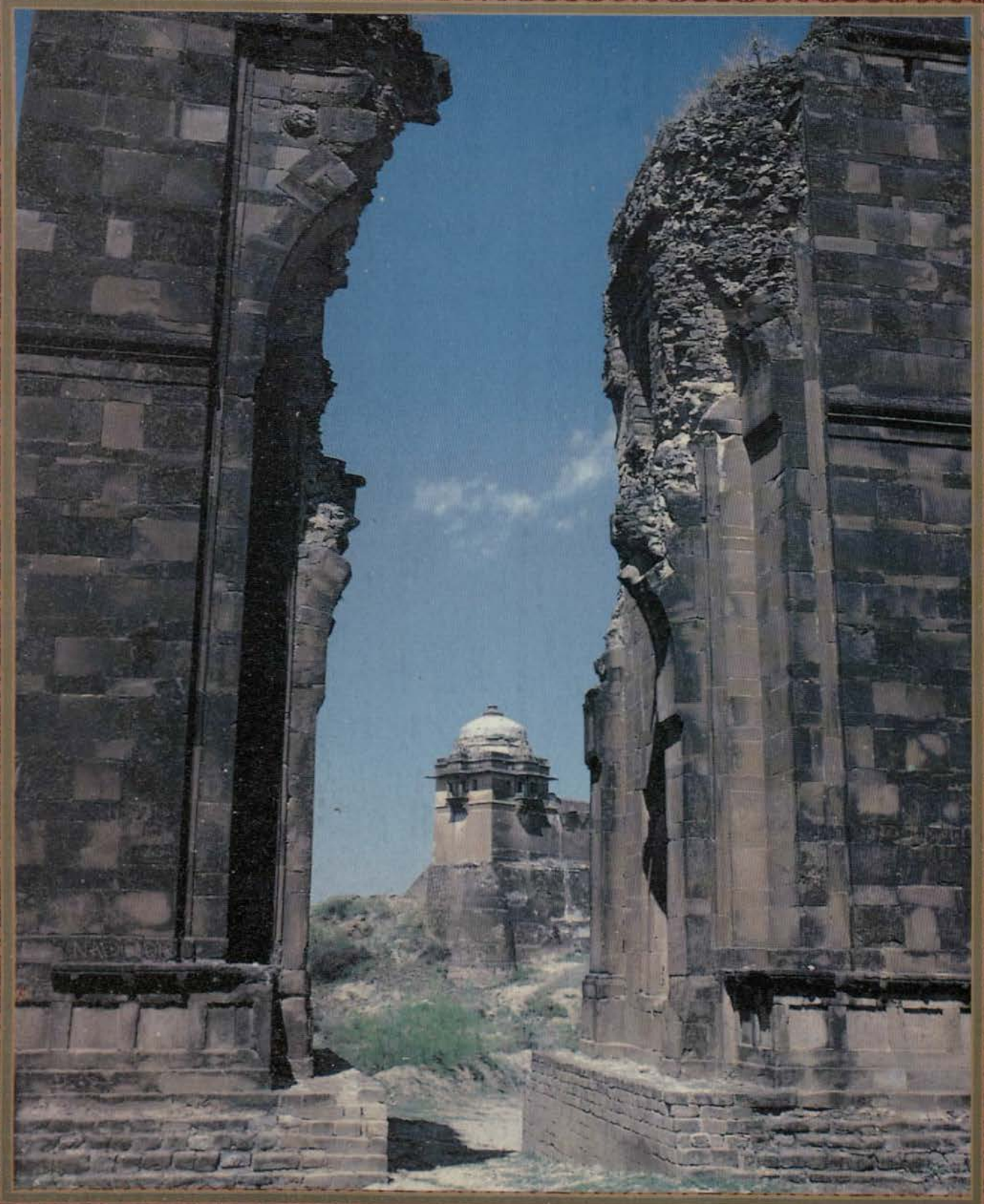
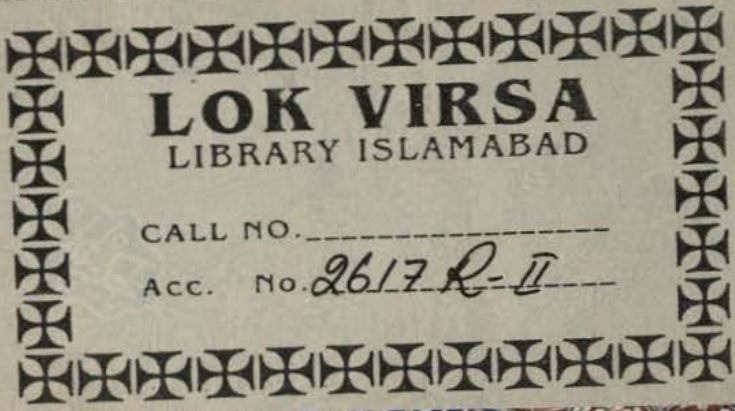


# MUSLIM ART HERITAGE OF PAKISTAN





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# MUSLIM ART HERITAGE OF PAKISTAN

by  
Dr. Ahmed Nabi Khan

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Ex-Director General, Department of Archaeology and Museum,  
Government of Pakistan

**Seventh edition : October 2008**

*Title Cover :*

*A View of Rohtas Fort, Jhelum.*

*Inside Cover:*

*Exquisitely decorated floral world with calligraphy,  
inside Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore.*

*Inside Back-Cover :*

*Tomb of Shurfa Khan, Makli Hills, Thatta.*

*Back-Cover:*

*Specimens of Arabesque and floral designs inside  
Mariam Zamani Mosque, Lahore.*

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# INTRODUCTION

The advent of Islam in Sindh and parts of the Punjab in the early decades of the eighth century of Christian era brought a phenomenal change in the socio-political traditions of the Subcontinent. Although Muhammad bin Qasim was called back immediately thereafter, the areas remained under the sway of the Umayyad and then the Abbasid Caliphate who sent their governors regularly to rule their holdings. During the third century Hijra/ninth century C.E., the territories were parcelled out into two emirates ruled by the two Arab tribes; the southern parts were in possession of the Habbaris with their capital at Mansurah, while the north was ruled by the Banu Samahs, also known as Banu Munabbah. Both of them acknowledged the sovereignty of the Abbasids and read their *khutbah* in the Friday prayers as a token of allegiance. Their long rule brought peace and prosperity, and a greater cohesion in social, political, religious and trade relations between the local people and the Arab population.

However, sometime during the closing decades of the fourth century Hijra, the religio-political influence came from the Fatimid Caliphate of Egypt. We hear, for instance, the name of Jalam bin Shaiban being appointed as a Da'i-governor by the Fatimid Caliph, al-Muizz-li-Din-illah, to rule Multan.

Mahmud of Ghazni invaded Multan in the beginning of the eleventh century C.E. It has been recorded that Multan was then ruled by Abu'l Fath Da'ud. During the later days, the Ghaznavid rulers abandoned their ancestral home and established themselves in the Punjab with their Headquarters at Lahore. Their rule came to an end when Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghauri defeated Khusrau Malik, the last of the Ghaznavid scions. This was the year 1175.

Qutb-ud-Din Aibek, the slave and successor of Muhammad Ghauri, established the first ever Muslim Empire in the Subcontinent. He was enthroned at Lahore in 1206 and also died here in 1212. Recently, a tomb has been constructed over his grave.

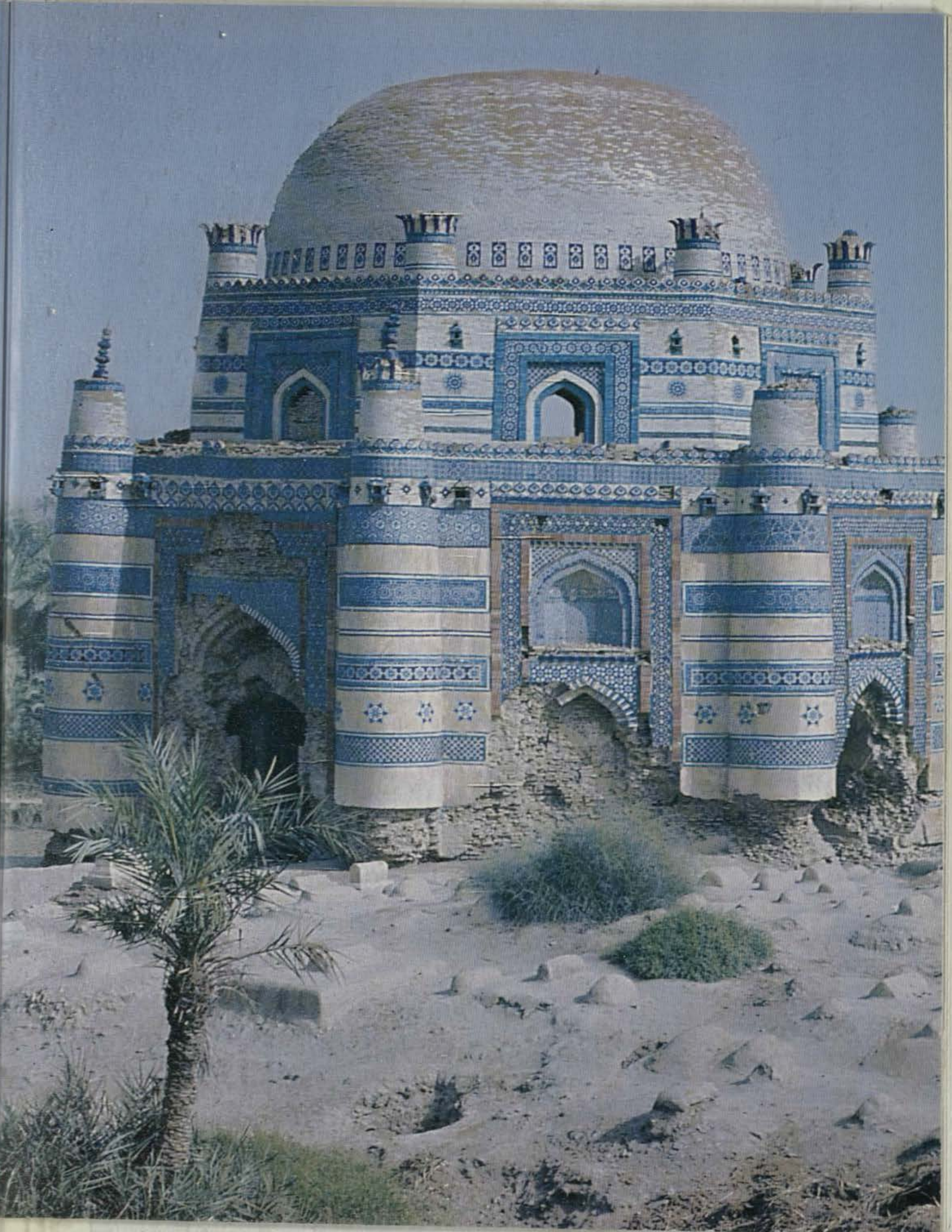
While the lower Sindh was under the sway of the Sumras, a local Rajput tribe, who had established themselves as independent rulers as early as 1053, the northern parts, particularly Uch and Multan, were occupied by Nasir-ud-Din Qubacha. The latter was appointed governor of these places by Shahab-ud-Din Ghauri and confirmed by Qutb-ud-Din Aibek. After Aibek's death, Qubacha declared independence and ruled the territories for well over twenty-two years, virtually coinciding with the beginning of the Mongol incursions into Hindustan. As a result of the Mongol upheaval in Central Asia, a near wholesale migration of population took place from various Central Asian cities and towns like Samarqand, Bukhara, Merve, Tashkent, Azarbaijan, Khurasan etc. Many of these came here to settle in Multan, Uch, Dipalpur, Pakpattan, Lahore and other places. The court of Nasir-ud-Din Qubacha provided them shelter. Several eminent personalities like poets, historians, artists, and artisans joined his services.

The rule of Nasir-ud-Din Qubacha at Uch and Multan came to an end in 1228 on account of the invasion of Ilutmish. The territories then became a part of the Turkish Empire of Delhi. It was the time of the Mongol rampage whose annual visitations brought havoc to the people and places of ancient Pakistan. The Sultans of Delhi kept on sending their ablest generals and administrators to rule the territories and thwart Mongol menace. We hear the names of Izz-ud-Din Kabir Khan-i-Ayaz, Kashlu Khan, Sultan Muhammad Shahid son of Balban, Arkali Khan son of Jalal-ud-Din Khilji, Zafar Khan, Ghazi Malik (later Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughluq), Ain ul-Mulk Multani, and Khizr Khan, gaining fame and distinction in ousting the Mongols from the borderlands.

The middle of the fifteenth century witnessed yet another independent ruling dynasty in Multan and the adjoining areas, in the form of the Baloch Langahs. They established themselves here on the eve of the weakening of the Delhi Sultanate. Sultan Husain was the ablest ruler the Langahs produced. He ruled for well over thirty years. Likewise, in the Punjab the Gakkhars gained political supremacy and ruled there independently for quite a long time.

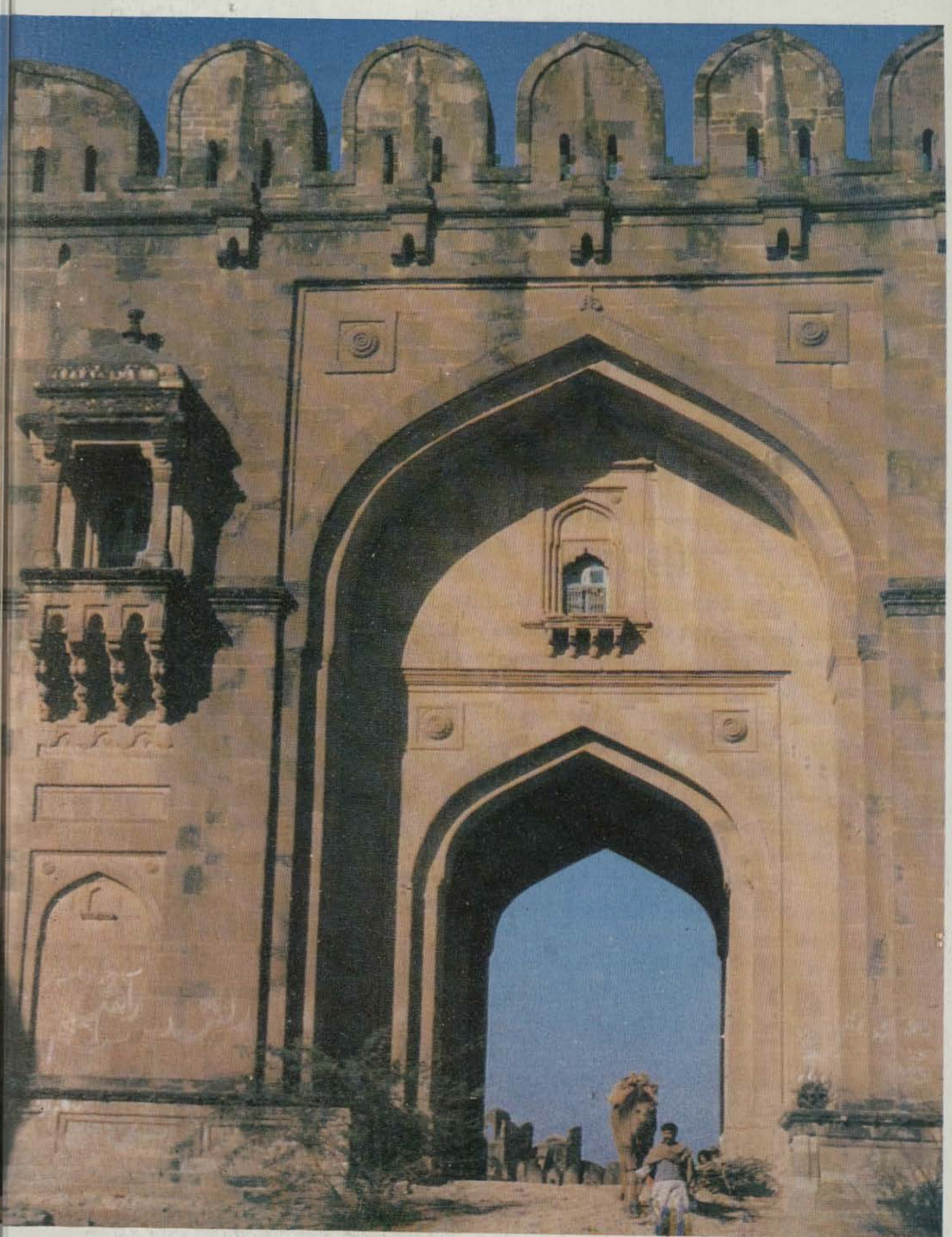
In Sindh, the Sammas were defeated by another Rajput tribe, the





Sumrahs, in 1333. Their long rule brought peace and prosperity to their holdings. However, in 1520 the Arghuns, the Iranian immigrants, overpowered them and established themselves in the fort of Sukkur. Gradually, their power and influence increased and, seven years later, in 1527, they defeated the last of the Langah chieftain, and extended their sway up to Multan. A year earlier, Zaheer-ud-Din Babar had defeated the Lodhi army and had founded the Mughal Empire. His son Muhammad Kamran Mirza, one time governor of Lahore on behalf of his father, erected in about 1530 the first ever garden-palace in Lahore. The city also played an important role when Humayun visited it on his last leg to save his Kingdom. On his defeat, he wandered in Sindh where, at Umarkot, his son Akbar was born. Sher Shah built a military fort at Rohtas (Jhelum). In 1554, Humayun returned to Hindustan to take back his lost Empire and, after expelling the bewildered Suri army occupied Lahore and thereafter Delhi. The Gakkhar chiefs provided a real and substantial help to the Mughal monarch in his mission. A year earlier, the weakling Arghuns were ousted by more energetic Tarkhans who ruled the southern Sindh for about forty years when Akbar incorporated their kingdom in his fast growing empire.

Akbar, the real builder of the Mughal Empire, ascended the throne in 1556 at Kalanaur. In order to supervise the operations of the expansion of his empire personally he created his *Darul Saltanat*(capital)at Lahore in 1584 and stayed here until 1598. Lahore witnessed a rare period of peace and prosperity for full fourteen years. It became the centre of excellence adorned with palatial buildings, both religious as well as secular. Military might, political sagacity and administrative acumen of the emperor and his devoted team of courtiers and nobles gave the Mughal Empire a unique position among the empires of the world. After the death of Akbar, Jahangir (1606-1627) and Shahjahan (1627-1657) ruled the celebrated Mughal Empire for the next half century. Jahangir was keenly interested in the beauty of nature. His frequent visits to Kashmir, the valley of paradise, alongwith his royal paraphernalia are the most charming episodes of the oriental romantic history. During these visits, poets sang panegyrics, musicians sang melodious songs and painters painted men and matters, birds and beasts, for the emperor, while he himself held colourful parties, wrote his *Tuzuk*, or went out for hunting or sight-seeing, often accompanied by his talented Queen Consort, Nur Jahan. The world





*An astrolabe.*

of art proudly possesses some of the treasures of the *Muraqqas* painted during this august period.

Shah Jahan erected some of the most sumptuous and ornate palaces, pavilions and pleasure gardens. Many cities of Pakistan, particularly Lahore and Thatta, possess a few choicest specimens of his buildings. It was during this period that Lahore produced a band of artists, architects, astrolabists and artisans. We know, for instance, Ahmad Me'mar and his family, Muhammad Muqim and his sons who were responsible for creating marvels of their trade. Muhammad Muqim produced several astrolabes and scientific instruments. One of his astrolabes made in 1639 is now preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan.

A critical study of these specimens of art, architecture, literature and sciences reveals the plausible fact that these are the cumulative results of the influences, borrowings and assimilation of the traditions both local and foreign-Arab, Central Asian, Iranian and Indian. The ravages of time and tide and change of taste and circumstances have, however, been responsible for decay and disappearance of many of them. But, whatever is left is part of our heritage, a reminiscent of our past glory, a guideline of our future progress and planning and a reminder to our coming generations to impress upon them the splendour of Islamic heritage of Pakistan.

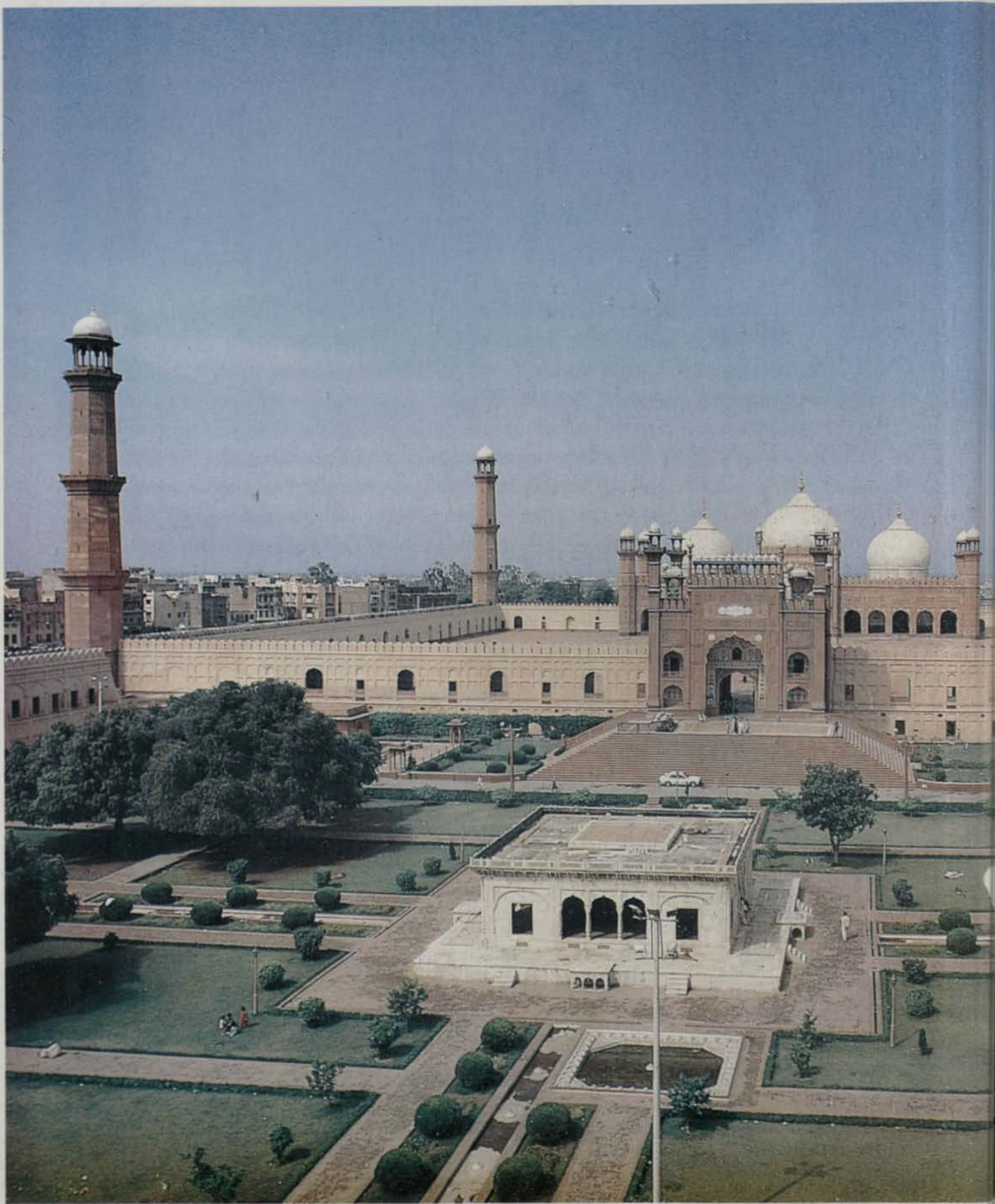
# ARCHITECTURE

The Islamic architecture of Pakistan takes its birth with the establishment of Muslim rule in Sindh. It has been asserted by the Arab chroniclers that Muhammad bin Qasim built a mosque at every place he conquered during his campaign. However, none of these exists now. The first city subdued by him was the sea-port of Debul, now known as Banbhore, an insignificant small town located at about forty miles north-east of Karachi on the old highway of Hyderabad. The remains of religious and secular buildings revealed through archaeological excavations give an insight into the nature and characteristics of the early Arab architecture on the soil of Pakistan. The city of Debul consisted of two parts : the fortified citadel on a comparatively higher level, and the unwallled lower city. The citadel possessed impressive buildings, both secular as well as religious, erected from time to time. In the lower city were located bazaars and factories and other residential quarters for traders and industrial workers. The buildings were mostly constructed with semi-dressed or undressed blocks of sandstone. Sometimes, the interior was plastered with mud, mixed with lime, and then whitewashed. Some of the spectacular buildings, uncovered in the citadel area, were remains of a massive-built stone fortification wall, the great mosque, and other residential buildings. The fortification wall had three gateways and several bastions. A flight of exceptionally broad steps went down to the lake. But the most impressive features of the fortification were the semicircular bastions, built at intervals.

The mosque was built as early as the first decade of the 2nd century Hijra (8th century C.E.). Within a stone boundary wall, the mosque was erected on a square plan right in the centre of the citadel. There were corridors and cloisters on the three sides of the courtyard, and, on the western side,

*Overleaf*

1. A view of the Badshahi Mosque from the Lahore Fort.
2. An interior view of the Badshahi Mosque.





was a spacious prayer-chamber. The mosque had two entrance gates. The facade of these gates was decorated with inscribed stones, several of which were discovered from the ruins of the mosque. One of these gives the date of the construction of the mosque, and some unidentifiable names responsible for its construction. The courtyard was paved with burnt bricks and the roof was supported by wooden pillars placed on stone bases.

Facing the northern gate of the mosque was the building of the *Maktab*, a necessary adjunct to the mosque. It has several corridors and rooms. Similarly, on the eastern side was the big building of a *Sarai* (caravan Sarai). These two buildings complete the complex of religious and social establishments of the city of the early Arab days. The houses were divided into blocks with well-laid streets and lanes. The surfaces of the houses were mostly plastered with lime and whitewashed.

Mansura, the first Arab city, was founded near Brahmanabad, an ancient city. The remains are now located in the district of Shahdadpur. It was founded by Amir bin Muhammad bin Qasim who came to Sindh with Hakam bin Awanah-al-Kalbi, and later succeeded him to governorship of Sindh, circumstantial between 110 and 120 A.H.

The remains of this ruined and forgotten city now cover an area of 9,000 feet by 4,500 feet, and rise to a maximum height of 35 feet above the surrounding level. Another mound, smaller in size, is situated to the south-east. Both the mounds are connected by an earth embankment. The main city represented by the bigger mound had a strong fortification of well-baked bricks strengthened by semicircular bastions placed at regular intervals. Within the fortification were market places, houses and other residential buildings, including a gateway with brick-paved floor.

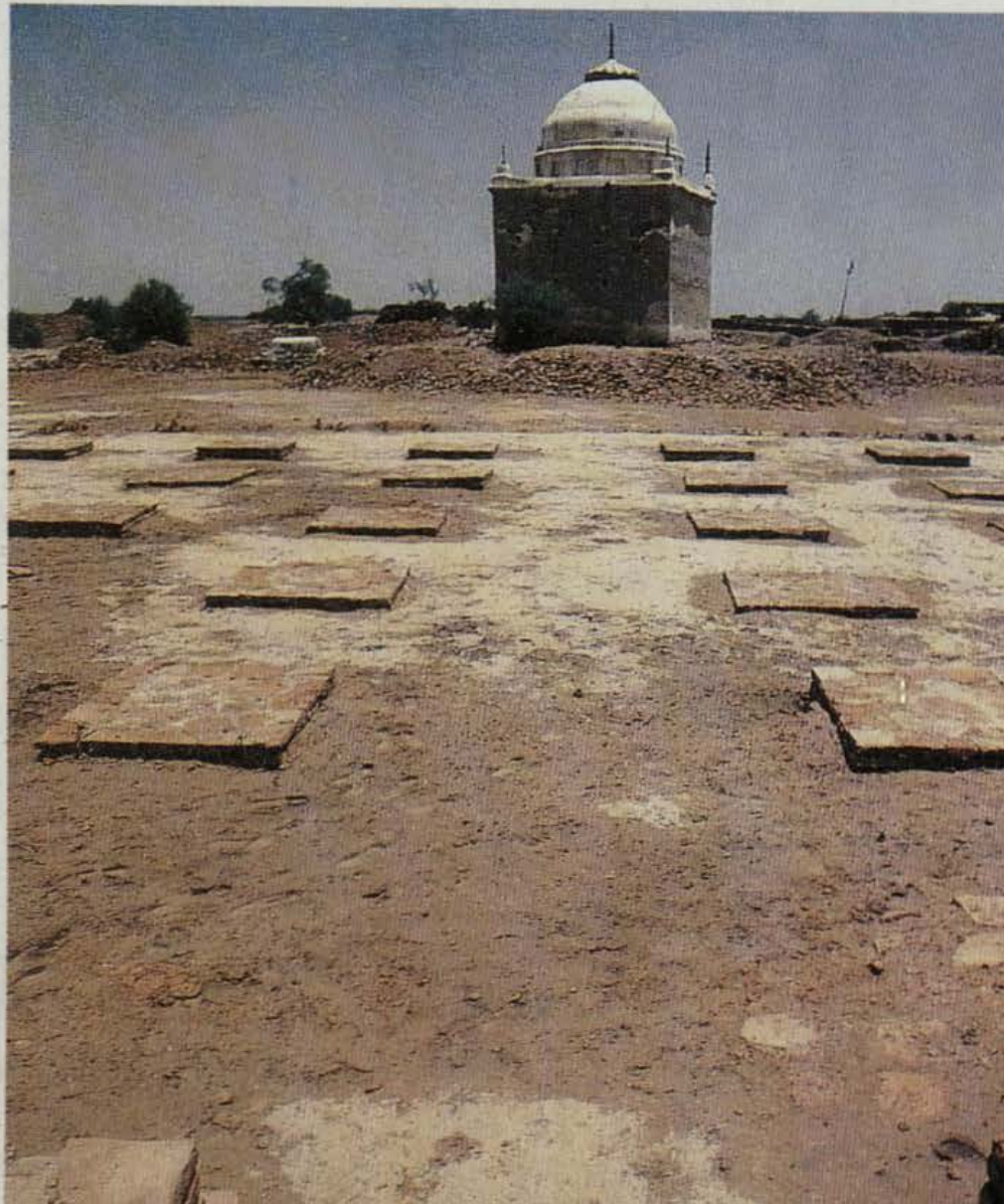
The mosque discovered here is rectangular in plan, measuring 150 feet north-south and 250 feet east-west and surrounded by a six-and-a-half feet wide boundary wall. The *Mehrab* of the mosque in the western wall is semi-circular in plan while the roof rested on posts of teak wood.



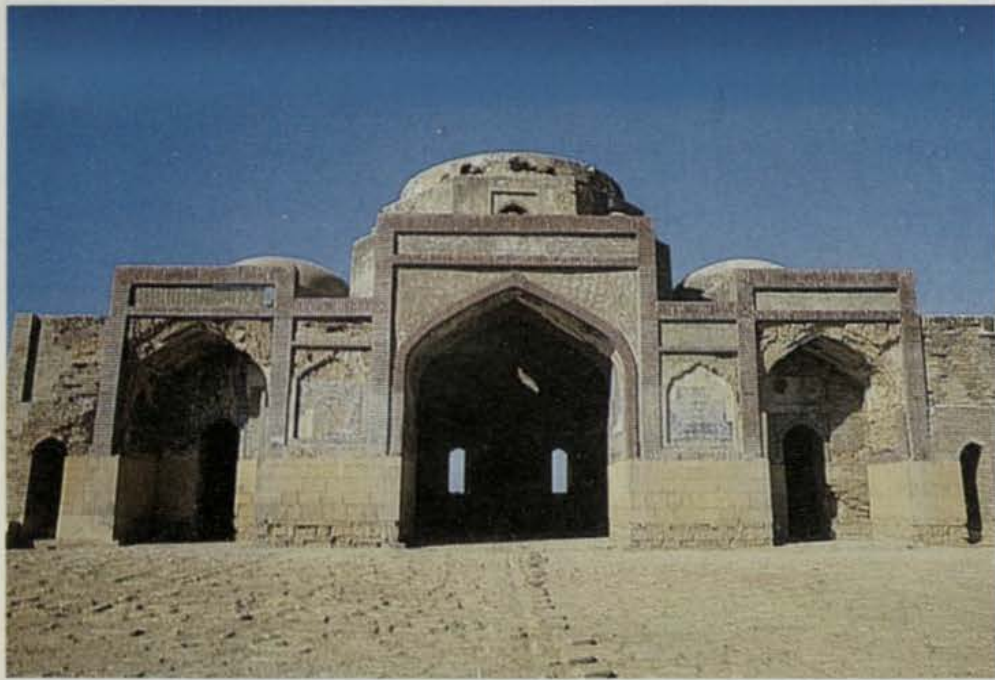
## EARLY ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

The inception and development of Islamic architecture in Pakistan owes a great deal to the inspiration from Central Asian traditions. It was due to the constant social and political contacts of the local people with the centers of excellence located at, for instance, Bukhara, Samarqand, Merve, Baghdad etc. The local people especially the affluent Muslims, often visited these centers. The impact deepened when immigrants from these places came and settled here as a result of Mongol invasion.

The specimens of early Islamic architecture in Pakistan have been found in Sindh and Balochistan and a tomb locally attributed to Muhammad bin Harun, an Arab governor, and located at Bela in Balochistan, may be regarded as its earliest known manifestation. Although no epigraphical or lit-



*Remains of one of the earliest mosques built by Muslims in South Asian Sub - continent, at Al-Mansura, Sindh.*

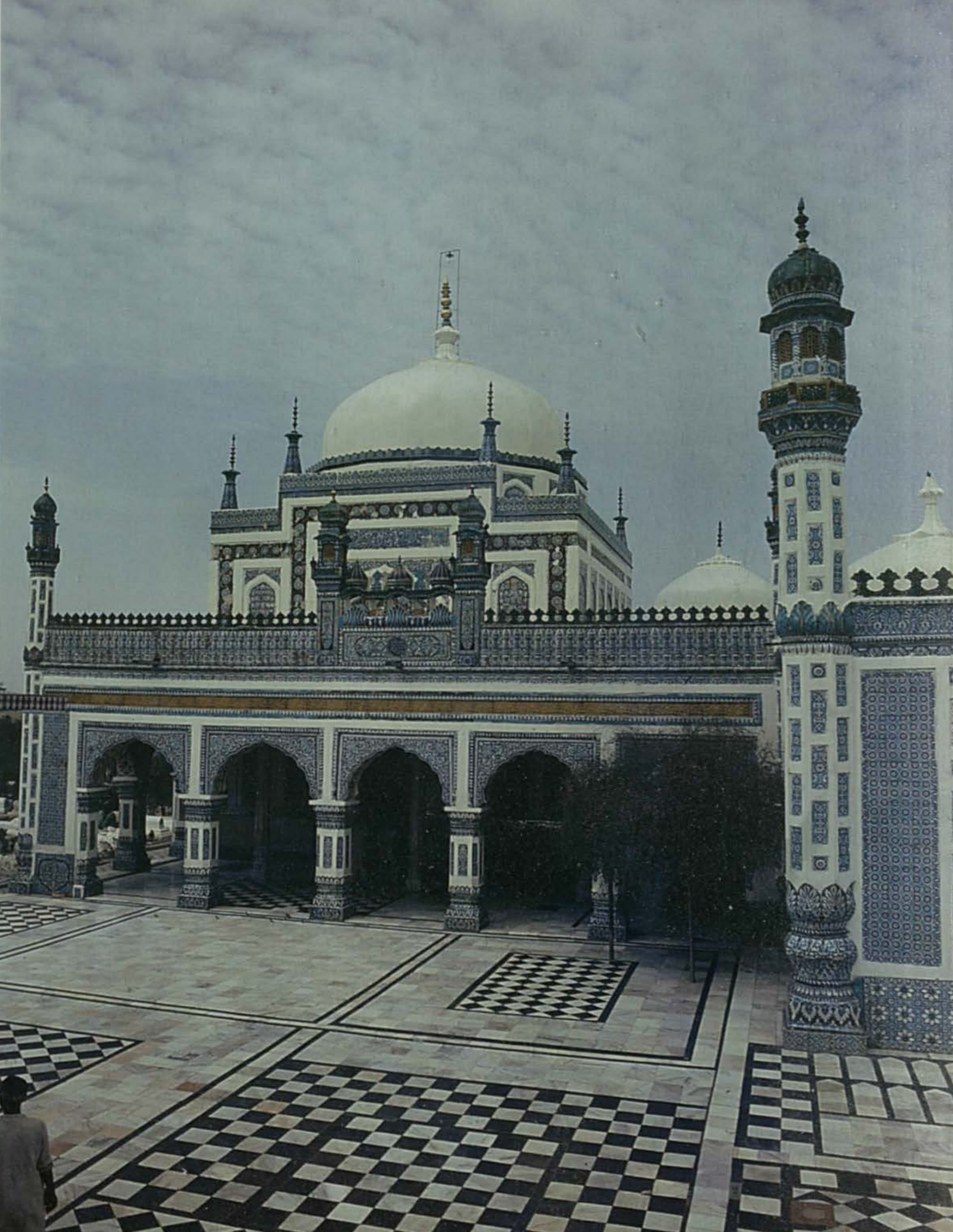


*A view of Dabgaran Mosque.*

erary source is available to testify the attribution, stylistically it belongs to a date when ancient Pakistan was introduced to the building traditions of Seljuq period. Square on plan, the brick structure is both interesting as well as instructive. The brick ornamentation with which its exterior is reverted is significant. The other specimen of this early phase, is the tomb of Shah Gardez at Adam Wahan in Bahawalpur. The structure is constructed in mud-brick, both externally and internally, with burnt bricks. The zone of transition has been created with the help of corner squinches on which the high drum is placed and above it, the dome. For the first time, we notice here the concept of these 'storeys' utilized for planning such funerary memorials, and in that sense this specimen may be taken as the forerunner of the famous Multan style of architecture.

It was most probably after this initial experimentation that the tomb of Baha-ul-Huq Zakariya at Multan was designed in 1262, and then the mausoleum of Rukn-i-Alam between a period of 1320 and 1324. It has been said that the latter was originally built under the orders of Muhammad bin Tughluq as his own eternal abode, but was later on, given away to the descendants of the great saint for his burial. However, circumstantial as well as architectural evidence does show that it was most probably erected by the saint himself during his life time. The mausoleums of Baha-ul-Haq Zakariya and his grandson, Rukn-i-Alam, served as perfect models for future architects who continued copying it for well over three hundred years. More than two dozens of such specimens still exist on the soil of Pakistan especially at Uch, Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Dera Dinpanah, Sitpur and more particularly at Multan and its neighbourhood, to show how deeply the style was adapted as a favourite medium for funerary architecture.





## ARCHITECTURE OF SINDH

The art of building introduced and practiced in Sindh has a character of its own. While the local traits and traditions have played their role in its formation, the Iranian characteristics influenced greatly its personality, especially the faience and mosaic revetment. The buildings which are mostly of religious character representing mosques, mausoleums and tombs have been created both in brick as well as in stone, and almost all the famous old cities of Sindh possess specimens of these edifices. Thatta, Makli Hills, Hyderabad, Shikarpur, Sukkur, Sehwan, Khudabad, Larkana, Rohri and many others have old mosques, mausoleums, towers, forts, pavilions. The foundations of brick buildings are laid in stone and faced with plain or enamel-faced bricks. The glazed tiles made of hard terracotta are generally of two colours ; white and blue, the latter varying in hue from dark purplish to light greenish or turquoise blue.

One of the finest examples of tile-work in Sindh is the Dabgaran Mosque built by Amir Khusro Khan Charkas in 1588 C.E. The mosque has a prayer chamber of three bays crowned with three flat domes. The superb tile work is executed in the interior while the Mehrab in the Western wall is faced with buff sandstone carved in low relief with tracery and arabesque work. Similarly, the Shahjahan Mosque is also a grand edifice. The prayer chamber is balanced on the east by another chamber of similar size ; both of them are crowned by large domes. On the North and South, galleries open by means of arcades on the courtyards. Ninety-three domes cover the entire structure creating a remarkable echo which travels throughout the prayer chambers and the arcades. The mosque displays a remarkable feast of faience revetment.

The construction of the mosque was begun in 1644 C.E. by Nawab Abul Baqa Amir Khan on the orders of Shahjahan. The eastern wing was added in 1658 C.E.

Among the other funerary memorials at Makli Hills of Thatta, the tombs of Mirza Jani Beg Tarkhan (d. 1601) stand out prominently for picturesque and colourful setting. The former is octagonal in plan with half



1. *An exterior view of historic Shahjahani Mosque, Thatta.*

- 2. *Richly decorated interior of Shahjahani Mosque.*
- 3. *One of the exquisitely decorated arches of the Shahjahani Mosque.*
- 4. *Tomb of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar at Sehwan.*
- 5. *A general view of the Makli Hills Necropolis at Thatta.*



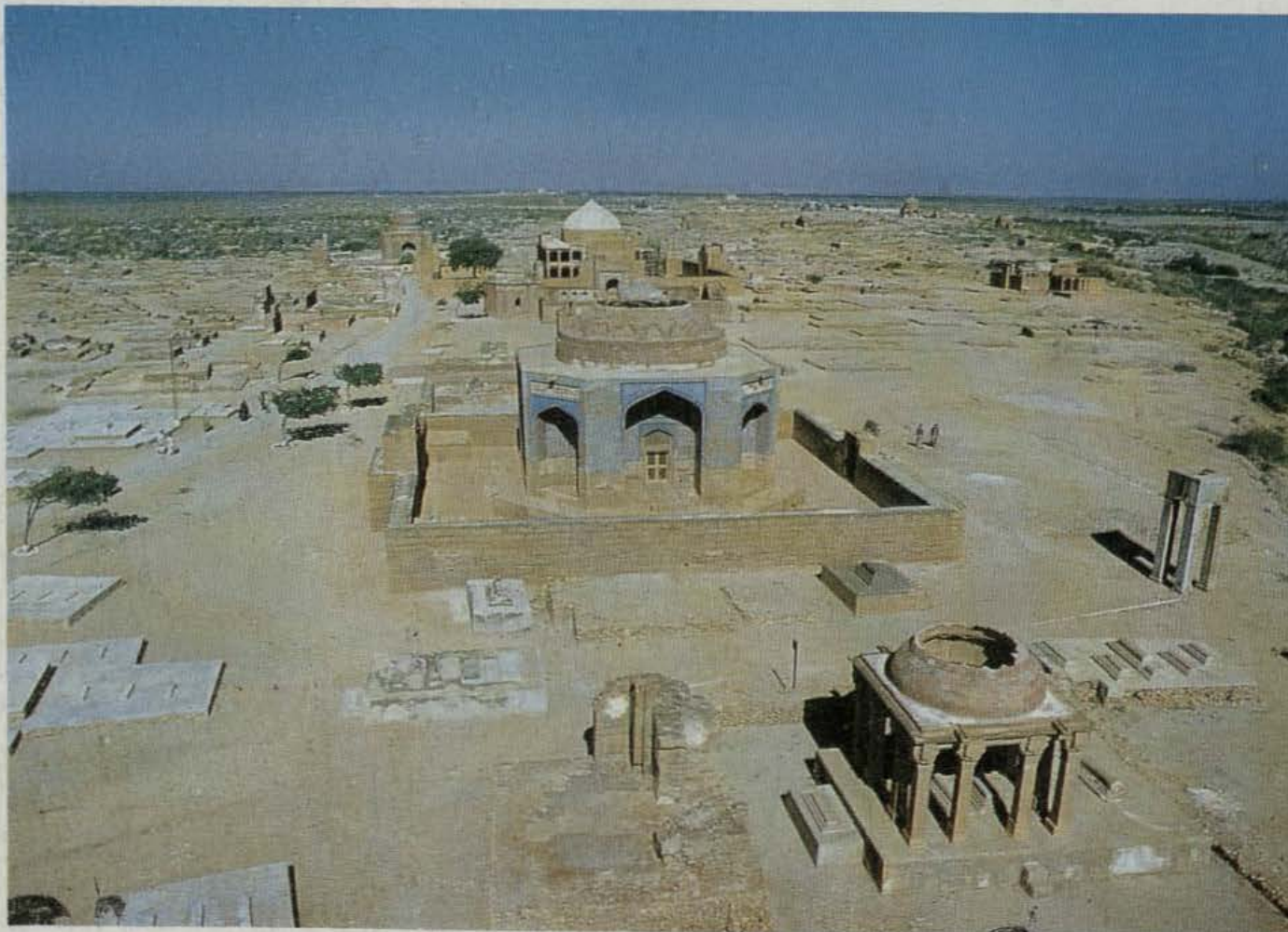
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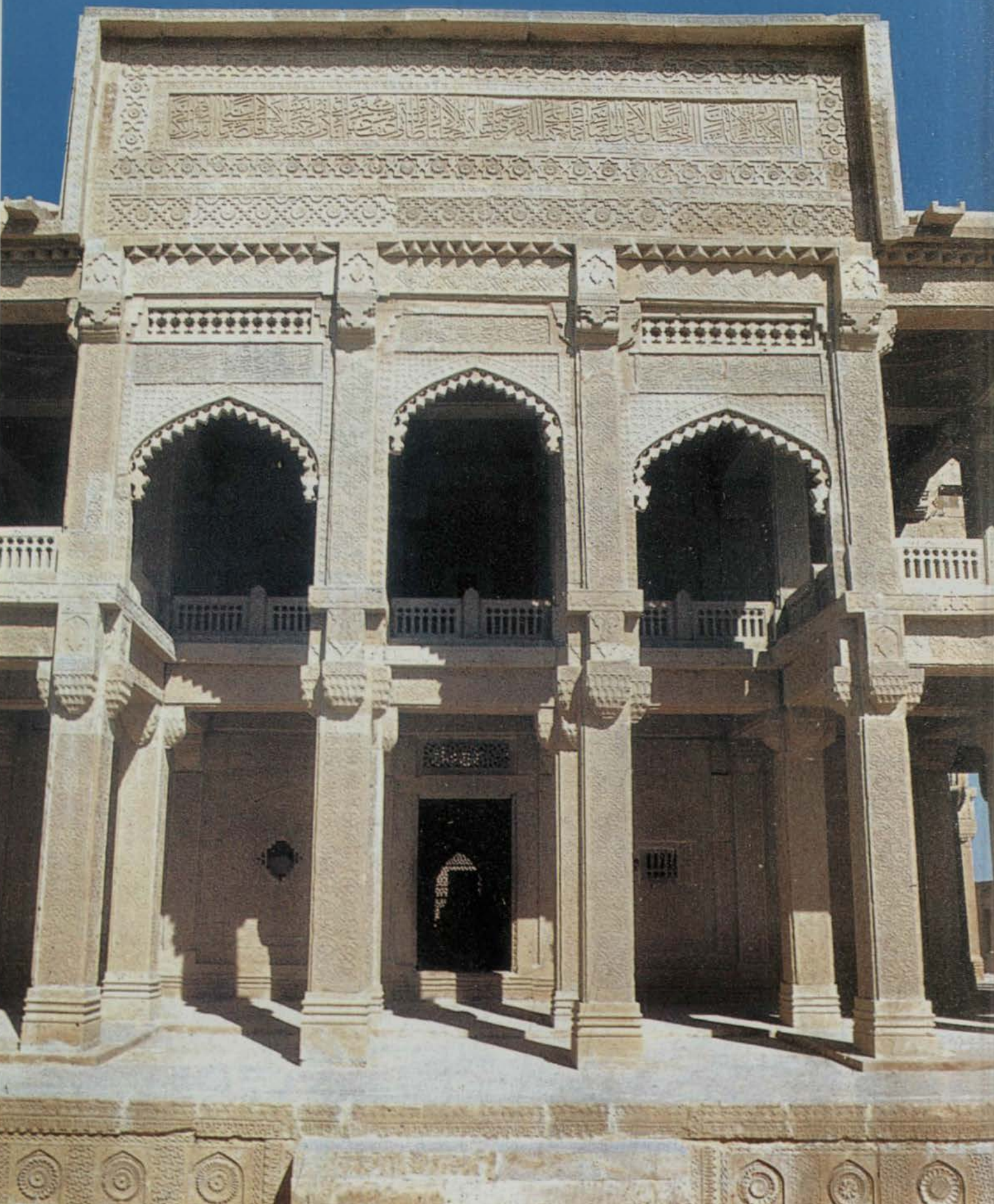
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*Chaukundi graves near Karachi, distinctive for their fine carvings.*



domed recesses on four sides and arched door-frames, richly carved in geometric tracery. The doorways crowned with Qura'nic inscriptions boldly written in white enamel on dark tiles is a massive square structure surmounted by a dome once covered with light blue tiles. It has four round corner towers, each having a staircase leading to the roof. The interior of the dome is decorated with a radiating design of glazed tiles set in chevrons. The tomb and the *Musallah* on the West were erected respectively in the year 1639 C.E. and 1642 C.E.

Among the several stone buildings at Makli Hills are tombs of Jam Nizam-ud-Din Isa Khan Tarkhan the Younger and Jan Baba. The tombs of Mubarak Khan, Baqi Beg Tarkhan, the Elder are remarkable for the richness and variety of their carvings and designs. The tomb of Jam Nizam-ud-Din, one of the most important rulers of Samma dynasty (1461 to 1509) possesses the finest ornamental carvings, consisting of carved bands in relief running on the walls, and representing half and full lotuses and arched panels set with sun flowers. The *mehrab* inside is also delicately carved and has very finely cut bands of Qura'nic inscriptions. The tomb of Isa Khan Tarkhan is erected in the centre of a square courtyard surrounded by high stone walls. The massive structure built with large-sized stones comprises a domed chamber surrounded by a two tiered gallery. The pillars of the interior walls are almost covered with surface tracery. The double storeyed pillared galleries have in the centre of each side a group of three tall, and multi-cusped arches surmounted by a wide parapet.



*A view of Alamgiri Gate of the Lahore Fort.*

## ARCHITECTURE OF IMPERIAL MUGHALS

The early decades of the sixteenth century witnessed an epoch making change in the socio-political set up of ancient Pakistan. It was the period when a new monarchy was established commonly known as the Mughal Empire. Zaheer-ud-Din Muhammad Babar, the founder of this celebrated dynasty, captured Lahore during the early days of his conquest of the Punjab, in 1524 A.C. He could not, however, find time and leisure to stay there for long. But his second son Mirza Kamran is remembered for his splendid pleasure-garden with a typical pavilion built in the centre of a huge tank. It was the first architectural enterprise with which the princes of the Mughal dynasty adorned the city of Lahore. Akbar, the real founder of the Mughal empire, established his capital at Lahore to stay here for fourteen years, from 1584 to 1598. He created a well-laid brick fortification in place of earlier mud brick wall, with two gateways. The eastern gateway now known as Masti Gate, still

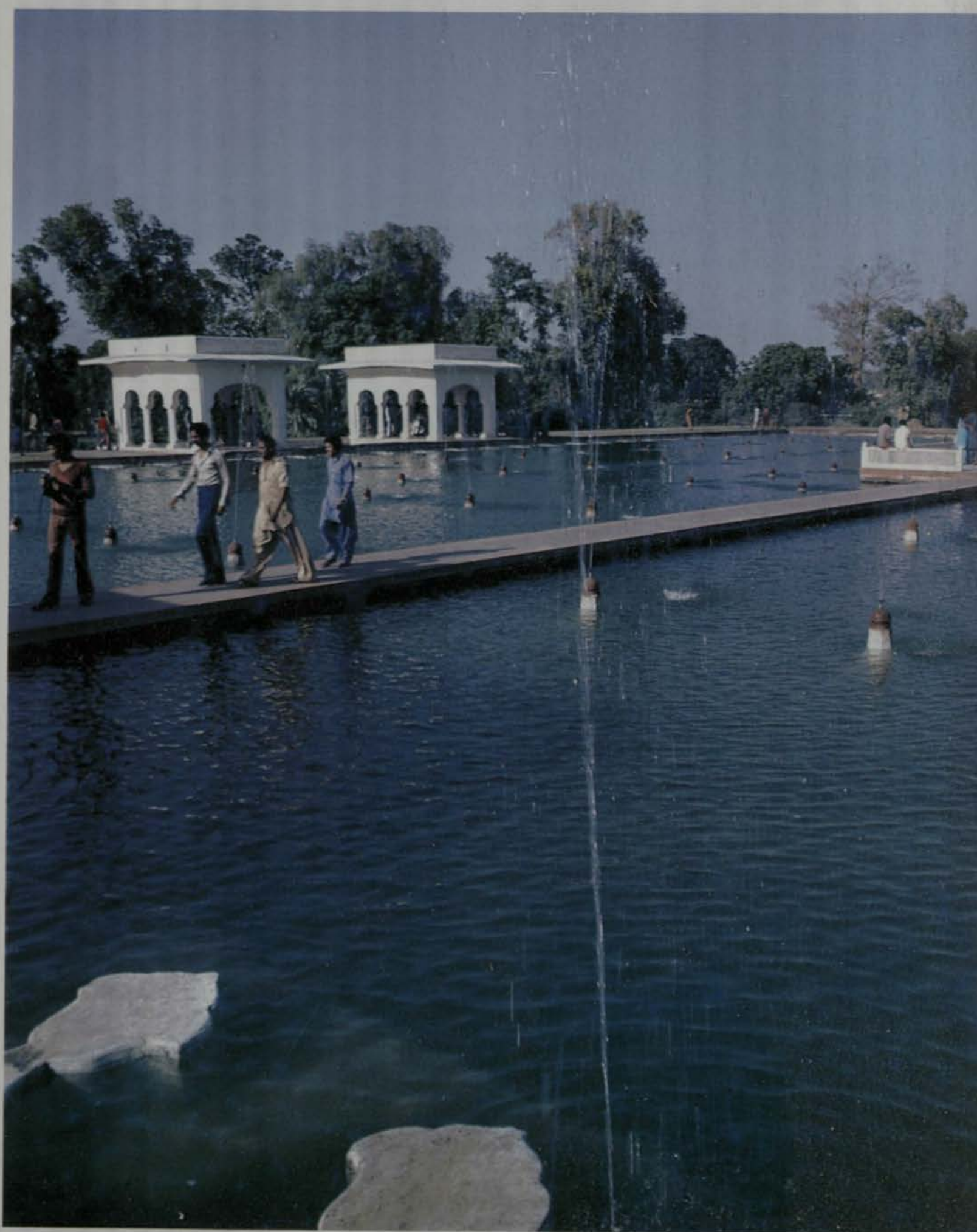




exists in almost its original shape and is in a fairly good state of preservation. Besides, the Hall of Public and Private audience, the remains of a Royal Bath and a few other buildings inside the Lahore Fort belong to the days of Akbar. Jahangir and Shahjahan were responsible for the architectural adornment of the city of Lahore. Jahangir's main contribution to the architecture of Lahore was a quadrangle in the Lahore Fort now known as Jahangir Quadrangle. In fact, the construction of the quadrangle was started during the later days of Akbar and was completed by Jahangir. The most interesting features of this quadrangle are the richly carved columns and brackets of red sandstone indicating the influence of local architecture of the earlier periods. The gateway to the Jahangiri Palaces is adorned with a marble inscription giving the date of its construction and the name of the royal architect. Similarly, the palaces built in the Fort by Shahjahan are the noblest manifestation of Mughal architecture. Built in 1633-34, they are the Emperor's private apartments, the Hall of Special Audience, the Ladies Garden, the Sleeping Chambers, the Royal Bath Rooms, the Shish Mahal and a few other buildings. The Diwan-e-Khas (the Hall of Special Audience) is a graceful pavilion created entirely in white marble. Lastly, the Alamgiri Gate constructed by Aurangzeb Alamgir is a majestic gateway for direct approach to the Badshahi Mosque. The monumental gateway is flanked by two semi-circular bastions boldly fluted and decorated with lotus designs at the base.

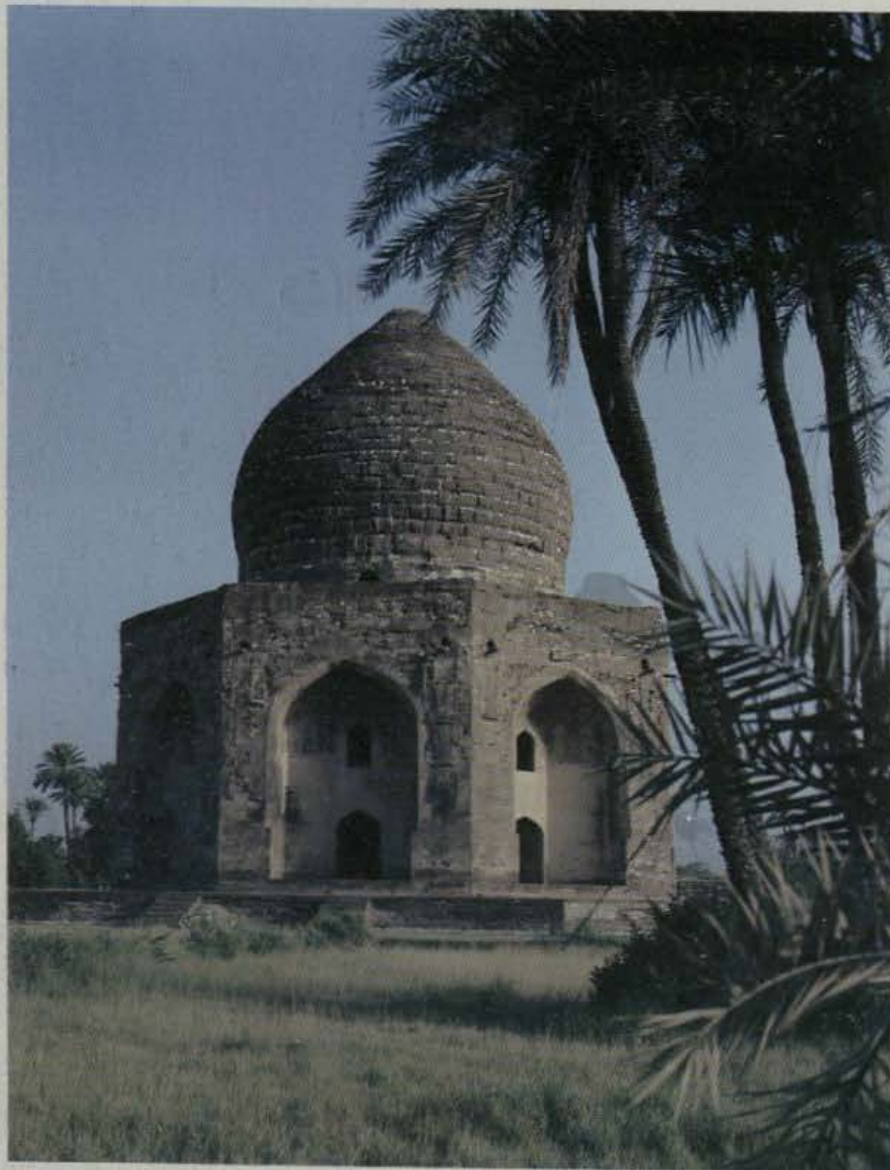
Outside the Fort, opposite the Akbar's Masjidi gate is a mosque called Begum Shahi Masjid. It is the earliest existing mosque of Jahangir period at Lahore. Built by Maryam Zamani Begum, in 1614, the mosque is architecturally important for its two main features ; the double domes and the most beautiful fresco painting with which the whole of its interior is replete. The mosque is surmounted with-arched towers, one at each corner. The northern gateway possesses a Persian inscription in stucco recording the date of construction and the name of the builder.

The mausoleum of Jahangir (d. 1627) was constructed under the orders of Shahjahan. Originally, a pleasure garden of Empress Nur Jahan and called Dilkusha, it was the last abode of the Emperor. The mausoleum is constructed within a high perimeter wall marked by gateways, paved causeways with



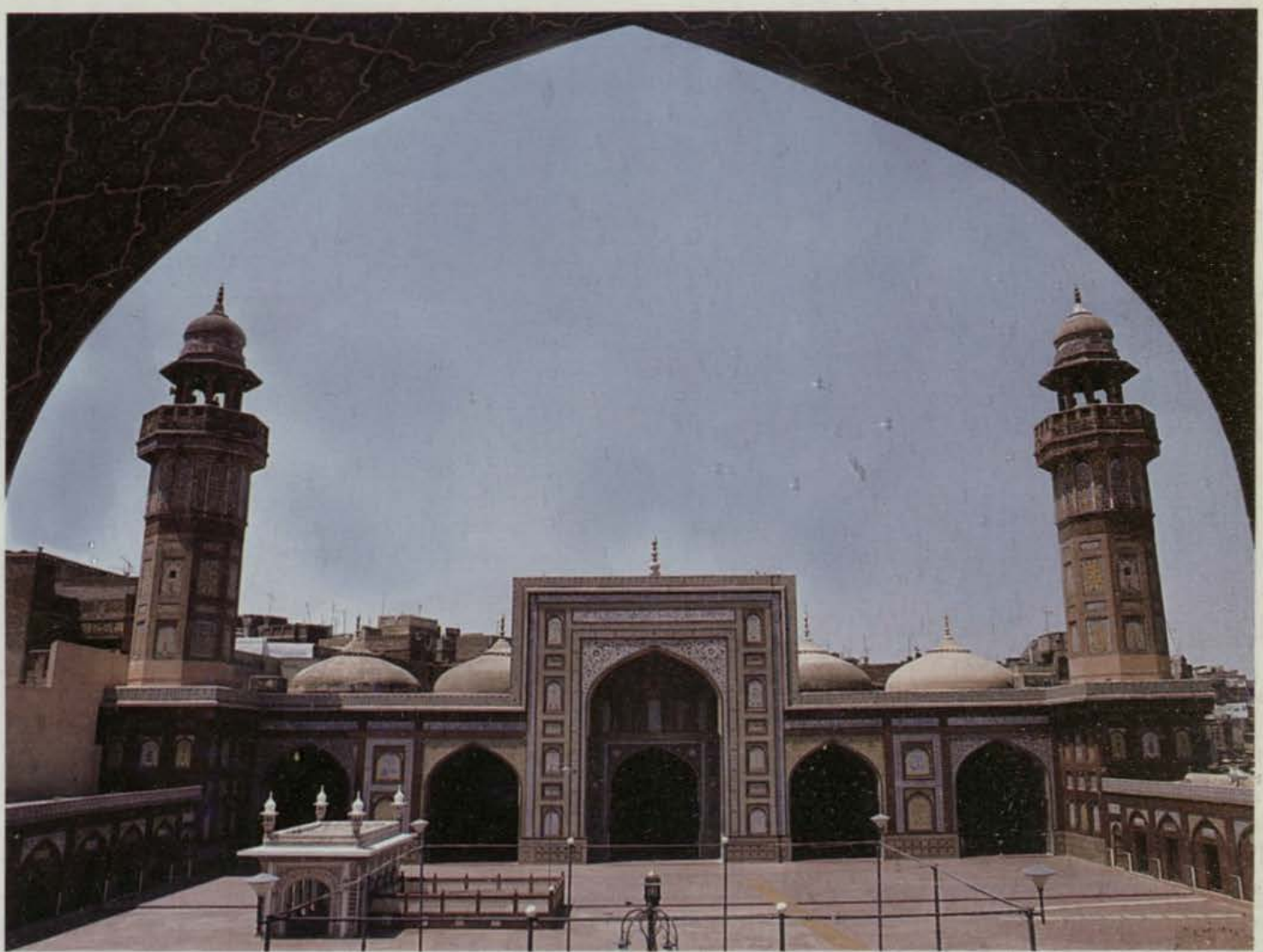


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1. *Shalimar Gardens, Lahore.*
2. *Tomb of Emperor Jahangir.*
3. *Tomb of Asif Khan.*



*Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore.*

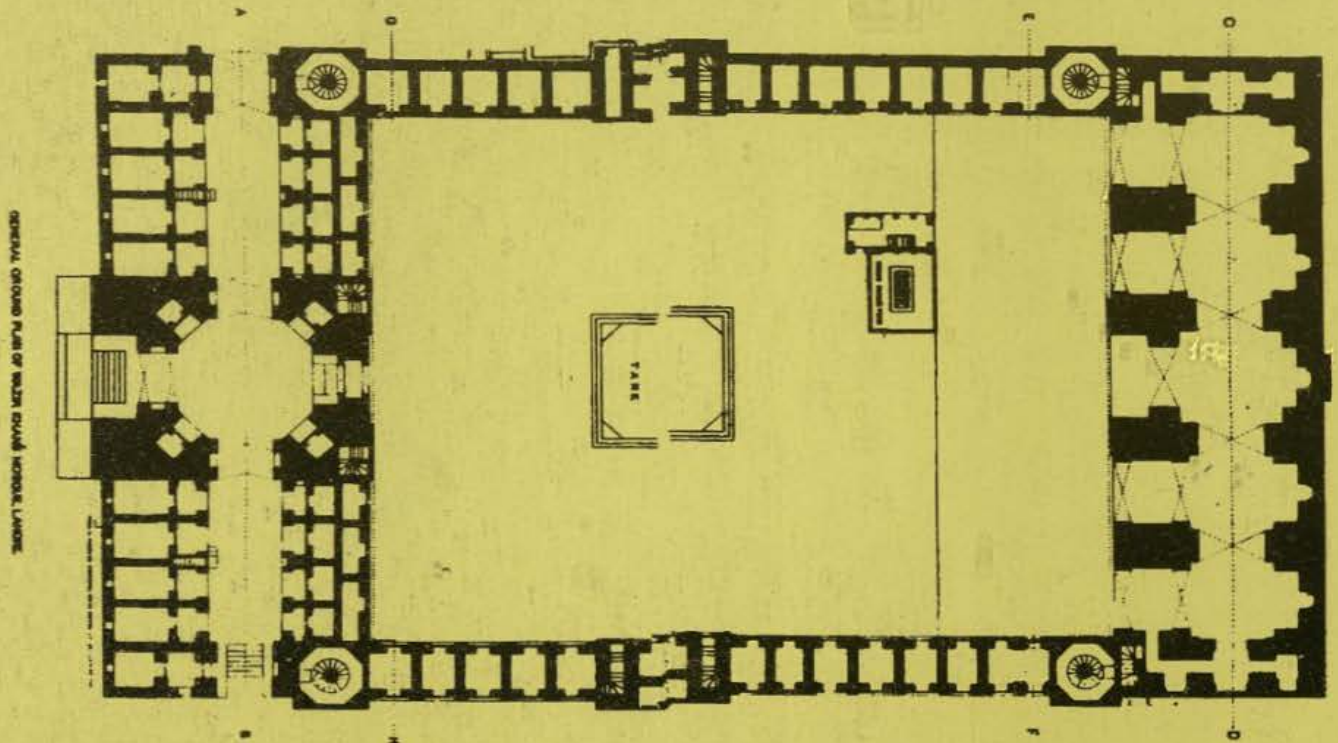
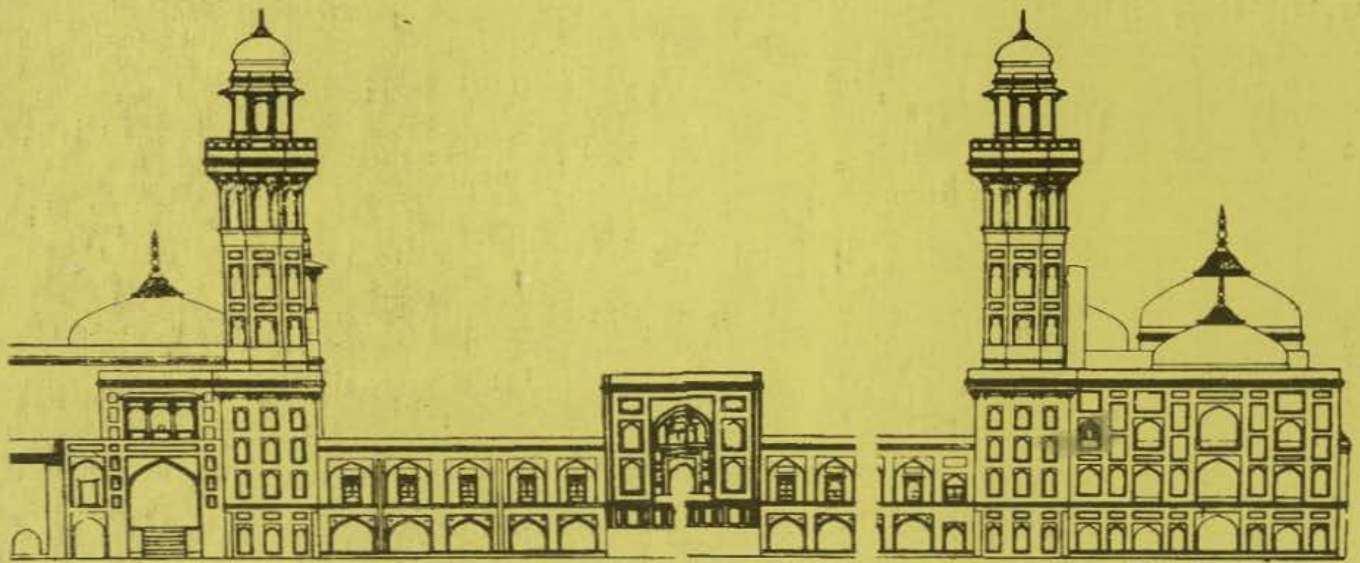
fountains and pools etc. The central square structure is of one storey with octagonal minarets in five stages having profuse colour decoration. The fresco painting, the stone inlay and the mosaic tiles, as well as the intricate pietra-dura manifest the characteristic embellishments of this period. It took ten years to complete, and was finished in 1637.

The Mosque of Wazir Khan is yet another grand specimen of the architecture of the Mughal period. It has unique tile mosaic fresco decoration. The large gateway and the four majestic octagonal minarets add to its grandeur. It was built in 1634 by the celebrated minister and physician of Emperor Shahjahan, Hakim Ilmuddin Ansari, better known as Wazir Khan.

The beautiful three-terraced Shalamar Garden specially designed for Shahjahan in 1642 is the zenith of the recreational architecture of the Mughal



WAZIR KHAN MOSQUE : LAHORE  
NORTH SIDE ELEVATION



*Overleaf :*

- 1. Floral decoration inside Wazir Khan Mosque.*
- 2. A decorated panel in fresco.*
- 3. Rich decorations are distinctive feature of the Wazir Khan Mosque.*
- 4. One of the minarets of Wazir Khan Mosque.*





period. It has a number of pavilions and summer houses. The third terrace had the Jharoka, the sleeping chambers and the residence of the Empress while the central terrace had a *hammam*, originally decorated with pietra-dura work. The Garden has a canal crossed by two subsidiary channels with three big tanks decorated with more than 400 fountains and a beautiful marble cascade. The original entrance to the Garden was from the lowest terrace through the two majestic gateways, one on the east and the other on the west. However, they were abandoned and another gate was opened through the Royal Sleep Chamber on the south during the British days.

The Badshahi Mosque has been considered as the biggest historic mosque of the world. Built in 1673-74, it is a bold and solid brick structure faced with red sandstone and embellished with delicate stucco carving and fresco painting. With the majestic corner towers and beautiful bulbous domes covered with milk-white marble, the mosque proudly crowns the city of Lahore. The double storeyed entrance vestibule is a majestic structure decorated with framed and carved panelling on all its facades. The grand prayer chamber is approached by flights of steps. At the four corners of the courtyard are the tall octagonal towers and four small minarets, also octagonal, are attached to the corners of the prayer chamber. The prayer chamber is crowned with three grand bulbous marble domes. The interior has decorative dado of well-polished *sang-i-abri*.

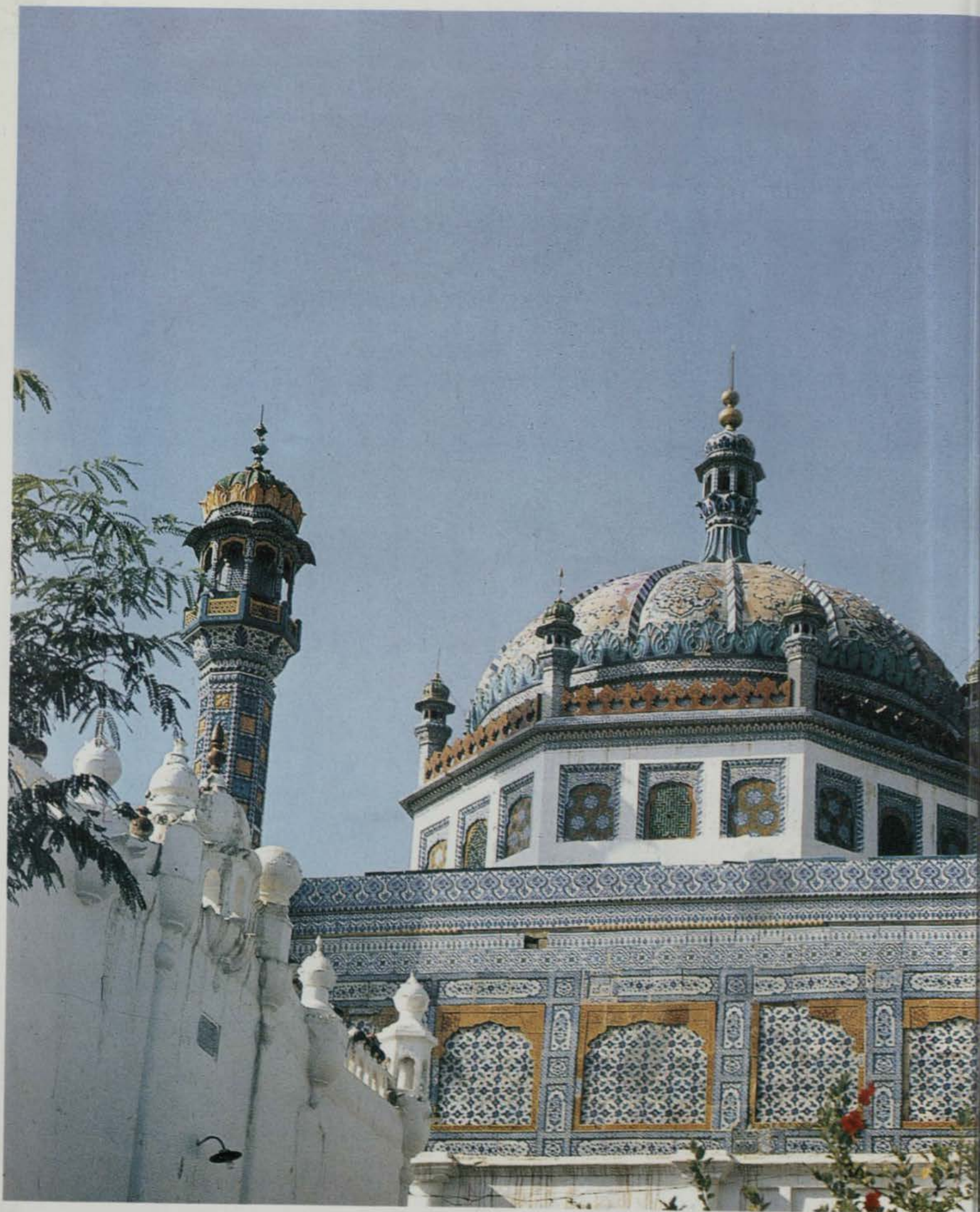
The other more important building erected outside Lahore during the Mughal period could be cited here as the Royal Hunting Resort at Sheikhupura, the Ba'oli of the Emperor Akbar days and two other octagonal tombs of Shahjahan period at Jandiyala Sher Khan near Sheikhupura ; tomb of Daud Bandagi at Shergarh ; a tomb at Hujra Shah Muqim ; tomb of Sheikh Abd-ul-Nabi in Gujranwala district, an exquisitely ornamented building of Shahjahan period ; tomb of Sheikh Ali Beg at Helan, Gujrat, dated 1589; a mosque and tomb of Shah Burhan at Chiniot, both of Shahjahan's days; the

*Preceding page:*

*An exterior view of the Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore.*



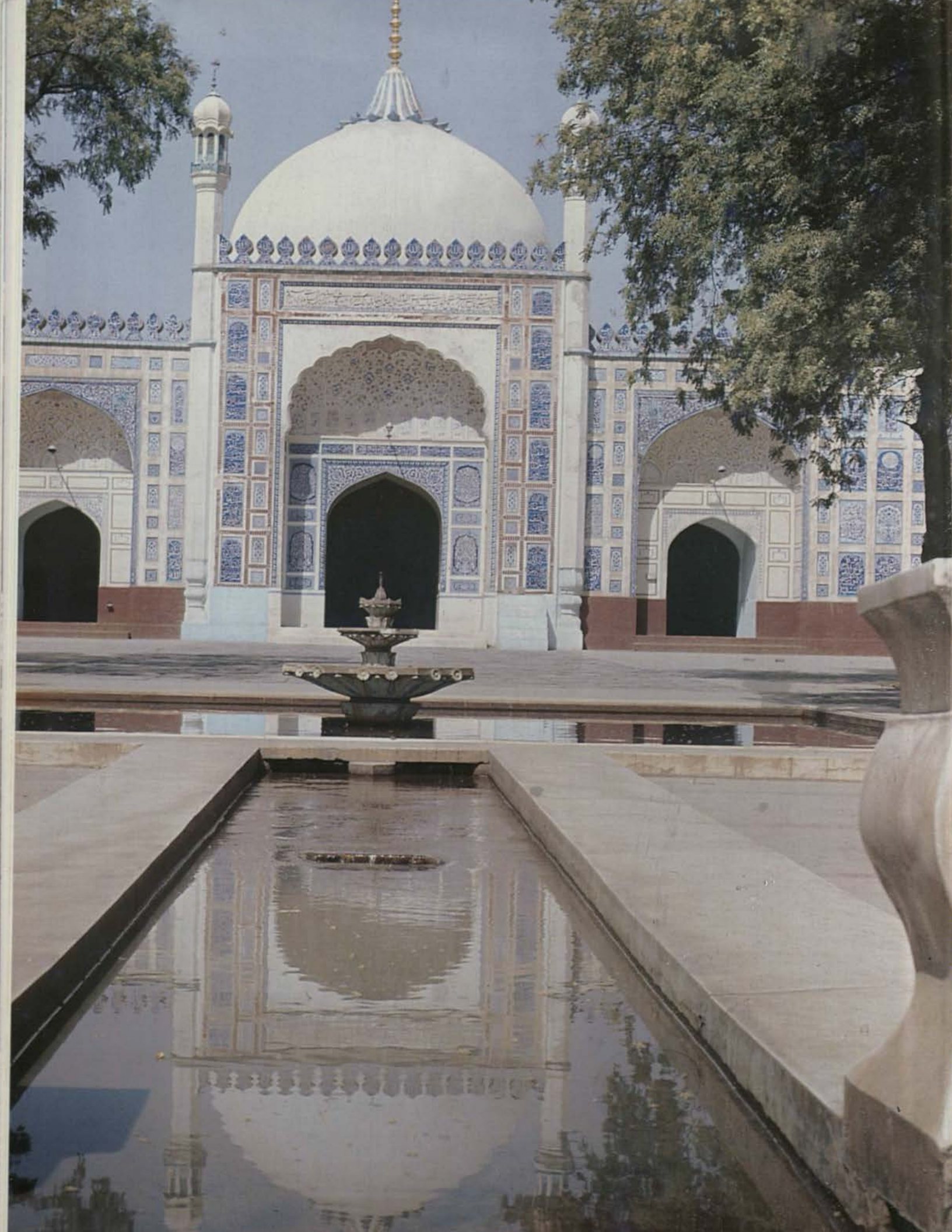
*A general view of Shalamar Gardens, Lahore.*



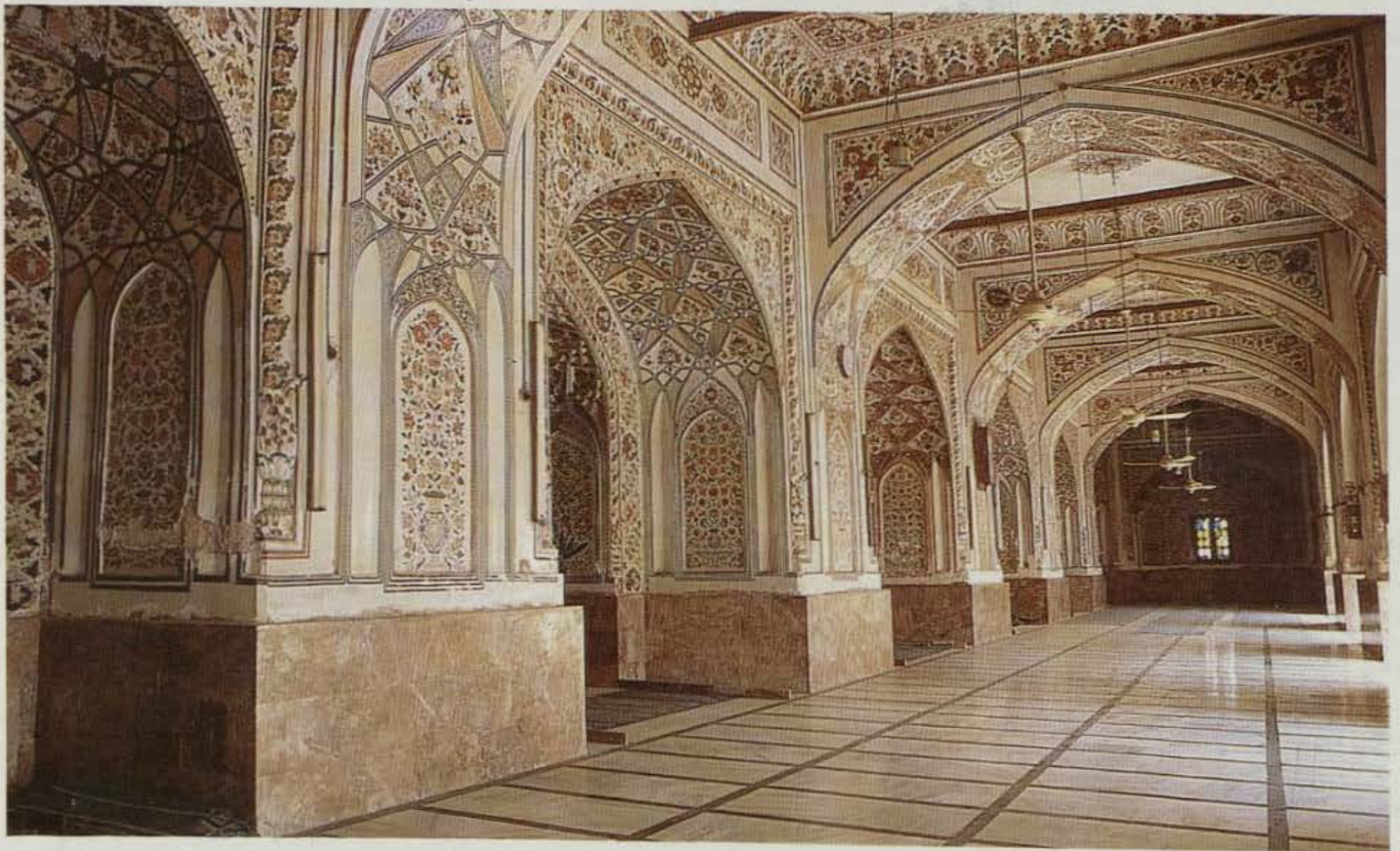


*Entrance of the tomb of Hazrat Sachal Sarmast, Khairpur.*

*An exterior view of the tomb of Hazrat Sachal Sarmast.*

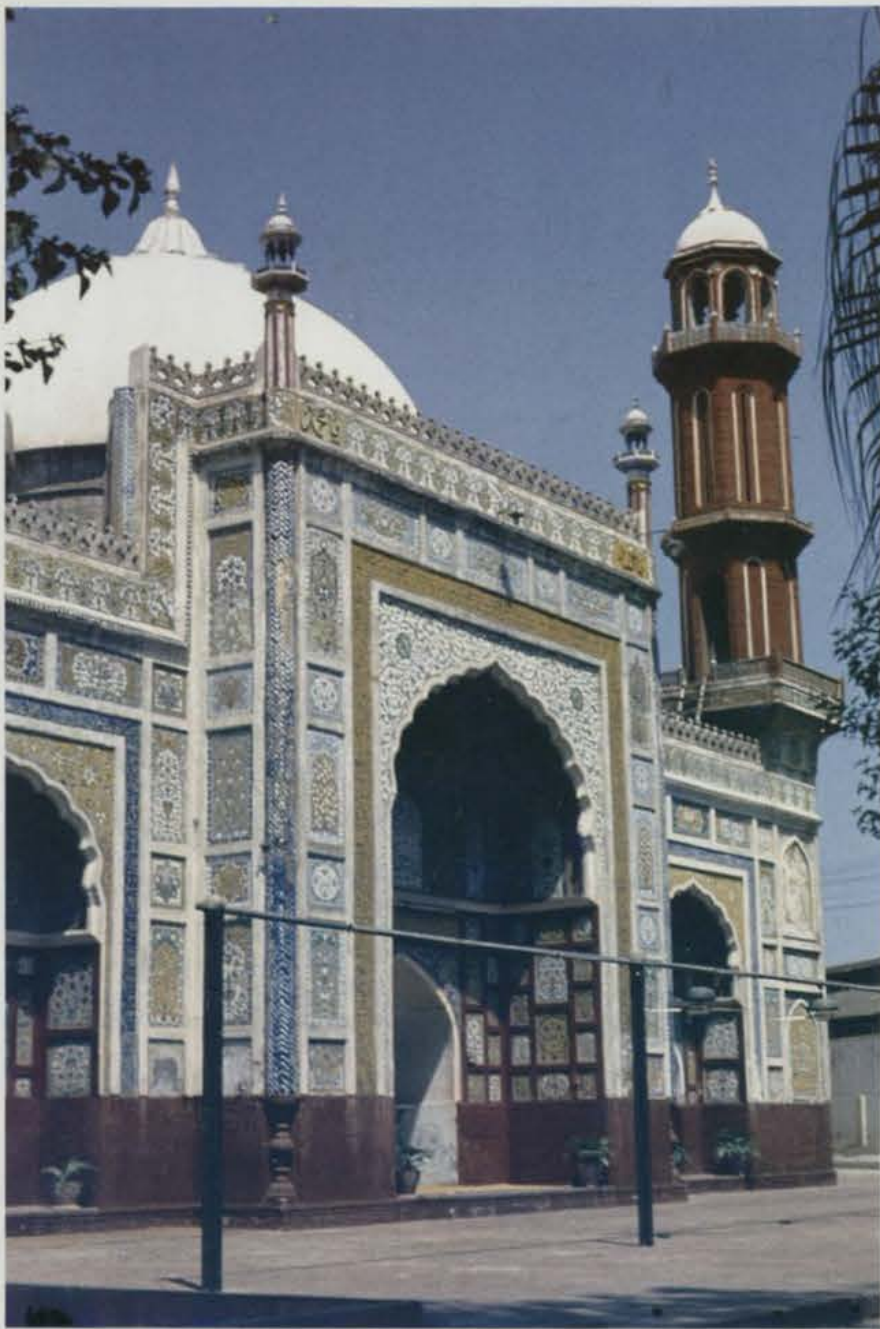






*Mahabat Khan Mosque, Peshawar.  
Interior view of Mahabat Khan Mosque.*

◀ *Jamia Masjid, Multan.*



*Dai Anga Mosque, Lahore.*

Farud Gah-i-Shahan-i-Mughlia at Wah; the tomb of Hakim Humam and Lala Rukh at Hasanabdal; the Rohtas Fort and a nearby tomb; the Riwat Fort; the mosque and fort at Pharwala; the fort Sarai, tomb and the Baradari of Sultan Pervez at Attock; the Gorgathri, the tomb of a certain saint alongwith a mosque, and the Mosque of Mahabat Khan at Peshawar.

These and several other monuments spread over the length and breadth of Pakistan relate the story of the inception, growth and culmination of the various phases and facets of Muslim architecture of Pakistan.

# CALLIGRAPHY

Calligraphy has been one of the most favourite of the visual arts throughout the Muslim world and almost every Muslim sovereign has taken keen interest in its development and dissemination. Besides the writing of the text of the Holy Qur'an and other religious texts, it played a conspicuous role in the various fields of plastic decoration.

## KUFIC SCRIPT

The text of the Holy Qur'an was recorded in the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him) on a variety of writing materials, including papyrus, parchment, leather, limestone slabs, shoulder blades, ribs of animals like camels. It was in this context that the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) stressed upon his followers for reading and writing. In the days of the first caliph, Hazrat Abu Bakr (may God be pleased with him), the Holy Qur'an was collected in a book form, and then codified under the third caliph, Hazrat Uthman (may God be pleased with him). On both the occasions, it was transcribed on parchment in a style of writing known as Kufic. During the caliphate of the fourth caliph Hazrat Ali bin abi Talib (may God be pleased with him), the style was perfected. The earliest known copies of the Holy Qur'an do not normally record the date of their transcription or the name of the scribe. However, when these copies were offered as a *waqf* to the mosques or *madaris*, the fact was recorded on the flyleaf. These notes were called *waqfiyas* and normally record dates and thus the *waqfiyas* were not very far out from the date of transcription. According to these *waqfiyas*, most of the earliest known copies belonged to the third century of Hijra. These were transcribed variantly in bold as well as minute Kufic letters. A fine specimen of minute Kufic attributed to Ibn-e-Muqla (272-328/886-940) is

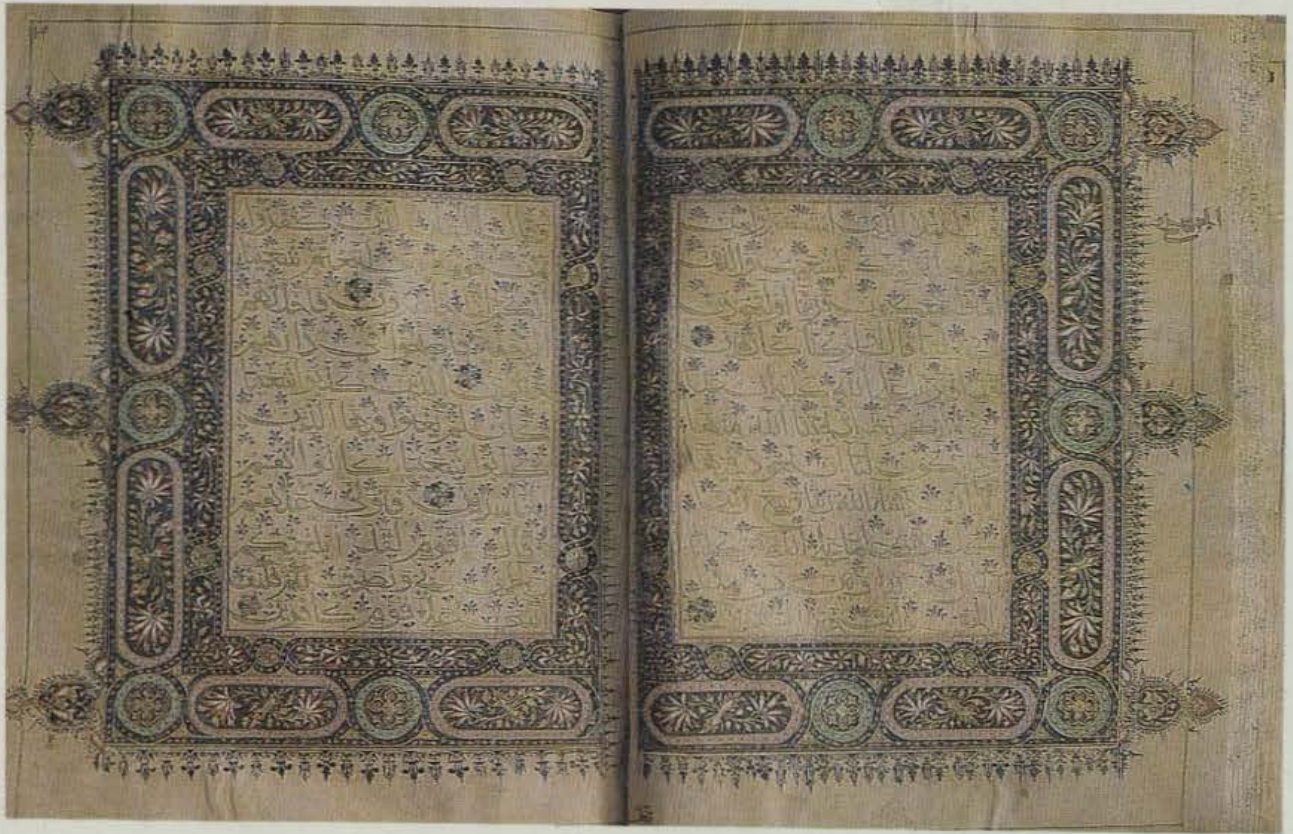


*Specimen of Kufic writing (5th Century Hijra).*

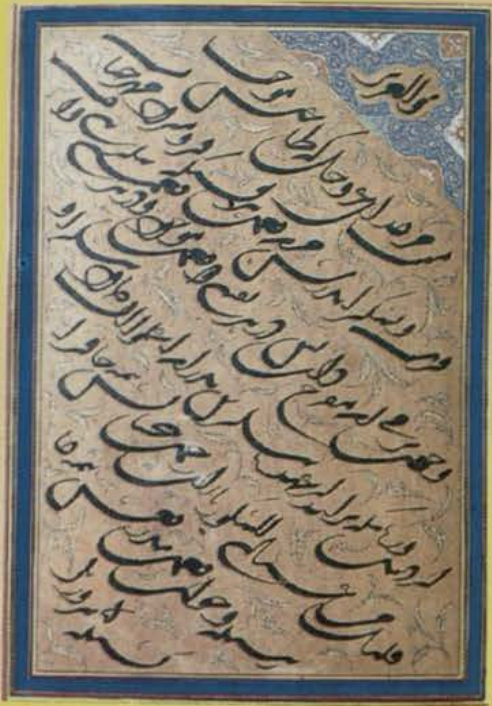
now preserved in Lahore Museum, while another copy in the same style is available in the National Museum of Pakistan. Ibn-e-Muqla was vazier in the days of Abbasid caliphs. He is said to have invented six styles of writing, and had codified grammar of the art of writing. The styles are : Naskh, Suls, Muhaqqaq, Raihan, Jauqi and Ghubar.

## NASKH AND SULS

While Kufic was in use for writing the text of the Holy Qur'an, Naskh was also practiced especially for several other purposes. Naskh and its offshoots were then adapted almost universally for writing the text of the Holy Qur'an and other works. The other renowned calligraphists were Ali bin Hilal better known as Ibn-al-Bawwab and Ya'qut-al-Musta'simi. The former perfected the various earlier styles of Ibn-e-Muqla. He is said to have transcribed as many as sixty-four copies of the Holy Qur'an. Similarly, the celebrated Ya'qut-al-Musta'simi, brought Naskh script to the heights of perfection. He perfected the style called Suls. Musta'simi died in Baghdad in 1297

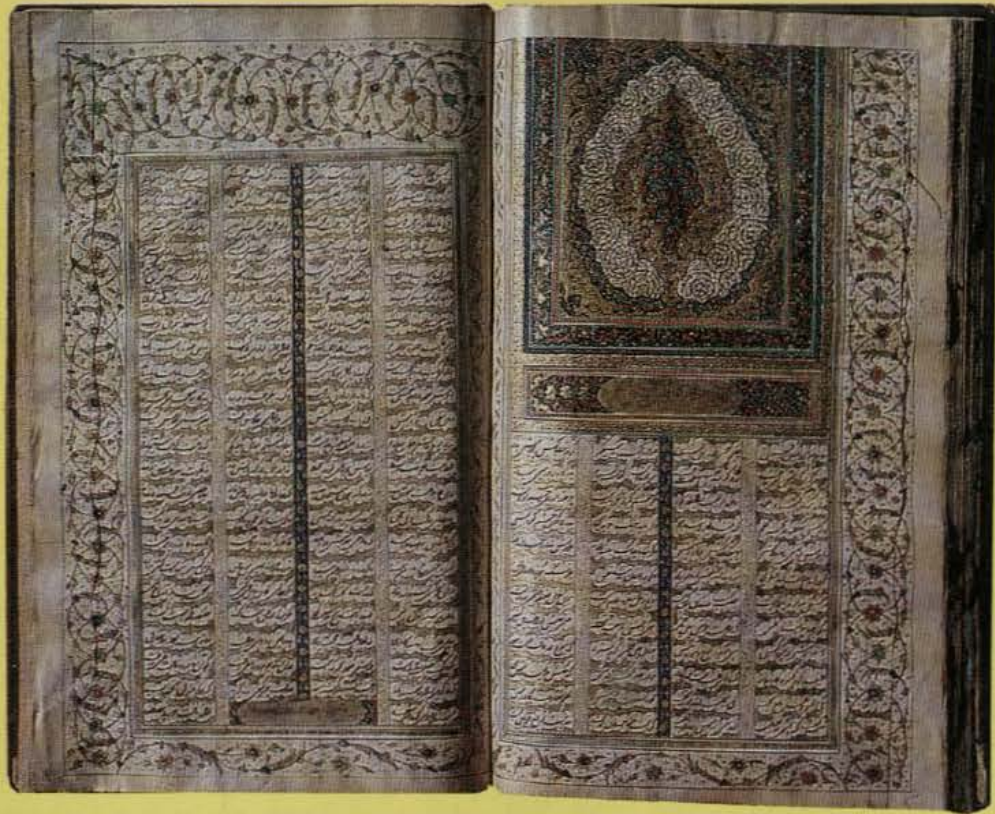


*Decorated pages of Holy Qur'an.*



Specimens of calligraphy in Tughra, Nasta' liq.,  
Gulzari, Shikasta, Diwani and Naskh.

کتاب



بِأَرْطِيَّةٍ وَمِنْ لَدُنْ  
الطُّبَّةِ نَبَأَهُ أَنْزَلَ  
رَبُّ الْقَوَى سُبْحَانَ  
عَنْ قَبْلِ رُبِّ الْخَلْقِ



اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ  
نَفْسِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ  
نَفْسِي وَمِنْ شَرِّ الشَّيْطَانِ

at an advanced age of 120 years, and left a galaxy of calligraphists as his pupils. Among these were Ahmad-al-Suharwardi who is well-known for his minute Naskh. Several specimens of Musta'simi's writings have been preserved in various museums and libraries of the world. One of these attributed to him is preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan at Karachi. It is transcribed in elegant Naskh and Suls on gold sprinkled paper. Another exceptionally large-size copy, now preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan is worth mentioning here. The colophon shows that it was prepared in bold Naskh in 851/1447 during the reign of Sultan Abul Muzaffar Shah (844-863/1440-1458) one of the Sharqi Sultans of Jaunpur. The text is transcribed in gold water within black lines.

## BAHAR SCRIPT

Khat-i-Bahar, a transitional style between Kufic and Naskh, is believed to have flourished in the 14th century in the Subcontinent for writing the text of the Holy Qur'an. It appears that the style was shortlived and did not have long and popular life like the other styles. However, several copies of the Holy Qur'an transcribed in this style are preserved in museum. It appears that the particular script was used expressly and exclusively for transcribing the Holy Qur'an, as no copy of any other work is known to have existed in this style of writing.

## THE NASTA'LIQ

While Naskh was still in popular use throughout the Islamic world, Iran experimented yet another and more beautiful style during the closing decades of the 14th century. It was derived from Naskh and Ta'liq, and Mir Ali of Tabrez introduced Nasta'liq script for writing the text of the Persian classics. His excellent writing earned for him the title of *Qiblat al-Kutab* from Amir Timur. The other prominent calligraphists whose works are celebrated for their finesse, were Sultan Ali Mashhadi (d. 1513), Kamal-ud-Din Behzad, Mahmud Nishapuri, Maulana Azhar Tirmizi (d. 880/1475) Mir Imad Husaini (1024/1615), and his talented daughter Gauhar Shad, and Abdul Baqi.

The style was brought to the Subcontinent by the Mughal sovereign, Humayun whose keen interest in the art and liberal patronage attracted to his



هو العتق

أعطيت

تحت ملكة

محمد بن

علي بن

باج زرارة

١٨٨٠

court many calligraphists from Iran. It is generally believed that the Mughal sovereigns not only patronized the art of calligraphy, but also many of them were proficient in beautiful writing, and had proper and regular training in it. Babar is said to have invented a special script known as *Khatt-i-Babari*, while his grandson Akbar founded an Imperial Atelier where artists and calligraphists prepared, illustrated and illuminated copies of Persian and Arabic works for the Imperial Library. The calligraphists included Khwaja Abdus Samad, Khwaja Sharif son of Abdus Samad, Fathullah Shirazi, Muhammad Hussain Kashmiri Zarrin Qalam, Abdur Rahim Anbarin Qalam, Mir Masum Qandhari Bokhari, his son Mir Buzurg, Mullah Ali Ahmed Muhrakan, Mir Abdullah Mushkin Qalam and many others. Emperor Jahangir appointed Muhammad Sharif the *Amir-ul-Umra* who scribed a large part of Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri. It was during the days of Jahangir that Muhammad Husain perfected the *Shikasta* writing, of which two fine specimens, *Kulliyat-i-Sa'di* and *Kulliyat-i-Saib*, are preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan. Similarly, Shahjahan's court had master calligraphists like Amanat Khan, Hakim Rukna Kashi, Munir Lahori, Murad Kashmiri, Muhammad Saleh, Abdul Baqi Haddad Ya'qut Raqam, and Abdur Rashid Dailami. His four sons, Dara Shikoh, Murad, Aurangzeb and Shuja were proficient calligraphists. Dara Shikoh was the pupil of Rashid Dailami, while Aurangzeb is known to have calligraphed several copies of the Holy Qur'an. During the reign of the later Mughal emperors, calligraphy received adequate imperial impetus and calligraphists like Muhammad Afzal Lahori, Muhammad Muqim, Mir Musa, Qazi Asmatullah, Mirza Sauda, Mir Muhammad Hussain, Imadul Malik, Gazi-ud-Din, Hafiz Amiruddin, Muhammad Amir Rizvi Panja Kash etc. Sauda is known to have introduced the Lucknow style of calligraphy. Similarly, Mir Panja Kash gave a new impetus to Nasta'liq and created several master calligraphists in the style like Agha Mirza Dehlavi and Imam Viridi.

These master calligraphists spent their lives in practising the art and producing specimens in the shape of copies of the Holy Qur'an, classical works of Persian literature, letters, documents; verses and greetings. These are now the proud possessions of the various museums and art galleries. A copy of the Holy Qur'an was prepared in three volumes in bold Nasta'liq for the Imperial Library of Shah Jahan. The exquisite copy is a rare piece of art of calligraphy; having profuse illumination, gilding and colour decoration. The colophon gives the date of transcription 1060/1650.



A specimen of Nasta'liq.



A tughra in Suls style.

Thousands of the books written beautifully and illuminated and illustrated elegantly once adorned the imperial libraries, have now found their way to museums and libraries all over the world. Some of them are now preserved in Pakistan as well. The collection of the National Museum of Pakistan has several such rare books which once adorned the royal libraries. Among these is a rare copy of *Samarat-ul-Quds* of La'l Beg. It was prepared for the Imperial Library of the Mughals, bearing the date : 1017/1669; a copy of *Kimiya'-i-Sa'adat* of Ghazali transcribed by Abdu'l Karim bin

Muhammad Yusuf, a Mir Munshi of Emperor Aurangzeb, in beautiful Nasta'liq for the study of the Emperor. The copy was also studied by Dara Shikoh who made several corrections and additions in the text of the scribe; a copy of Shahnama with several illustrations; Diwan of Amir Khusrau, Divan of Bairam Khan, Diwan of Shahi etc. The last name is transcribed by Sultan Ali Mashhadi.

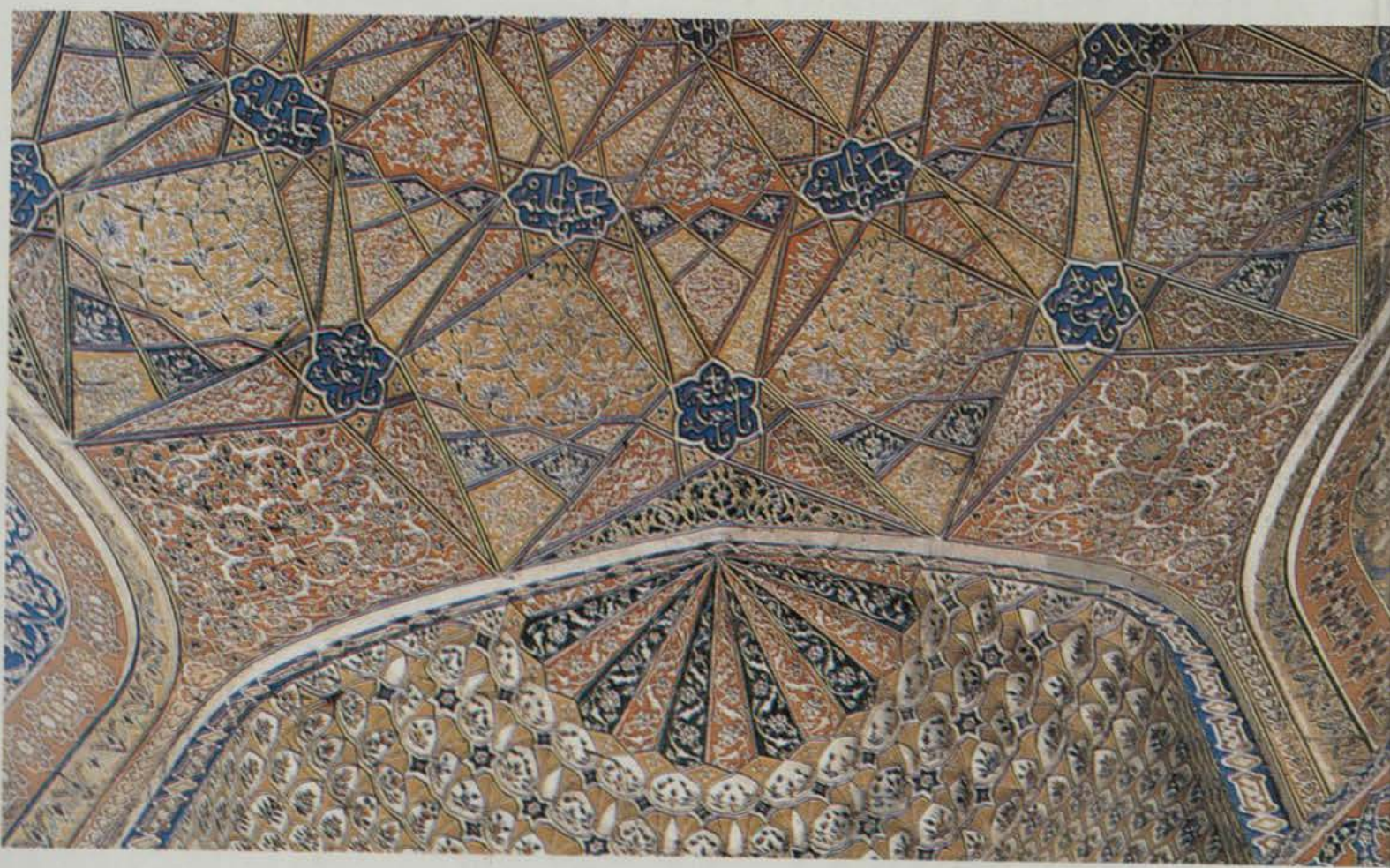
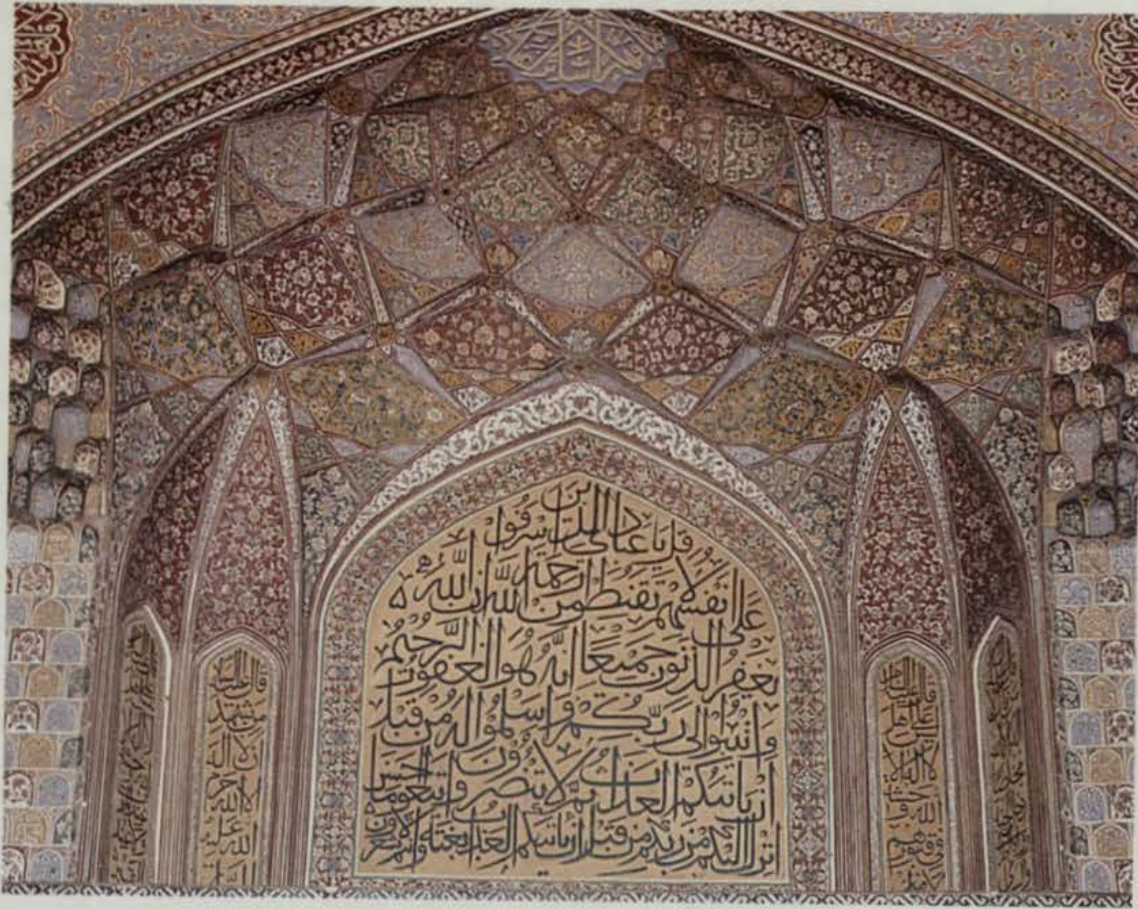
## MINOR ORNAMENTAL STYLES

While Naskh and Nasta'liq were used constantly for writing the Holy Qur'an and other religious texts, other varieties in the shape of *Ghubar*, *Gulzar*, *Tughra*, *Bahar*, *Raihan*, *Tauqi'*, *Muhaqqaq*, *Riqa*, *Maghribi*, and many others were experimented by enterprising calligraphists. In essence, they were, ornamental exercises practiced almost side by side with the main styles. *Ghubar* was often used for writing the text of the Holy Qur'an on a long strip of paper. A copy of this specimen is preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan transcribed in 1139/1726 by Ghulam Mohy-ud-Din. The *Tughra* was very popular with Ottoman Turks who had taken it from the *Seljuqs*. The style was mainly used as a decorative *Unwan* on the *Faramin* and contained the name and title of the monarch who issued it. The practice was adopted by the Muslim rulers of the South-Asian Subcontinent including the Mughal emperors. Similarly, the 'bow and arrow' and 'boat and oars' *tughras* were devised and used especially in epigraphs in the Muslim Bengal.

## MONUMENTAL CALLIGRAPHY

Apart from writing the text of the Holy Qur'an and other books on paper, calligraphy was used to decorate monumental buildings as well, especially the mosques and mausoleums. The popular device was both extensive as well as varied and stone, stucco, faience, faience-mosaic, terracotta, wood, glass, glass-mosaic, were used for carving or assembling the texts. Many historic buildings on which these epigraphs were fixed do not exist now, but their inscriptions still survive. The earliest known inscription found on the soil of Pakistan was discovered from the ruins of a mosque at Banbhore, the site of the famous Debul. As has been alluded to earlier, it is carved on yellow stone in floriated Kufic with tendrils growing up from the terminations. The blank spaces are filled with floral motifs. Another inscription having only a few letters in Kufic was found from Mansura.

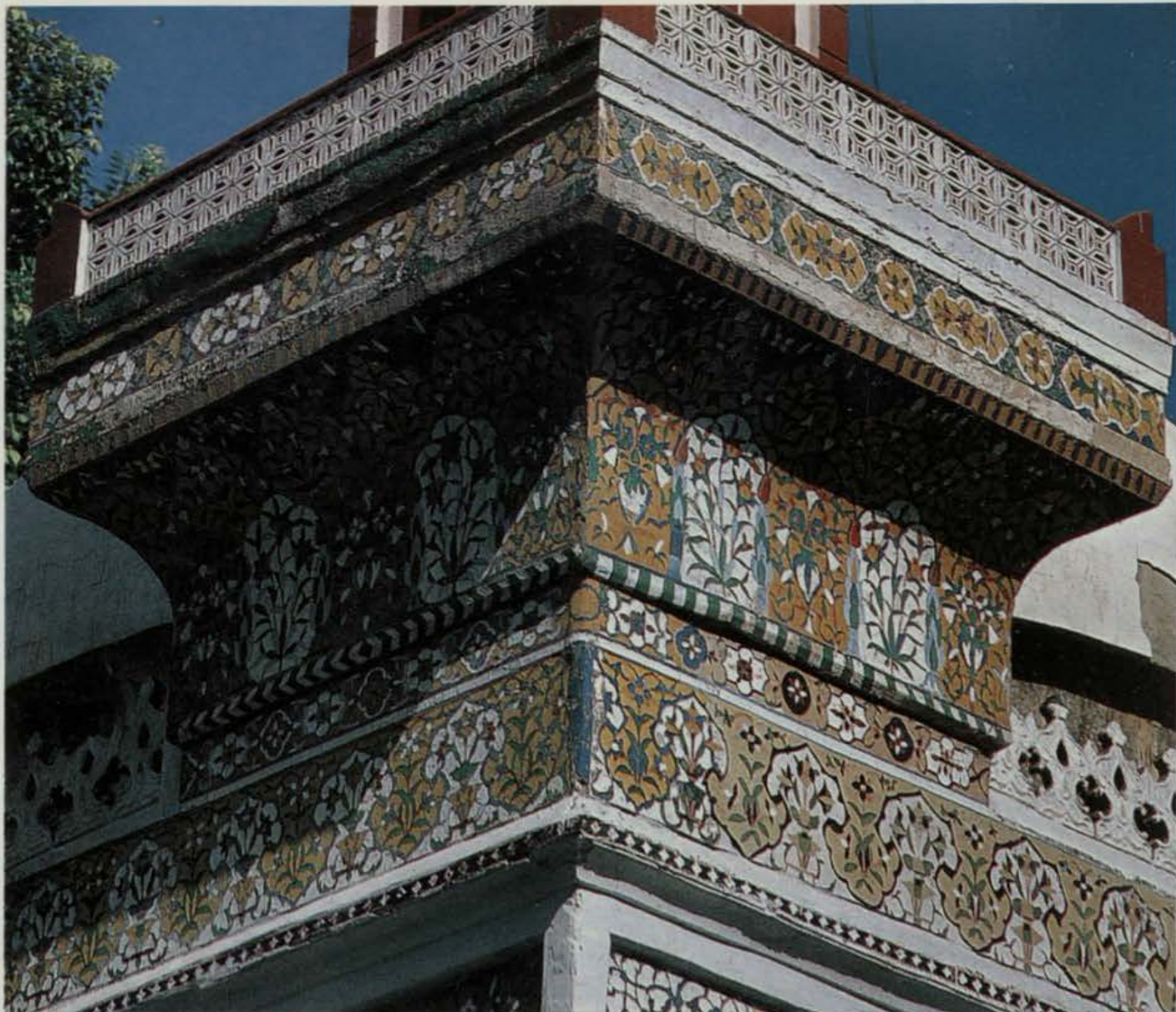
مَنْ لَمْ يَرْكَبِ الْإِسْلَامَ  
مُسْتَهْزِئًا خَرَجَ مِنْ حِلْمِي  
فَلَا يَنْبَغِي لِي أَنْ أَتِيَهُ  
فَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ السَّابِقَ سَمِعَ لِنَبِيِّ  
أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ السَّابِقَ سَمِعَ لِنَبِيِّ  
أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ السَّابِقَ سَمِعَ لِنَبِيِّ  
أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ السَّابِقَ سَمِعَ لِنَبِيِّ





*Beautifully executed pieces of calligraphy : Wazir Khan Mosque.*

Although Kufic was replaced with Naskh and Suls, efforts at carving epigraphs in this style are known to have continued. However, their nature had been more or less decorative. At Multan, on the facade of the tomb of Baha-ud-Din Zakariya a panel runs on the sides and top of the eastern entrance. The panel is filled with cut brick tiles arranged in meanders forming the shape of pseudo-Kufic letters. Stylistically, the specimen may date to the 13th century. Similarly, several historic buildings at Thatta have preserved some of these devices dating as late as sixteenth century. One of these is a motif created with a repetition of 'Ali' in a geometric design on the ceno-



*A decorated portion of Dai Anga Mosque, Lahore.*

taph of a grave, while yet another is an enriched entwined composition of formulae 'Allah', 'Rasul' and 'Ali' set against a floral background. It is a part of an inscription of a mosque constructed at Thatta by Shah Hasan Arghun in 938/1538. The mosque does not exist, but the inscriptions are now preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan.

A large variety of inscriptions are carved in Naskh and Suls characters, on stone, faience, terracotta, stucco and wood. Their repositories are at Thatta, Multan, Pakpattan, Dipalpur, Sukkur, Lahore and other places in Pakistan. The finest extant specimens carved on wood are those found on the Mehrab of the Mausoleum of Rukn-i-Alam at Multan, and on the wooden

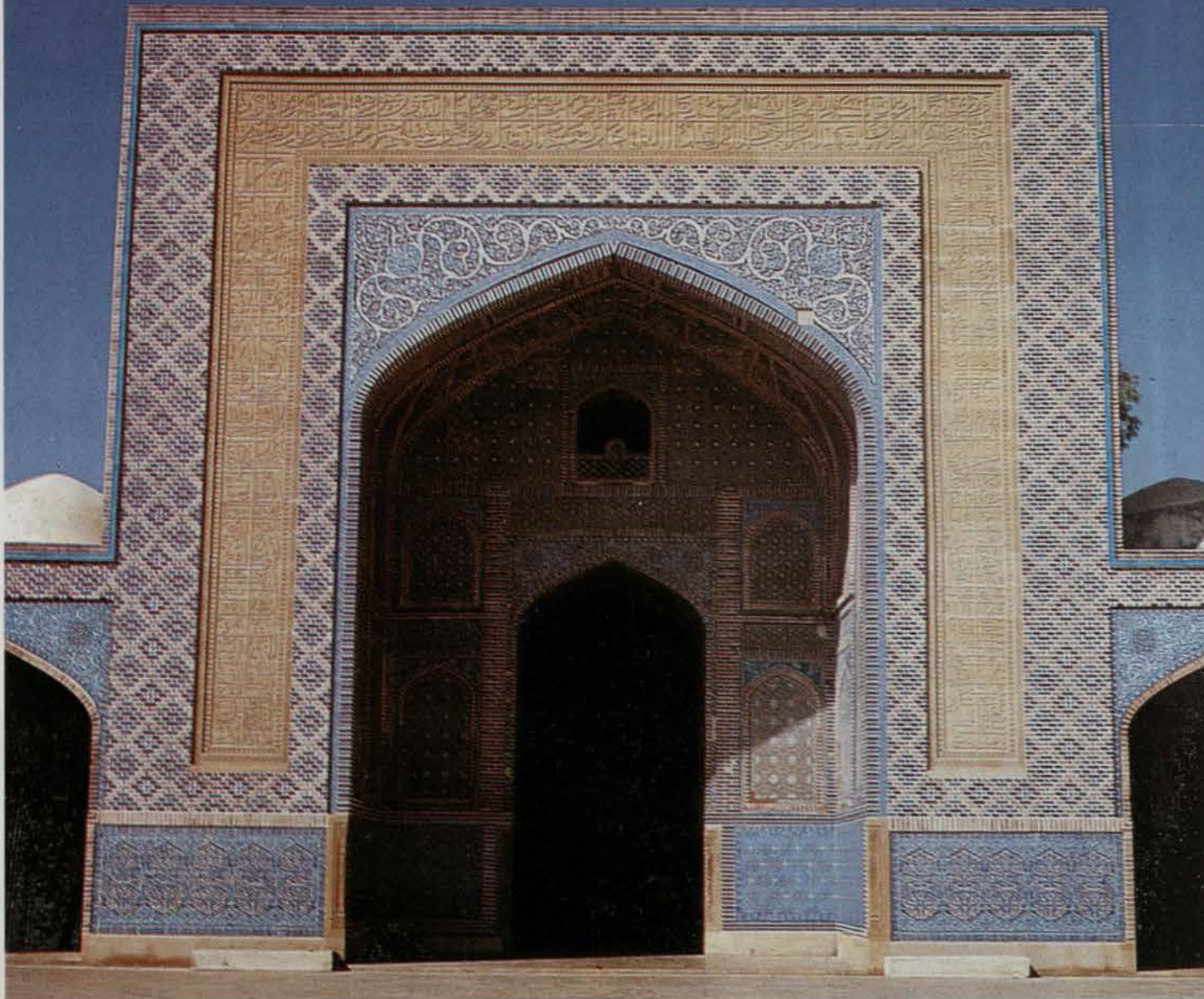


binders in the interior of the tomb of Sheikh Ala-ud-Din at Pakpattan. The biggest repository of inscriptions both in stone as well as in faience is found at Makli Hill (Thatta). Numerous cenotaphs and head stones of stray graves at this biggest necropolis of the East possess inscriptions in Naskh and Suls.

Nasta'liq, the most exquisite of all, was chiefly employed for carving the epigraphs under the patronage of the Mughals. Although during the earlier phase of Akbar's rule, Naskh was favoured for the purpose, the phenomenal change to Nasta'liq occurred most probably under the influence of Mir Ma'sum (d. 1019/1606) a great noble, and senior officer of the court of Akbar. His enthusiasm in the art of calligraphy or more precisely, Nasta'liq carving entitles him to be called as the father of monumental Nasta'liq of the period. Hundreds of his specimens are preserved in various museums. The epigraphs of the imperial Mughals carved on the cenotaphs of the tomb of



*The Mehrab of Mahabat Khan Mosque, Peshawar, decorated with Suls style of calligraphy.*



*Main entrance to the Prayer Chamber, Shahjahan Mosque, Thatta.*

Emperor Jahangir and on the facade of the entrance gateway to Jahangiri Mahal at Lahore Fort are masterpieces of the art, the Mosque of Wazir Khan, the Gulabi Bagh Gateway at Lahore and Shah Burhan's tomb at Chiniot possess specimens of Nasta'liq carving during the days of Shahjahan. The last three named monuments have epigraphs executed in faience mosaics.

All these inscriptions are the coveted specimens of the art of Muslim calligraphy practised on the soil of Pakistan.

# MUGHAL PAINTING

It was during Mughal period of our history that painting received a real impetus. It is commonly believed that the second Mughal emperor Humayun while staying in Iran invited two promising painters, Abdus Samad and Mir Syed Ali, to join his court. The earliest known painting executed by Abdus Samad or according to some other art critics, by Mir Syed Ali, is the famous composite painting of the House of Timur, now preserved in the British Museum.

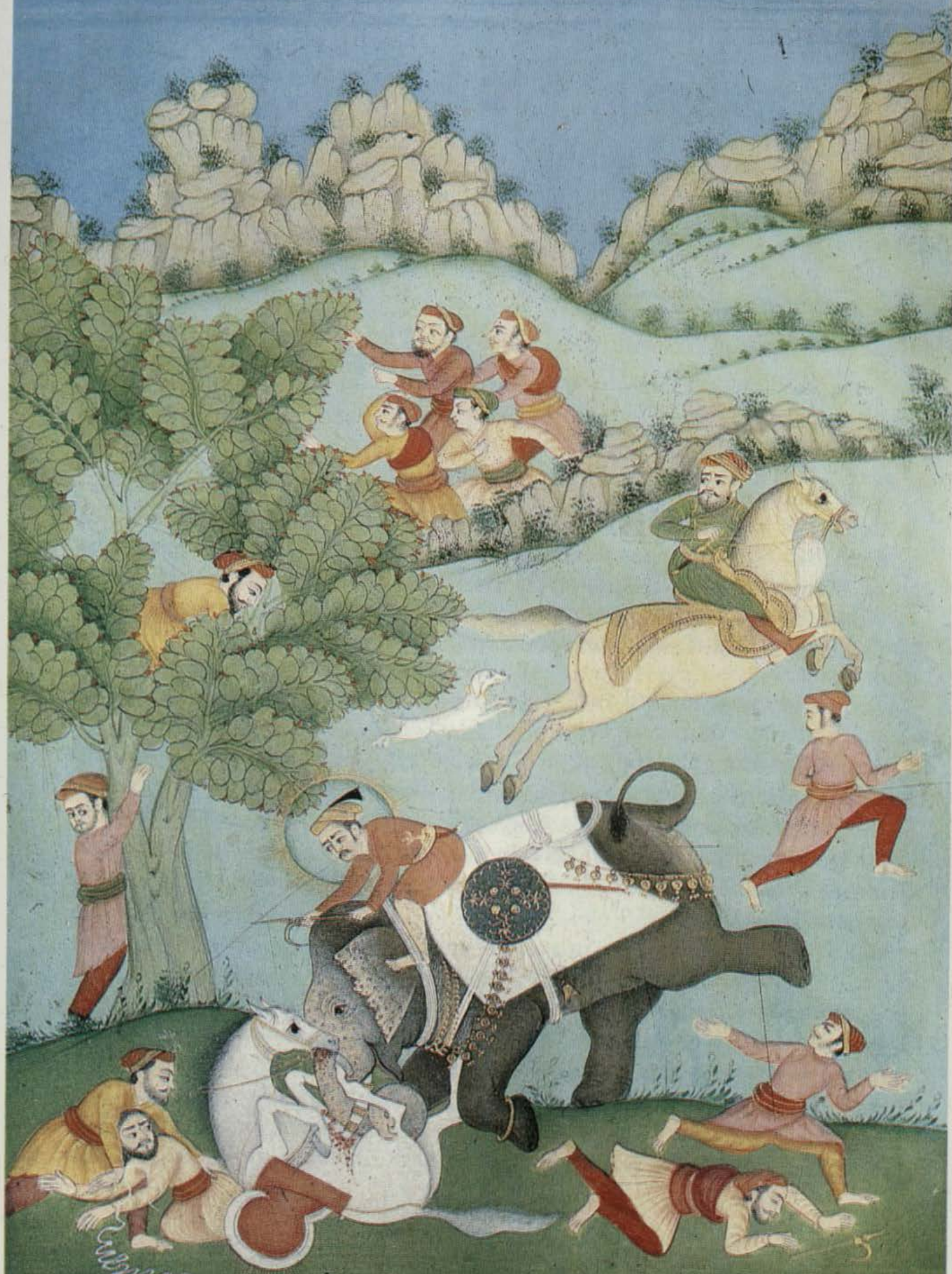
While still at Kabul, the painters developed skill and a distinctive style of their own. This was, in essence, the birth of the Mughal art of painting. After the death of Humayun, Akbar was proclaimed emperor in 1556. The young emperor created history by establishing a full-fledged Imperial Atelier of painters under the supervision of these two painters and were assigned the task of illustrating *Dastan-i-Amir Hamza, or Hamza Nama*. These paintings were of extraordinary large size, each measuring two-and-a-half feet by two feet, painted on fine cotton mounted on paper. The back was used for writing the text. In all, fourteen hundred paintings were prepared and arranged in twelve folio volumes. The work took fifteen years to complete (c. 1556-1580) while more than fifty painters executed them. Out of the large number only 125 paintings are known to have survived; the largest number are shared by Vienna and London museums. Some Vienna paintings bear seal impression of Akbar dated 1001/1592 and that of Aurangzeb dated 1100/1688.

The second book selected by the Emperor for the purpose of illustrations was the *Razmnama* (Persian version of Mahabharata). It took the master artists six years to complete. The tradition so set up became the most

favourite throughout the long reign of Akbar and thousands of Persian classics both in the imperial court and in smaller courts of princes and nobles, were prepared and illustrated. It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of works so prepared. Many of those that survived have now found their way to various museums and art galleries of the world. We know, for instance, the illustrated manuscripts of *Tutinama*, *Darabnama*, *Babar Nama*, *Timur Nama*, *Akbar Nama*, *Baharistan*, *Bustan*, *Shahnama*, *Zafar Nama*, *Nafahat-ul-Uns*, *Anwar-i-Suhaili*, *Diwans of Hafiz*, *Anwari*, *Shahi*, *Amir Khusrau*, *Khamsa-e-Nizami*, *Ajaib-ul Makhlukat* etc. A few folios of the last named classic are now preserved in the National Museum of Pakistan. Many of these paintings bear names of the painters who executed them. The prominent painters of the age besides Abdus Samad and Mir Syed Ali, were : Farrukh Beg, Daswant, Kesu Kalan, Kesu Khurd, Basawan, Khem Karan Kakand, Mahesh, Sanwala, Haribans and Ram.

It has been asserted by certain critics that Jahangir (1606–1627) had evinced keen and enthusiastic interest in the art of painting since his young age. He had gathered together artists of repute and had established his own Atelier under the supervision of Aqa Riza Herati. The prince was interested in the subjects covering everyday life rather than sophisticated discourses represented through classical works. He was fond of portrait paintings, European works, fauna and flora of the country. These paintings were collected and preserved in the shape of *Muraqq'a* (albums) to be seen and enjoyed at leisure. Several such albums are known to have survived and are now the proud possessions of museums and art galleries throughout the world. The paintings and calligraphic specimens included in these *muraqq'as* were pasted on larger-sized papers and the broad margins were treated with profuse *hashiya* ornamentations.

The Prince's Atelier, paved the way for crystallization of a distinct style of Mughal painting. The inauguration of this particular style took place at Lahore where the new emperor stayed for a long time after suppressing Khusrau's revolt. The Atelier and the Imperial Library were shifted from Agra to Lahore. However, the tradition of manuscript illustration continued with all vigour, and besides illustrating those scripts which were left unfinished during the previous regime were completed and some new works





*Portraits of Mughal emperors and queens in miniature on ivory.*

were undertaken. Above all, however, were the illustrations of *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, several copies of which were prepared under the orders of the Emperor. A double-page frontispiece of one of these illustrated manuscripts of *Tuzuk* giving the details of the coronation of the Emperor prepared by Abu'l Hasan is still preserved. It was liked by the Emperor so much that the painter was bestowed the title of *Nadiruz-Zaman*.

The age witnessed a craze for copying European subjects, although the trait had begun during the previous reign when in 1580, Missionary Radolphe Acquaviva brought a copy of the Royal Polyglot Bible of Philip II of Spain, painted in eight volumes, and a copy of the Byzantine Madonna from the Borgeses Chapel at S. Mavia Maggiore in Rome, and presented them to Akbar. Under Jahangir, Abu'l Hasan executed a copy of Durer's 'Saint John of the Cross'. The works of Italian painters created an impact on the paintings of Jahangir period.

It is believed with plausible certainty that the master-artists of this period painted portraits of almost all the nobles of the court and other senior officers most of which still survive and are preserved in the various museums. Many of them were painted by leading portraitists like Monohar, Abu'l Hasan, and Nanha. Similarly, pictures of animals and birds were executed by Ustad Mansur. The most important painters of Jahangir period were; Aqa Raza, his son Abu'l Hasan entitled *Nadiruz-Zaman*, Farrukh Beg, Mirza



Ghulam, Mansur, Bichitr, Nanha, Bishan Das, Dharam Das, Ram Das, Anant, Goverdhan, Daulat and Manohar.

The reign of Shahjahan (1627–1658) though conspicuous for the patronage of the art of building, marked a new trend in painting. It was the age of formal and conventional portraits which included portraits of the Emperor, princes and nobles of his court. They were magnificently attired and displayed splendour of the age. The commemorative portraits of the Emperor were gorgeous but stiffer and conventionalized.

These portrait paintings were mounted in highly ornamented frames. The trait started during the previous reign became so popular that no painting was considered complete unless it was mounted with highly ornamented borders, in which were displayed bright birds and beasts, flora and fauna, and above all human figures, seated or standing, amid floral and arabesque background. Stray paintings of albums are known to have survived and now form part of the collections of museums and art galleries.

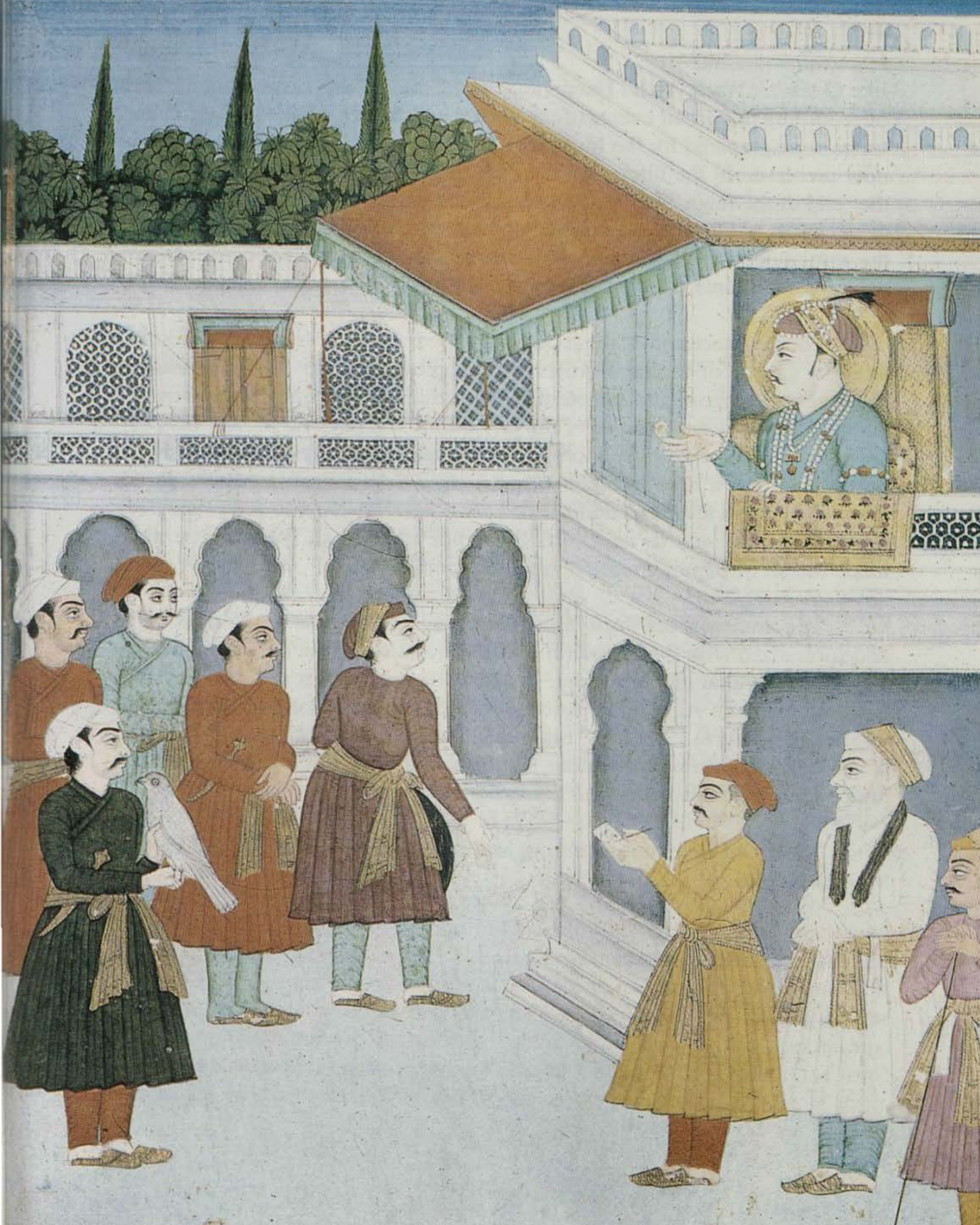
Portraits and *muraqqas* however, could not altogether suppress the favourite and all-pervading tradition of book-illustration. We have noticed the deluxe illustrations of the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* in the previous reign. Although Shahjahan himself did not write his *Tuzuk*, his court chroniclers

*Overleaf:*  
*Specimens of Mughal miniature paintings* ▶





پادشاه جهانگیر



like Qazwini, Waris Abdul Hamid and Muhammad Saleh carried out the task of recording important events of the period and deluxe editions of these histories were prepared for the Imperial Library. One such *Shah Jahan Nama* is now preserved in the library of Windsor Castle. The manuscript is dated to the end of the reign and contains 43 miniatures, some of which were added at Lucknow or Faizabad during the eighteenth century. In this deluxe edition the miniatures depict magnificent processions, conventional court scenes, palace scenes, tents, coats, weapons and all the paraphernalia of imperial life.

For the execution of these paintings, portrait pictures as well as miniatures, a galaxy of selected artists was employed in the Imperial Atelier. However, it is significant to note that indiscriminate and unusual demand of painters which was the order of the day during the days of Akbar was curtailed to a great extent by Jahangir, who employed only master artists of exceptional merit. The position became more crystallized in the reign of Shahjahan when a limited number of artists were attached to the court. The rest found their way to the courts of nobles and Rajas. The disbursement made the art of painting more liberal and spontaneous.

The traditions set forth in the preceding age became much more stiff and formalized with the accession of the son and successor of Shahjahan. In effect, the Mughal emperors had, varied tastes and interests, different from each other. While Akbar had patience for miniatures, Jahangir's fascination was for portraiture. Similarly, Shah Jahan was fond of delicate palaces and pavilions. Aurangzeb was austere and orthodox. But as a cultured Timurid prince he had interest in art and letters.

The art of miniature painting, however, declined after the fall of the Mughal empire.

# THE ART OF COINAGE

While the other facets of the socio-political life received a phenomenal impact on the advent of Islam in the Subcontinent, the art of coinage achieved precision and regularity. Since the early days of civilized life, it has been considered a royal prerogative to issue coins by every king or ruler. The advent of the Muslim rule here gave a new colour and dimension to this prerogative, though the early Arab governors used Khilafat coins. In fact, the Khilafat coins became the main currency of the day. These coins had Qur'anic verses, the name of the Caliph and the date of mintage on their obverse and reverse. A great many of these Arab coins have been found buried in the remains of ancient towns and places once frequented by Muslim population. Excavations at Banbhore, for instance, have yielded a few thousand coins belonging to the period of Arab supremacy. Among these, the decipherable pieces belong mostly to the Caliphs of Baghdad or their local governors. They were minted at the Caliphs' own mint. One gold coin in this enormous collection belongs to the Abbasid Caliph, Abu Jafar Harun-al-Wasiq Billah, (842—847 C.E.). It was minted in Egypt in 844 C.E. Similarly, the silver coins contain many pieces struck by other Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs.

The earliest known coin minted by any Muslim ruler in the Subcontinent was of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, who annexed the Punjab with his fast growing empire in 1021 C.E. He struck gold coins from Lahore mint called Mahmudpur. These coins bear an Arabic inscription with the name of the Sultan on the reverse, and the Sanskrit version of the *Kalima* on the obverse. His bullion coins contain Arabic inscription on the obverse and famous Rajput bull on the reverse. The later Ghaznavid kings used the same mint and struck coins of Bull and Horseman type.

## COINAGE OF TURKISH SULTANS

Muizzud-Din Muhammad bin Sam known as Muhammad Ghauri deposed the last Ghaznavid Prince, Khusrau Malik, in 1187 C.E. and occupied Lahore. In 1192 C.E., he subdued Prithvi Raj of Ajmer at the famous battle of Taraori and founded the first Muslim ruling dynasty in the Subcontinent. As usual and natural he followed the local devices of coinage on his coins and imitated the local currency, but introduced his own name and other characteristics. His numerous bullion (mixture of silver and copper) coins usually exhibit the Kabul device of the Bull and Horseman, while gold coins are the imitations of Qannauj type bearing a crude form of the image of Lakhshmi. Qutb-ud-Din Aibek issued his coins from Lahore as well. Nasir-ud-Din Qubacha who ruled Multan and Uch independently for well over twenty-two years, issued coins of this type for his own dominions. Similarly, Iltutmish (1211—36 C.E.) issued a large number of coins of various devices. The earliest issues bear a portrait of the Sultan on horse back surrounded by a marginal inscription on the obverse, while the reverse has an inscription in Arabic. The latest type, however, possesses the inscription on both sides. The name of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustansir appears on obverse in recognition of the diploma of investiture from the Caliph. The reverse contains the Sultan's name and his title. On the circular margins are the names of the mint and the date in Arabic. He introduced a 90-rati silver coin called '*tanka*' which later on became the standard denomination of the Turkish Sultanate and was followed, occasionally with modifications, by succeeding Sultans.

Muhammad bin Tughlaq, (1325-51 C.E.) the celebrated king of the Tughluq dynasty, was the first Muslim ruler who revolutionized the coinage of the South-Asian Subcontinent. He paid attention towards the reform of his coinage and established several mints at various cities of his kingdom. His experiments with this coinage particularly his forced currency, gave him a prominent place among the greatest moneyers of history. He has been called as 'the prince of moneyer'.

In addition to his normal currency, Muhammad bin Tughlaq struck some special coins. The commemorative coins were in the memory of his father, while the Khilafat issues were in honour of the investiture he had received from the Abbasid Caliph. But, his most remarkable venture was the

introduction of the forced currency. The coins were struck in copper and brass, but their face value was that of silver and gold. These beautifully executed coins bear several religious formulae from the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The innovation of the emperor, however, could not succeed and people started imitating the coins. After sometimes, therefore, the emperor withdrew the currency.

Muhammad bin Tughluq issued coins of more than twenty-five varieties in copper and bullion. The inscriptions on some of these coins mention their various denominations. He struck a new coin of 140 rati and called it '*Adil*'. This remained the standard denomination throughout his reign. He also divided the *tanka* into several parts, and issued coins of different

*Specimens of the coins of Muslim period.*





*Specimens of gold coins.*

denominations according to this division. They were called *Du-Kani*, *Shash Kani*, *Hasht Kani*, *Dwazda Kani*, *Shanzda Kani*, etc. The *Kani* was also called as *Jital*.

The coinage of the succeeding kings of the Tughluq dynasty has little of special interest. The gold coins of Firuz Shah Tughluq are fairly common, but the later kings issued mainly copper and bullion; their gold is extremely rare. The pieces minted by the members of the Lodhi dynasty (1451—1526 C.E.) Bahlul, Sikandar and Ibrahim, bear close resemblance to the issues of Sharqi kings of Jaunpur which bear the legend on the obverse, the reverse gives the name of the king. Bahlul Lodhi issued a large bullion coin called 'Bahluli'.

## COINS OF MUGHAL EMPERORS

In 1526 C.E., the last Lodhi king Ibrahim was defeated by Zaheer-ud-Din Muhammad Babar who founded the dynasty of the Great Mughals. The coins of Babar and Humayun, especially the silver *Shah Rukhis*, follow the Timurid devices and were struck at Lahore besides Delhi, Agra and Kabul. On the obverse of these coins was the *Kalima* with name of the four Caliphs and their attributes in the margins. The reverse had the king's name, his titles and the name of the mint and date.

Sher Shah, the founder of the Suri dynasty, who defeated Humayun in 1540 C.E. and ruled the country for about five years, is accredited with introducing a reformed currency. He abolished the inconvenient bullion coinage

*Coins of the Muslim period. Some of the coins bear Kalima.*





*Specimens of gold coins of the Mughal period.*

of mixed metal and struck well executed pieces in gold, silver and copper with a fixed standard of weight. His silver rupee had standard weight of 178 grain, while copper *dam* was of 330 grain. He also standardized the sub-division of rupee and *dam*. These coins, especially the silver pieces, bear usual Arabic inscriptions as well as the name of the king in Nagri script. Genuine gold of the Suri kings is very scarce, but the fine quality rupees are found abundantly. Sher Shah also established a number of new mints at various places in his kingdom.

With Akbar's accession in 1556 C.E. a new era of coinage began. In 1577, he established a separate department for controlling the Imperial Mints and appointed a Mint Master at the capital. The first Master of Mint was Khwaja Abdus Samad, an eminent painter and calligrapher of the Mughal



period. The excellent pieces issued under his control were the masterpieces of numismatic art. The early issues follow the model of Sher Shah's coins; the *Kalima* and other geometric patterns were employed to decorate the legends on the coins. Both gold and silver bear the same inscriptions though there is some variation in their arrangements.

Akbar's Elahi coins are the most interesting pieces which depict religious and social changes in Akbar's policy. These coins bear new legends like '*Allahu Akbar*' or '*Allahu Akbar Jalla Jalalohu*' and dates according to Elahi era. The Elahi coins issued from the Lahore Mint were some of the finest of the series. The coinage of Akbar possesses finest calligraphic inscriptions. They also bear figures of Rama and Sita and figures of birds. He struck for the first time Persian couplets on his coins.

Besides the bold Muhra or silver rupees, there were *dams*, paisas or *fulus* in copper, weighing normally 323 grain. One silver rupee had forty copper fulus. The *dam* or *fulus* was divided into 25 *jitals*, but it was only for account purpose and no coin of such name was minted.

Jahangir (1605—1627 C.E.) maintained on the whole his father's mint system. His gold and silver coins were, however, very ornate. He used Persian couplets so frequently on his coins that forty-seven different couplets of his reign have so far been recorded.

This was specially with the coins issued from Lahore and Agra. His extraordinary regard for his queen Nur Jahan is also evident from his coins which bear her name along with his own name in usual Persian couplets.

Jahangir's most celebrated Muhras are those which bear his portraits. The portrait Muhra depicts the emperor sitting cross-legged on his throne. The most remarkable of these is the piece bearing the full faced portrait of Akbar with the inscription of '*Allahu Akbar*' on the obverse and a representation of the Sun on the reverse. The particular piece was issued in the first year of Jahangir's reign. Jahangir was, however, the only Muslim emperor who used his portrait on the coins. In the 13th years of his reign, he issued the beautiful series of zodiac muhars on which pictorial representations of the zodiac symbols were substituted for the name of the month. The zodiac symbols were also used for the rupees.

Shah Jahan, (1628—1657 C.E.) however, abstained from copying his father's innovations and issued coins with *Kalima*, the names of the four Caliphs and the other usual devices. His copious currency is regarded as monotonous but not without artistic merit. The coins are decorated with endless variations in which squares, circles, lozenges, etc. form borders enclosing the *Kalima* on the obverse and the emperor's name on the reverse.

The coins of Aurangzeb (1658-1707 C.E.) and his successors have, with a few exceptions, no novelty, except that the emperor discontinued inclusion of the *Kalima* on his coins and dates were given in Hijra era. During later period, pretensions, personal titles were frequently shown on the coins.

The coinage of the Mughal emperors has been regarded as the finest among the series struck in the South-Asian Subcontinent. V.A. Smith, author of 'Akbar the Great Mughal' says that it was far superior and more beautiful than that of Queen Elizabeth or of other contemporary sovereigns of Europe. Another numismatist, C.J. Brown, remarks that considering it as the output of a single dynasty, which maintained the high standard and purity of gold and silver for three hundred years, considering also its variety, the number of its mints, the artistic mint of some of its series, the influence it exhibits on contemporary and subsequent coinages, and the importance of its standard coin—the rupee—in the commerce of today, the Mughal currency surely deserved to rank as one of the greatest coinages of the world.

The downfall of the Mughal empire, however, brought a chaos in the coinage of the South-Asian Subcontinent. Numerous independent States emerged throughout the country and started coining their own currency. Foreign invaders of that period too issued currency; Nadir Shah Afghani and Ahmad Shah Abdali struck rupees and muhras from the mints at Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, Derajat and elsewhere. Nadir Shah's issues were Persian in fabric, while Durrani coins were in Mughal style.

# ARABIC AND PERSIAN LITERATURE

The Arab conquest and spread of Islam created a new era of literary activities in the areas which now form Pakistan. The earlier phase of the literary activities was almost entirely concerned with the study of religion and religious philosophy, and Sindh produced scholars and *Ulema* who studied the Holy Qur'an and Traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in such depth that their works achieved fame far and wide. They went out and stayed at the centres of Islamic learning and piety like, Makkah, Medina and Baghdad to teach these subjects. Likewise, Sindh produced eminent poets like Abu'l Ata whom Arab scholars and critics of that period recognized as a great and eminent versifier. While local people learnt Arabic to cater to their religio-social needs, classical works in Sanskrit were also translated into Arabic at the Abbasid court.

It has been asserted that the text of the Holy Qur'an was translated into Sindhi by an Arab scholar from Mansura during the early days of the second century Hijra. It was the earliest known translation of the Book ever attempted in a foreign language. It was also during this period that the celebrated traditionist, Rabi bin Salib-al-Sa'di-Basari came to Sindh in 159/775 and spent his time to collect, collate and teach the Traditions here. The serious and earnest attention the early Sindhi scholars gave to the study of the Traditions, was perhaps due to the efforts of this celebrated scholar. Qazi Abdul Karim Sam'ani (d. 562/1166) gives a list of some of these *Ulema*, in his book, *Kitab-ul-Ansab*. Among those was the famous traditionist Rija'al-Sindhī (d. 321/933). He taught at Baghdad. While in Mansura lived a celebrated theologian Qazi Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Muhammad Mansuri, a Qazi of Mansura. He was a great scholar whose treatises *Kitab-al-Misbah* and *Kitab-al-Hadi* are wellknown. Similarly, Ali bin Ahmad bin Muhammad was from



*Holy Qur'an written in Naskh ya' quti style (4th Century Hijra).*

Debul whose work *Adab-al-Qaza* is a well-known serious book on administration of justice. Abu Ata'al-Sindhi was a celebrated Arabic poet whose poetic genius was acknowledged by the Arabs.

The tradition of writing in Arabic continued for the next few centuries. Indeed, the deep and all pervading influence of Arabic remained as the main medium of instruction. The earliest known history of Sindh was originally written in Arabic by Sheikh Ismail bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Musa Tai, a Khatib and Qazi of Aror or Alor. The book was, later on, translated into Persian by 'Ali bin Hamid of Uch in 613/1216 and was named *Chach Nama*. The Arabic text no longer exists. The renowned Arab historian Ahmad bin Yahya-al-Balazuri (279/892) devoted a long chapter on the Islamic history of Sindh in his *Futuh-al-Buldan*. Similarly, Tabari, Ibn-e-Asir, and Ibn-e-Khaldun gave detailed accounts of Islamic history of the South-Asian Sub-continent.

During the eventful reign of the Ghaznavids, large parts of today's Pakistan turned into the centres of excellence. Lahore became the abode of Sheikh Ali bin Usman-al-Hujveri. Besides his famous *Kashful Mahjub*, he wrote several treatises in Arabic on sufism and other related subjects. Utbi had already written his *kitab* in Arabic, providing details of the campaigns of Mahmud. But, the most celebrated of all was Al-Beruni (d. 441/1048) whose *Asar-al-Baqia* and *Tahqiq-i-Malil Hind* were written in Arabic. Yet another celebrity of the age was Hasan Saghani of Lahore (b. 577/1181). Although he was born in Lahore, most of his life-time was spent in Makkah and Baghdad. He was the author of several books among which was the famous *Mashariq*

*Illustrated pages from classical books in Persian.*



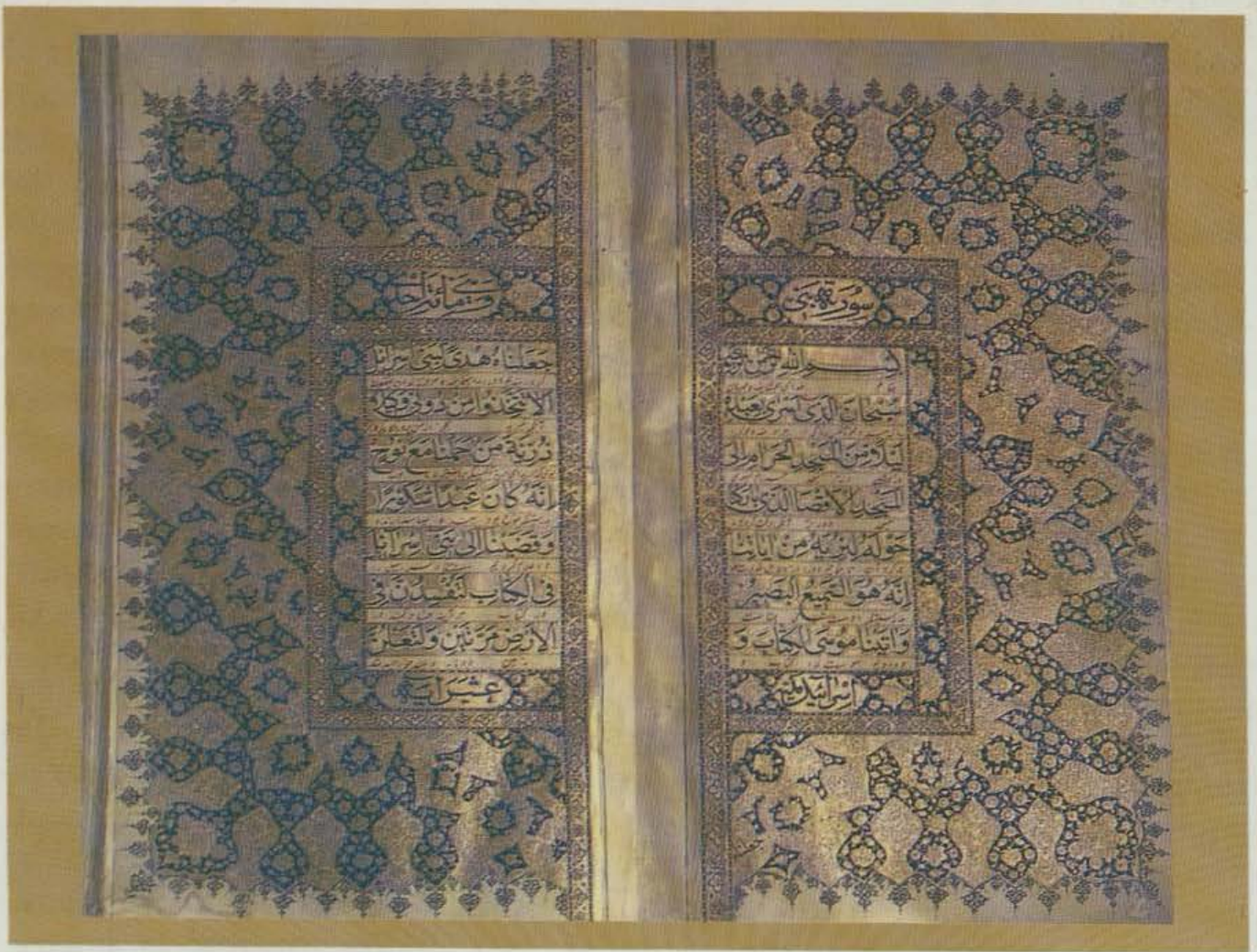
*al-Anwar*, an anthology of the *Traditions* and two Arabic dictionaries, the bigger in twenty volumes and the other shorter in twelve volumes. Saghani often undertook diplomatic missions to India as a roving ambassador of the Abbasid Caliphs.

This very brief account of some of the more important writers and their writings indicates the deep rooted influence and dissemination of Arabic language and literature. Indeed, from the very beginning, Arabic was adopted as a medium of serious and cultural pursuits, and the subjects which attracted were the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Many *Ulema* from this land achieved international fame in those day's Islamic world for their knowledge and contribution to these subjects.

## PERSIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

With the advent of Ghaznavids in Pakistan, Persian became popular here and the people evinced their keenness to learn the language with earnest zeal. It has been asserted that the earliest known Persian poet of Pakistan was Masud Sa'd Salman who hailed from Lahore as he himself says.

Aufi, the author of the earliest known history of Persian poets, *Lubab-al-Albab* writes that Masud Salman had compiled three *diwans*, of which one was in Arabic, the other in Persian, and the third was in Hindi. His greatness in the domain of poetry has been acknowledged universally. In fact, it had been a tradition that the compositions of these poets were often bi-lingual or even multi-lingual. A historian of distinction, Nizam-ud-Din Hasan Nishapuri, author of *Taj ul-Ma'asir* was of the same category. The history relates the events of the period of Qutb-ud-Din Aibek and Iltutmish. Two more treatises of the period are *Silsalat-al-Ansab* and *Adab-ul-Harb* of Fakhr-ud-Din Mubarak Shah-al-Mudabbir. We have mentioned the Persian translation of the earliest known history of Sindh, by Ali Kufi. The work was undertaken under the patronage of Ain Al-Mulk Ash'ari, the Minister of Qubacha, while the patronage of Nasir-ud-Din Qubacha gave to the world the first anthology of the bibliographical survey of Persian poets, *Labab-al-Albab* of Aufi. It was almost the time when *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* was written in Persian by Minhaj-i-Siraj. It is the only source of information available to us



*Specimen of decorated pages of Holy Qur'an.*

for the history of the formative periods of Muslim rule in the South-Asian Subcontinent. The simple and free from verbose style makes the book more treatise on history, like *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* of Ziya Barni. The two historians relate almost contemporary events of history, while the compilation of the letters of Sheikh Hamid-ud-Din Nagauri inaugurates the art of letter writing and *Insha* in Persian.

This is almost the time when Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan Sijzi flourished. It has been said that Khusrau was among those very few Persian poets of the South-Asian Subcontinent whom the Iranians also recognized. The prolific poet wrote extensively and composed several *masnavis*, hundreds of *qasidahs*, and thousands of *ghazals*. Among his *masnavis*, the more famous are : *Qiran us-Sadain*, *Miftah-ul-Futuh*, *Dewal Rani Khizr Khan* or *Ishqiah*, *Nuh Siph* etc. These *masnavis* throw light on the contemporary

socio-political history and, at the same time, provide a positive evidence of the growth and popularity of Persian as a vehicle of intellectual pursuits.

The disciples and followers of various saints collected not only the writings of their precepts, but also their sayings. Gradually, a special type of literature grew later on, to be called *Malfuzat*. The importance of this type of literature lies in the fact that it portrays the style and diction of language spoken by the common man. *Fawaid-ul-Fawad*, *Zubdat-al-Maqamat*, *Safinat-al-Auliya*, *Siyar-ul-Arifin*, *Silsalat-ul-Zahab*, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh Karimullah*, *Ma'arij-al-Wilayat*, etc. are full of anecdotes and spoken words.

## THE MUGHAL PERIOD

The literary activities during the Mughal period began with the writing of the founder of the Empire, who was a distinguished writer and poet. The princes and princesses of this royal dynasty were also enthusiastic patrons of art and letters, and many of them were themselves writers and poets of merit. The atmosphere so created at their court and outside gave a new impetus to the development and dissemination of Persian language and literature. Humayun, son and successor of Babar, had abiding interest in poetry, philosophy, astronomy, history and geography. He preferred to read, write and speak Persian in preference to Turkish. It has been asserted that he was a distinguished scholar and poet and had composed *diwan* of his verses. Several poets, and scholars were attached to his court. Sheikh Gadai, Mir Waisi, Sheikh Abdul Wahid Bilgrami, Jalali Hindi, Muhammad bin Ashraf al-Husaini, Nadiri Samarqandi, Mir Abdul Latif Qazwini, Maulana Ilyas, Qasim Kahi, Tahir Dakhau are some of his court poets and literati. Maulana Abdul Wahid Bilgrami wrote several treatises on sufism and philosophy. *Jawahir Nama-e-Humayuni*, written by Muhammad bin Ashraf-al-Husaini and dedicated to Humayun deals with the nature and uses of precious stones, while Yusuf bin Muhammad Hiravi, a personal physician to Babar and Humayun wrote several books like *Riza-ul-Insha*, *Jami'-ul-Fawaid*, *Qasida fi Hifz-i-Sihat*, etc. mostly dealing with medicine and public health. Similarly, Maulana Muhammad Fazl, wrote *Jawahir-ul-Ulum*, one of the greatest literary undertakings of Humayun's reign. Among the historical works *Tazkirat-al-Waqia'at* of Jauhar Aftabchi, and *Tazkira* of Bayazid provide intimate history of the



reign of Humayun in a simple but lucid style. The Mughal court under Humayun attracted numerous distinguished poets from the Safavid court, and the art of poetry received new dimension in the South-Asian Subcontinent.

The long and prosperous rule of Akbar the Great (1556-1606) has been regarded as the most significant for intellectual attainments. Among the galaxy of literary luminaries of the period, the most outstanding figures were the two talented brothers, Sheikh Faizi and Sheikh Abu'l Fazl. While the elder brother's contribution was mainly in the realm of poetry, the younger brother excelled in inventing a particular style of prose writing. He was primarily a court historian. Faizi was the poet laureate of Akbar. He composed verses extensively and, besides *ghazals*, wrote several *masnavis* including *Naldaman*, *Markaz-ul-Adwar*, *Bilqis wa Salman* and *Tabashir-ul-Subh*. According to Badauni, he wrote as many as one hundred and one books, the most famous of which, apart from his poetical compositions, was the *Sawate'ul-Ilham*, the extraordinary commentary of the Holy Qur'an, letters having no dots were used. The other notable poets of the age included Naziri Urfi, Malik Qumi, Zahuri and Ghizali. Abdul Rahim Khan Khanan deserves a foremost place as a dazzling personality and the greatest patron of art and letters. He himself was a poet of distinction.

Abu'l Fazl also evolved a peculiar style for letter writing (*Insha*). His famous *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* are valuable contribution to history writing followed and adapted by later writers. The other books on history written in this period were *Muntakhab-al-Tawarikh* of Abdul Qadir Badauni, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* by Nizam-ud-Din Ahmed and *Humayun Nama* by Gulbadan Begum.

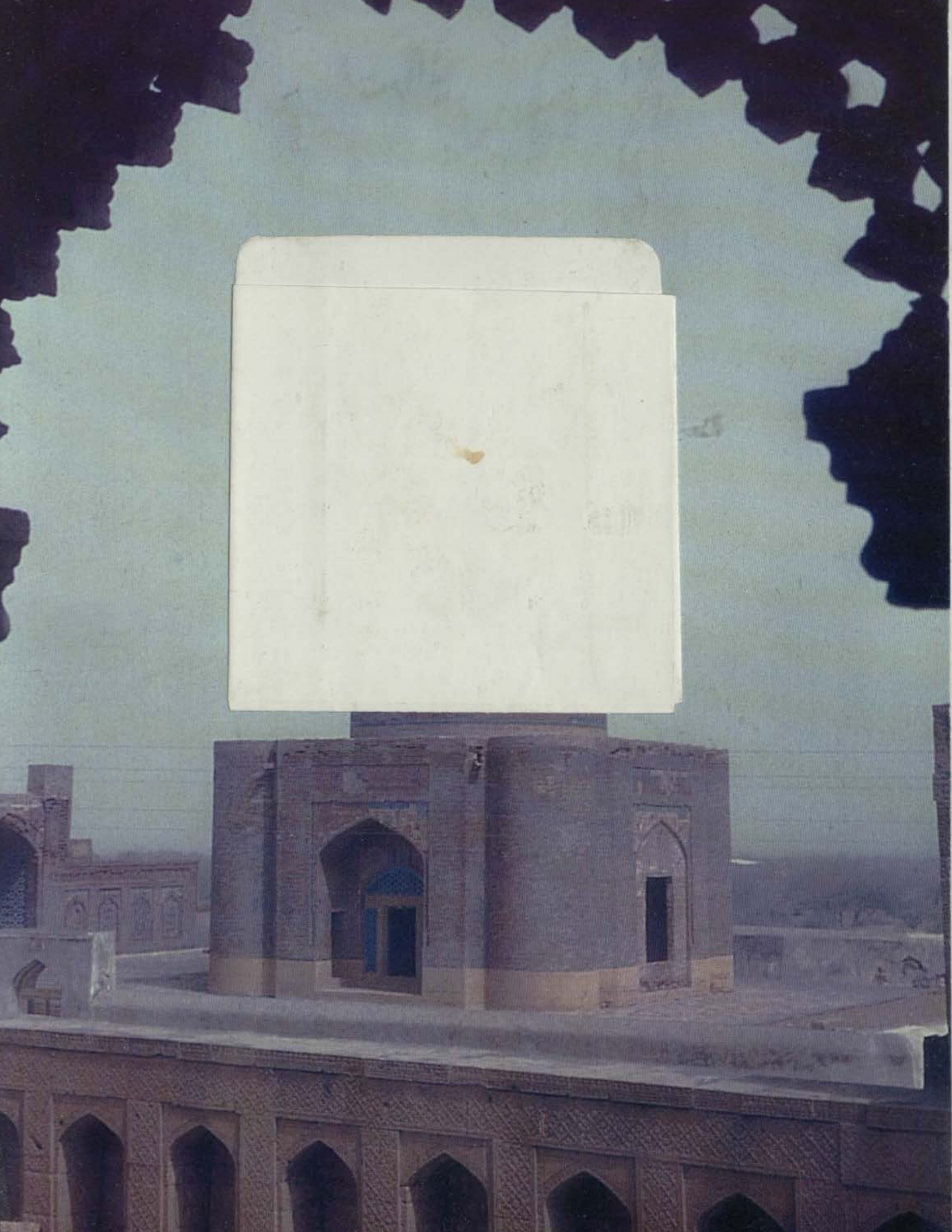
Jahangir's *Tuzuk*, the autobiography of the emperor, is a masterpiece of prose writing. Following the style of his great grandfather, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* is written in simple and frank diction, recording events and anecdotes with graceful ease. His judgement and criticism on poets and painters of the age in the *Memoirs* is unique, while description of several socio-political events, geo-physical scenes, flora and fauna of the country make it a masterpiece of imperial writing.

Some of the more important works on history produced during the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan were *Iqbalnama-e-Jahangiri*, *Ma'asir-i-*

*Rahimi*, *Badshahnama* of Abdul Hamid Lahori and *Amal-i-Salih* of Salih Kanboh are valuable compilation not only for the records of events of historical importance, but also for a simple, frank and lucid style. Among the most outstanding poets of Shahjahan's days were Qudsi Mashhadi and Abu Talib Kalim who was also the *Malik-ul-Shu'ara* of Shahjahan. The most outstanding personality of this period was, however, his son, Dara Shikoh. He was a great author, poet and patron of letters, with keen interest in sufism. He wrote several books like *Safinat-ul-Awliya*, *Sirr-i-Akbar*, *Sakinat-ul-Awliya*, *Hasanat-al-Arifin* and *Majma'ul Bahrain*, to expound and explain the doctrine of Qadiriya School of Sufism. The little anthology of his verses (*Ghazaliyat* and *Ruba'iyat*) explain the same thought and philosophy.

Of the royal prose of remarkable excellence are the letters of Aurangzeb Alamgir. The style is ornate but spontaneous and free from being verbose, revealing scholarship and expression of the Emperor. Besides, several historical works like *Mirat-ul-Alam*, *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* and *Alamgir Nama* were written to record events of historical importance. Several poets of repute were bilingual, as Urdu had been coming up with full force. Zauq, Ghalib, Momin, Shaifita and many others composed poetry in Urdu as well as in Persian.

The period of transitions and upheaval on the eve of the decline and fall of the Mughal empire was, in this respect, most productive. It looks that every intelligent educated person tried to write something of the happenings around him as a matter of duty. The noteworthy among these were : Iradat Khan (*Tarikh-i-Iradat Khan*), Kafi Khan (*Muntikhab-ul-Lubab*), Khushhal Chand (*Tarikh-i-Muhammed Shahi*), Anand Ram (*Tazkirah*), Ghulam Muhyud-Din (*Zafarnama*), Mahdi Ali Khan (*Jahan Kusha-i-Nadiri*), Rai Chitraman (*Chahar Gulshan*), Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgirami (*Khazana-e-Amira*), Miskin (*Tazkirah*), Abdul Karim (*Bayan-i-Waq*), Ghulam Ali (*Shah Alam Nama*), Khair-ud-Din (*Ibrat Nama*), Sher Muhammad Nadir (*Zubdat-ul-Tawarikh*) etc. The tradition continued and even in the early British days supremacy of Persian was well recognized. Poets like Abdul Qadir Bedil, Mohsin Thattavi and Nur-ul-Ain Waqif, Shibli Nu'mani, Girami Jullundhri and several others kept the tradition alive and vigorous. Similarly, Sindh produced several poets, philosophers, literati and above all, historians of repute like Qane' (*Tuhfat-ul-Kiram*) and Yusuf Mirak (*Mazhar-i-Shahjahani*).



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