two black birds with white and red touches stand at the bottom of the page facing each other.

Design XI; figs. 41-2

The eleventh flower design, figs. 41-2, (21 and 22 in the flower representation); depicts a rose stem with a number of purple flowers. The two flower representations mirror each other while the birds are almost the same. The stem

stylized tree. The half blossoming flower in the middle is a realistic rose, yet the blossoming flowers are very stylized.

All four birds at the corners are depicted in orange. The two flying birds have long tails with dark touches. The two birds standing at the lower corners of the painting have long necks, protruding feathers on the head and a very short tail. They stand facing each other. On fig. 41 the flower stems are a little moved from the center in a delicate depiction while they stand straighter and upright in fig. 42.

Depiction XII; figs. 45-6

Another fantastic composition is depicted in the twelfth design on figs. 45 -6 (23 and 24 of the flower series). Out of the bottom center of the page grows a thick stem with elongated leaves. Flowers in full blossom hang from the branches in an inverted position together with smaller buds that grow at the tips of different branches. Flowers and buds grow in two alternating color schemes; one is an orange cup with a lilac and purple heart, the other inverts the colors.

The design is balanced around a central stem with two almost identical halves. The two flying birds have a red head and neck with a purple body and blue wings with a long green tail and a single feather on the head. On the lower corners two dark purple birds with lighter tails and striped blue wings, stand looking backwards.

Design XIII; figs. 49-50

Figs. 49-50 (25 and 26 in plant depictions) have the thirteenth design which, while following the main scheme of the flower depictions, still preserves its own

leaves, followed by thin stems, blossoming flowers and different sized buds. The flowers are represented in groups of three or more. All the blossoming flowers have a darker outline and get lighter towards the white center, with yellow lining in the middle. The flowers are either purple or red-orange, in different sizes with a little transparent crown on top.

The two flying birds are depicted in fancy colors and are looking backwards. The upper and lower birds almost have the same color scheme. The lower birds stand facing each other. The two paintings are almost an exact copy.

Design XIV; figs. 53-4

The fourteenth design in figs. 53-4 (27 and 28 in the flower depictions) is a mirror depiction of purple and orange flowers while the animals are depicted in exactly the same positions. The stem grows into two broad green leaves, and then thin stems carry the heavy blossoming flowers and different sized buds. The buds are represented in purple while the large blossoming flowers are depicted in a multi-petal compact form in purple with wider orange petals at their base.

In the upper corners, two flying purple birds are depicted with colorful wings, a long dark tail and a long blue feather growing beside the eye. In the lower corners, small animals are depicted for the second time in all the 18 designs, the first in figs. 29-30, design VIII. A dark brown fox-like animal with a white stomach and a very long tail is depicted in two positions; one where it stands on all four legs while raising its head, another where it stands on three legs raising the fourth and its tail resting on the ground. Like all depictions in this series, each of them is a mixture of realistic and

Design XV; figs.57-8

Figs. 57-8 (29 and 30 of the plant depiction) have the fifteenth design; the two pages mirror each other. It has a lighter design than most of the previous ones as it has more open space and brighter colors in the inner petals of the flowers. From a small tuft of grass grows the stem supporting some elongated leaves and stems that support flax-like flowers in purple. Some of the flowers are opened, others are half opened or still buds. All the flowers, except the buds, have stamens coming out of them depicted delicately in yellow and purple. Small yellow petals surround the purple main ones.

The four corner birds are of the same kind, color and size. The body of the birds is depicted like a flamingo but they have different beaks. The upper birds are flying with their legs outstretched, while the lower two are standing in different positions. The one at the right is bending its head downwards scratching its neck, while that on the left has its head raised and looks backwards.

Design XVI; figs. 61-2

In the 16th design some of the previously followed rules were altered. Figs. 61-2 (31-2 in the flower depiction sequence) have a design of bell-shaped flowers depicted in three colors with buds at the tips of the branches. Growing directly from the bottom of the painting without any grass tufts around, the stem holds thin leaves followed by flowers and buds. The flowers are depicted in blue, purple and orange. The flowers are of medium size but the leaves are long and they fill most of the painting.

In the previous designs the two opposite pages had almost the same colors, but

the two pages is quite different. It seems that the two paintings were executed by the same hand, or at least two artists who worked with the same painting rules. The change in the color scheme might suggest that they were made by one artist who was confident enough to depend on his memory to repeat the colors of the painting he had finished previously, or he might have intended to give variety to the two similar pages. This may lead us to assume that the two paintings were probably painted one after the other; one of them could have been taken to a patron for his or her approval, while the other was still in the atelier being worked on.

The four birds on the painting have the same color scheme, but they represent two different kinds of birds. The flying birds lack the crown, while the ones on the ground have a crown and long tails. The bird on the left looks at the plant composition in front of it, while the one on the right looks behind it. Although using the same colors for the birds and the flowers, the distribution and the small scale of the birds make them attractive but not distracting for the viewer.

Design XVII; figs. 65-6

The design before last in figs. 65-6 was mistakenly marked in the plant sequence, as mentioned above, as 34-5 instead of 33-4. It is a representation of a beautiful bright orange and yellow flower. The leaves are at the bottom of the main stem which then branches out carrying leaves, flowers and buds. The flowers are composed of two interlacing elements; the inner one is a jasmine depicted in dark orange with long delicate pink and red stamens growing out of the center. In between the jasmine petals grow five petals which surround it forming a rounded design. They

The flower design with much empty space in between the petals was used effectively by the artist to show parts of the green branches and leaves in between the petals. The leaves too have a unique design as they are apple-like with different green shades. The motifs were successfully stylized to enhance the painting. The two paintings are almost identical.

The upper flying birds are depicted in red, blue and white. They have long green tails and they are almost the same size as the previous birds at the corners. The lower two birds have the same color scheme as the upper ones yet they are much larger and have shorter tails.

The lower corner birds of fig. 65 lack their black dots indicating the eyes. This is not the only case as other birds on the muraqqa^c lack some details too, but these seem the most surprising as the birds on the opposite page have their eyes drawn.

Design XVIII; figs. 69-70

The last flower design on the muraqqa^c is the 18th design, figs. 69-70, and the last painted pages of the muraqqa^c (36 and 37 in the plant depiction series). The final design is different from the all others, just as the first one was different in depicting only leaves. From a brown branch grow a number of purple and red flowers. Elongated green leaves are depicted in different sizes beside the flowers. The flowers are realistically large with blue stamens growing out of them. Purple and red buds of different sizes complete the flower depictions in the empty spaces.

The paintings on the two opposite pages mirror each other as can clearly be noticed from the S-shape of the main tree branch of the painting. Unlike the previous

Again the artist does not give the viewer a chance to feel that the representation is very realistic for the red and purple flowers grow side by side on the same branch.

Following the same scheme of the previous designs, four birds are depicted at the corners. The flying birds are depicted in red and blue with dark long tails. On the right page, figure 69, the bird on the right looks in front of it while the left one turns its head backwards. The upper birds are depicted in the same colors used for the flowers matching the overall scheme of the painting. On the other hand, the lower corner birds are depicted in bright yellow with black wings, heads with a red feather on top, and long green tails. Their bright yellow contrasts with the black heads and wings making them stand out more than the upper ones which have the same color scheme as the flowers.

4.4.2. Analysis of the flower and plant depictions

The flower depictions in this muraqqa^c, like its arrangement, are unique. It can be assumed that none of them is a realistic study. Although these flowers are not identifiable, yet the viewer cannot but admire their colors, compositions and the delicacy and beauty of the representations.

The depiction of over 18 different kinds of plants and flowers together with more than 36 differently depicted and colored kinds of birds was a work of a talented artist even if he was not one of the masters. Probably all the flower depictions were designed by one hand, as can be seen from the main concepts that the artist followed with his designs. Although each one has its own identity, still they all are the same size, occupy the same area, and balance evenly within the page.

painting to the next, but all preserve the same configuration, being 1.5cm wide with a stylized plant motif repeated all around in gold with red and blue touches. In a few cases, the gold leaves or flowers were painted but the red and blue touches were not finished. All the plant designs were painted directly on the album paper and their borders too. The rest of the page and the background are uncolored; since the colorful depictions of the flowers and birds occupy the center of the page, adding more colors would have been distracting.

Covering the same area of the page, the designer arranged the flowers repeating them as much as the design needed. A small flower was to be repeated several times filling the painting area as in design XIII, figs. 49-50; on the other hand, a large flower was repeated fewer times among the painting as in design III, figs. 9-10, where only two big flowers are depicted, with little buds and half flowers around. In another case; design I, figs. 1-2 lacks any flower representation as it consists of leaves of a non-flowering plant, all of the same size but in different positions filling the whole space with thin stems and closed leaves. The last design too, XVIII, figs. 69-70, has a bending branch and broad leaves and flowers; still it fills the same space as all the previous designs do.

Some designs share more common features than others. Designs IV (figs. 13-4), V (figs. 17-8), VI (figs. 21-2), VII (figs. 25-6), XI (figs. 41-2), XII (figs. 45-6), and XIV (figs. 53-4) have characteristics that they share only among them. These seven designs out of the 17 share almost the same color palette where the dominant colors are orange and purple. These seven paintings show the capability of the artist who could use the same colors, almost the same setting and size of motifs yet

Two other designs have another common feature. Designs VIII, figs. 29-30, and IX, figs. 33-4, share representing colorful bouquets which have different flowers, fruits and leaves. These two designs attract the viewers' eyes with their colorful different-sized flowers after the almost rhythmic depictions and color schemes in the four designs preceding them. They also share another unique feature which is the corner depiction of something other than birds. Design XIV, figs. 53-4, joins them in the depiction of animals on the lower corner – rather than the standing birds – as in design VIII, figs.29-30, while design IX, figs. 33-4 has two butterflies depicted in the upper corners rather than the usual flying birds depicted in all other 17 designs.

The birds at the corners were probably painted by a lesser artist who was responsible for painting all of them, unlike the flowers that had more than one artist or apprentice working on them. They represent a less experienced painter or designer as we find him trying new features in every one without major change, unlike the flower designs which were done with confidence and a well-trained experienced hand. The bird artist probably started his work after the flowers were finished and before the muraqqa^o was bound. Some of these birds were not finished, like the borders which lack the red and blue touches in some cases.

The artist of the plant depictions had in mind that none of them need be realistic. All the designs were to represent beauty, not by copying nature; even if they were derived from studies of real plants. It is clear that whenever he had a realistic touch in his design, he contradicted it with fantastic color against the expectations of the viewer thinking of the natural origin of the motif. The comparatively small birds

at the corners helped to fill the space around the design and give the flowers a

4.5. Illumination and borders of the muraqqa^c

The following study of borders will be concerned with the borders around the pages with paintings together with the page illuminations, but not the borders around the flower and plant depictions as they have been already discussed previously with the flower depictions and are executed in a different style.

Unlike the flower and plant depictions, the pages with paintings are highly illuminated in gold patterns. Studying the flower depictions and seeing how the artist preserved the twin representation in all the pages, it would be expected to find every two opposite painting-pages sharing the same background pattern. In fact the same illumination in the background occurred rarely and when the design was repeated its size was changed. These illuminations as clearly seen in plates 7-9 share the feature that they cover the whole page around the painting. They also appear in stylized motifs arranged in geometric patterns.

Illuminations around paintings in our muraqqa^c are different from the usual ones of the Mughal emperors' albums. They used to have highly colored depictions of people or studies of colored flowers – as seen in the Gulshani muraqqa^c mentioned previously (plate 33)¹⁰ – while ours here has a monotonous design depicted only in gold on paper without any colors for the background. The variety of the designs and the differences between the opposite pages together with the colorful painting in the middle made the pages attractive for the viewer. These designs appear to be printed around the paintings from stencils, as they are repeated in wall-paper format with high accuracy and working lines are visible under them. In some cases the edges of the

¹¹ In some parts of the black lining around the borders indicating that they were not

painted by hand, in which case the painter would have been more careful. A lesser artist was probably responsible for the pattern around the paintings. Choosing the patterns was probably also done by the lesser artist and perhaps even without knowing the painting that would be pasted in the middle; thus the patterns do not correspond to the paintings with the different topics and not even to the designs on opposite pages.

The illuminations of similar albums has not been studied or reproduced extensively yet. The illuminations that have been published are largely of the Jahangir and Shah Jahan albums and or are limited to certain others such as the Kevorkian Album.¹¹

The usual background illumination surrounding paintings since album making became an appreciated art of its own in the 17th century under Jahangir and Shah Jahan was studies of flowers and herbs, or human depictions in different positions and sometimes studies of animals and birds. In one of Jahangir's albums, the *Muraqqa'-i Gulshan* now in the Gulistan Palace Library in Tehran, with the latest painting dated to 1609,¹² the paintings have painted borders in gold on coral or light-green background. The album pages vary between paintings and calligraphic pages or pages combining paintings with calligraphy inserted.

As it is clear from the Jahangiri *Muraqqa'-i Gulshan*; the borders were not just added as decoration for the different pages, but also to express their patron's devotion to nature and love of birds. In one of the borders, stylized vegetation is depicted in gold while the colored representations are of human figures in different positions and in pastel colors unlike the strong and bright colors of the birds. As can be seen in a

page from the muraqqa^c, it has an inscription in the middle with highly decorated borders around depicting human figures in different positions and activities (plate 33).¹³ These background designs are different from the gold ones we have in our muraqqa^c, but still they give an idea of how borders were treated under Jahangir in the early 17th century from which we can see the changes over a century later and under less powerful patrons. Under Shah Jahan, borders had more human representations among the plant representations. Along with the innovative flowering plants, more eclectic scroll and arabesque designs appear.¹⁴

The floral and plant composition pages in our muraqqa^c lack the gold pattern illumination, as mentioned previously; they have empty backgrounds around the flower designs. The alternation between figured scenes and colorful static floral paintings was very successful. Similar albums executed in the 18th century – like the St. Petersburg muraqqa^c – usually had calligraphic pages alternating with paintings, which created the distinction between pages giving the artists more freedom to depict whatever they wanted to put in the background illuminations. Our artists here had to find a way to place the background patterns without clashing with the paintings and the flower paintings without them clashing with each other or with the main paintings and without boring the viewer.

4.6. Borders framing the paintings

Other than the background illumination there are the borders which frame the paintings. The number of borders around the paintings changes from one page to the next. There is no constant number of borders or size of painting. Some of the pages have more than one border around the painting, sometimes if there are three or more borders around one painting, two of them may have the same color but not the same design. Some of them are directly drawn on the paper, while most of them are pasted on, either in one rectangular band for each color, or just separate bands attached to each other at the corners. The gold stylized vegetation was probably painted after pasting the borders on the page itself and not painted on the colored borders before being pasted on as might be assumed. The borders' background colors are limited to blue, coral, pink and green with gold stylized vegetal and floral representations.

Simple gold lines were added to the trims of the painting hiding traces of pasted edges. These thin delicate lines surrounded all the borders successfully concealing any evidence of mounting and pasting from the viewers' eyes. The borders seem to have been added after mounting the paintings. This proves that the paintings were already finished and were in the artist's possession before the binding of the album was started. All pages have green color trims all around the page that were probably the very last thing added to the muraqqa^c pages before their binding. The thin edges of the pages have been painted in gold so that when it is closed it appears as a solid gold color.

The borders and backgrounds cannot give us much information about the date

popular for Indian art lovers and collectors besides the Indian patrons themselves. The late 18th to early 19th century is the probable dating for the binding of this muraqqa°, i.e. not much later than the date of the paintings themselves.

4.7. Leather binding of the muraqqa°

The binding of this muraqqa° is in brown leather pressed on the outside with a central golden medallion and corner pieces. A gold cartouche runs around its borders and golden finials and crenellations surround most of the decorative items on the cover. Both the front and back of the muraqqa° have exactly the same design (figs. 71 and 75). Now the front cover has the Dar al-Kutub label with the muraqqa°'s call number, otherwise the two covers are exactly the same. There are two labels on the cover; one, which is probably contemporary to the stamps put on the flower pages in the muraqqa°, is pressed on the leather cover. Another paper label with the same call number seems to be a recent addition to the manuscript as the pressed one is unidentifiable at first glance. Both labels are in Arabic and read "Persian History 66 تاريخ فارسي ٦٦". There is now some scratching of the gold and wear of the edges. Bands of leather of the same brown color have been added all around the edges in an attempt to preserve it. Unfortunately these edge bands are themselves starting to get loose from the original cover.

On the other hand, the cover on the inside looks as good as new (figs. 72 and 74). It is made of bright red leather with a large gold medallion in the center covering the whole page with added designs at the top and the bottom. Two small crenellation-like borders surround the whole page. Both front and back inner cover have exactly

early 20th century, but an exact match to our design was not found. Indian book bindings and their designs have not been fully studied.

No stamps or signatures show the origin or the date of execution. Being so well preserved on the inside is normal because these sides were closed most of the time. On the other hand the wear of the outer cover indicates its old age and heavy handling. It was not possible to find information or records at Dar al-Kutub stating how or when this muraqqa° reached the library's collection. The very last page of the muraqqa° before the binding has an inscription that was added when it came to the Dar al-Kutub collection. It gives the call number and a general serial number (fig. 73).

The attachment of the leather cover is made of the same material used for binding the pages together; also the same added leather trims of the paper attach the cover to the painted pages which indicates that it is the original cover.

Chapter 5

The Results of the Study

5.1. Introduction

Studying the muraqqa^c did not give clear answers to the questions that were raised at the beginning of this study. Its paintings, as previously mentioned, are arranged in pairs. This arrangement of similar paintings was not an innovation, as we can see from Jahangir's album, where two similar paintings face each other in Muraqqa^c-i Gulshan (plates 34-5), one being a later copy of the other.¹ The innovation is having the whole album arranged in double paintings, each two copying each other. They cover a wide range of familiar topics from Indian and Mughal paintings. Only four paintings out of the 34 represent full-figure portraits, none of which is identifiable. Most of the other paintings have a familiar iconography. No formal portraits of famous or historical characters are represented among them, except for the representation of Baz Bahadur sultan of Malwa in the 16th century, which cannot be considered as a formal portrait. The album also lacks any calligraphic pages.

The figural pages alternate with fantasy flower paintings showing 18 different designs in 36 pages, and were painted directly on the paper of the album. The borders surrounding the pasted-in paintings were sometimes painted directly on the paper or were pasted as external colored bands and gilded after pasting. The muraqqa^c has a high quality gilded leather binding that is its original one. The muraqqa^c and all its

paintings lack any signatures or stamps contemporary to its execution, the only stamp being that of Dar al-Kutub which will be discussed later.

5.2. Identifying artists and different school styles

The figural paintings are in different styles and by different hands. None of the paintings carries the artist's signature or even an attribution. The paintings vary in size with the smallest being fig. 27, a full-figure European female musician, 6 x 9 cm. The largest two are about the same size, 18 x 28 cm (figs. 31-2). Some of the paintings were executed in different techniques than the normal opaque watercolor, such as figs. 23 and 27, which are line paintings with simple shading. Fig. 63 is different as it is depicted mainly in sepia with a little coloring for the figures.

Fig. 7 has a different style than all the other paintings. It might be the earliest of them all, or a copy from a very good painting by an earlier artist. It depicts Laila and Majnun in a style similar to the imperial Mughal 17th century style. This artist probably has no other paintings among our muraqqa^c. His style indicates thorough training and probably work for some time in an imperial atelier.

Using style to attribute the paintings was helpful but still left some unanswered questions. Nine or ten paintings can be attributed to one artist as they share the same style and almost the same color palette. They are figs. 16, 19, 32, 35, 39, 43, 59, 64 and 67. These nine figures have different subjects but they share the delicacy of line and a highly executed finish with fine details. The 10th painting is fig. 4, which has a slightly different style. It has very well depicted trees and beautiful decoration of the figures. It is a busier scene than the others. It is probably either a

The artist responsible for executing these ten paintings was a highly trained painter with access to earlier works; he had the talent to copy them with additions in his own style. That these ten were painted by one artist might be doubted at first glance since they represent a wide variety of topics. Among his identifying touches are finely depicted women in a variety of positions. All the paintings of the muraqqa^c depict women in different positions except for the two ascetics in figs. 23-4. The women and angels in his paintings have almost identical facial features. They also share the same style of dressing as in figs. 4, 16, 39, 64 and 67 where the main characters' skirts are almost the same. They even share the color and sometimes the pattern.

His architectural representations show how he used the same outlines with little alteration to fit in other paintings with a different setting. Figs. 39 and 64 have the same architectural outline applied to two different buildings. Although they occupy the same part of the page in a setting that was familiar and frequently used in provincial Mughal paintings, the color scheme and the way the women are depicted suggest that they were done by the same hand. Fig. 35 shares the same building outline with the previous two paintings, although, like fig. 16, it has a grille above the door. An open terrace appears in figs. 35, 39 and 59, and only slightly changed in fig. 64 where the leading steps to the terrace are placed at an angle.

Fig. 19 has a different setting than all the other paintings in the muraqqa^c, with the two characters appearing inside a window frame. This was a familiar way of framing personal-portraits but not for such a topic as ours, which is women bathing.

The painting shares the delicate lines, colors and the tied-up curtain with the other

Comparing the ten different paintings to each other, we can detect the variations in our artist's style from copying previous works to introducing his own setting and adding personal touches to the copied paintings. These paintings could have been executed over five to ten years which would explain the range of style. He clearly studied a wide range of Indian paintings which he adapted to his provincial Mughal style. The Deccani, Rajput and Mughal origins of his paintings can be discerned in some paintings. The arrangement of these paintings in the muraqqa^c does not correspond with any chronology.

Our artist probably worked for a commercial atelier where his paintings were sold individually or pasted into albums as was the case here. He could also have been the atelier owner who collected the other similar paintings and arranged them with his in this muraqqa^c, or simply painted his after finding an interesting one to copy. He also might have made these paintings upon the orders of a patron.

Two other paintings, figs. 20 and 36 could be attributed to a second painter. Fig. 20 seems to be unfinished, but the style of trees in both paintings is similar. Also the wave design decorating the carpets beneath the characters is alike. Small transparent objects such as bottles and flasks are represented in both on trays on the ground. The wide eyes with eye-shadow above them also help identify the artist's style.

Fig. 31 shares a significant detail with fig. 32 which is the two left hands of the angel and the royal ascetic, but it is not certain that it belongs to the painter who has the largest number of paintings attributed to him, as it is a copy of a painting in

The remaining 22 paintings are probably works of different artists. It is not clear if more than one of them were executed by the same painter as they do not have many features in common.

5.3. Result of the study of the stencils

From the study of the flower and plant depictions, it could be deduced that these flower paintings were done in the same atelier that bound the muraqqa°. This atelier was probably a commercial one owned and supervised by a highly trained master aware of the imperial style. The master may have drawn the main outlines and taught lesser artists, but he could not have worked on such a huge project entirely on his own. Probably three or four categories of artists worked on these flower depictions. They were painted right on the muraqqa° pages and not stenciled as one might think at first glance.

A master may have been responsible for the flower designs while one or two lesser artists worked on the delicate execution of the paintings. A third level artist perhaps worked on the bird and animal depictions under the supervision of the master artist or another higher artist. A fourth one could have been responsible for the border depictions, but he was not involved in the execution of the borders of the pages with paintings. Assuming that a number of artists worked on the flower depictions is the most likely theory, otherwise it would have taken a great deal of time to be finished. The quality of paper and its color show that all the bound pages of the muraqqa° were manufactured at almost the same time, proving that the flower depictions were contemporary to the muraqqa° binding and the addition of the paintings' pasting to it.

5.4. Place of execution

Most of the paintings of our muraqqa^c are similar to those of the ateliers at Lucknow or Oudh in general.

As mentioned before, the muraqqa^c does not have any stamps or signatures of any type other than that of Dar al-Kutub itself. No pages have been torn out or removed from the manuscript, so we cannot assume that a frontispiece with more information is missing. This indicates that it was probably not commissioned upon the orders of someone in particular, but made to be sold for any interested customer. Having no signed or attributed paintings is unusual. If our artist of the ten paintings was responsible for the collection of all the album paintings and executed his after collecting the others, he might have left his paintings unsigned to match the others. Another explanation for not signing the paintings might be that they were made to be sold to Europeans who could not read the signatures. It also may indicate the commercial nature of the atelier. It could be also upon the orders of the patron of the album who did not want anything to distract the viewer from admiring the paintings.

5.5. Possible patrons

Those interested in purchasing or commissioning such albums included higher officers of the Mughal provinces who wanted to emulate the Mughal emperors and Europeans who were interested in Indian arts and wanted to keep their own copies of paintings which were comparatively easy objects to transport overseas. Another possibility is that these paintings and albums were prepared for the harem or *zenana*, where women connoisseurs enjoyed pictures just as much as men did in their private

section of the palace. Indeed in Mughal India, women not only appreciated pictures, but commissioned and painted them.²

Our muraqqa[°] could be attributed to a female owner who admired some individual paintings and ordered the preparation of an album with other paintings following the same scheme. This can be supported by the fact that the muraqqa[°] lacks any war scenes or male figures at all except for the two traveling ascetics. It does not have any hunting scenes or portraits of higher Mughal nobility as other muraqqa[°]s had.

It is possible that after its execution and completion the album was sold to a European ambassador or officer. He could have bought the already finished muraqqa[°] when he was in India, which might help explain how the muraqqa[°] came to Egypt. The European officer might have visited Egypt after India and have given the muraqqa[°] as a present to the Khedive himself or one of the higher officials who donated it later on to the Dar al-Kutub collection. This assumption does not contradict the previous one. It is possible that the muraqqa[°] was commissioned by a lady of the Indian or European elite, afterwards sold to a European officer who brought it to Egypt and then sold it or gave it away as a present. The possibility that it was originally made as a present and directly brought to Egypt with an Indian ambassador is not likely because of the muraqqa[°]s commercial quality which would have made it less acceptable as an official present from one country to the other. Also because India was under the British occupation and independent Indian relations with other countries were not possible.

5.6. Date and Provenance of the album

The date for most of the paintings in this muraqqa^c is probably the late 18th century, from 1770-1800. Lucknow was known as the largest center for commercial ateliers and the style of our paintings fits with those 18th century Lucknow examples. Perhaps two or three paintings of the 34 could be attributed to Bikaner, also c. 1770-1800.

It is difficult to use the iconography of the paintings as dating criteria as most of them represent familiar subjects. Some of them have been common in India for centuries such as the painting of Krishna and the gopis (figs. 3-4). A topic such as Laila and Majnun in figs. 7-8, was depicted frequently under Persian patronage since the 15th century and continued under Mughal patronage. Other paintings are almost identical copies of other muraqqa^c paintings such as figs. 31 and 56 whose originals or fellow copies were executed at almost the same dating range.

Dating this muraqqa^c to the late 18th century depended mainly on the study of the paintings, their style and quality. Studying the flower and plant depiction, the paper, the muraqqa^c different illumination styles together with the leather binding all support the estimated date of execution.

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Appendix A

Appendix A

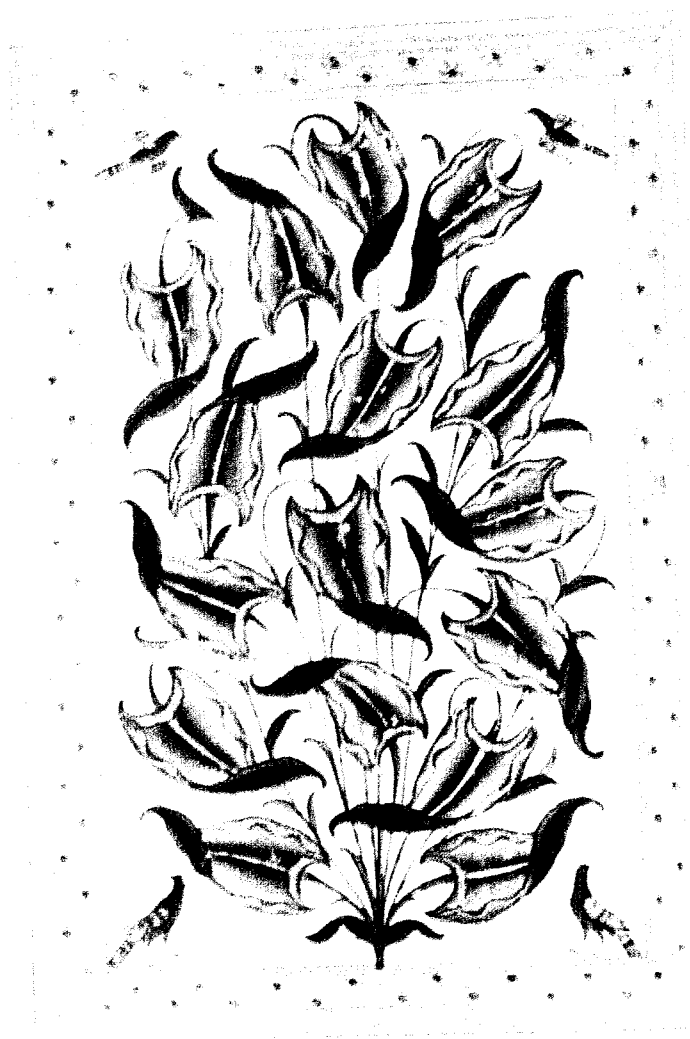
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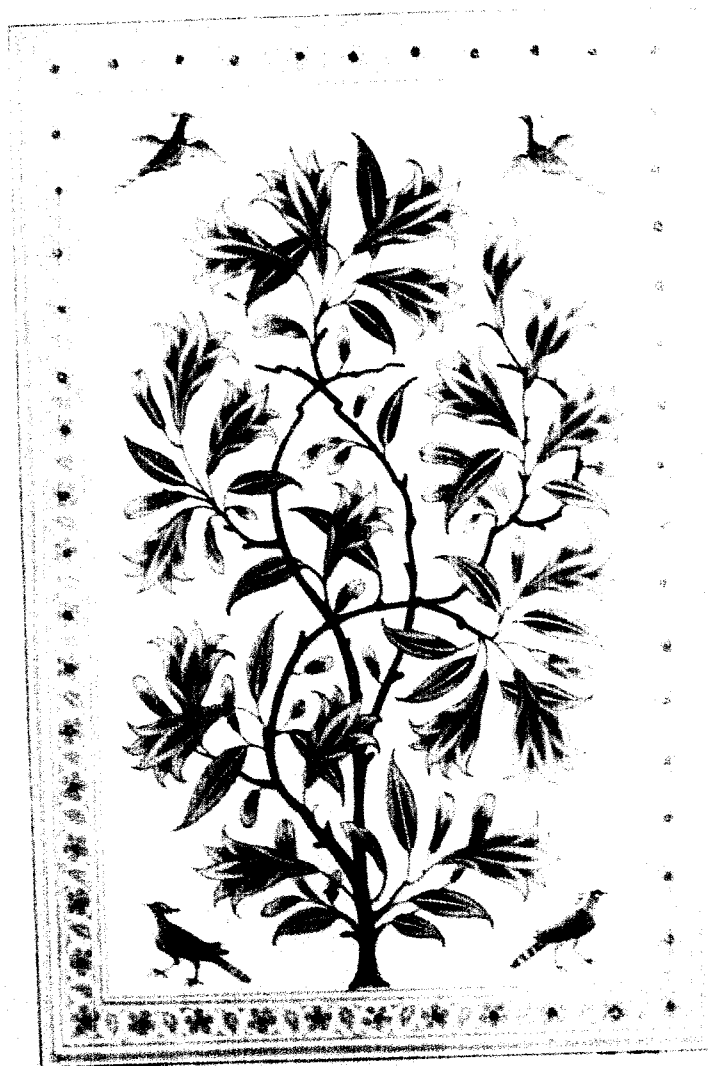
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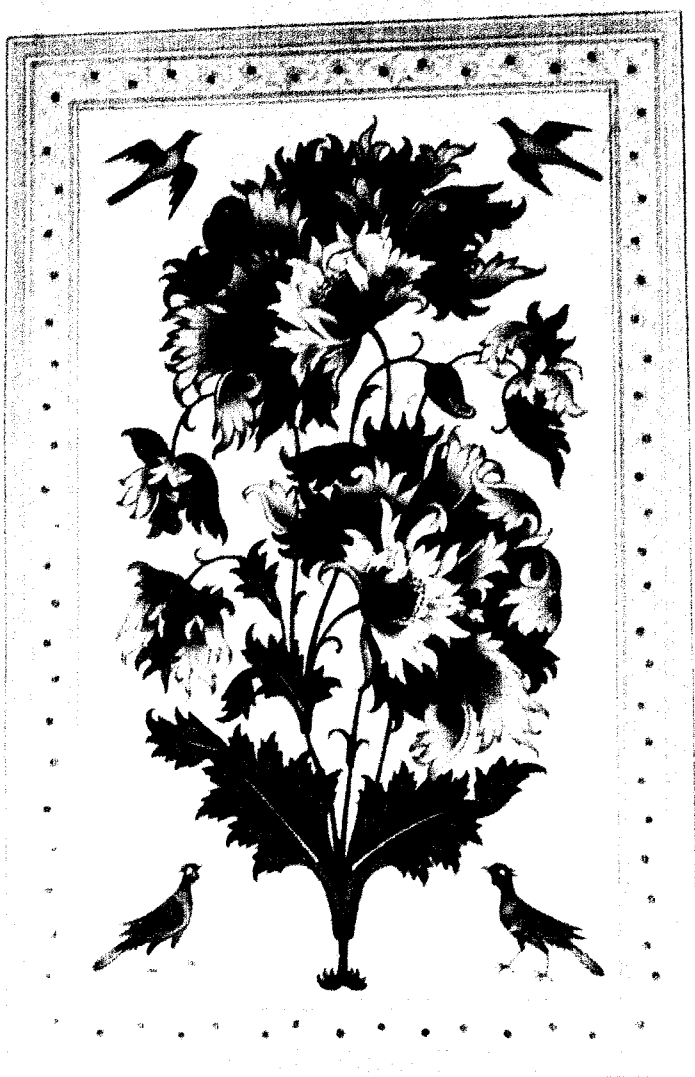


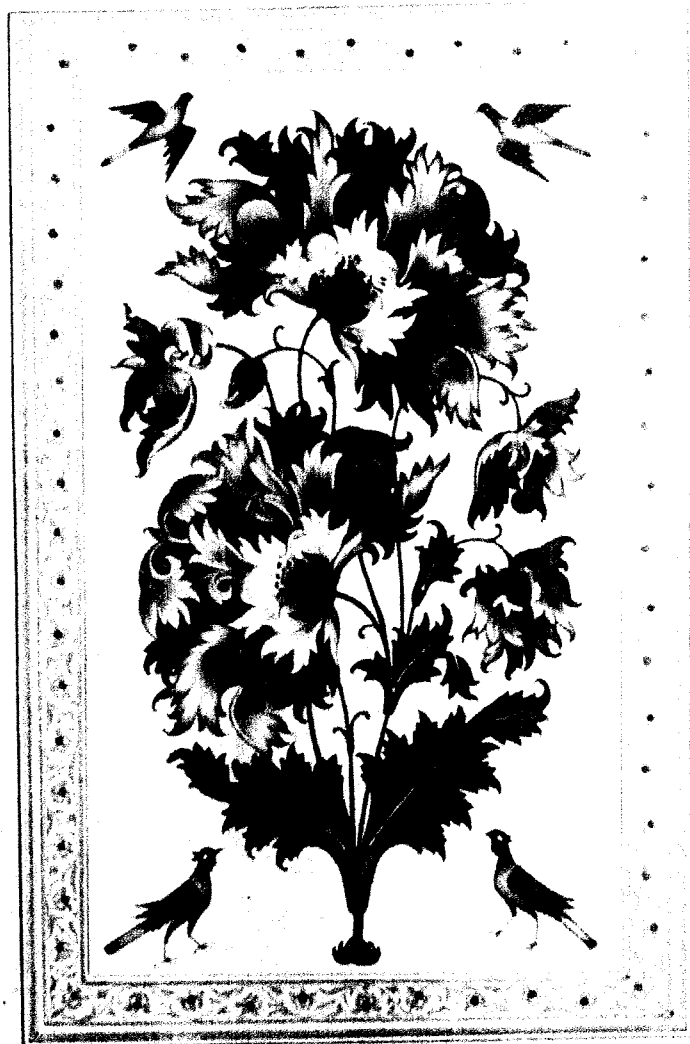


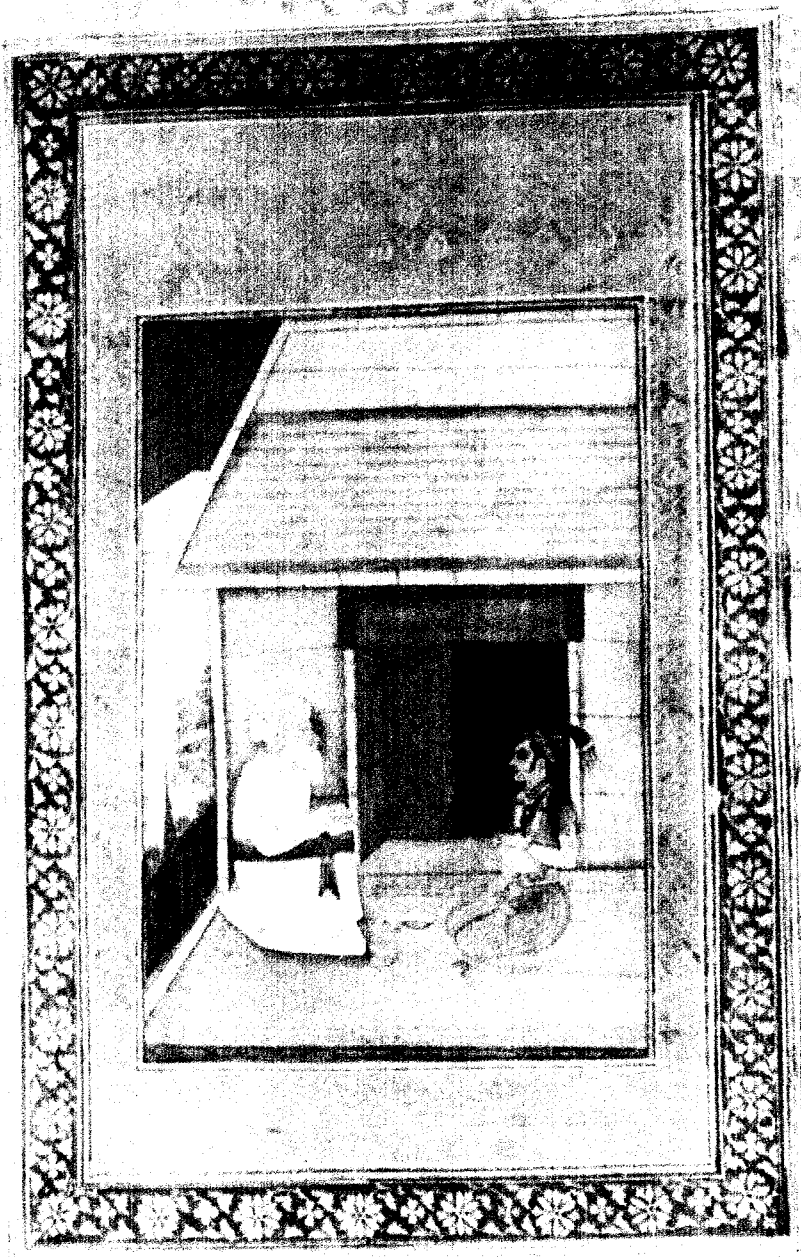




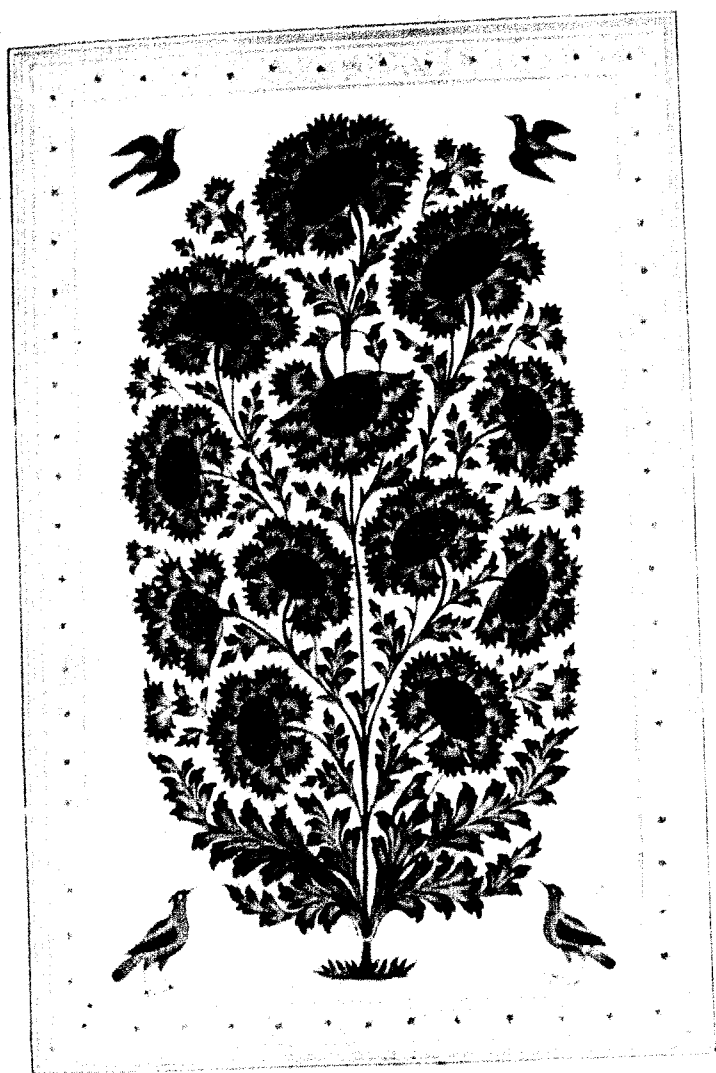


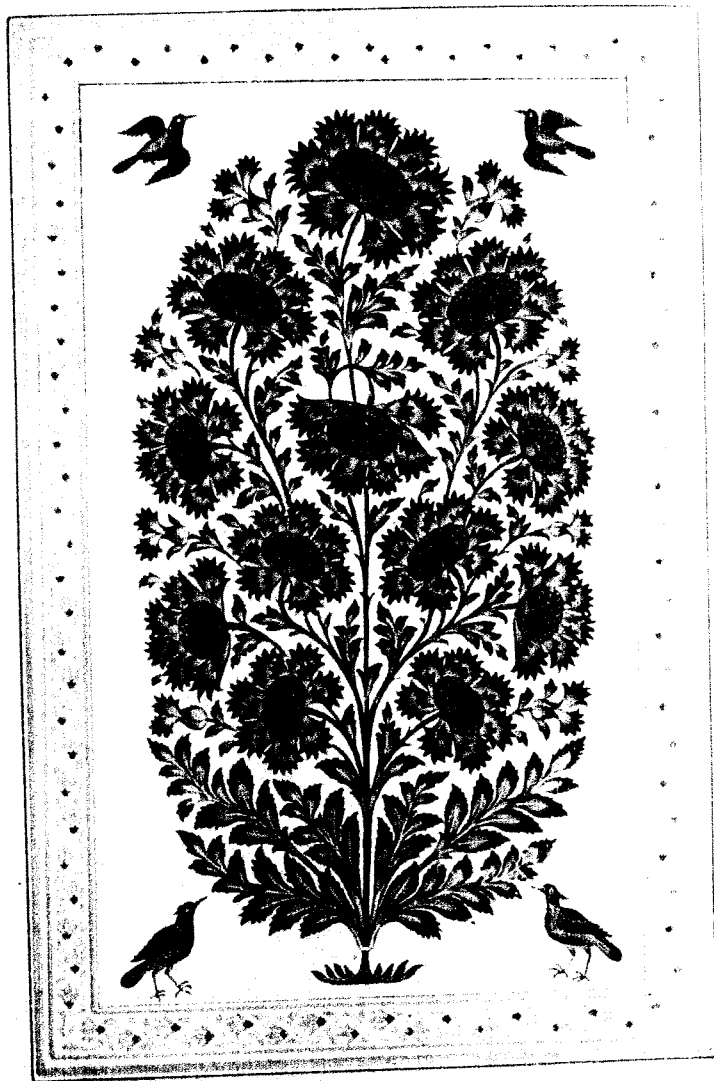






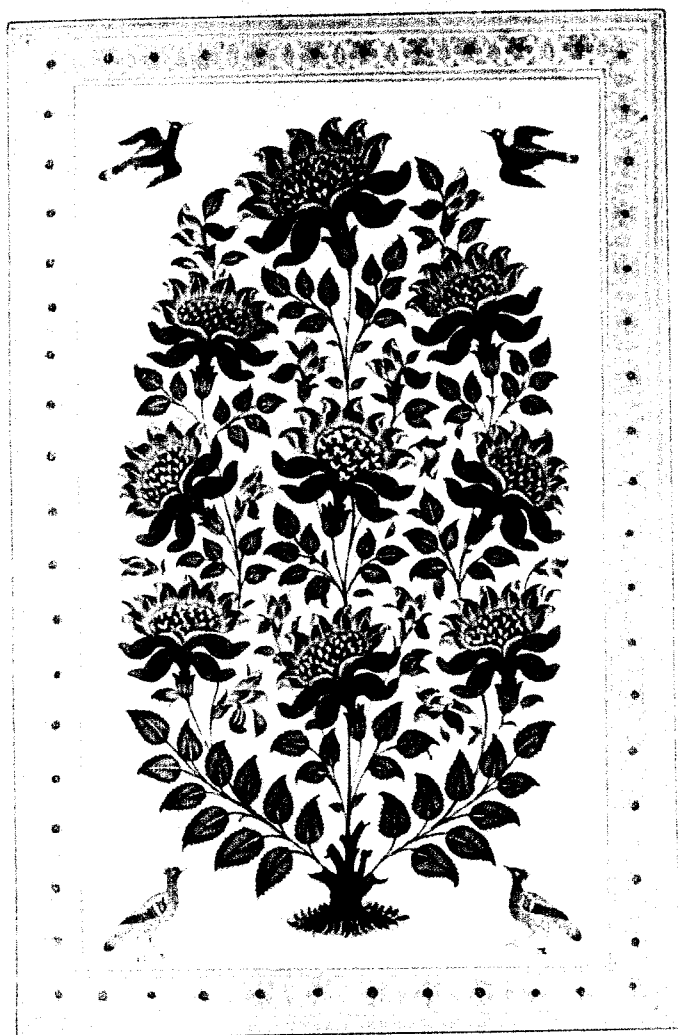


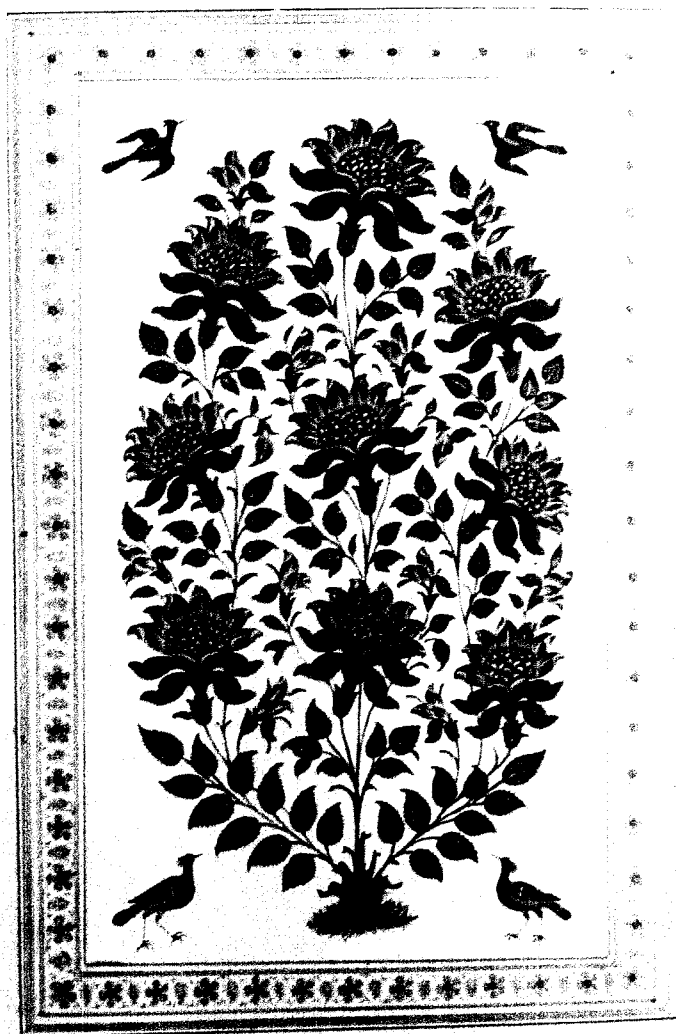






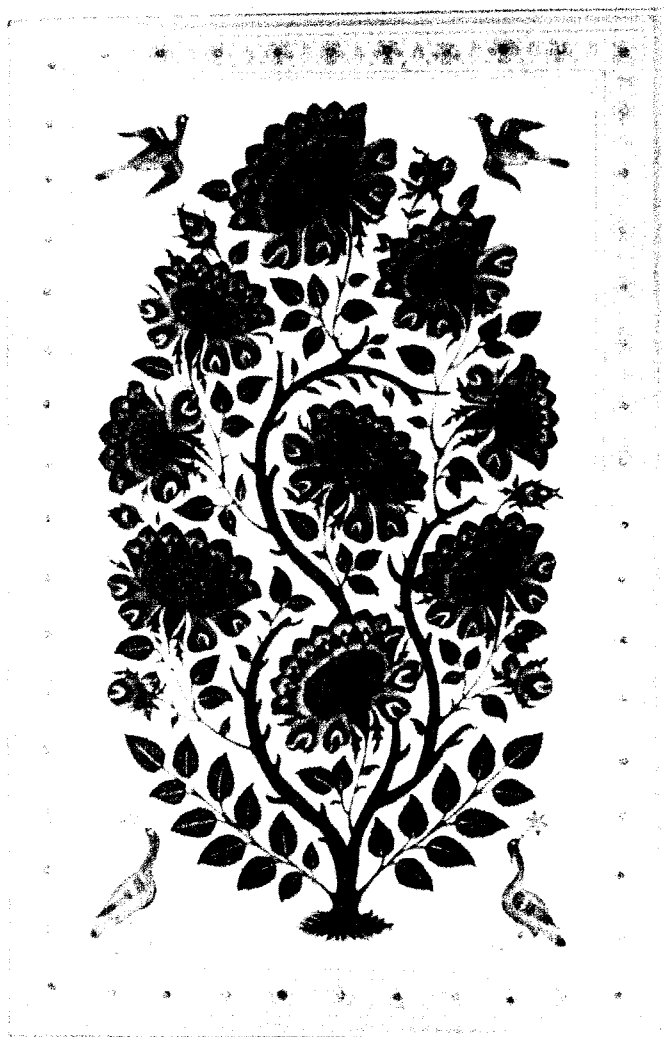


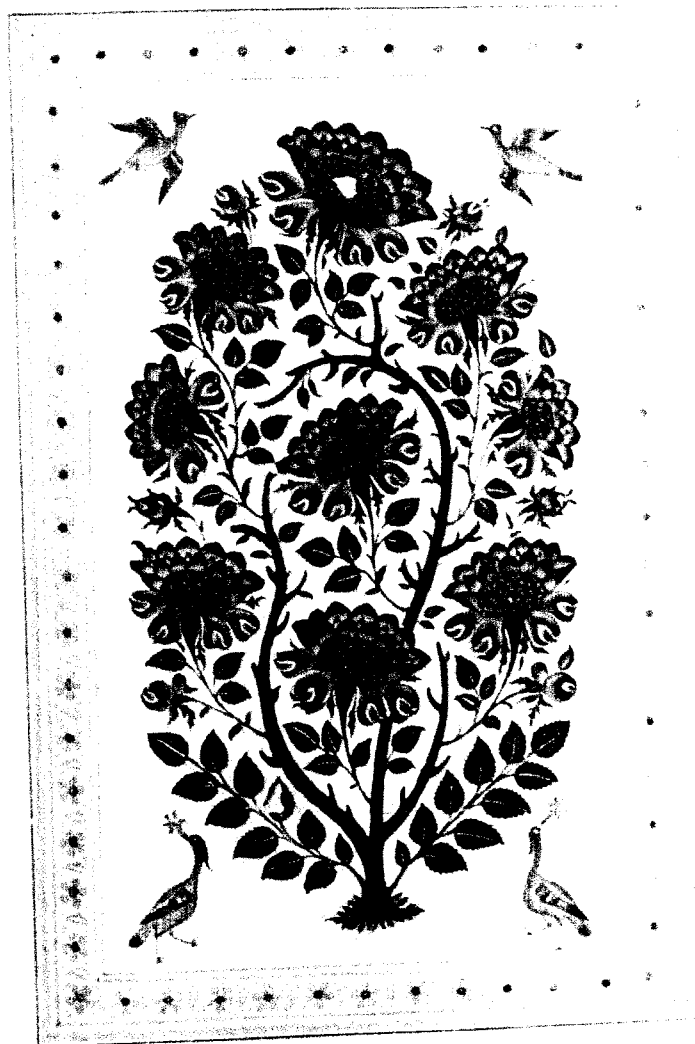








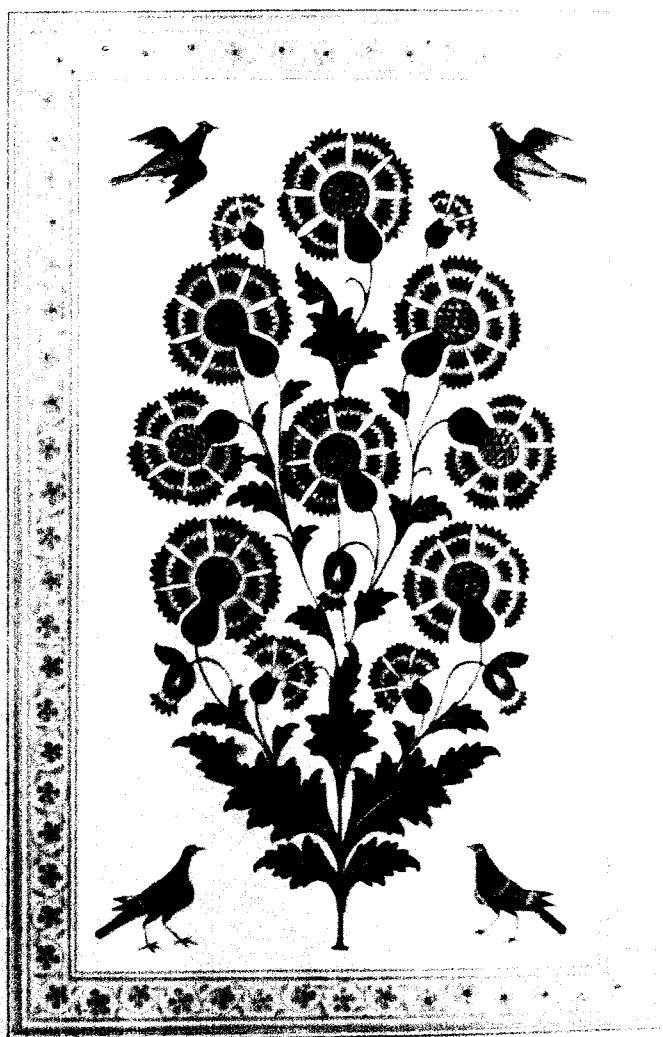




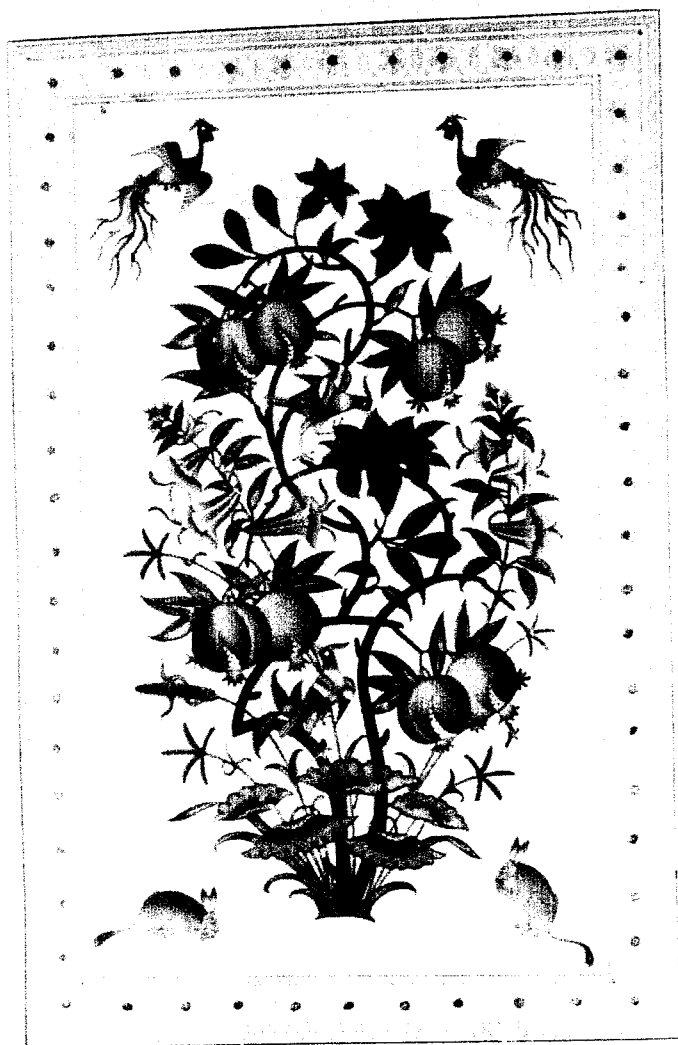


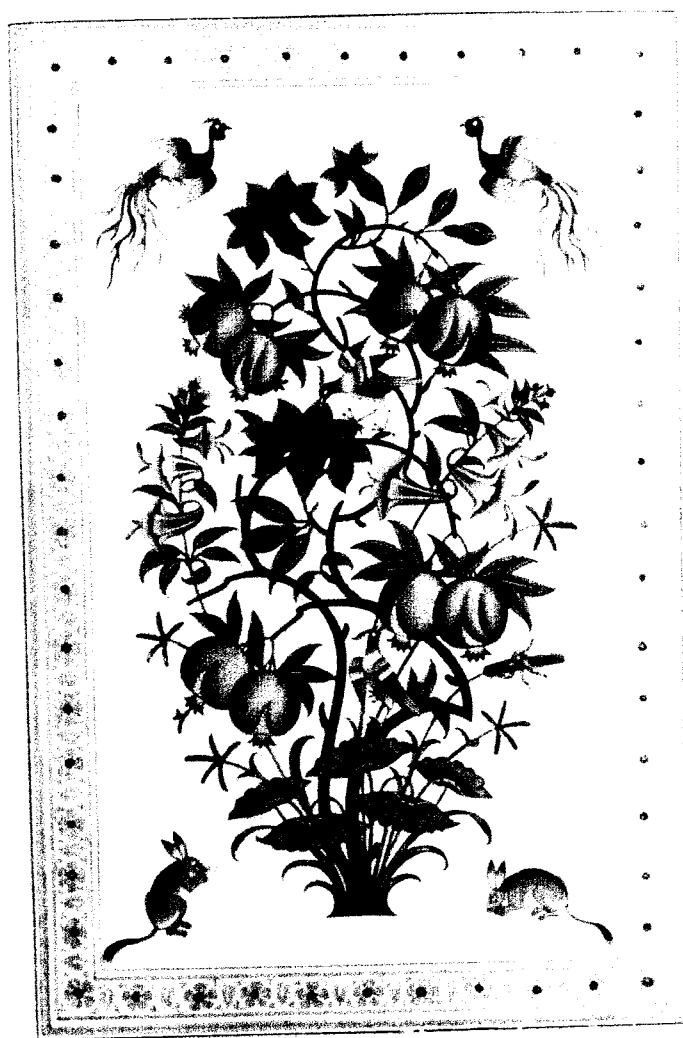




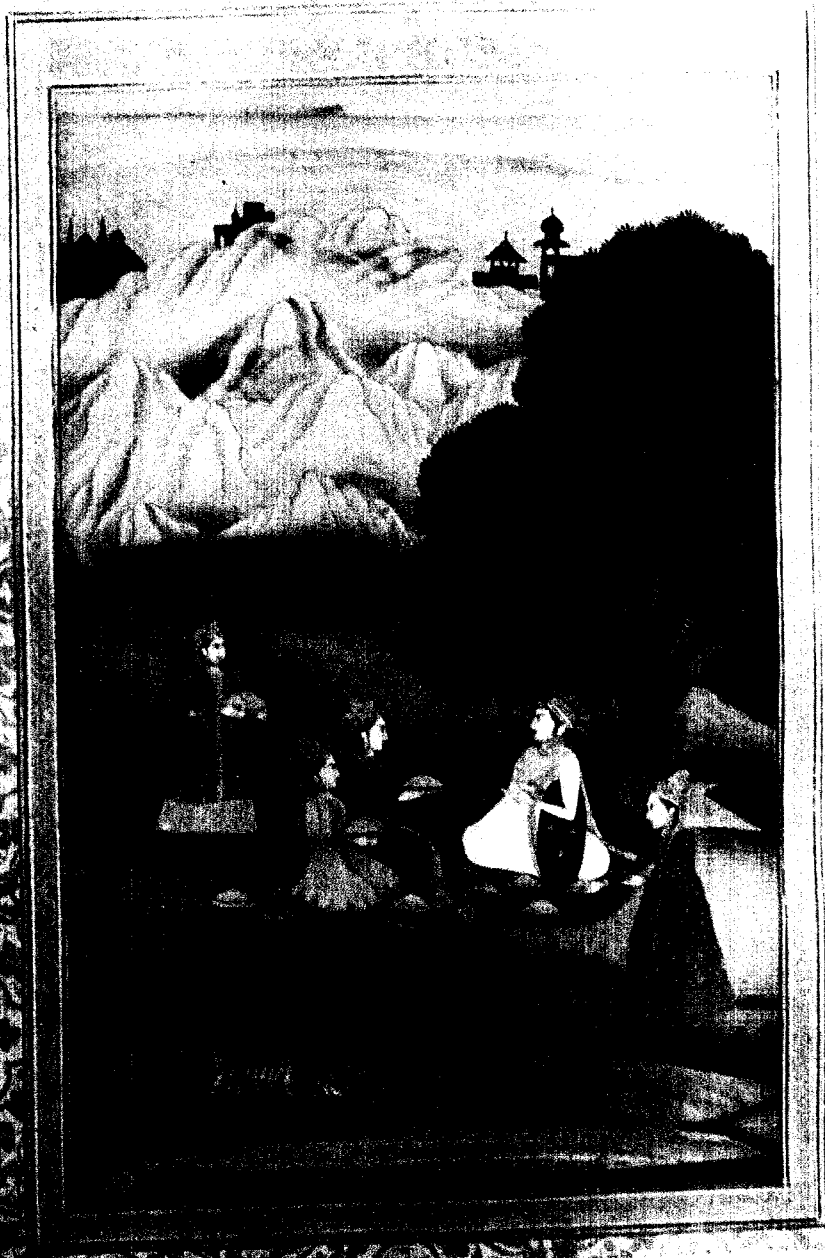




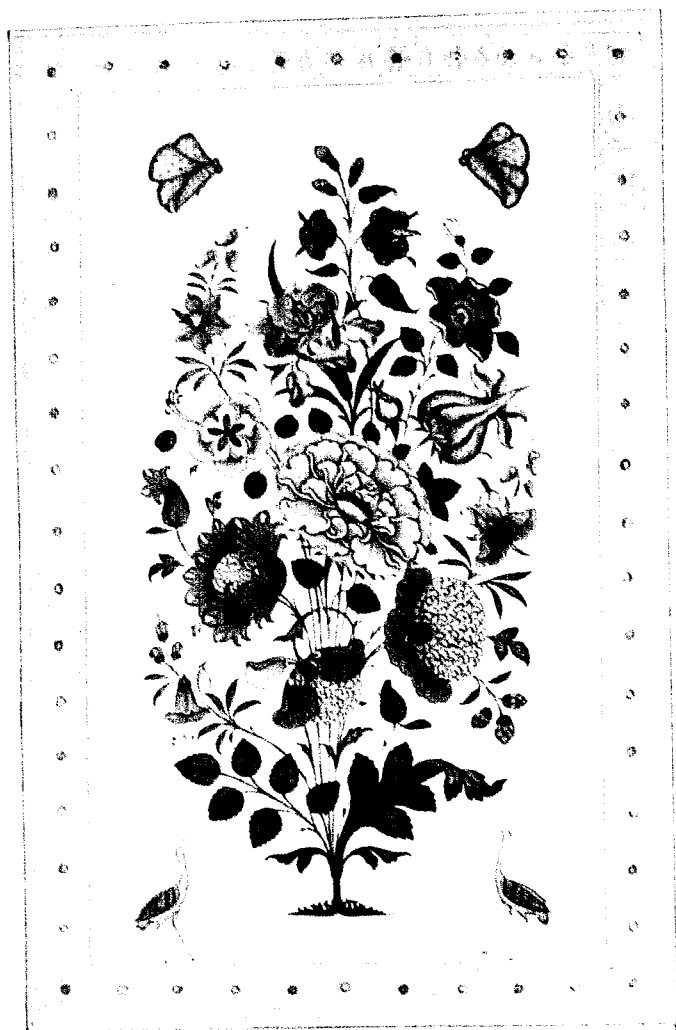


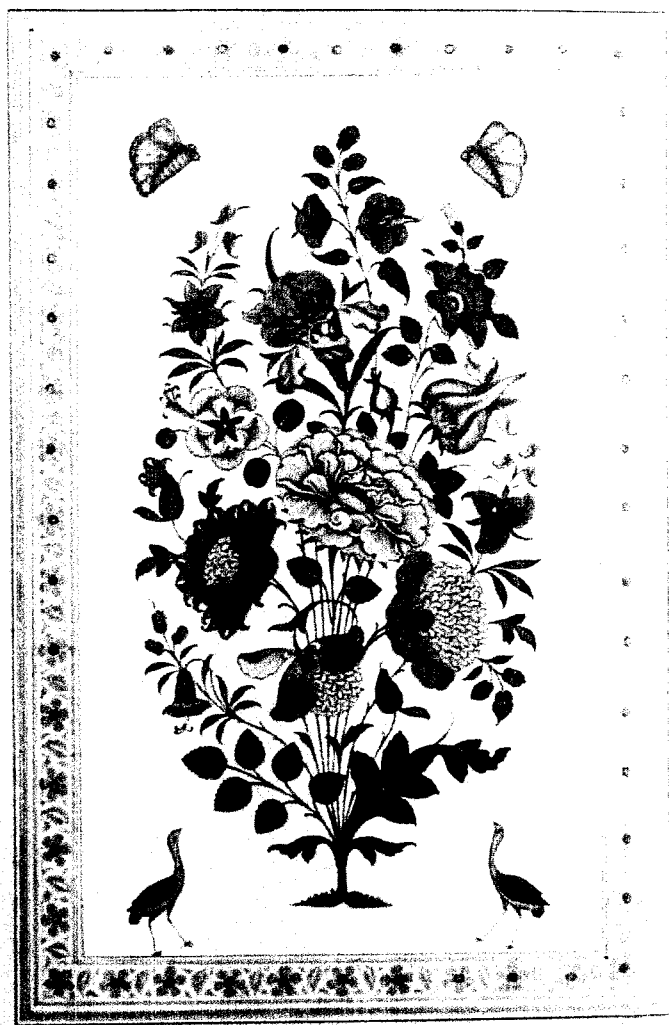


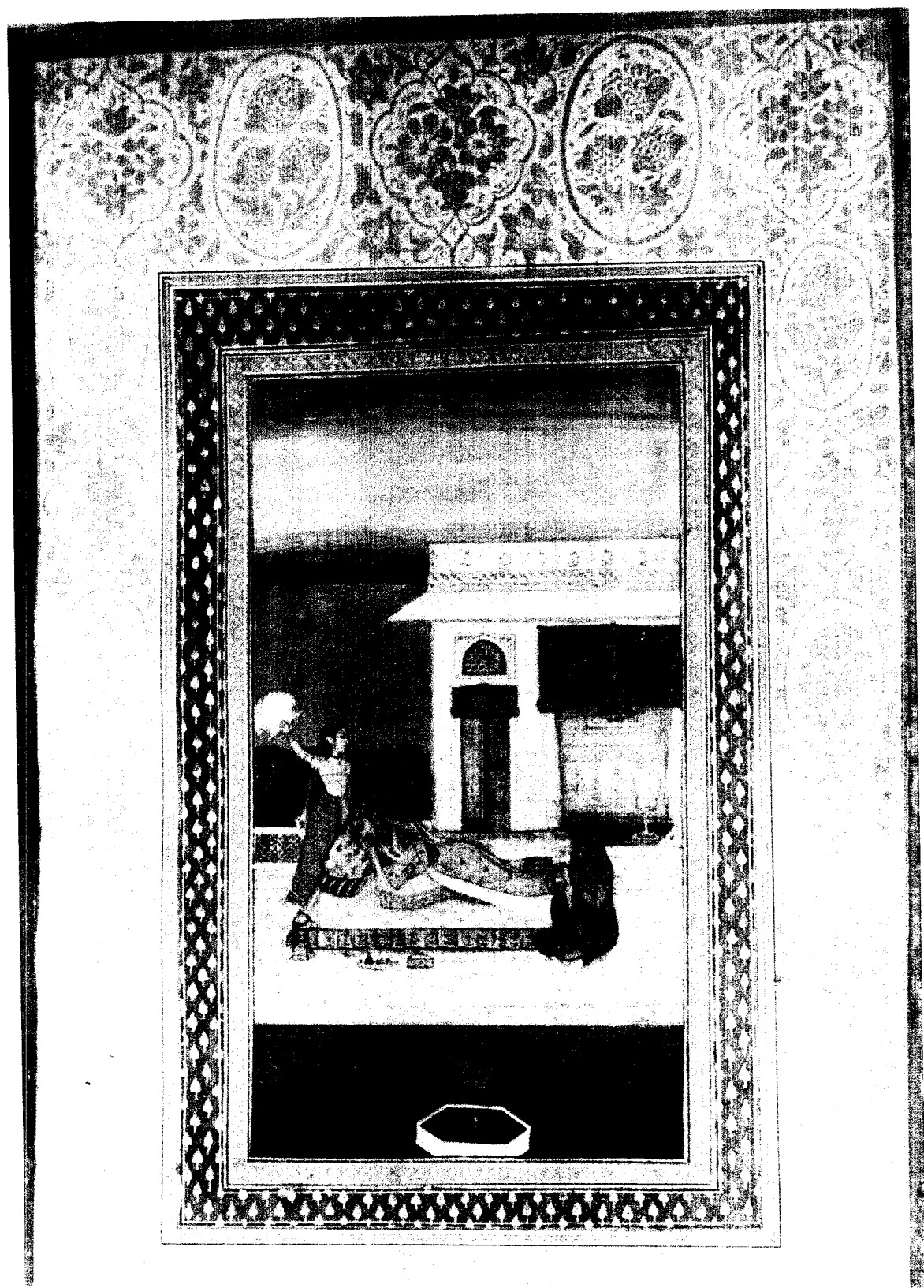




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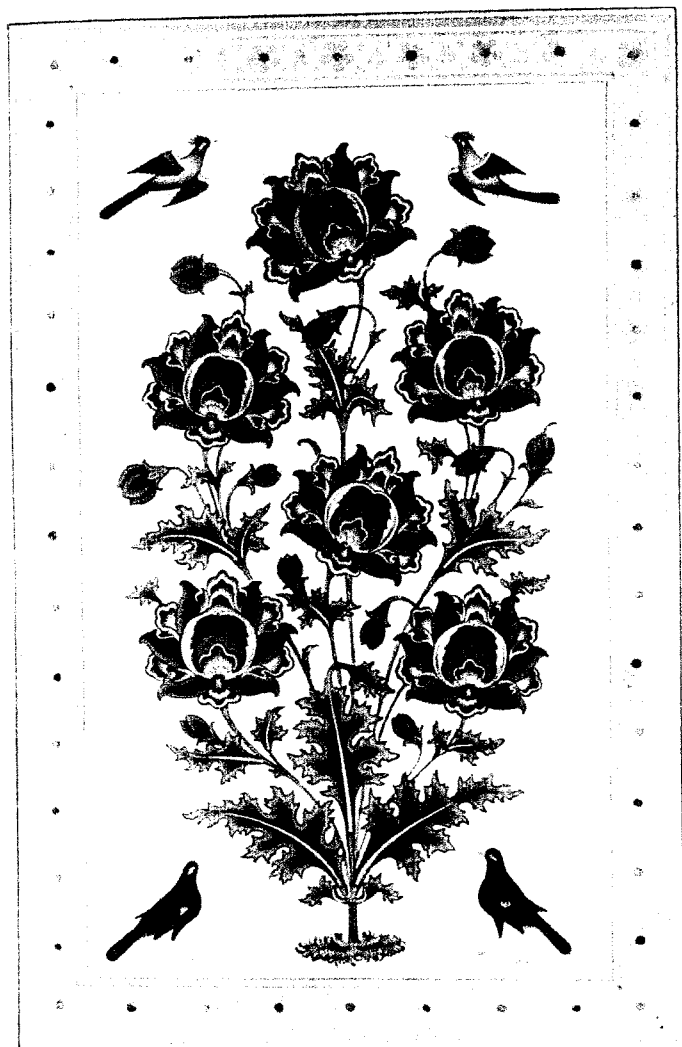








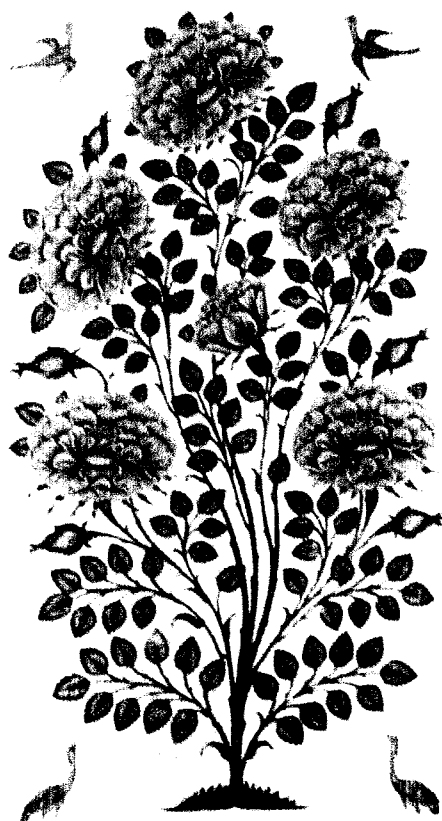
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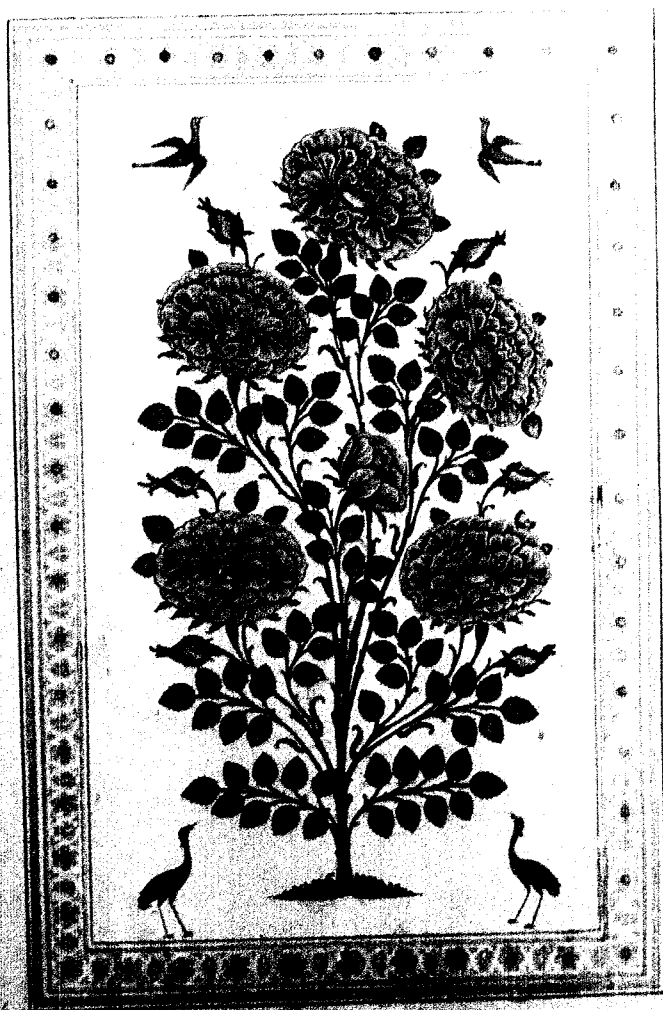


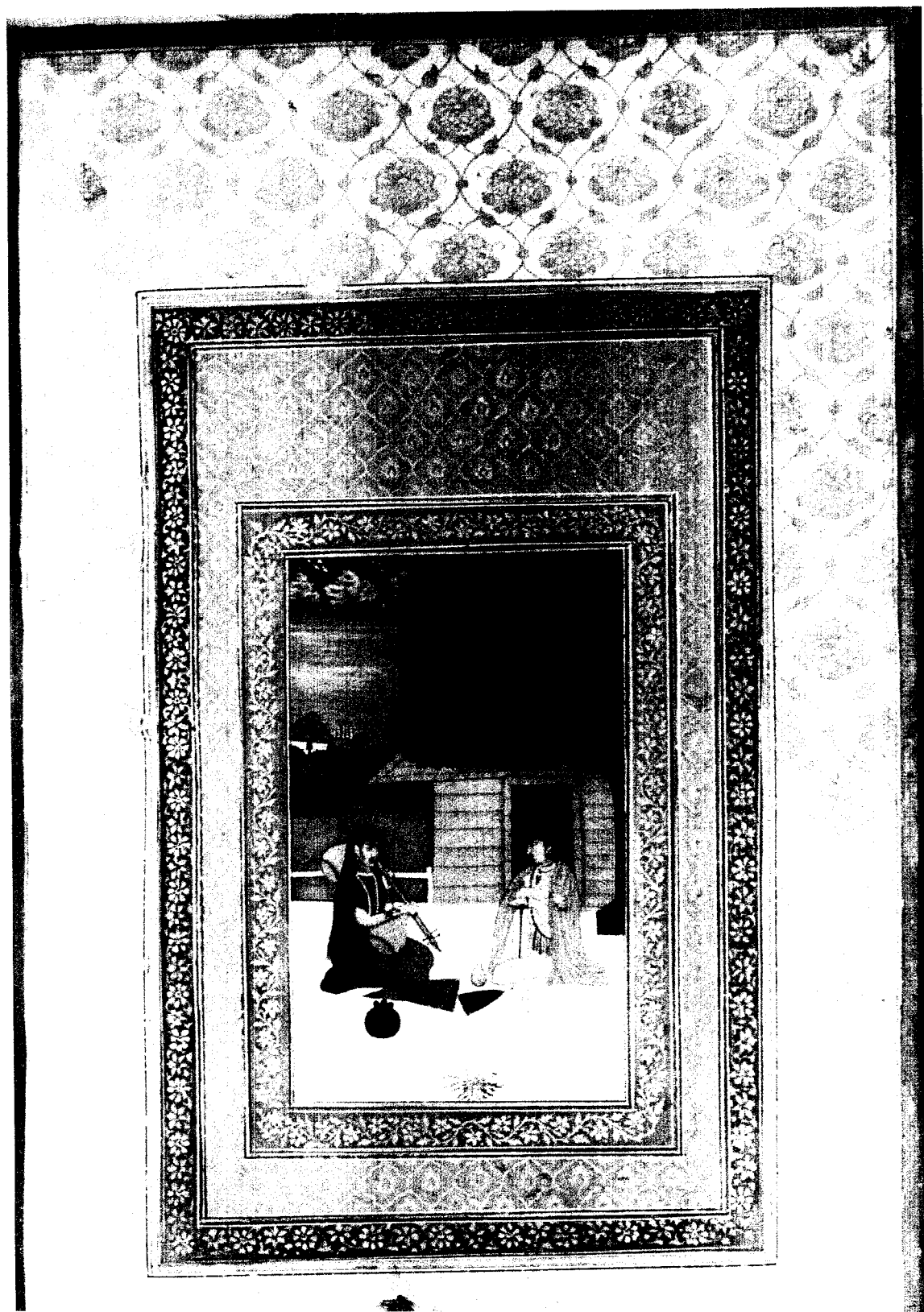




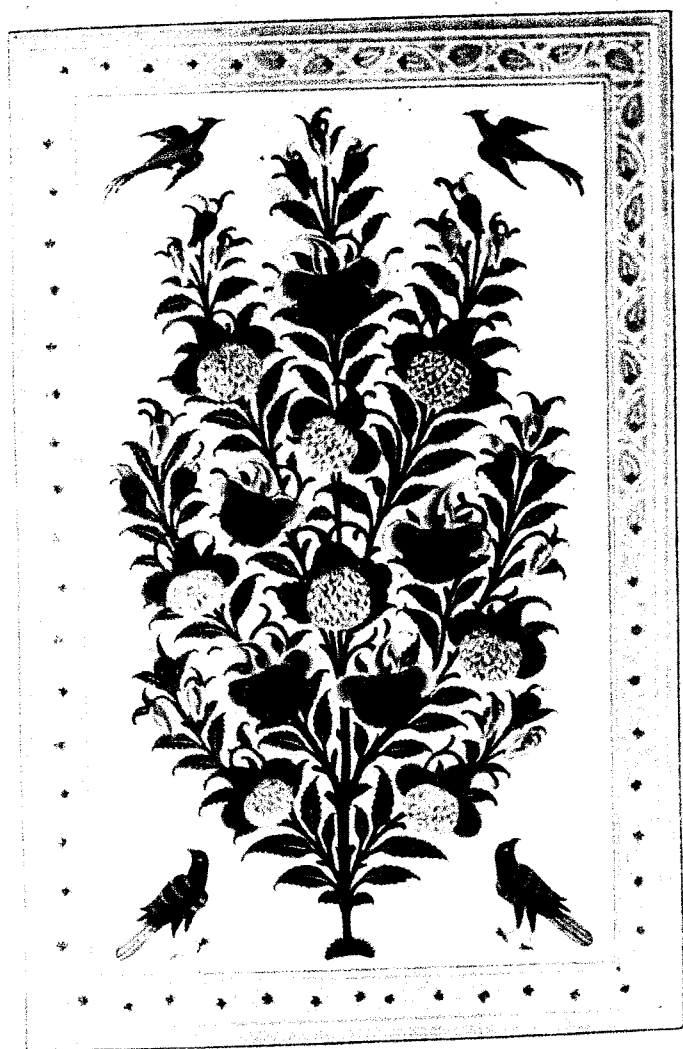


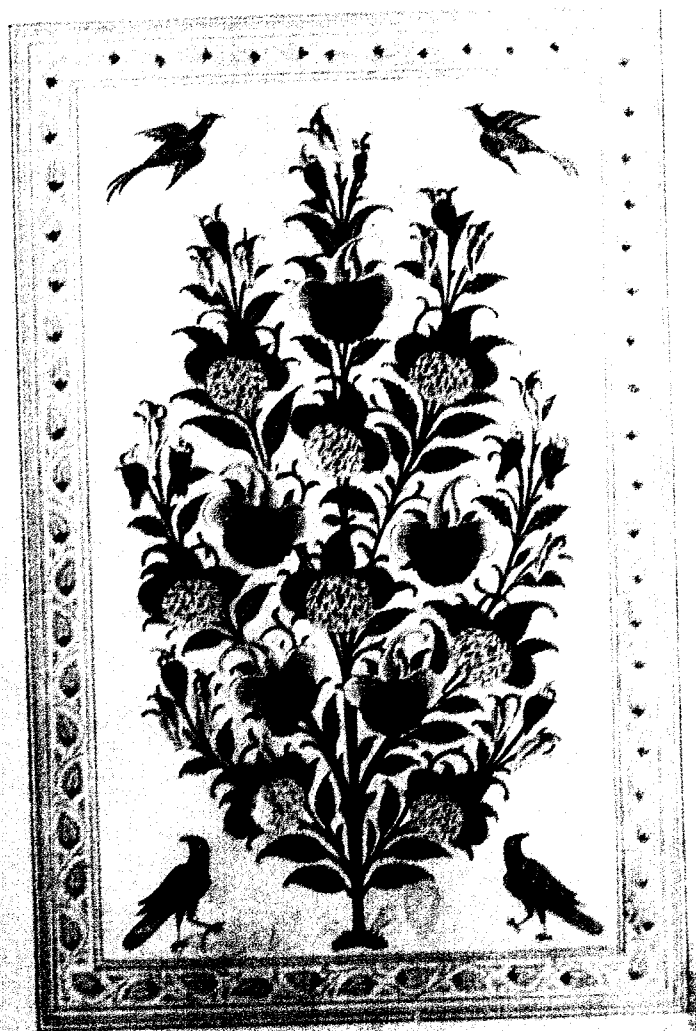


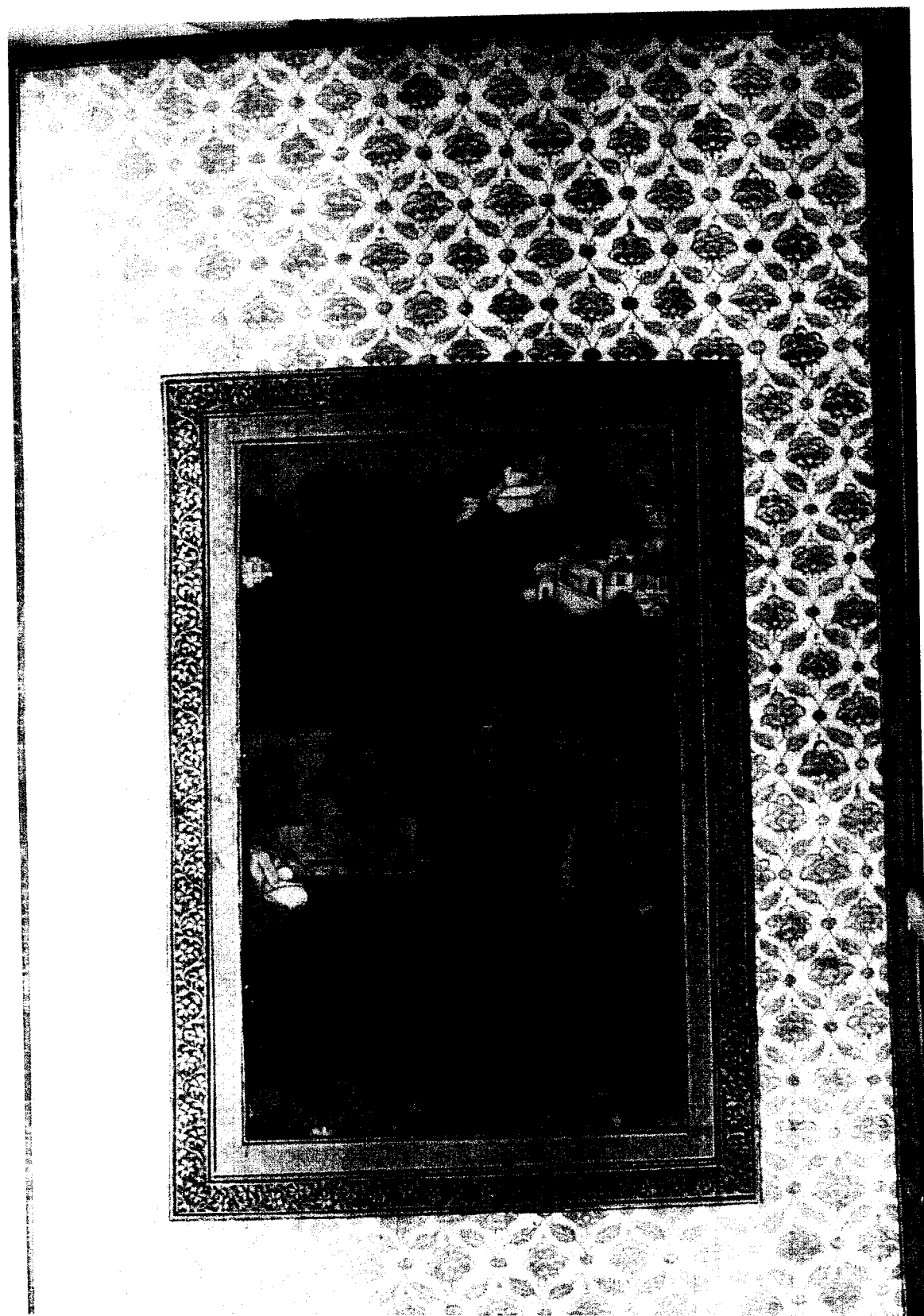




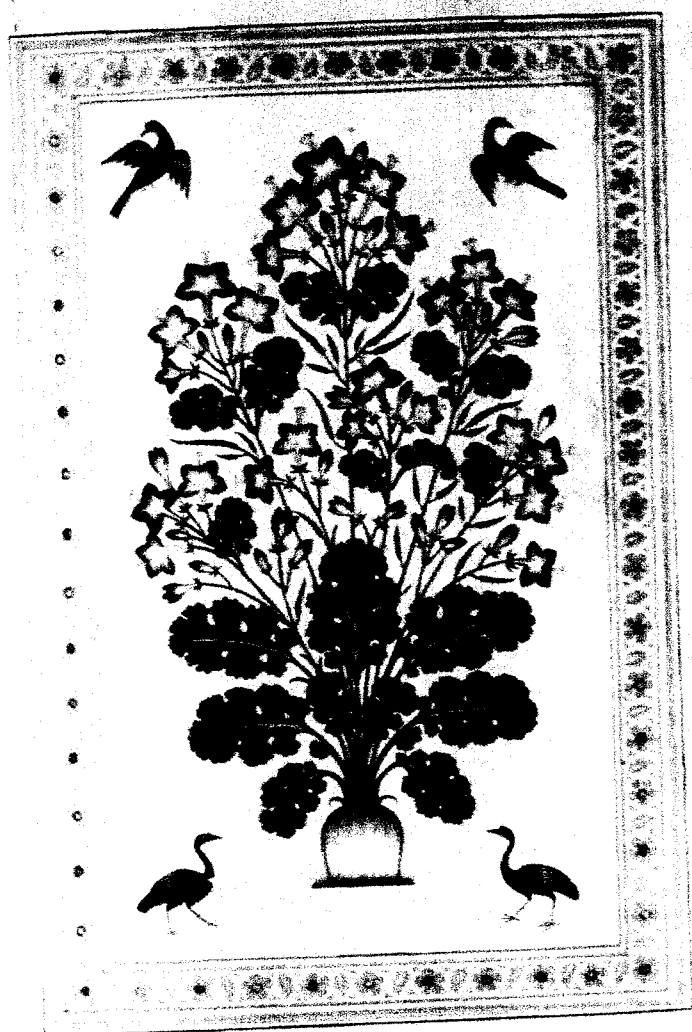


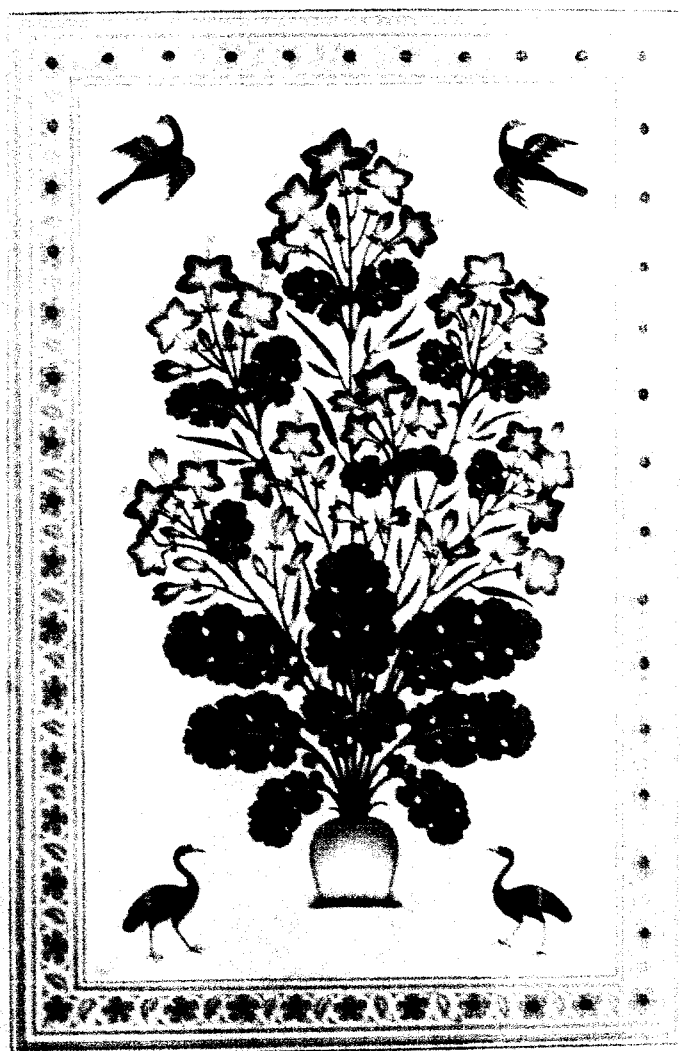




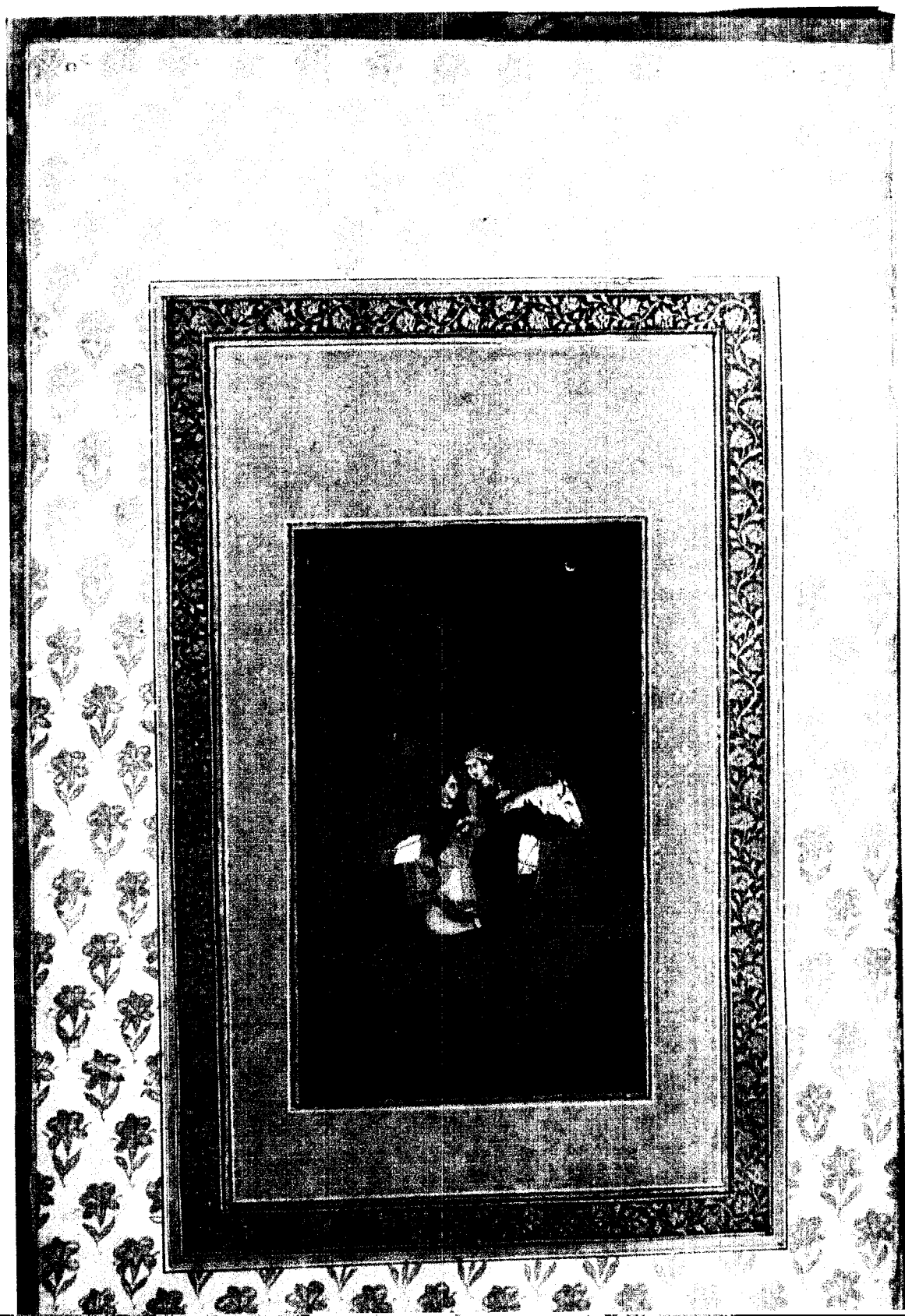


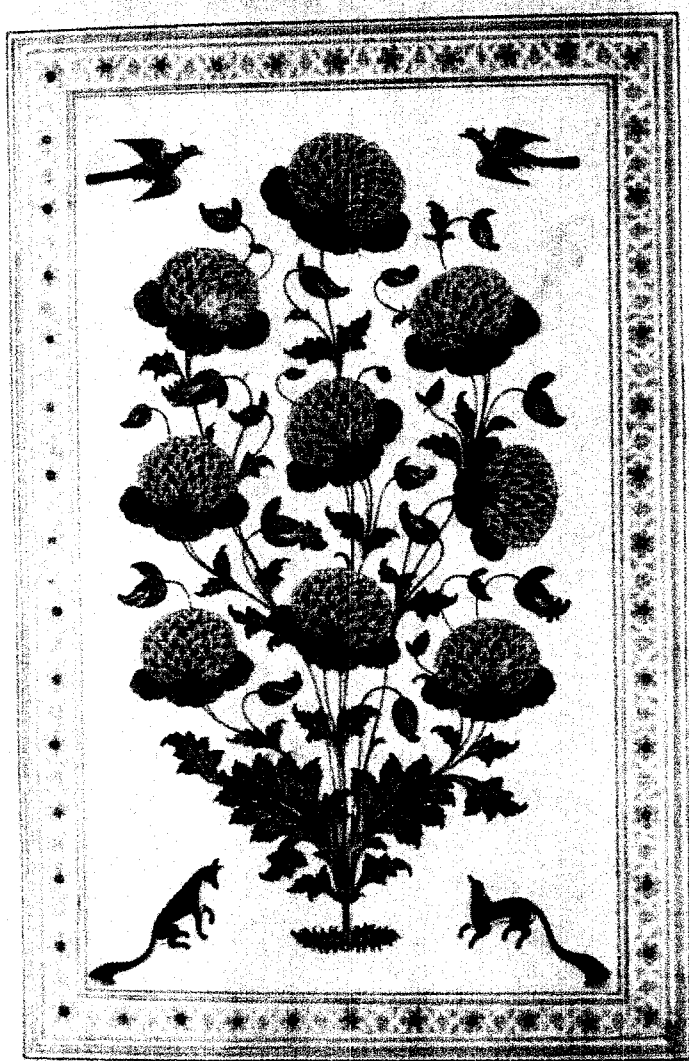








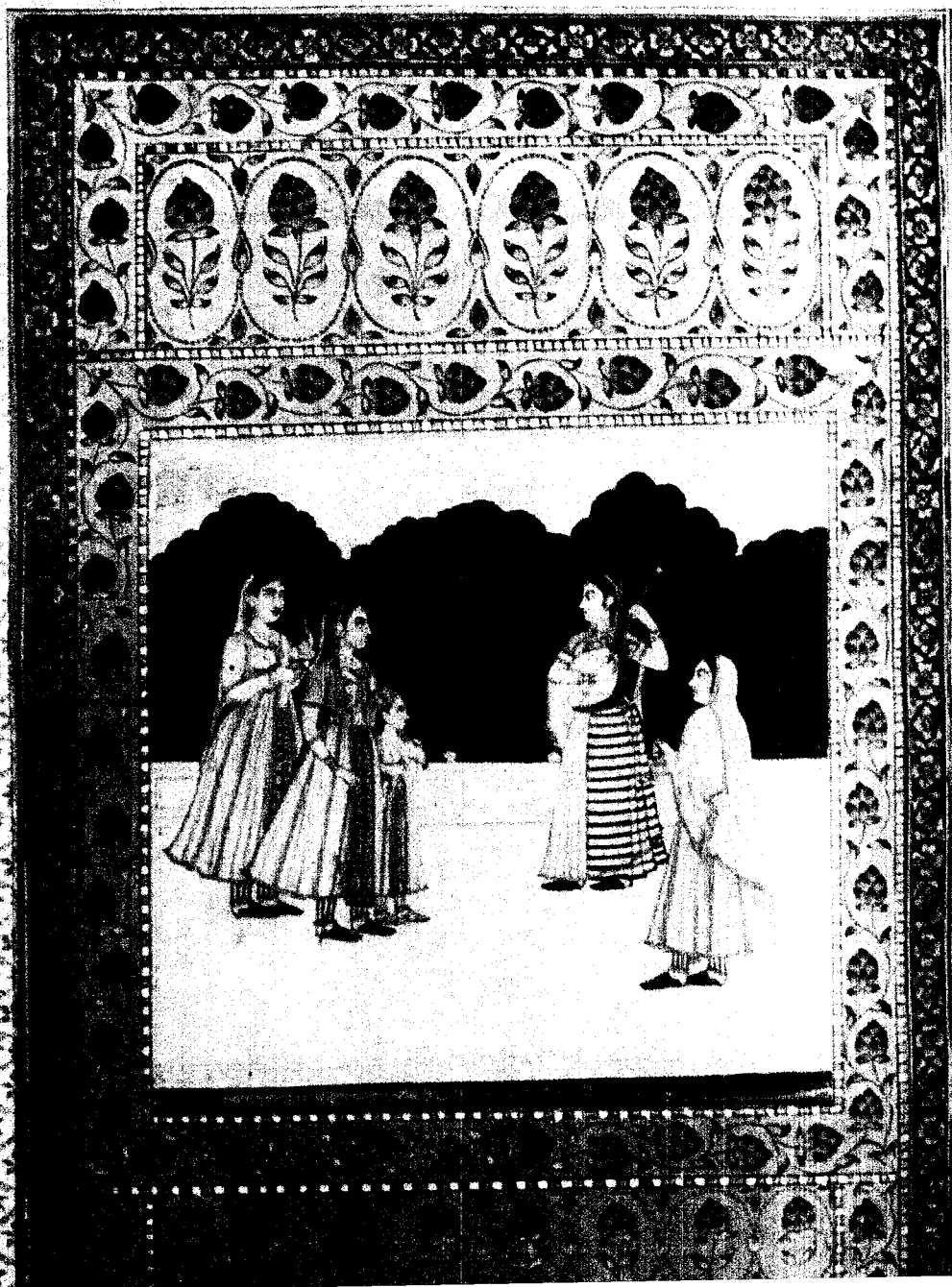


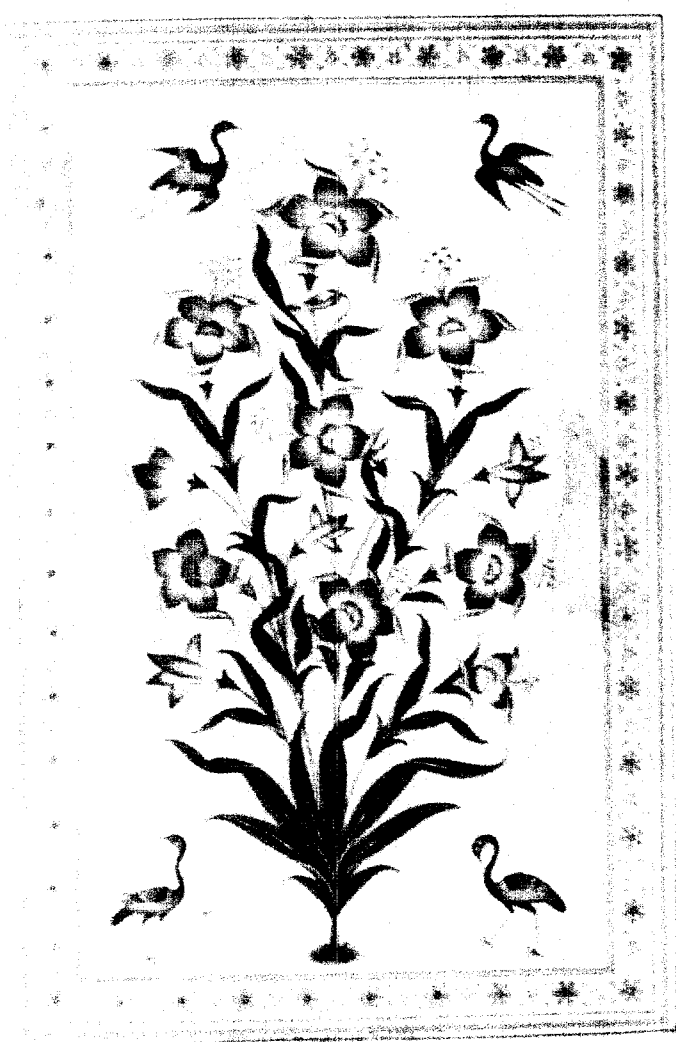


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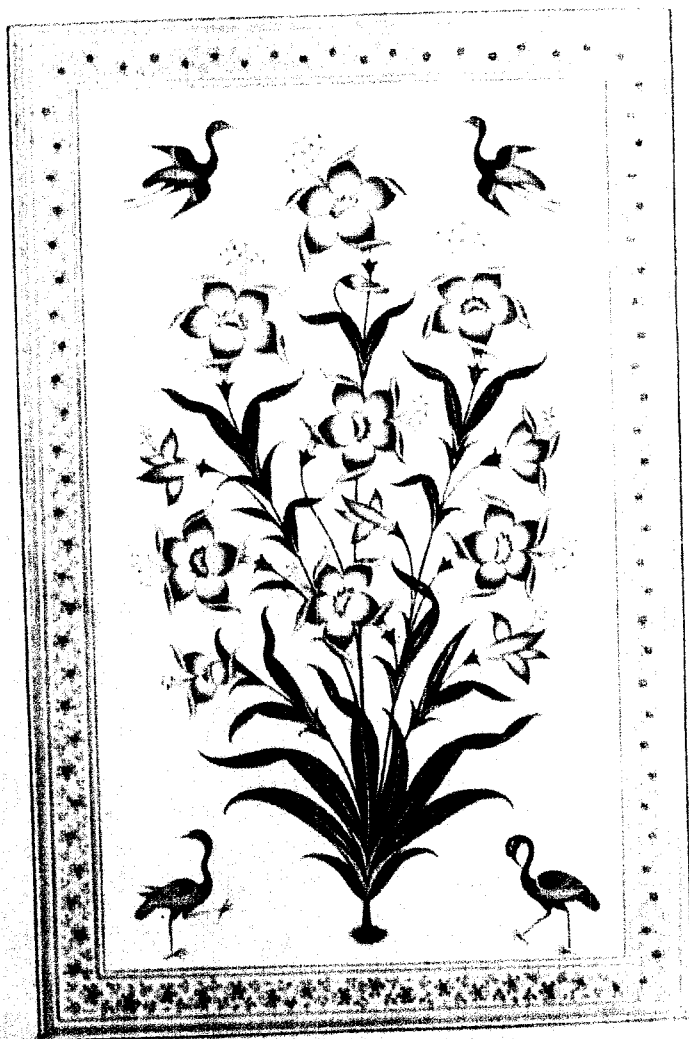








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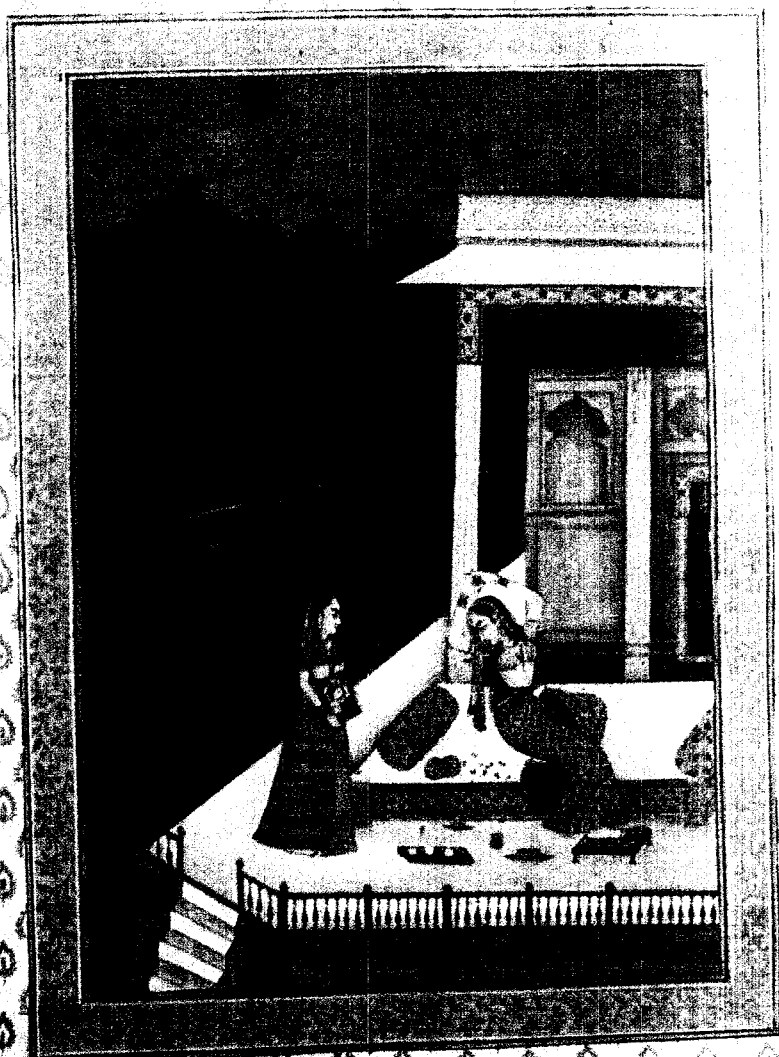


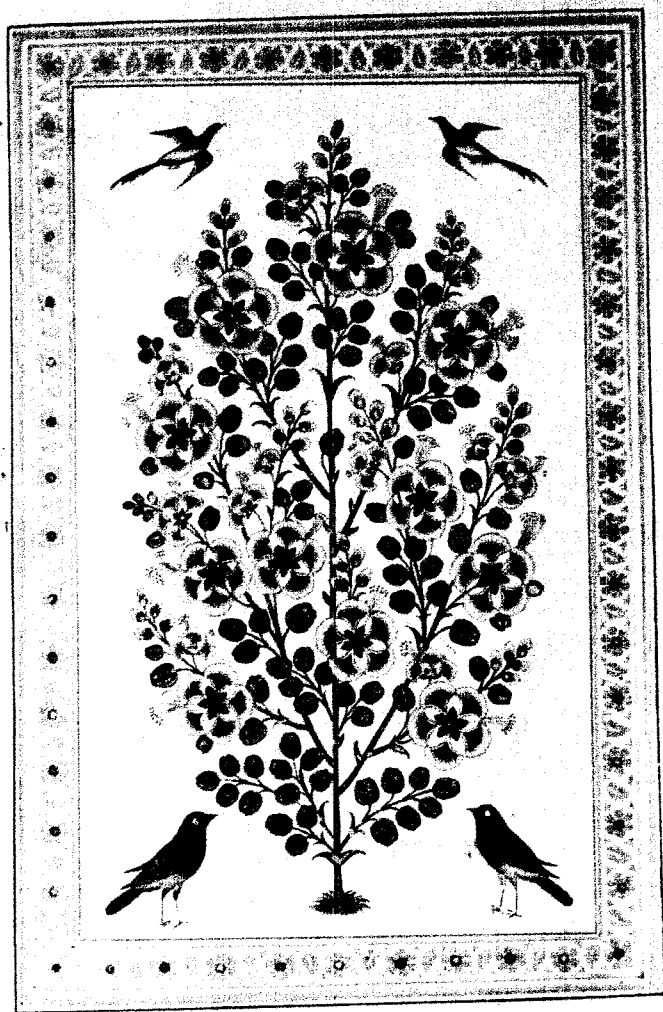


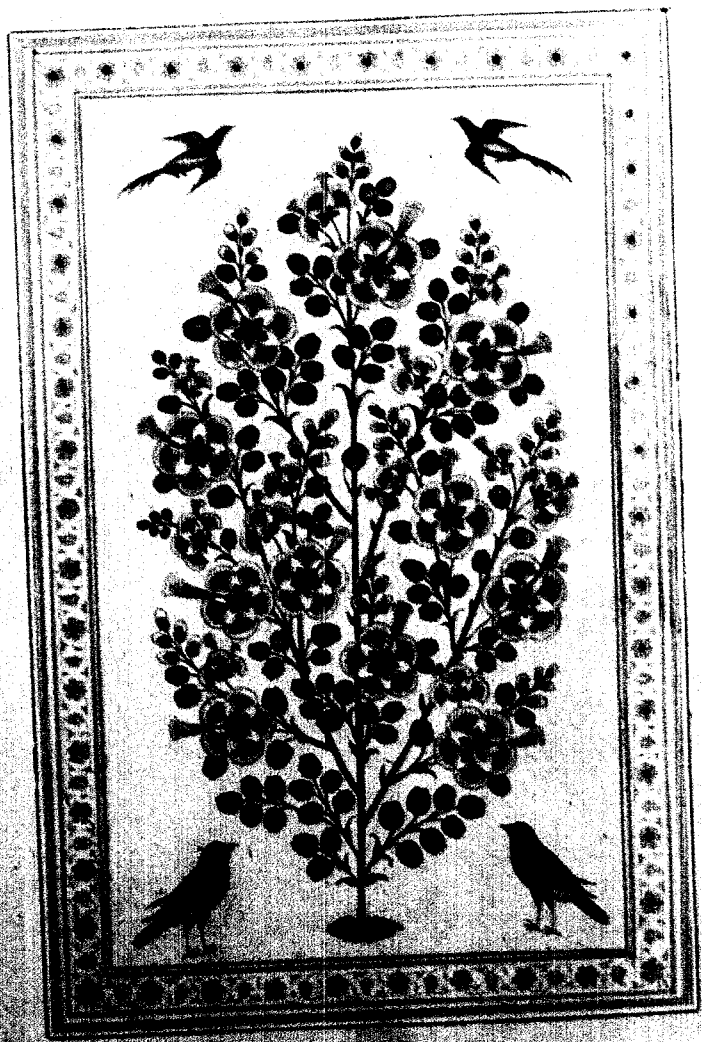












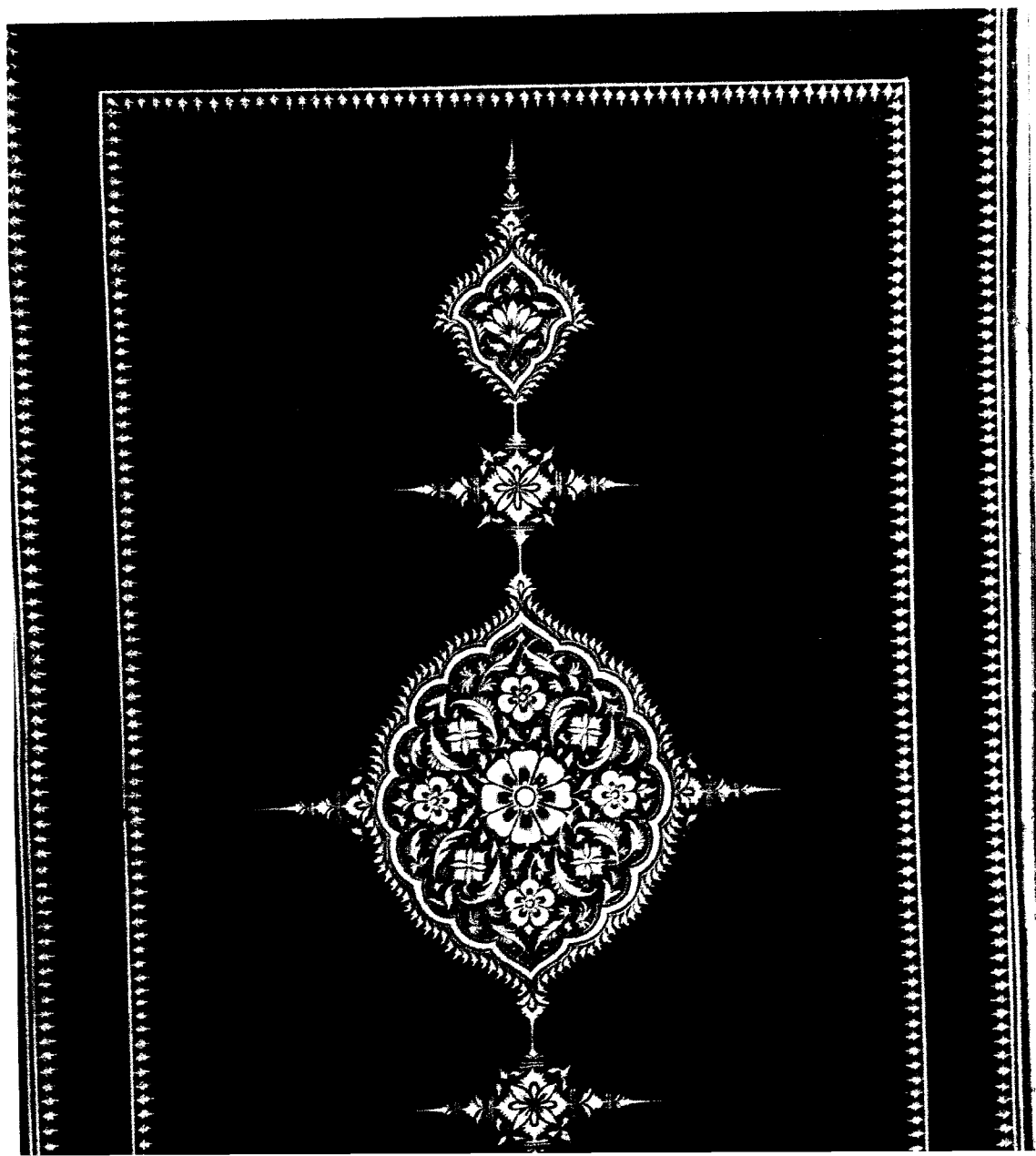






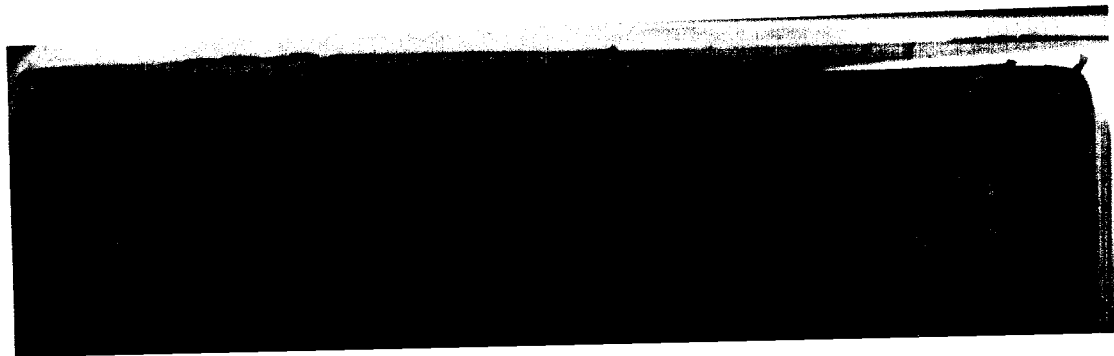






تاریخ فارس ۱۲۸۱





Appendix B

Appendix B

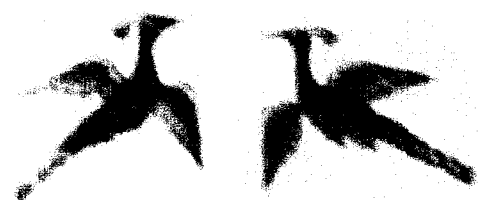
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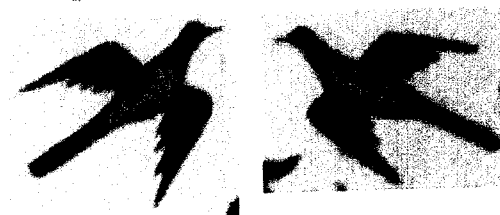
Figure 2



Design II: Figure 5



Figure 6



Design III: Figure 9



Figure 10



Design IV: Figure 13

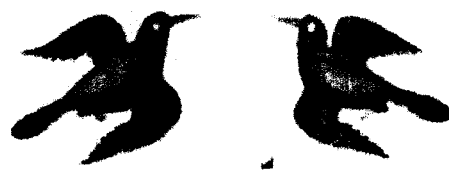


Figure 14



Design V: Figure 17



Figure 18

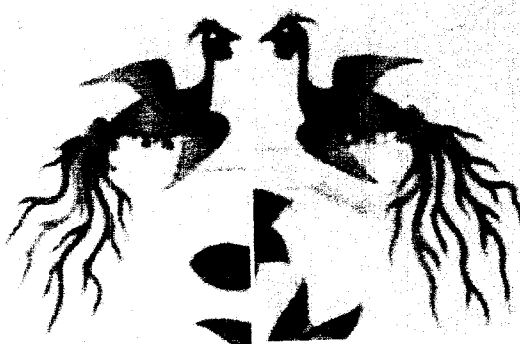




Design VII: Figure 25



Figure 26



Design VIII: Figure 29

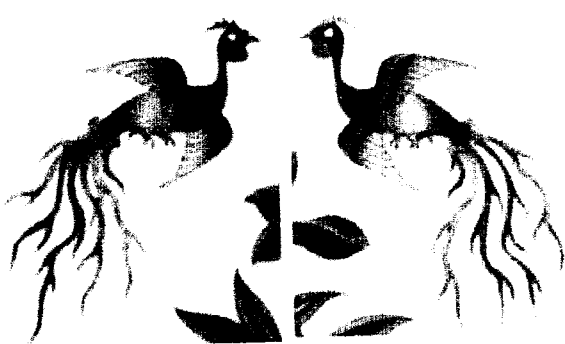
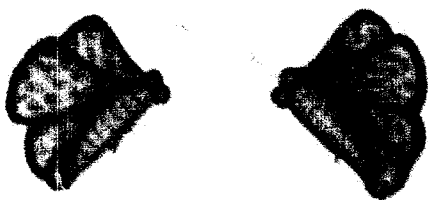


Figure 30



Design IX: Figure 33

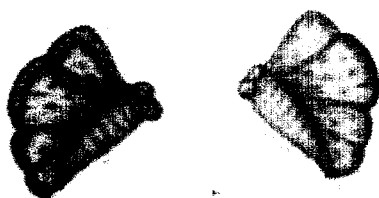


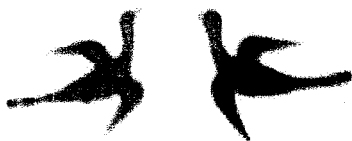
Figure 34



Design X: Figure 37



Figure 38



Design XI: Figure 41



Figure 42





Design XIII: Figure 49



Figure 50



Design XIV: Figure 53



Figure 54



Design XV: Figure 57

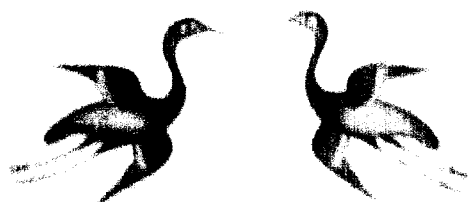


Figure 58



Design XVI: Figure 61



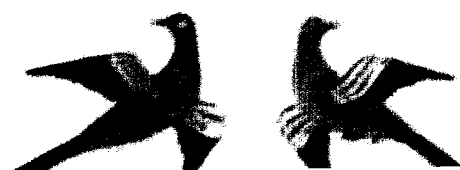
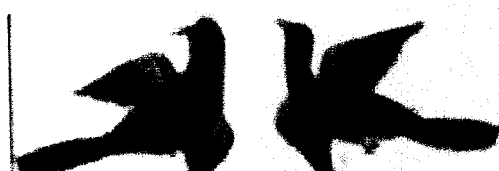
Figure 62



Design XVII: Figure 65



Figure 66





Design I: Figure 1

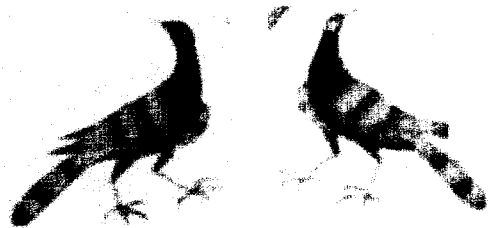


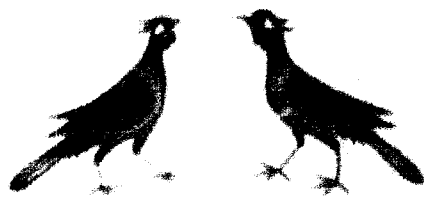
Figure 2



Design II: Figure 5



Figure 6



Design III: Figure 9

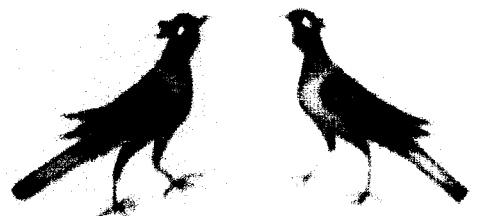
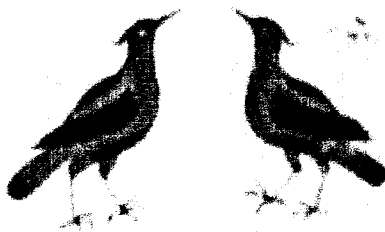


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Design IV: Figure 13

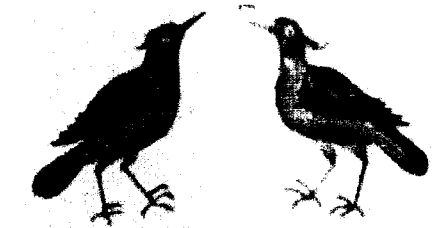
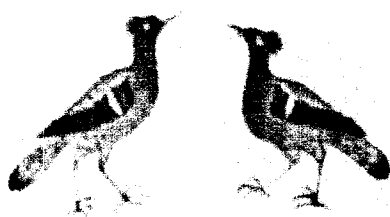


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Design V: Figure 17

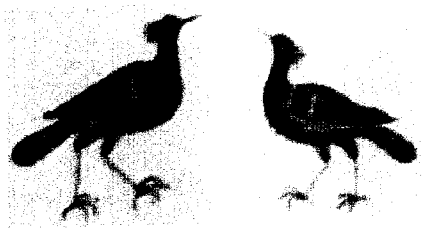
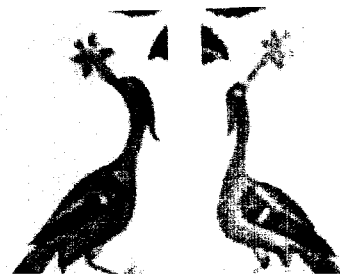
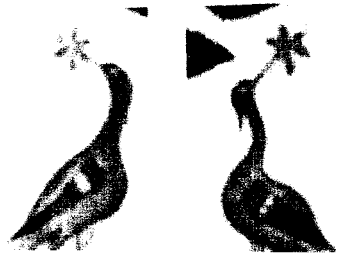
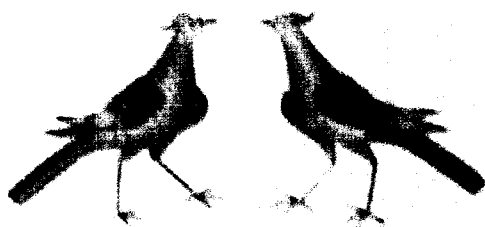


Figure 18





Design VII: Figure 25

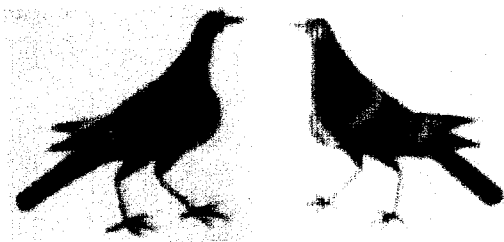
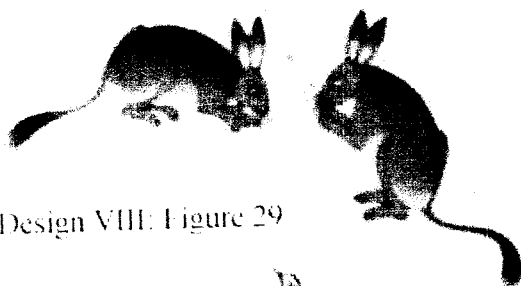


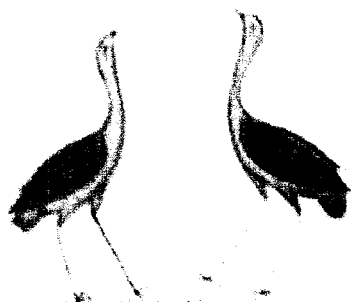
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Design VIII: Figure 29



Figure 30



Design IX: Figure 33

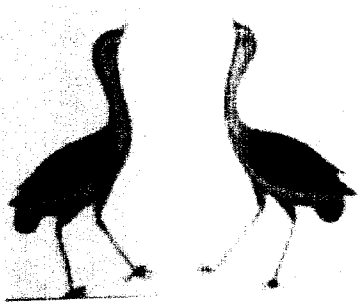
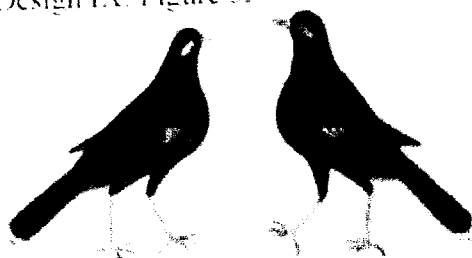


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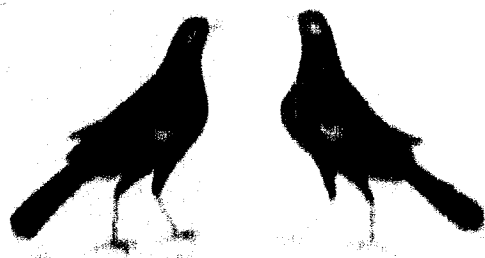
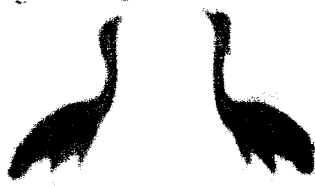


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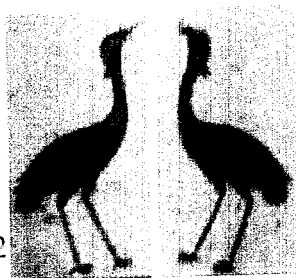
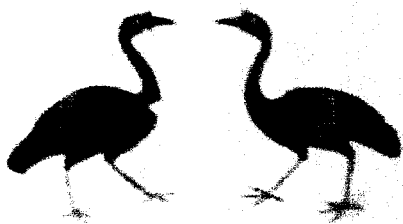


Figure 42





Design XIII: Figure 49

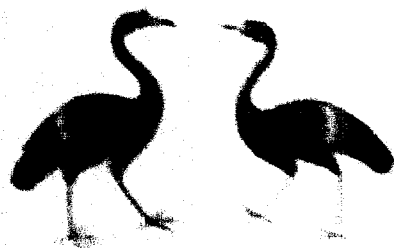
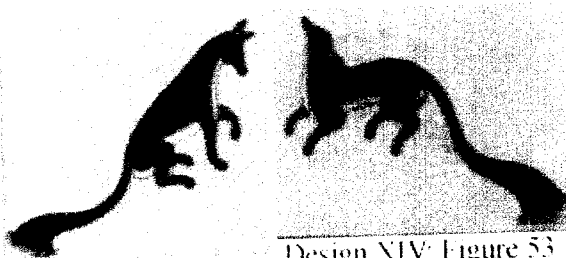


Figure 50



Design XIV: Figure 53

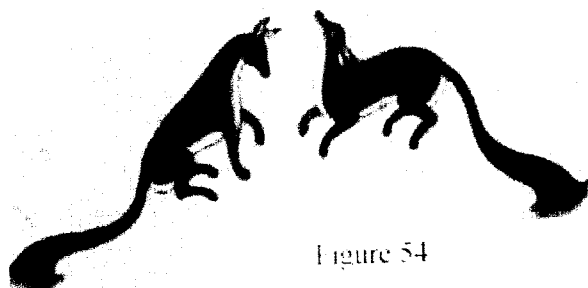


Figure 54



Design XV: Figure 57



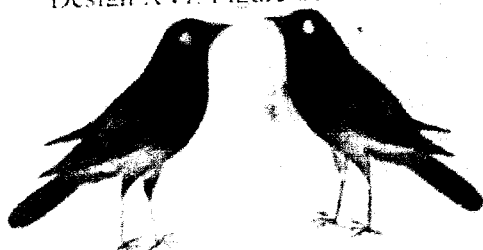
Figure 58



Design XVI: Figure 61



Figure 62



Design XVII: Figure 65

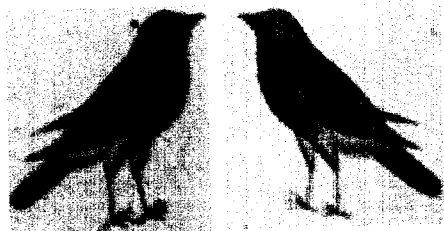
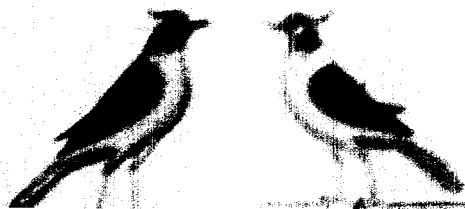


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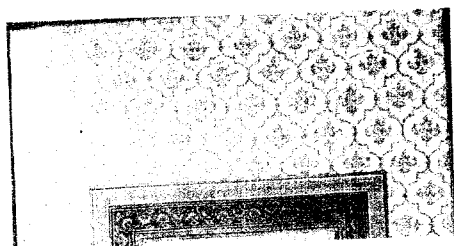


Fig. 3

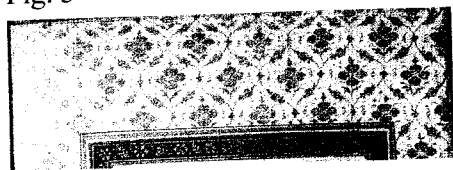


Fig. 7



Fig. 11

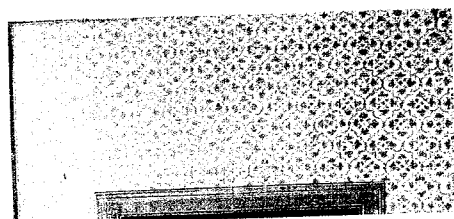


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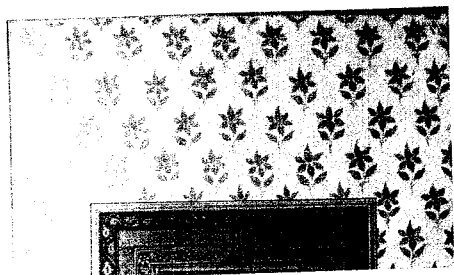


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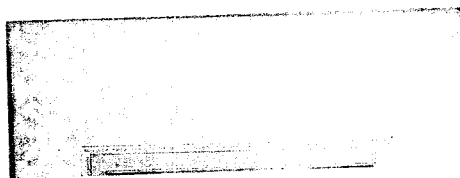
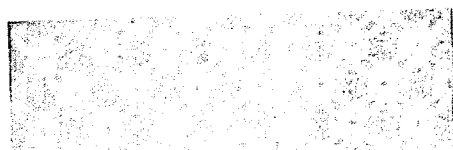


Fig. 4

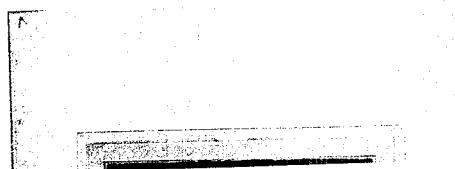


Fig. 8

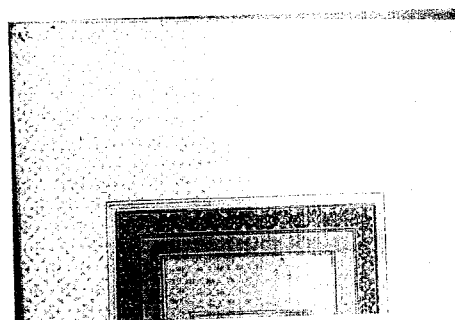


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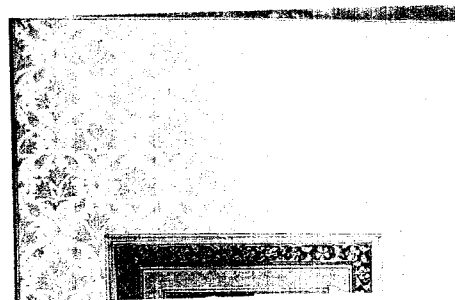


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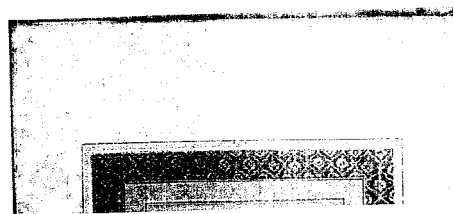
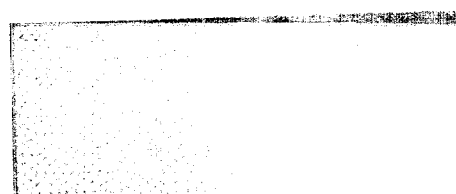


Fig. 20



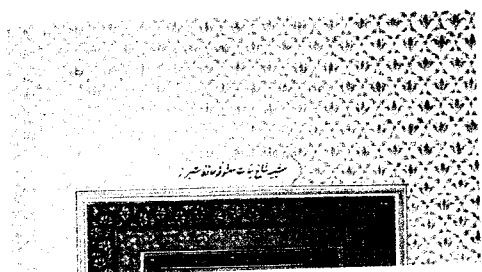


Fig. 27

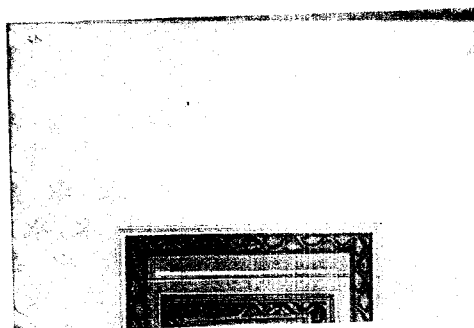


Fig. 28

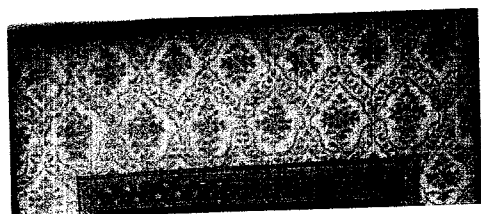


Fig. 31

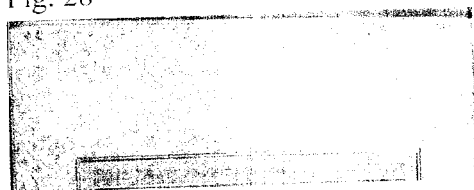


Fig. 32

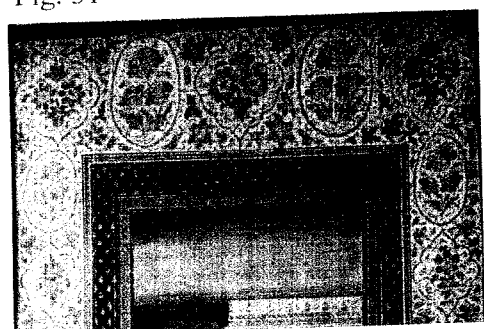


Fig. 35

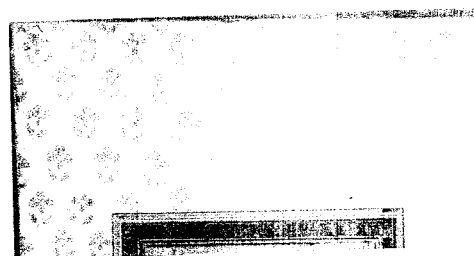


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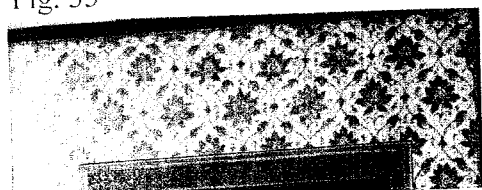


Fig. 39

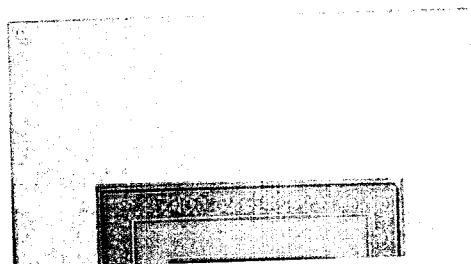


Fig. 40

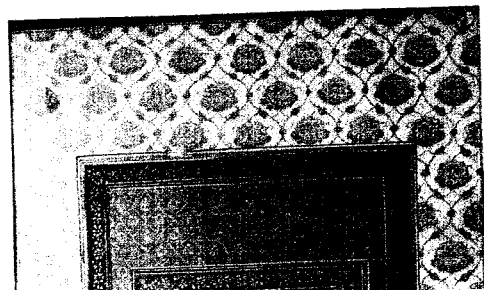


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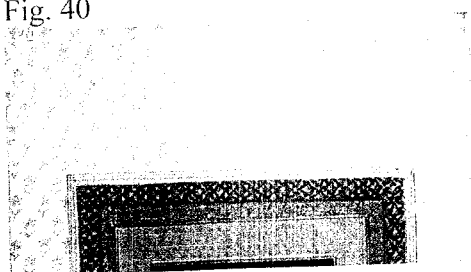
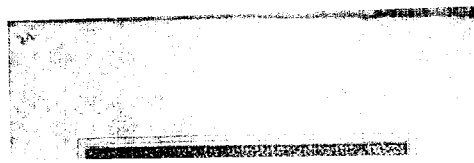
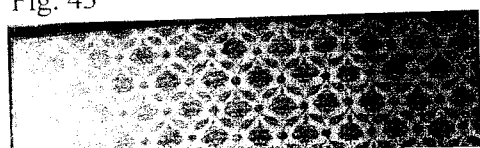


Fig. 44



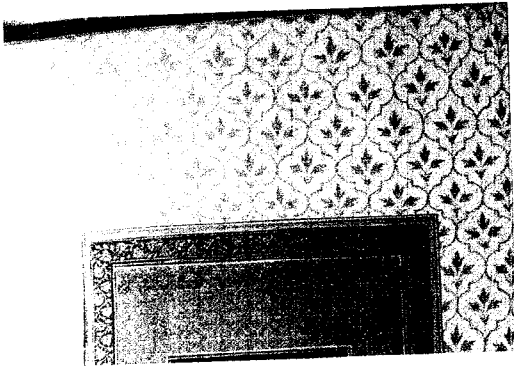


Fig. 51

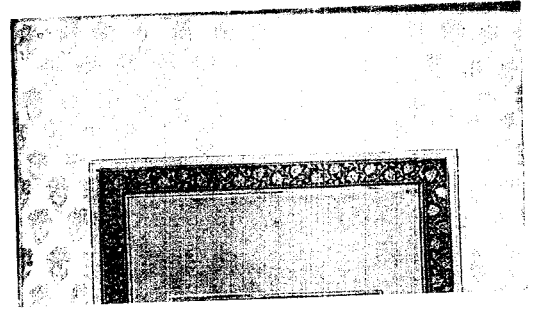


Fig. 52

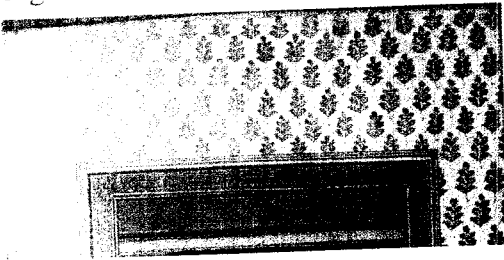


Fig. 55

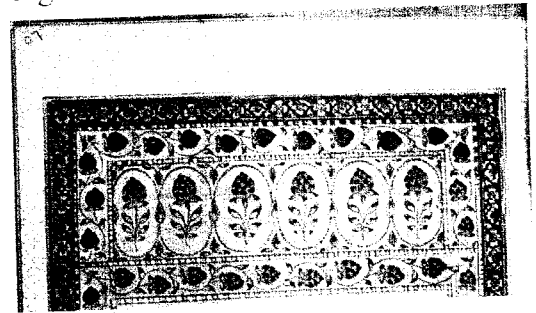


Fig. 56

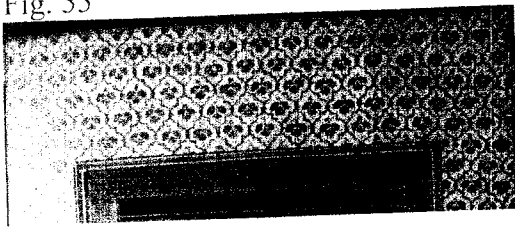


Fig. 59

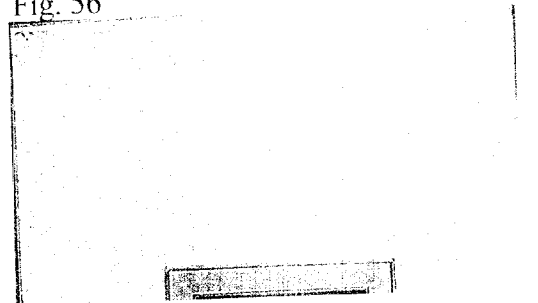


Fig. 60

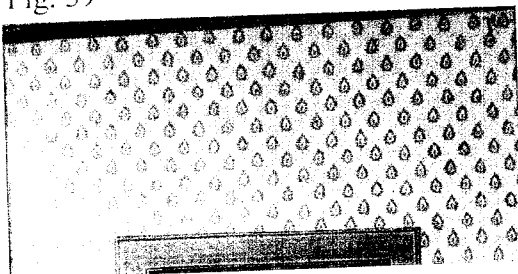


Fig. 63

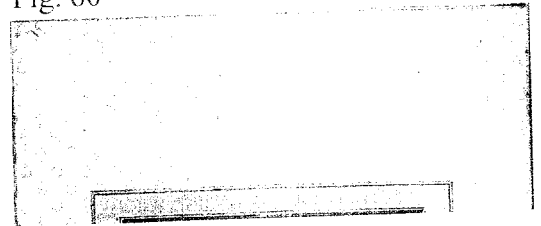
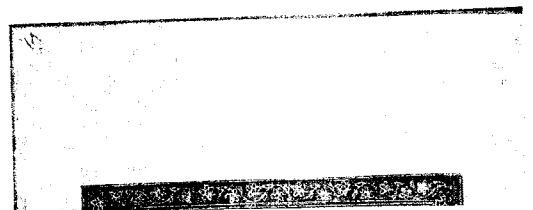
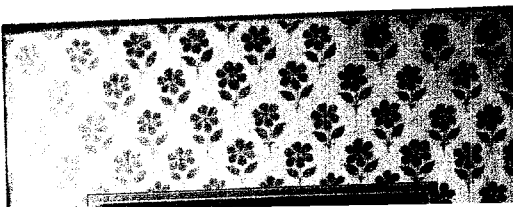


Fig. 64



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Plate 18: Women on a terrace. By Rai Anup Chattar, Mughal, c. 1710. The India

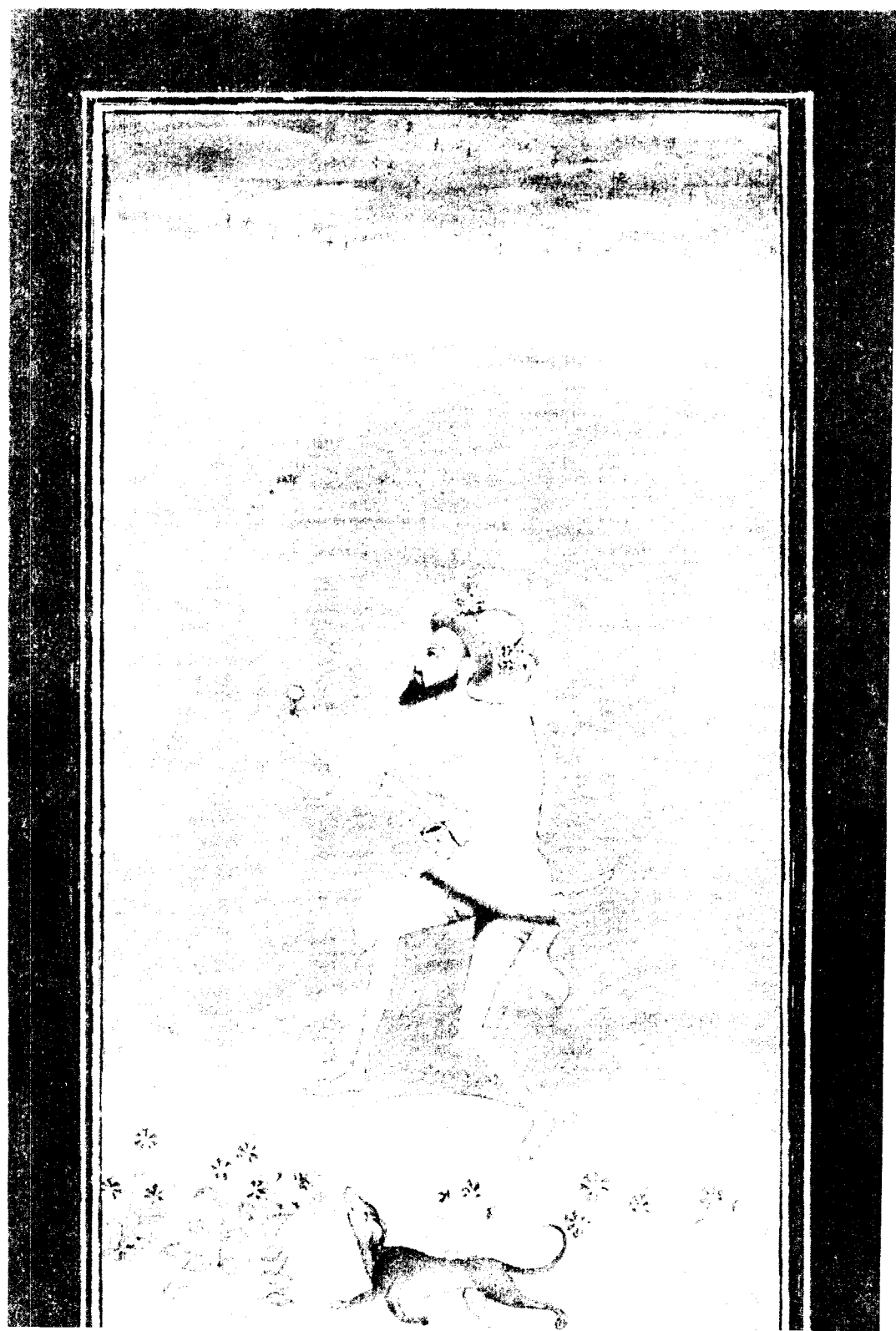




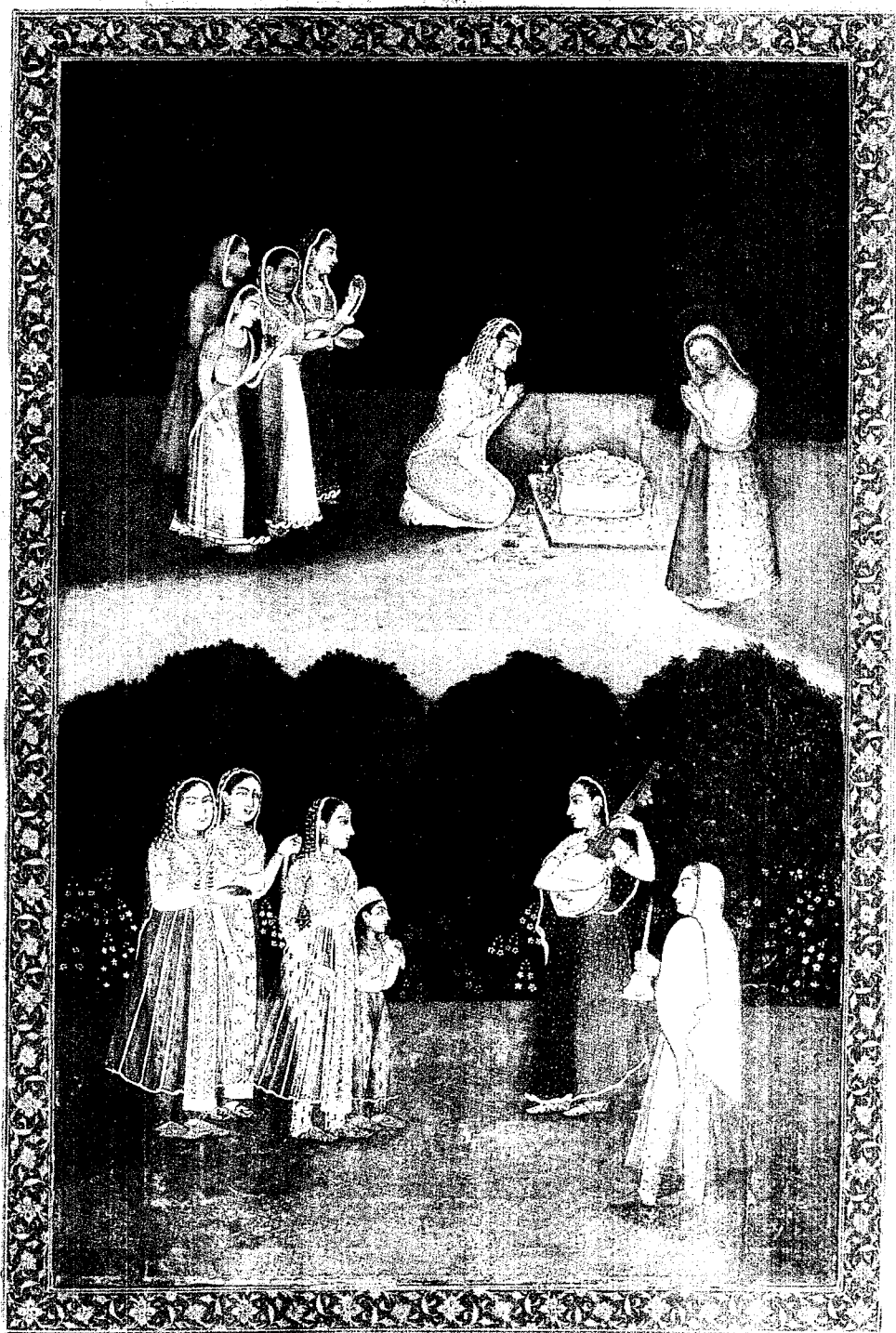








Plate 24: Nur Jahan with attendants on a terrace. Provincial Mughal; Oudh. 18th



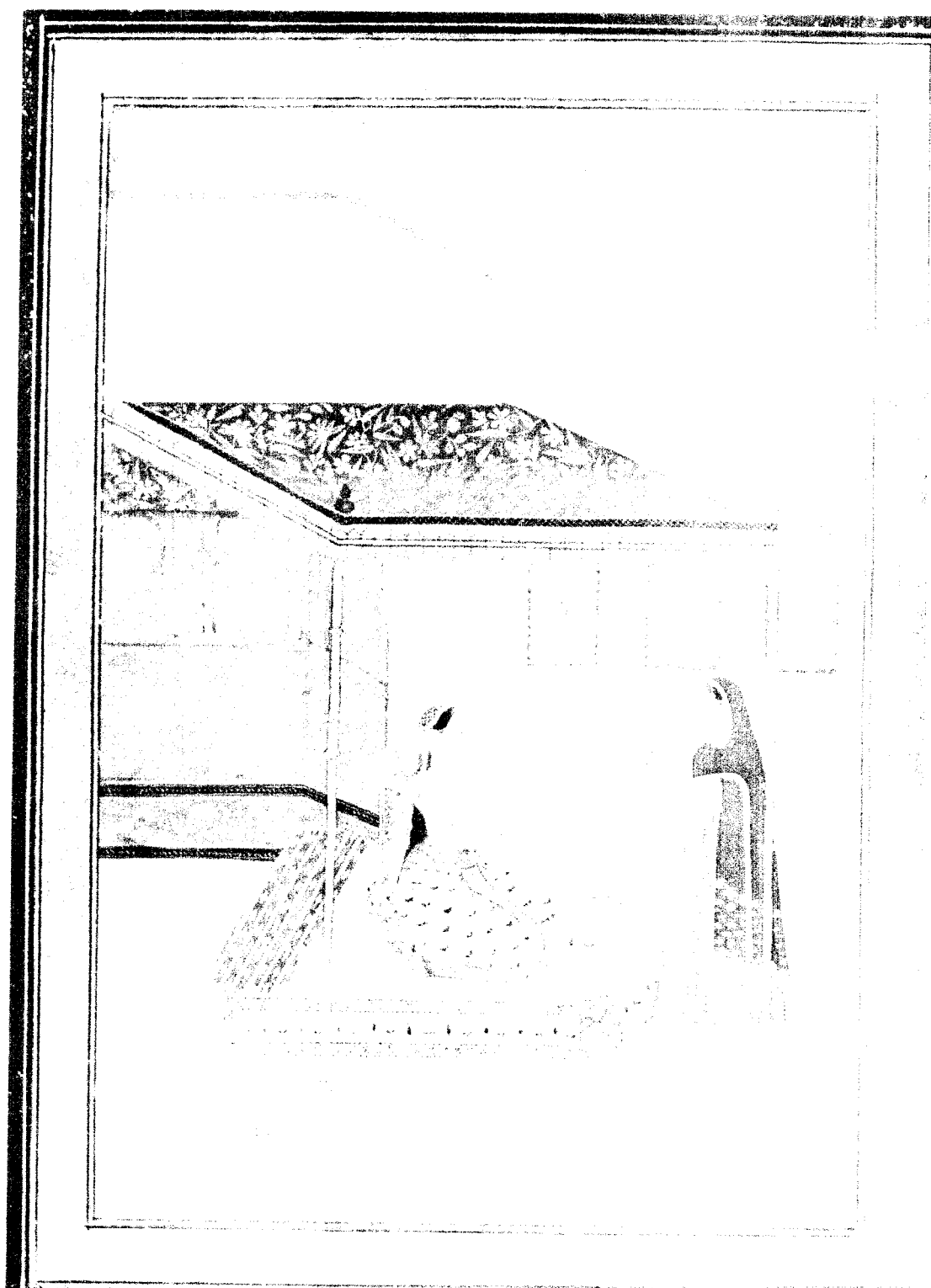




Plate 27: A woman looking at her reflection. By Natthu, Bikaner, 1665. Private collection.

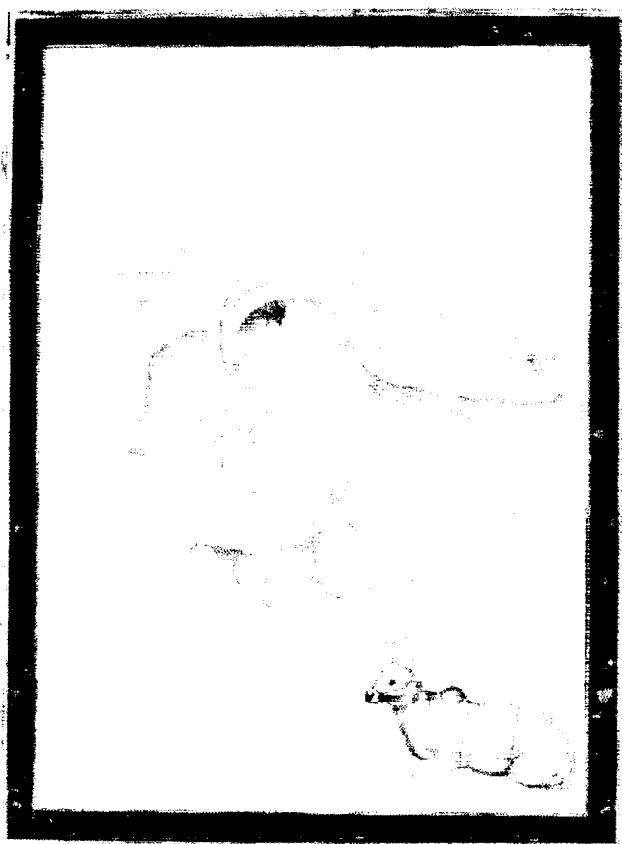


Plate 28: Shiva diverting the river.
 Deccani. The India Office Library
 collection, [Johnson Album 34 no. 1
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