Chapter-V

Art and Art Education during the late 19th and early 20th century in Punjab

pp162-231
846. The Mayo School of Art, Lahore. Metal-working Department. At the back some senior students are finishing a large tank in traditional brass-work. In the foreground, some boys doing a piece of work under the tuition of an instructor.

847. The Mayo School of Art, Lahore. Elementary Drawing Room. The walls are used for drawing upon, being especially prepared for this purpose as a "blackboard". This is a special idea of the Principal.
CHAPTER-V

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From the statement in the Educational Dispatch of 1854\textsuperscript{1} from the secretary of the state, it becomes clear that the colonial administrators aimed at imparting the forms of instruction that were appropriate for training personnel for technical or industrial and administrative work. An increasing demand for trained personnel viz. engineers, mechanics, electricians, overseers, surveyors revenue officers or teachers in schools and for employment in railway workshops, cotton mills and mines led to the establishment of industrial schools in all the presidencies\textsuperscript{2}.

There were set up Industrial Schools in Punjab too. Each school trained craftsmen in one special branch of craft like—wood work, lacquer-turning, and pottery etc. J.L Kipling in his report for the year 1875-76 on the Mayo School of Art mentioned the school of carpentry at Lahore and the Industrial school at Kasur. In 1884 there were four Industrial Schools functioning in Punjab which were attended by 93 students\textsuperscript{3}. Since these institutions were not found to be working properly, the Director of Public Instruction

\textsuperscript{1} Hunter, A, “Report on The General Progress of Art Education; 1865-1866”.
\textsuperscript{2} See-Vakil, K.S and Natrajan,S, Education in India, 3\textsuperscript{rd}.rev.ed, Bombay, 1966.
\textsuperscript{3} Punjab Education Report from 1884-85, ibid, p-46.
recommended their closure as he felt these schools had a tendency to degenerate into ‘charitable institutions’ or into factories that were supported by public funds, and that new and improved methods of instruction or special skills and the technical instruction that a pupil got in these schools could be equally well obtained in the local workshops. Further, the education in general that these schools provided could be better acquired in the night schools and that too at a much cheaper cost. Such a testimony reflects that the purpose of such schools was not being met fully in Punjab though such complaints could be equally heard in other states as well regarding similar institutions.

However, the schools kept on being established and in around 1913-14 the number of industrial schools was 24, which were attended by 2,249 pupils. There were Board Industrial Schools at Hisar, Rohtak, and Rewari in the Ambala division where carpentry, smithy, weaving and tailoring were taught. Also there were aided schools at Gurgaon, Salampur, and Bhiwani.

4 According to the report of the Director of Public Instruction in 1883-84 there were 5 Industrial Schools functioning in Bengal which were attended by 172 students. Out of these five schools only 3 were considered to be serving some practical purpose, particularly the Industrial school at Mahisadul in the Midnapur district which the local Zamidars and public had founded. However, other schools in Bengal were said to be, ‘excrences on the education system’ and had neither the plan nor a well defined objective. Six industrial schools were functioning in Madras out of which 3 were situated in Madras and 3 in Mofussil. Resolution of the Govt. of India, No. 10/399, dt. The 23rd oct. 1884, Selections from Educational Records in India, 1886-1907, NAI, 1968.
besides 5 ordinary schools which had industrial schools attached to them. In the Jullandhur division there was a Board Industrial school at Ludhiana and industry classe with 40 students was started at Government High School, Ferozapore. In Lahore division, a Board Industrial School was opened at Kasur, and another one at Clarkabad named Mission Industrial School for Girls. Three Board Industrial Schools were opened at Kalabagh in Mianwali, Kot Fateh Khan in Attock and Gujarkhan in Rawalpindi while in Multan and Lyallpur which were then in the Rawalpindi division.

Also, several new institutions were opened in the state to impart western education in the field of Science, Medicine, Law and Technology. In 1868 a proposal was submitted to the Supreme Court by the Punjab government to establish a university at Lahore which was sanctioned after a considerable correspondence. Thus, Lahore University College was established. The government appointed a governing body or senate, the President of which was Lieutenant Governor of Punjab and some ex-officio members. In addition, some eminent persons in the field of education and the benefactors or promoters of the institution were also nominated as the members of the Senate. Also there was made arrangement for grants and scholarships. A major aim of the government was the diffusion of western literature through the medium of vernacular and rewards were given for the translations of


European standard works and for the enlightened study of the oriental literature. There were appointed educational officers of the government and set up Councils of Education to discuss the matters of education in the province\(^7\). During the British rule in Punjab female education also advanced to quite an extent particularly under the administration of Sir Robert Montgomery\(^8\).

Subsequently, a premier institution pertaining to the education in art and industrial crafts was also set up in Lahore. It is well documented that the flooding of the Punjab with British goods from Manchester had badly affected the local industry by the end of nineteenth century. Also, it had degenerated the popular taste by detaching people from their cultural roots which in turn had an adverse effect on the local arts and crafts\(^9\). Therefore, it was within the framework of the scheme to promote trade in industrial art articles that the Punjab Museum\(^10\) and the Mayo School of Industrial

\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Ibid, p-588.
\(^9\) 40,000 cotton workers and 900 weavers had become jobless. Cotton printing from this city, once prized in far-off Switzerland and Holland, was badly hit by the shoddy machine-made varieties from Manchester. Cottage industry in woolen and silk cloth were deliberately wiped out.
\(^10\) The colonial rulers began quite a movement of establishing Museums in the beginning of the nineteenth century in India. The earliest of these museums were infact set up in Madras. As the Punjab came under control of the British, the policies and other such measures were adopted that brought about significant changes in the Punjab Province and made it stand at par with other Indian
arts were established. With the purpose of building a British institution with a museum, a library and lecture rooms for teaching indigenous crafts to celebrate the Queen's jubilee in 1887 funds were raised through a special levy on the population of the Punjab province. The Lahore Museum was functioning in 1858 is borne out by a notification by the Director of Public Instruction for Punjab, W.D Arnold on 2nd oct. 1858. Also, the correspondence preserved in the Punjab Archives (Pakistan) indicates that the Museums had also been set up at Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Amritsar and Sialkot. later in 1861 District Committees were set up by the Punjab Government in order to select the objects to be sent to London for an exhibition to be held in 1864. With regard to art manufactures from Punjab good quality items were supposed to be collected. It was about 1872 that a proposal of Mayo Memorial was mooted. The idea was to replace the old Museum building with a new one and also of joining the School of Arts with the Museum building. Baden-Powell in his 'Handbook of Punjab Manufactures' published in 1872 refers to the establishment of a school of Industrial arts in order to improve the state of arts of the province. In the reports regarding the Punjab exhibition of 1864, the establishment of such an institution had been frequently referred to as essential to the improvement of the arts of the province. Later in 1873 in the meeting of the Mayo Memorial Committee Mr. Lapel territories. There were numerous museums and observatories already in existence in other parts of the country viz. Bombay, Madras and Bengal. Chowdhury, Nazir Ahmad, Lahore: Glimpses Of A Glorious Heritage, pp258-259.

11 Ibid.
Griffin proposed that the funds raised for the founding of the memorial to the late Lord Mayo\textsuperscript{12} must be utilized for building up a school of art and design in which industrial education should be given. Also that the collected funds that amounted to 66,199-10.0 must only be spent for the purpose of erecting the necessary buildings and fittings. He suggested that the Government should be asked for a grant-in-aid in order to carry out the project of the institution. The main objective was to make the school a scientific and technical institute that would include Chemistry, Botany and Mechanics in its curriculum\textsuperscript{13}. An appropriate use of machinery was also recommended. During the discussion, Sir Richard Temple suggested that the institution should be a school of art and industrial education rather than scientific and technical one. Thus in the dispatch sanctioning the adoption of the proposals of the Mayo Memorial Fund Committee, as recommended by the Punjab Government; the Secretary of the State suggested that “the object of the school should be instruction in drawing and designing rather than in Mechanical work, the latter being treated as purely subordinate and supplementary to the former.”\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} Lord Mayo was the fourth Viceroy of India. In 1868 he was appointed Viceroy of India and was murdered on 8th February 1872.

\textsuperscript{13} Report of Administration of Punjab and its Dependencies From 1882-83. The report included the annual report on the Mayo School of Art And Industrial Schools in Punjab, Punjab Archives, Patiala.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
Until the building of the new school of art could be erected, it began to function in 1875 on the prescribed lines in a residential building in Anarkali in Lahore. John Lockwood Kipling who was appointed the first Principal of the school\textsuperscript{15} had prepared the initial designs for the new building in which he was assisted by Master Bhai Ram Singh. The building was designed in the Mughal style and in brick with simple decorative features. Iron girders were used for ceiling. In the main building, there were to be five rooms on the ground floor and one on the upper storey measuring 63 feet by 25 feet. The height of the lower floor was 20 feet and that of upper floor 28 feet. The out houses provided place for a carpenter’s shop and a room for molding and casting with a plaster kiln. These sketches were modified during Lockwood’s absence on furlough. The work for the lower storey was nearly complete in 1881 and was proposed to be used for the Punjab Exhibition of 1881-82\textsuperscript{16}. The building work was finished in the spring of 1882 under the supervision of the constructor Rai Bahadur Kanhaya Lal, M.I.C.E Executive Engineer of the Lahore division at the total cost of Rs. 43,000\textsuperscript{17}.

\textsuperscript{15} J.L Kipling was transferred in 1875 from Bombay to Lahore and was made responsible for setting up the new school in Punjab on the lines of Bombay. He was the then Principal of Sir J J School of Art Bombay.


\textsuperscript{17} ibid.
The curriculum of the school was designed as per the instructions laid down by the secretary of the state and keeping in view the actual needs of the craftsmen of the province and was intended to execute a number of commissions in the state and to serve as 'lessons in design' in several branches of art manufactures. Since the Mayo School of Art aimed at exercising a general influence over the artistic industries of the province by acting as an aesthetic center, a school of design and a 'source of enlightened criticism and advice'. The pattern of instruction laid great emphasis on the training of craftsmen in the higher and more artistic branches of their crafts particularly in the principles of design (plates 100-102). The curriculum of the school was adopted from the School for Design at South Kensington, later called the Royal College of Art and was modified in light of the need of Indian students. It aimed at imparting education "that shall make both carpenter and a colourist more intelligent and effective each in his degree". The following curriculum was adopted for the Mayo School of Art proposed by J.L Kipling, dated 27 May, 1875 to The Secretary to the Government of Punjab pursued in the school\(^\text{18}\) --

J.L Kipling proposed to classify the elementary part as follows-

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\(^{18}\) Tarar, Nadeem Omar, "Official Chronical of Mayo School of Art: Formative Years under J.L Kipling, National School of Art, 2003, p158.

Also see- "Selections From Educational Records of Govt. Of India, Technical Education in India,1886-1907,Vol-IV, 1968, National Achieves of India,p44-45.
1. Black-board demonstrations of the first principles of drawing (pl-102).
   Elementary outline from flat copies.
   Elementary geometry.
2. Outline from objects.
   Rudiments of perspective.
3. Light and shade from objects and casts.
   Plant drawing from nature.
4. The general principles of ornamental design, especially Eastern.
   Modelling in clay from casts.
   Moulding and casting in plaster.
   Architectural drawing from examples. Advanced perspective.
   Modelling from nature.
   Studies in colour of ornament.
   Ditto of still-life.
   Drawing from the living model in black and white.
   Original design.
   Painting from the living model.
   Modelling from ditto.

   It was suggested that one day in each week should be devoted to competitive time-sketching and sketching from memory. The trials of the skills possessed by the student were to be taken at the examination or inspection of the school. All students without Elementary course were required to qualify in the first three grades and at the fourth the instruction was to have special reference
to the work that the student intended to take as future profession. J.L. Kipling proposed that in the instruction of a carpenter and a colourist, “there is a point at which their respective grooves of training should diverge” 19.

The principal, J.L. Kipling often involved students in the documentation of architectural and other details of old historic buildings. He encouraged students to draw sketches from marble inlay decorations and make paper casts of old wood engravings. He considered it important for the students to study the indigenous styles of art. As a matter of fact, generations of students at the Mayo School copied the encaustic panel decorations from the mosque of Wazir Khan at Lahore. As per the Principal’s report on the school for the year 1882-83, the students of Mayo School of Art prepared the facsimile reproductions of these fresco decorations for the Royal College of Art, South Kensington as a part of their advance course work. About thirty drawings were supplied to Mr. Purdon Clark, CIE, of the India Museum, South Kensington.

The very significant feature of instruction was that the principles of Oriental design were considered of the primary importance in all architectural and decorative work. Mainly the students came from the artisan class. In the junior classes there was compulsory training in reading, writing and arithmetic from the school Maulvi for two hours. In the year 1877-78, the officiating principal, Mr.

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19 Ibid, p159
Garrick introduced a class of photography\textsuperscript{20}. Painting was taught for decorative purposes. The students prepared working drawings for carpets, ornamentation on vessels etc. A potter’s kiln was also built in the same year. Experiments were carried out in reviving the art of water-colour painting on wood coated with varnish for protection that had been popular in past. Similarly in gesso work, embossed ornaments were made on plain wood surfaces that were either painted or gilded later. Also the students practiced oil painting. The students made paintings of birds and birds and foliage on gold base on furniture. The annual report of the Principal for the year 1879-80 refers to the loan obtained for press from the department of public works for the purpose of illustration. Kipling observed that the absence of good printing was a hurdle in the process of teaching delicacies of tone and colour, however, the illustration work in black and white ink with the method of wood-cutting was well developed (plates 103-106). In the year 1882-83 there were seven students enrolled in this branch of study. Also as per the report the school ran a night drawing school for ladies, held twice a week during cold weather. Seven ladies were reported to have attended this class in 1882-83. As per the Punjab Education Report for 1884-85, few students were sent to the school by the Municipalities and the District Boards since these bodies required and employed draughtsmen

\textsuperscript{20} “Report of the Principal of Mayo School of Art, 1877-78”, included in the Report of the Director of Public Instruction, 1877-78.
therefore they found it worth their while to send them to this institution for instruction in design and carpentry\textsuperscript{21}.

In the year 1888-89 an engineering class was transferred to the Mayo School of Art. This class was earlier maintained by the Oriental College. This resulted in an increase in the number of students in the school. The school was reported to have made a satisfactory progress during the year with 51 scholarships and stipends in all\textsuperscript{22}.

Distribution of subjects in four divisions was as follows:-

1. The Patiala Reader Engineering class of the Punjab University included the subjects- Engineering drawing, estimating and surveying.


\textsuperscript{21} The Municipalities and District Funds that provided stipends for education of boys sent by them for the year 1884-85 were—Amritsar Municipality, 2 students, Rs. 10 and Rs 5 per mensem respectively; Kasur, 2 at Rs 5; Jhang, 1 at Rs 5; Gujranwala District Fund, 1 at Rs 5; Jullundhar District Fund, 1 at Rs 6; Gujrat Dis. Fund, 1 at Rs 6; Sialkot, 1 at Rs 5, and the Nabha State, 2 at Rs 11 each.


\textsuperscript{22} Out of 51 scholarships and stipends in all, 30 were provided by Government, 2 by District Boards, 9 by Municipalities, 4 by the University and one from other sources.

3. Decorative painting, lithography, pen drawing, advanced light and shade and elements of colour.

4. Modelling in clay and moulding. The students in the last three classes learnt geometry and perspective, which were obligatory subjects with elementary free hand drawing. The second and third divisions were graded into advanced and elementary classes.

In the branch of decorative painting, Munshi Sher Mohammad directed the advanced students in the work of reproducing the painted decoration of the interior of Wazir Khan's Mosque. This was considered the best training for the young decorators (pl-107). Similarly, students of the second division worked under the direction of Bhai Ram Singh for the designing of the new ateliers and classrooms for the School of Art and for the new museum\(^\text{23}\). The next year Gurdit Singh, an advanced pupil and John Lawrence Scholarship holder officiated in the place of Ram Singh\(^\text{24}\). The pattern of instruction continued to be the same in the following years except for the addition of the practice of glazed pottery-making in the fourth division in the year 1896-97, Joinery in 1898-99 and Repousse work and Blacksmithy in 1899.

Most of the students may be categorized as (a) artisan-craftsmen to be in various industries (a) ‘Drawing Teacher’s

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\(^{23}\) The Principal’s report of the Mayo School of Industrial Art, Lahore, for 1889-90 included in the report of the Admn. of Punjab and its Dependencies for the year 1889-90.

\(^{24}\) Tarar, N.O, op.cit., p84.
Training’ students (c) students seeking Punjab University certificate/diploma in Engineering (d) Hobby classes students (e) Amateur artists who joined the evening classes as casual students. That the institution was ably catering to the needs of the contemporary society and the students were getting employment immediately after completing their professional training may be concluded from the fact that most of the students were suitably employed after the completion of a course. Bhai Ram Singh and Sher Mohammad, the most promising students from the first batch were inducted as Assistant Teachers in 1884-85. The students of the school were employed as the Drawing and Carpentry Masters, Draughtsman, Lithographers and Litho-Draftsman, Decorative painters, Sub-Overseers and Surveyors etc.

The school got several commissions pertaining to industrial crafts. Within two years of its inception, the school began to undertake public works to display the talent of students. The earliest such work mentioned in the report of the Director of Public Instruction, 1878-79 was the wall decoration of the corridor between the Lawrence and the Montgomery Halls. Next year the work for designing furniture was taken for the Government College and the Punjab Club. Also wood block advertisements, maps and plans were made for the Civil and Military Gazette. In 1881-82, the students made preparations for the Punjab exhibition. The regular illustrated periodical on Indian art entitled, ‘Journal of Indian Art and Industry’ was planned for the next year and ten pen drawings were prepared.
by the students for its first issue\textsuperscript{25}. By the year 1884-85 the director of public instruction began to refer to the school as an Art School. The work prepared by the school for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition was sent to London. Nine medals were awarded to both students and the teachers for this work, however, there was no mention of the school. Similarly, work was also produced for the Glasgow Exhibition in 1887-88 \textsuperscript{26}.

A large amount of work was done before the royal visit of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales. The work for

\textsuperscript{25} The drawings made for the illustration of the Journal of Indian Art 1884-85 were for diverse subjects including architecture, Multan pottery, ivory-carving and others. It also included drawings made for carpets, screens in carved wood, koft-work, Hoshiarpur inlay and wood-work and was referred to as ‘most complete in point of accomplishment’ in the Education Report of the year.

\textsuperscript{26} The Education Report of 1884-85 informs us that the most important and original piece of work was the design for the billiard-room for His Royal Highness the Duke of Connought at Bagshot Park. The design was prepared by Principal J.L Kipling and Ram Singh the Assistant Master. The room was designed to be lined with an elaborate arrangement in carved wood. The designs and drawings were further worked upon by the students who prepared full size drawings and models for the project which was considered to be an instructive practice by the authority. Some of the select panels from the project were reserved for the actual execution by the students of the wood carving class in the school. Another project executed in a year was the design for a carved screen that was to be presented by the Punjab Government to the Indian Institute at Oxford. Mr. Basil Champneys, the Architect of the Institute suggested the lines on which to design the screen. The actual work was carried out in Amritsar.

Ibid.
the year included the decoration of the dining hall at Government House Lahore, painting and decorating the large Montgomery Hall, both at Lahore and alternations and improvements to the Circuit House Delhi, as also the decoration of the Government House Peshawer, designing and executing large and small metal lamps for the Taj at Agra in accordance with Lord Curzon’s directions and various artistic improvements in the Lahore Museum. Such specimens of drawings later served as models for the craftsmen as most of this work was given over to the artisans for execution for exhibiting at the Indo-Colonial display in London. Among these skillful drawings in the Journal of Indian Art and Industry in 1886 there is a beautiful sketch by Kapur Singh" of three vessels that includes two tea pots and a ‘Surahi’ in the center. The sketch represents the intricate Persian patterns of these Cashmere tinted copper vessels. (pl-108). Then there are two drawings of Hindu Brass vessels by Ram Singh. The vessels depicted in the sketch are from the village of Pind Dadankhan, near Jehlum, and, though of the ordinary forms these show skillful decorative work. The water ewer known as ‘gangasagar’ is ornamented with grotesque birds and there is motif of punched or

27 A contemporary of Keher Singh artist whose drawings and paintings in the collection of Government Museum, Chandigarh echo the style of the Company School. Kapur Singh probably belonged to Kapurthala and also worked at Lahore. His paintings were exhibited in the Industrial Arts and Crafts Exhibition at Lahore in 1864. Percy Brown who had observed his work writes, “He painted a large number of figures subjects, miniature in size and showing a very fair knowledge of drawing with considerable action”.

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graven fish on the dish placed in the center. The third vessel is ‘gager’ which is the kind that women normally carried to well. The artist has copied the intricate designs on the vessels in exact detail and the perspective drawing of these vessels is nearly perfect and speaks of a understanding of the third dimension. Another drawing by the same artist is that of Rewari Brass Ware (pl-109). A yet another sketch by Ram Singh copies the embossed copper that was wrought for the decoration of the ‘Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) at Amritsar by an anonymous workman (pl-110). Kapur Singh is believed to be the first artist of Punjab to handle the medium of oil-painting. He also made painting in water-colour in the western style. He had had the opportunity to learn photography from English photographers. He earned great popularity for his Indo-European style of painting. His paintings like-Lahore Life Guards, Drawing of A Hawk, Sikh Ladies Riding In a Carriage Drawn by Two Bullocks were much admired (plates 111-112). That the Punjabi artist was making a systematic and concerted effort to understand the new aesthetics and incorporate these values into the indigeneous and inherited ones is amply proved by works like -Ajaib Singh Nihang and Dyal Singh Comb maker by Kehar Singh which are excellent examples of the Punjabi artist’s effort to grasp the fundamentals of western aesthetics28 (plates 113-114).

28 “...Through their contact with European art and patrons, Indian artists arrived at new ways to represent space and the human body in a realist mode of portraiture and landscape and they began to handle new themes- the quaint and the exotic, and occupations and traders of bazaar. Thus the Punjabi artists...
An excellent drawing by Sher Mohammad of confectioner’s lamps and candy hammers speaks of the mastery of the artist over pencil drawing and shading as well as the technique of hatching. Artist has ably copied the design of lamps ornamented with the forms of flowers and birds. The drawing of two candy hammers shows the skill in depicting a foreshortened view of the object. A figure of a ‘halwai’ or a sweetmeat seller by J.L Kipling has been added to the sketch (pl-115). Another example is that of a Thana silk weaver by Sher Mohammed and is a fine example of human figure. The weaver shown at work on the loom is clad in shirt and trousers with the sleeves rolled up. The perspective drawing of the interior of the room or workshop is a very significant work wherein by defining the back wall, side wall and the floor with a window opening on the left side of the weaver the artist delineates a clear passage of light, even as the window becomes the main source of natural light (pl-116). Light and shade is quite skillfully handled by the application of hatching and cross-hatching technique thus suggesting the volume of the figure. Also the detailed drawing of the apparatus of the weaver also suggests that the artist has made a close observation of the object. Sher Mohammad later on became a famous artist and not only a Drawing Master in the Mayo School of Art but also its Vice-Principal. He was considered one of the more accomplished artists who painted in the medium of oil-painting. He used to spend most of his time in

became oriented for the first time to the possibilities of capturing visual experiences rather than the prescribed ones”.

Kessar, Urmi, op. cit, p-119.
the premises of the school. There are several paintings of Sikh nobles by Sher Mohammad in the Lahore Museum.

Amir Baksh was another student of the Mayo School of Art who displayed excellent draughtsmanship in his sketch of brass and leather hookahs from Kasur and Hisar (pl-117). In a sketch of the old door of Lahore city, Amir Baksh has made an exact copy of very intricate design of the wood carving with even the minutest detail of the old door rendered carefully and clearly. In the upper one third portion of the door, panels of carved wood are arranged in a kind of simplified ‘swastic’ pattern with four long rectangular framed panels on each side carved in similar design and a square panel in the center with the motif of a flower with eight petals. (p-118). Here again the drawing has been juxtaposed with a drawing by Kipling of a Jat carrying a hooka in his hand. It can be seen also that the work of all these students very closely follows J.L Kipling. Such close association with a craftsman like Kipling along with the formal education in the rudiments of academic art gave a further boost to the Punjabi student’s understanding of the realistic rendering of the form.

Since the main function of the institution was to preserve and restore the examples of oriental ornamentation, therefore it was usually the practice to apply surface ornament to the objects of European design. This practice was followed in almost all forms of craft industries viz. metal ware in brass, copper and silver, furniture and wood-carving. In a sketch by Ala-Ud-Din, the claret jugs and biscuits or tobacco jar are examples of the surface ornament of
Kashmir chased copper applied to the European forms of ware (pl-119). Whereas, this example has less to offer in design and tilts more towards ornamentation; another drawing by Mohammed Din of graven brass hookas represents the old and traditional designs of the nariyal or coconut hookas that were earlier enriched with engraving. Here beautiful surface decoration is done with flower and leaf patterns inside with Paisley motif (pl-120). Paisley is a motif of foreign origin which was brought from Scotland and incorporated into Kashmir textiles. Thus, it was skillfully integrated with the indigenous design scheme and motifs. The design by Mohammad Din seems to be inspired by the Ajantisque classical motifs of plants, animals and floral designs. There is a design of a swan and peacock on the surface of one of the hookas. The surface of the hooka is divided into horizontal panels of different sizes filled either with floral or geometrical designs. Significantly, Mohammed Din suggests the volume of the object by drawing accurate forms and by adding proper light and shade in cross-hatching.

The increasing interest that the Mayo School of Art generated in the province may be judged from the increasing number of the students that had risen from 33 in 1882 to 185 in 1884 despite the fact that the Principal's attention was frequently diverted to other chores. Mr. Kipling was kept busy preparing for the 'Colonial Exhibition' during the year, "It cannot be denied that the searching out and bringing forward of the great industrial artistic capabilities of the province is of some use to the school, in that it brings us into contact with the best workmen and gives that practical turn to our
work which is so easily missed in the theoretical teaching. The examples of oriental design in the form of engravings, photographs, books and our own drawings and casts that are gradually accumulating are of great use to artisans who came up from time to time to take instructions for special objects.  

By the year 1904-05, the number of students in the institution reached 333 and the principal proposed a boarding house for the students. In fact a boarding house was opened in hired buildings the very next year and was soon full as the number of students was more than 333 during this year. That at the turn of the century the school began to move out of its earlier confines of a limited approach and was becoming more expansive is clear from a number of new features, which were introduced. A prize scheme was introduced with competitions in wood-carving, metal work like-Repousse and Blacksmithy, modeling and decorative painting. These works were to be exhibited later in the annual exhibition of the school. A series of Industrial Art Pattern Books were also being prepared at

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29 Kipling had studied at the South Kensington under Sir Phillip Cunliffe. He was an enlightened Englishman who was under the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites like Rosetti, Hoarman, Hunt and Burns Jones. He taught his Indian students to copy Greek and Roman models.

The above statement by Kipling is important in that it defines not only the raison d’etre and philosophy of the school but the approach of the administrators to the Indian craftsmen in the 1880-1890.

the school by Mr. Percy Brown and another one on 'wood-work' with a series of plates was about to be completed. Also there was arranged a series of 'Magic Lantern Lectures' by the school of art out of which three were delivered by the ladies only. These were highly appreciated by the Paradah Nashinh ladies for whom these were organized. In addition, the control of the Engineering class came under the Mayo School of Art instead of the Punjab University. In 1914, a few more classes were added to the Mayo School of Art namely – cotton printing and polishing. At this point of time the institution only lacked the book-binding section in order to complete its original scheme. This section had to be unavoidably postponed because of the difficulty of obtaining the required machines from England. The workshop hours were increased that year to facilitate the students so that they could work under actual commercial conditions for as long as possible. Also an overseer was appointed for this purpose.

The pattern of education in the Mayo School of Art though mainly promoted the indigenous crafts of the region and not much was produced in the medium of oil or water-colours in the institution even though some of the students did acquire fame in these fields too. In the Industrial Art Exhibition held in Delhi in 1902-03 the Mayo School of Art made a significant contribution. Sher Mohammad had designed the title page of the exhibition catalogue showing a Multan Potter at work (pl-121). Percy Brown, who was the assistant director of the Delhi Art Exhibition, categorizes the paintings in the painting section in three styles viz.—"The Buddhists, exemplified
by the frescoes on the walls of the caves of Ajanta, the Mohammadan
style as shown by the book illustrations or portrait pictures of the
Mughal artists and the Modern style of oil and water – colour painting
as practiced in the schools of art. Two of Sher Mohammad's portraits
of Punjabis in oils displayed in this exhibition were especially
mentioned in the exhibition catalogue and were appreciated for the
qualities like 'knowledge of technique and a familiarity of the human
face that places them considerably above the ordinary work of this
kind’30.

Before the introduction of oil medium in India
by the European artists; no oil-painting was practiced in the country.
But the number of paintings in this medium displayed in the exhibition
proves that by the early years of the 20th century this medium had
gained wide popularity and was particularly favored by the students
and teachers of the Government schools of Art and that oil picture
painting as a branch of study as well as a means of livelihood was
being taken seriously by a rapidly increasing class of artists. In
appreciation of these Indian works done in the foreign medium Percy
Brown writes, “Some of the work displayed in the Entrance Hall of the
exhibition was remarkably good in the life studies, the modelling and
the feeling of living flesh being well reproduced and one or two
landscapes showed an atmosphere of and a consideration for
composition which is worthy of remark”31. In statuary, also the works

30 Quoted by Watt, Sir George, "Indian Art at Delhi", The official catalogue of the
Delhi Exhibition, 1902-1903, pub. 1903, p-457.
31 Ibid.
contributed by the schools of arts constituted a different class of work. These works that were done by the students of the schools of art formed an important part of the display and called attention to the large amount of study of this kind that was then being carried on at these institutions. However, in comparison with any ordinary bazaar production these were found to be 'immeasurably superior'. The main subjects treated were complete figures or busts done from life in painted plaster or at times in bronze. The numerous examples displayed in the exhibition revealed 'a certain amount of aptitude on the part of the modeler in seizing a likeness which is encouraging'\textsuperscript{32}. The major defects in these works were a 'lack of feeling' and 'ignorance of the construction of figures or face' and the main reason of such faults was 'the limited time that an average art student devoted to this study and was generally too eager to become a professional artist to spend long over the ordinary school of art routine'\textsuperscript{33}. Besides these paintings which were commended in the exhibition, the Mayo School of Art received First prize of a gold medal awarded for wood carving shown on the balcony of the Punjab Room and a Second Prize of a silver medal for a side board that had been made in the school (pl-122). The school had not only been guiding the workers in the Lahore city but also it had conserved and developed 'all that is beautiful in the various styles'. A Punjab wood-carver is shown at work on one of the brackets of the Panjab Balcony. A characteristic overmantel is placed behind him and a panel from the

\textsuperscript{32} ibid., p452
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
Punjab Room is shown lying on the floor this sketch is by Sher Mohammad. An interesting exhibit in the wood carving division was the small room specially furnished by the Mayo School of Art, Lahore ‘to exemplify the adaptability’ of the Punjab style to modern house furnishing. The walls of this room were provided with a lofty dado, in illustration of the peculiarities of Bhera and Chinot wood carving, while the balcony opening into the main Gallery was considered one of the finest examples of the modern developments of Punjab wood carving \(^ {34} \).

Around 1929, the curriculum consisted of a four year course. In the first year the students were taught free hand drawing, scale drawing, geometry and clay-modelling after which a student could opt for courses in crafts like – wood work, smithy, copper beating or repousse, lacquer turning, jewellery or painting and modelling. Since the school still laid great emphasis on the training of craftsmen therefore the subjects like painting and modelling were not paid much attention as these courses were considered to be of subordinate importance in the training of a skilled craftsman. The boys learned English and Urdu calligraphy, elements of decorative design and lithography in the painting section. In the modeling class the students learned to make plaster casts in bas-relief and round as a matter of routine. In the year 1930 the class of Teacher’s Training course was reopened. This class had been discontinued in 1925 though it always remained popular among the students. About this

\(^ {34} \) ibid, p 107-108.
time the institution faced acute financial stringency\textsuperscript{35} and in the coming few years a decline in the number of students on rolls was recorded in the school\textsuperscript{36}. The class of Cabinet-Making showed decline from 141 students in 1931 to 98 in 1932-33 due to the serious trade depression but the courses, which continued to be popular, were Blacksmithy and Teacher’s Training classes. In 1934 the Drawing Teacher’s Training class was discontinued again which resulted in an acute decline in the number of students as recorded 238 in the previous year to 1934\textsuperscript{37}. Another reason of the decline in the number of the students on rolls in the Mayo School of Art was that other institutions of special education viz. the Metal Works at Ambala, and Sialkot and wood working at Jullandhur had begun to attract the students who might have sought admission in the art school. The decline recorded in the number of students on rolls continued during the 1934-35 the total enrollment sessions being 161

\textsuperscript{35} According to the Educational Report of 1930-31 the Sanitary Inspectors class was closed due to lack of funds and this class was now conducted by the Sanitary Department in the school premises, also many reductions were effected in the personnel of the staff. Further in 1932-33 the book-binding department was abolished as a measure of economy.

\textsuperscript{36} The total number of students on rolls of the school fell from 305 in 1930-31 to 242 in 1932-33 and 238 in 1933-34.

\textsuperscript{37} Exhibition of all kinds of products manufactured in the school was held like the previous year and the goods worth Rs.4,027 were sold to the public.

against 193 in 1934\(^{38}\). However the school participated in the important exhibitions in this year i.e., The All India Exhibition of Arts and Industries held at Lahore in 1936 and Coronation Mela Exhibition held in Simla, in May 1937. Although the number of entrants in the school was recorded to have fallen in the 1938-39 session yet there was recorded an improvement in the sale proceeds of the goods produced in the institution as it amounted to Rs. 5,560 as against Rs. 4,165 previous year\(^{39}\).

Apart from a brief survey of the changes of the number of students and the proceeds from the sale of their works what needs to be however considered carefully is the impact of the training in the school, its teachers and alumni had on the artistic scene of Lahore in particular and Punjab in general. It may be said that by late 1920's and early 30's, the philosophy of Mayo School of Art had significantly expanded and a number of artists associated with the institution in intimate capacities had begun to be recognized not only at the local level but nationally. In the thirties two dominant styles were popular. The first was Bengal School represented by Abdir Rehman Chugtai and Samrendranath Gupta. The second was

\(^{38}\) However, the annual exhibition which was generally held in February was postponed that year till November due to consideration of weather but was finally held in the first week of December. The exhibition attracted about 35000 people, and articles worth Rs. 3,000 were sold. The school participated in the All India Empire Exhibition in 1935.

the style of painting with recognizably western parameters. Abdur Rehman Chughtai belonged to the famous Chughtai family of Lahore. He was sent to the Technical School near the Railway Station in Lahore. In 1911 Chughtai was enrolled in the drawing department of the Mayo school. In 1916 he became teacher of Photolithography in the school. In the same year he went to Calcutta in order to study photolithography at the Calcutta Government Press. His association with the Mayo School of Art was short but his names remains linked with the institution as he is considered to be one of the

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40 He was probably born on 21st September 1899 in a deeply religious Moslem family. This date is recorded on his school certificate though sometimes, 1897 is also taken as the possible date.

See Artist of The East Abdurehman Chughtai, Nizar Art Press, Pak, n.d, p12

41 Later due to his obvious inclination towards art his father took him to Baba Miran Baksh who was his uncle and was a 'naqash.' Though Chughtai was taught for only a brief period by Miran Baksh yet it germinated the seed for future development of the artist. In fact one of the noteworthy features of his later works is the use of architecture as framework for his compositions which gave him an opportunity to represent his favorite floral and decorative motifs as was actually the influence of his early education in art when he was made to copy the designs on the walls of the Wazir Khan Mosque. He again got admitted in the same Technical School for a certificate in formal education and stood first in the entire Province. For some time he even did teaching as a Drawing Master at the Mission School Gujranwala.

Artist of The East: Abdurehman Chughtai, Nisar Art Press, Pakistan, p-3.

See also Art and Institutions in Pakistan: A historical perspective leading to the contemporary scene (Oslo Mela 2002.

http://www.pvassociates.org/Art-&-Art-Institutions-in-Pak.pdf

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most significant artists of the period. As a matter of fact, he is the perfect example of both formal and informal systems of art education. While experimenting with colours, he made some of his earliest paintings like—Village Belle, Nur Jehan, at Jehangir’s Tomb, Evening of Oudh and themes from Omar Khayyam (plates 123-124). Later he began to paint in the style of the famous Bengal School the influence of which was paramount in the whole country. His works may be said to relate to the ethos of Indian and Persian miniature paintings. The magazines like ‘Modern Review’ readily started publishing his work. Evidently his creations were mainly a result of real experimentation as he absorbed the essentials of the wash technique of Ajanta paintings, Iranian mysticism and Hindu mythological subject-matter and developed his own style of painting which nearly became a movement in itself. However, the most important among Chugtai’s works were his paintings that interpreted the poetry of Ghalib and other great Urdu poets that represented the ‘best in Moslem feelings and way of life’\textsuperscript{42}. Soon the paintings on Ghalib were prepared and the book was ready for publication\textsuperscript{43}. His work exhibited in 1919 in an exhibition held at Lahore Museum resulted in a remarkable sale of his works. In 1923 eleven of his paintings were selected for the ‘British

\textsuperscript{42} Artist of the East Abdurrehman Chugtai, Nizart Press, Pak, p3.
\textsuperscript{43} G. Venkatachalam sought patronage in Her Highness, the Maharani of Cooch Bihar for the publication of Chugtai’s book who sent Rs. 5000/- for the purpose and granted all the originals for herself in exchange for the contribution. Chaudhry, Nazir Ahmad, Lahore: Glimpses Of A Glorious Heritage, Sang-e-meel, p241.
Empire Exhibition' at Wembely by an Indian Fine-Arts committee constituted to select works of Indian artists where once again these were widely acclaimed.

Later Chughtai went to Europe, as he desired to learn Western art in its actual context. Under the guidance of Huissener sisters and particularly Elza Huissener, he got ample opportunity to see some of the greatest art works of the West. He was most impressed by Rembrandt and considered him the most genuine master. Besides, he also came in contact with a number of intellectuals, poets, artists and critics. During his visits to Europe he concentrated on learning the new techniques of etching and engraving. At the Central School, London in 1937 he learned the art of etching where Cartwright, the Principal and the etcher W.P Robins were much impressed with his work. The admission to the class of etching depended on the drawing ability of the student thus the student was required to go through the drawing lessons first. Nevertheless, Chughtai was permitted to join the etching class by Sir Frankshort, the famous etcher on the School’s board due to his impressive skill of drawing\textsuperscript{44}. He repeatedly visited Europe in 1930 and 1936 and met Sir Lawrence Binyon, Sir Campbel Dobson, Sir William Leiwely, Sir John Marshal, J.W Wilkinson and Basil Gray. He introduced the Bengal School idiom in Punjab and had a number of students and followers. Later he modified the pure Bengal School manner. Technically he began to use occasionally water colour and tempera simultaneously. He also expanded the oeuvre of the Bengal

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.

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School by incorporating detailed rendering of architectural decorative elements in a precise manner culled from old Mughal monuments and even more significantly by emphasizing on the poetic content of the subject more than the merely romantic or metaphysical one. Samarendranath Gupta was the other important name associated with the Mayo School of Art. He was the first Indian Vice principal of the institution and he had gone to London on deputation in 1925. He was elevated to the post of principal when he returned. He was an excellent designer and a printmaker. He was one of the earliest students of Abanindranath Tagore and painted in the Bengal School style. Later when he visited London he practiced the Western style of painting and aquatint (pl-125). He produced countless prints in various techniques viz., etching, drypoint and aquatint though he never taught printmaking to his students in school45.

About 1929 B.C Sanyal visited this premium institution of Punjab and was offered the job of an art teacher by Principal Lionel Heath46 and found that the school had more to do with the crafts than art and the institution encouraged the indigenous crafts like wood carving, copper ware, lacquer turning, wrought-iron and enameling etc. The major function of the school was to train


46 Sanyal was called for an interview with the Director of Industries Dr. Rowley as the administrative control of the Mayo Shool Of Art was under the Deptt. of Industries at that time.

Ibid. For further information on B.C Sanyal see pp-225-231.
artisans towards more up to date technical skills and freshness of design in different fields of traditional crafts. Besides these craft sections other courses of instruction were decorative art work, litho-printing and clay modelling47. Sanyal was given the charge of the Commercial painting and modeling departments of the school. In my interview with Late Shri B.C Sanyal on June 18, 2002 he told me that there was no fine art department as such in the Mayo School of Art. Things had only just begun to penetrate the minds of people. Even the distinction between fine art and craft did not exist. This institution was entirely different from CGCA and Sir J.J School of Art, Bombay. Most of the teachers were local craftsmen and had no formal training from outside Punjab. Most of them were master craftsmen and were doing their hereditary work and training young craftsmen in the same techniques. The students usually did not have much of elementary education even.

Since Sanyal felt this system of art practice and teaching did not provide any scope for ‘creative thinking’ he made an effort to break the monotony of the routine exercises carried out by the students thereby opening up an entirely new dimension in art education. Sanyal had already begun questioning the validity of the existing art school curricula with a predominant emphasis on craft and industry related training while, Sanyal mentions in his ‘Vertical Women 1902-1947’ “I remembered my six long years in the Art School in Calcutta though not as dull, but equally counter-productive”. On his arrival at Mayo, he was struck anew with this

47 ibid, p-32.
sense of inadequacy in a pattern of art education in which training in fine arts was relegated to the level of a handmaiden to the study of crafts etc. As the tradition was deep set in the pattern of art practice and ‘the routine became the rule and habit with students and teachers alike, thus it was not so easy to bring about a change in the methods of teaching painting and modeling in the Mayo School of Art. However, Sanyal with his School of Art background began to encourage students to pose as models one by one in order to do sketching. He would often join the students himself in this task. This practice stimulated not only the students but teachers as well who also began sketching along with the students. Many people volunteered to sit as models for the students. Further Sanyal replaced the wooden cubes, pyramids and spheres with flowers, foliage, fruits and draperies of different colours for the purpose of still life painting. Earlier only drawing from models was done in this class. This progressive activity was encouraged by the administration as it consented to pay for the material required for such activities and soon the semi nude and nude models did not remain a taboo (pl-126). These models were provided by the administration. Among others who watched all these developments was the venerable Ustad, Munshi Miran Baksh who also “nodded his huge turbaned head in cautious approval”\(^48\). Further, the printmaking section also opened itself for experimental printmaking. The printer Ain ud Din and the machine man Buta responded well and cooperated with Sanyal in

carring out experiments in print making. The students under Sanyal's supervision executed several colourful designs in different shapes and forms. Such kind of activities helped in establishing link between different departments in the school. Principal S.N Gupta cooperated with his staff in promoting these newer ideas and the students started making large posters and show cards. Master Attah Ullah taught lettering and calligraphy. Soon Sanyal started teaching anatomy that helped in making the study from life more meaningful.

In the modeling studio as well, B.C Sanyal tried to workout certain innovative ideas. Earlier the students in the modeling section were required to copy some plaster casts, which was rather stereotypical, since not much individual creativity was possible. Though it was not so easy to get female models yet Sanyal encouraged his students to take initiative in this matter also. However, male models would offer themselves willingly. The renowned wrestler Gama posed for the students once (pl-127). Later Principal Gupta asked Sanyal to take to modeling for different workshops. Sanyal was able to bring quite a change in the painting

49 Although Sanyal appreciated crafts but designing for workshops was not easy for him which included making of working drawings of objects in section, plan and elevation which was most important in the workshop designing so that the skilled artisan-craftsman could understand and translate the drawing into concrete form and shape. His art training in the art school in Calcutta did not include practical and applied knowledge of structure and construction. He did take interest in learning iron-work and beaten copper vessels. B.C Sanyal showed me photographs of two wrought iron fire screens which he had designed and were turned out in the workshops of the Mayo School of Art.
and modeling studios of the school as he was able to develop a vital relationship with his students and in case he found the students had enquiring mind and an inclination to learn he began working with them as one among them. He would also take them outdoor for the study of landscape. Ratan Batra, Mohammad Latif, Munir, Kamal Sen, Dhanraj Bhagat and Ishwar Singh were among such promising students of the school. For students like these Sanyal laid more stress on the study of human anatomy as related to figure work and acquired a skeleton for the classrooms. The story of a student named Dhanraj Bhagat who was later to emerge as one of the foremost sculptors of modern India that he narrated to me in the interview, throws light on this fact regarding the Institution. As he said, “I tell you the story of a boy. His name was Dhan Raj Bhagat. He was able and clever but his eyes won’t open. He could imitate well. I enquired about his education, which at that time was nil. He could hardly understand English language, which was current at that time. I promised to help him in many ways if he would at least pass the matriculation exam. He was an honest boy and began to study the way I guided him”. Dhanraj Bhagat became a renowned Indian sculptor later. Soon non-professional casual students and even some teachers from Punjab University also started visiting the modeling studio in their spare time in order to learn clay modeling. This practice helped in breaking the barrier between the citizenry and the art school as such an activity enabled amateurs or common people to cultivate the art or craft of his or her choice that the art school offered.

50 Interview dated June 18, 2002.
"Many educated grown ups and young gentlemen from the university came in pursuit of knowledge and experience in art. They were not seeking to be professionals but were keen on having first hand perception of experience in art"\textsuperscript{51}. These people included individuals from all walks of life like professors, students of medicine and pure sciences and literature. Also a number of young women joined the institution for the purpose of learning painting and making ‘fancy lamp shades’ or for designing jewellery in order to make brooches, earrings and bangles for personal use. About 1931 the school participated in an exhibition organized on the occasion of seventieth birthday of Rabindranath Tagore. Mian Mohammad Hussain and B.C Sanyal were sent by the school along with the art works produced in the institution in order to represent the school. Besides, select handicrafts from different sections of the school, paintings by S.N Gupta, Sanyal and Mian Mohammad Hussain, were also sent for the exhibition.

Other teachers in the craft sections were teachers like Haji Saheb, Sardar Sunder Singh and Sadhu Singh. Haji Saheb taught smithy work and Sardar Sunder Singh was in the jewellery section. Both were eminent craftsmen. Sadhu Singh excelled in scale drawing which was a very important aspect of design education in the school. The class of decorative work was

commendably conducted by Mian Miran Baksh. He specialized in the decorative work in the Indian style. He had studied for a drawing master's course at the Mayo School of Arts during the time of Lionel Heath. He had joined government service as an art teacher at the Railway Technical School, Lahore and later transferred to the Mayo School as the senior drawing teacher (plates 128-130). Subsequently he became the Vice Principal of the Mayo School of Art. Uncle of the very famous artist Abdurrehman Chughtai and the son of Umar Din artist, Miran Baksh was a versatile personality. Basically a Naqash, he was a 'derveshi' dancer and also played Sitar. He had a hujra (room) in the Mosque of Wazir Khan and he did much of his work there. He taught his pupils in the typical manner of the Indian artists who wouldn't have 'patience to bear with the futile efforts of imperfections'. Master Miran Baksh retired in 1930. He had served the institution for nearly thirty-five years and with him, the institution lost an able officer whose place could not be filled in future.

After the retirement of Samarendranath Gupta from the post of Principal of the Mayo School of Art, Mian Mohammad Hussain became the principal. P.N Mago revealed to me that he had joined the class of miniature painting in the Mayo School

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52 He was always addressed as Munshi ji by the staff of the Mayo School of Art. He was an expert draughtsman with a good command over ornamental design, arabesque, and also calligraphy.

ibid, p36.

53 Chughtai had also been one of his pupils for a very brief period.

of Art in about 1945-46 as a casual student. Mian Mohammad Hussain was the Principal at that time. Mian Mohammad Hussain was sent to the Central School of Art and craft in London for two years to upgrade his qualifications before being promoted to the post of Assistant Principal. He had also been an old student of the Mayo School of Art and learnt to paint in the Bengal School style from S.N Gupta who had special liking for him. He was an expert in making working drawings of furniture, copper-wares or jewellery. Hussain and Sanyal used to work together in the school premises on holidays by engaging models for figure study. Both used to share the expenses. S.L Prasher held the post of Vice-Principal at that time. Now the institution extended its teaching facilities to the amateur enthusiasts by conducting evening classes in drawing and painting from life and sketching. There was also a modeling studio for casual students in the evening class and students here used to make sketches from European plaster casts of the Victorian era\textsuperscript{54}. S.L Prasher also invited B.C Sanyal to join the school again. Thus Sanyal took charge of the course of training in the evening. People from different walks of life joined this class. Not all of them aspired to become professionals in the field of art but the experience of engaging in a creative activity in the class did nurture their faculty of appreciating art in a much better way.

Haji Mohammad Sharif was another famous artist who painted in the traditional style of miniature painting. He was on the staff of the Mayo School of Art (plates 131A-131B). His

\textsuperscript{54} From an interview dated May 19, 2002 with Mr. P.N Mago.
ancestors worked in the court of Maharaja of Patiala. He migrated to Pakistan in 1945 after his retirement from the service in Patiala and joined the Mayo School of Art as a teacher. He retired as the Head of the Department of Miniature Painting in 1969.55

S.L Prasher, a young practitioner of art from the Punjab University was appointed a lecturer in the school. He had done Master's in English from the University. After taking his degree he came in contact with Abdul Aziz of Mysore a renowned painter who later became the Principal of Govt. School of Arts, Kabul. Prasher gained proficiency in landscape painting, portraiture and modeling under the guidance of his teacher56.

That the Mayo School of Art not only functioned as the institution of art education but it also had its share in promoting art activities in the pre-partition Punjab may be noted from the fact that the Punjab Fine Arts Society that was set up about 1920’s in Lahore held its first exhibition in the premises of the Mayo School of Art.57 As a matter of fact, the Punjab Art Society was founded mainly

55 Chowdhury, Nazir Ahmad, op.cit.,p252.
56 Later an English painter Hall Bevan Petman was also permitted to set up his studio in one of the spare rooms in the school (see pl-132). He used to be accompanied by a lady friend who modeled for the excellent pastel drawings in which she was represented in a variety of themes by B.Petman. She was also his future wife.
57 The schools of art in India had a significant role to play apart from being educational institutions.As there existed not many academies or salons etc. and the schools of art were the only main centers of art activity.
due to the efforts of Mr. Lionel Heath, the Principal of the Mayo School of Art as it was hoped that this society will be ‘able to inspire the local talents to do their best and build up a “new” school with individual and original qualities’\textsuperscript{58}. However a brief description of paintings displayed in the exhibition reveals the interesting but a peculiar problem faced by the art world in India at that time. Almost all the works exhibited were broadly categorized as paintings in the ‘Indian’ style and those in the ‘Western style’. A local newspaper commented that the pictures in the Indian Style formed the major part of the exhibition and were ‘superior in quality of work to those of the Western Style ‘both in conception and execution’. On the other hand the works done in the Western Style were found to be of the sketchy type in which pleasing effects had been obtained without much of effort on tinted paper\textsuperscript{59}. The Jury faced great difficulty while judging the best picture in the exhibition due to the ‘conflicting claims of the pictures painted in totally different styles’\textsuperscript{60}. Paintings by A.R.Chugtai and S.N Gupta who was the Vice-Principal of the Mayo School of Art at that time were highly appreciated .Later in the exhibition of Indian art works at Wembly in 1925 also the works by these two artists drew much attention among the artists from Punjab. Two other

\textsuperscript{58} Rupam No. 13 and 14,January-June 1923,pp38-39.
\textsuperscript{59} ibid,p-38.
\textsuperscript{60} It was thus suggested by the committee that the schedule of prizes must be so drawn in future as to avoid competition between these two styles of pictures against each other. However, the idea of segregating the Indian and European pictures was not much appreciated in general.

ibid,p-89.
important artists were Roop and Mary Krishna experimenting with western influences and interacting with traditional Indian techniques and construction (pl-133). They had also been pupils of Abanindranath Tagore. Roop Krishna was represented in this exhibition by his “Last Drop” in which reflects the ‘spirit of Indo-Persian tradition most happily seen through his modern training. Other artists from Punjab included Mr. Inayat Allah, Mr. Mohammad Hussain Qadri, Mr. A.R. Ashghar who all were represented by works of merit and originality. Most of the eight artists from Punjab were associated with the Mayo School of Art, in some capacity or the other.

THE TEACHING OF ART IN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

In early 1940’s Punjab University, Lahore, set up a Department of Fine Arts. Anna Molka Ahmad a European artist who shifted to

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61 “Modern Indian Art at Wembly”. Rupam, No.-21, 1925, pp 13-14. For further information on Roop and Mary Krishna see pp-223.

62 Ibid.

63 MA Fine Arts in 1955 and BFA and MFA Graphic Design and Painting were initiated in 1964. After her retirement she was honoured as Professor Emeritus, and she taught and guided the department until her death in 1994. In 1998, it was given the status of an Institute, offering MFA in Graphic Design, Book Illustration, Print-Making (Graphic Arts) and Painting, along with an MA in Painting. In 2003 a Doctoral programme was started and in March 2004 the Institute of Art & Design was raised to the level of a College. This was made possible by the leadership and vision of Lt. General (Retd.) Arshad Mahmood,
Lahore was its pioneer, mentor and her guiding spirit for nearly thirty years. It was through the intercession of that this move appears to have been initiated. And the Department of Fine-Arts in the Punjab University, Lahore was set up where B.A classes were started in June 1942. A number of young artists who graduated from this department took up the profession of Art teacher. Thus, a stream of such artists soon spread in the schools and colleges as art teachers all over Punjab. Later due to her personal efforts, the subject of fine-art was introduced in the colleges. In painting, she had a unique style of applying colours that is better termed as the ‘orange-mauve formula’. She had the tendency to use these deep rich colours in an equally bold brushwork. Her attitude to painting was that of expressionists (plates 134-135). She did not appreciate the Bengal School style of painting rather she looked down upon their work. While writing in her magazine, “Vista” about Bengal School artists in 1959 she remarked that there is visible a tremendous change in the work of the younger exponents of this style who ‘awake us’ instead of hypnotizing like old masters with their ‘virile painting’. Anna Molka Ahmad always encouraged her students to paint scenes of life and village people. She would encourage them upon making pictures of the Vice-Chancellor of the University and Lt. General (Retd.) Khalid Maqbool, the Chancellor of the Punjab University. The future of the college include having six independent departments, each offering three degree programmes.

http://www.pu.edu.pk/cad/site/history.html

64. Art and Art institutions in Pakistan: A historical perspective leading to contemporary art scene (Oslo Mela2002).

http://www.pvassociates.org/Art-&-Art-Institutions-in-Pak.pdf
the village folk involved in various occupations in the realistic style. Most of the work of her students bear her stamp of training. Her method of painting as well as teaching is reflected further in her own words as she said, “I teach my students tonal painting, that is, varying of tone of colour from dark to light but I practice coloristic painting, using colours of different light values for each shade of light and dark”65.

From the information given so far about progress of formal art education in Punjab it may be summarized that the formation of an art school in Punjab was an attempt of the colonial educationists and the administrators to introduce “a change from an oral and empirical to a rational mode of art instruction, based on European concepts of visual literacy”66. Sir Richard Temple urged that aesthetics is not a matter of “taste or fancy”, but “established principles...which can be learnt, illustrated, and applied, and on them practical rules can be found”67. First, an important step was taken up by the colonial rulers to establish the school of art and crafts in Punjab. This also acted as a guiding institute and for setting standards in various crafts, by exercising influence on the small-scale craft institutes. The major reason behind this development was the necessity to adopt modern methods of manufacture due to changed

65 Ahmad, Jalaudin, Art In Pakistan, London, 1972 (By arrangement with Pakistan pub.)
67 See for more detail - Herbert Read, Art and Industry: The Principles of Industrial design, London, Faber and Faber limited, 1944.
social conditions and new demands by the society, which had acquired an altogether new outlook under European influence. With the introduction of machinery, new and improved methods of manufacture were adopted by the Punjabi craftsman. Now there was a demand for new types of articles of furniture, which were unknown to the Punjab artisan. Furniture based on the European design was executed in the Mayo School of Art and the Punjabi artisan did the surface decoration by using traditional techniques like wood carving, inlay, etc. The objective of the School of Art was to display the manufactured craft objects in the Museum, and serially ticket them so that the customers were enabled to place an order easily (pl-136). At times arrangements were made with European and native purveyors of art ware to deal directly with the trained artisans. Generally, the private dealers suggested the best articles for market. Training in craft was an integral part of the Mayo School of Art and its primary function was "to maintain, restore and improve oriental art in all art industries and manufacturers". In addition, there were provisions for teaching trades like lithography, printing, architecture, designing, painting, and sculpture, wood engraving and photography in the school. The school was particularly devoted to the practice of indigenous crafts and the school manufactured art objects. These facts help us in summarizing that the main focus of the earliest institutions of formal art education in Punjab like those in other parts of India was the teaching of trades or skills with purpose of manufacture and sale of art and craft products. These institutions functioned as primarily commercial entities. It was assumed that the
Mayo school of art would make an impression on the industrial life of Panjab and the smaller industrial schools were in fact supposed to look up to this premier institution as their source of inspiration and guidance. As a matter of fact, students were sent to the school from other places for training purpose for example, the Director of Education, Colombo had sent students for training about 1928.68

The concept of artist-craftsman that was generated by such a major institution of formal art training like the Mayo School of Art found its own relevance in contemporary society. The first generation students who got through this set pattern of art training with more emphasis on learning craft played their role by practical application of their skills. Their formal training initially was free-hand drawing geometry, rudiments of perspective (model drawing), light and shade plant drawing from nature, elementary studies of colour. Later, more advanced and technical instruction followed in the form of architectural drawing and design suitable for mistris and draughtsmen, advanced perspective, modeling from nature, lithographic drawing besides compulsory training in crafts like engraving on wood and metal, textile design wood construction and ornamentation, wood-carving, cabinet work as carpets, embroideries, etc. After completing the course, students of the Mayo School of Art generally found employment as painters, Art Teachers or draughtsmen, for Railway or Survey departments of the Government. Although, the curriculum of the art school did not give enough space

68 Archives of Mayo School of Art, Index C, 57 C, 1921-30 Training of students sent by the Director of Education, Colombo, 1928-31, Admission H-I, p95.
to the courses in fine-art like painting, modeling or landscape yet, it played significant role in inculcating in the Punjabi artist, an understanding of a 'correct' approach to human form and also the rules of chiaroscuro and perspective. J.L Kipling, the first Principal of the Mayo School of Art was no doubt, the most dominating figure in the art life of Punjab at the end of the nineteenth century and had become more of a ‘phenomenon’ with his band of promising young students. These talented students included Ram Singh, Sher Mohammad, Kapur Singh, Amir Baksh, Ala-Ud-Din, Mohammad Din, and who continued their profession later on and earned great fame as artists.\(^{69}\)

This development gave a further boost to the movement of struggle for a new pictorial idiom in order to achieve greater realism that had been going on gradually since the time of old masters like Kehar Singh, Kishan Singh and Bishan Singh. Ultimately this struggle led to a style of painting that may rightly be called a provincial equivalent of “European Naturalism”. Whereas there seems to be a correlation between the artist or the artisan in the school of art initially; became blurred or indistinct later, as is evident from a growing awareness on the part of the artist and perhaps even more significant, on the changing attitude of the people that began to gradually appreciate a work of art for its own sake rather than only for its utilitarian validity. Thus a dissociation began to be sensed between the actual pattern of art education being followed in the school and the requirements on the ground. The curriculum of the school of art

\(^{69}\) For more detail on their works see pp176-181.
had by now become quite outdated and inadequate for the training of an artist. Since the school of art curriculum evolved during the industrial revolution in the colonial period and was purposefully structured for industrial callings, it did serve its objective to some extent. However, the courses became worn out and monotonous as no important modifications were done till the end of the colonial period. However, like the art schools of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay had a major impact on the development of the arts in their respective regions, the Mayo School of Art also influenced the artistic life of the province in its own way. Training in this school, in a way had its impact on the future generation of artists in that often these were products of schools where grounding in drawing was imparted to them by teachers trained at the Mayo School of Arts. Artist Pran Nath Mago while discussing this point during my interview with him elaborated that the subject of drawing was a part of the school education at that time. He narrated his own experience with the Drawing Master Trilok Singh in his school about 1936-37 and who also had his art training in the Mayo School of Art. This teacher introduced the students to the concept of drawing from objects in still-life, the effect of light and shade and rudiments of colour theory. This approach proved to be a significant learning experience for those students who had general aptitude for Art. However, some times lack of competent teachers would defeat the very purpose of this practice which was quite often the case as he informed that in case of non

70 Pran Nath Mago was born in the Gujarkhan district of Rawalpindi Division on Aug.22,1923 and had his early education in Khalsa High School, Gujarkhan.
availability of a trained teacher even a Band Master could serve the purpose. Like other Government schools of art, Mayo school of art played an important role in training Drawing Masters for teaching the subject of Drawing in middle and high schools. Training in drawing imparted at the school was of immense use to many of the later artists, all of whom were quick to point out its relevance. Many of the renowned artists like-Abdur Rehman Chughtai, S.G Thakur Singh, Sobha Singh, G.S Sohan Singh and many more had their early lessons in art in such institutions and their work became witness to their early grounding.71

It might be relevant to mention here that other developments in the concept of art education were also taking place in the country though not exactly in the main stream of formal education policy. Hindustani Talimi Sangh, an organization founded in 1937 launched Nayee Talim Scheme i.e. Gandhian Education Scheme for children between seven to fourteen years of age. It may be called the greatest and the most revolutionary experiment in educational planning in India. The fact that the first syllabus was prepared with the help of Acharya Nand Lal Bose, the pre-eminent artist and founder of the Kala Bhavan at Shantiniketan is a pointer to

71 In order however to assess the impact of such training on the artists it is necessary to identify and analyze its core features. Firstly, it is important to identify different types of Drawing that formed the part of instruction in these institutions. A detailed description of different types of Drawing as were taught in the schools of general education or technical and industrial institutions is given in chapter-III, pp86-87.
the increasing importance being given to training in the arts. The first syllabus for the teaching of art in Basic Education in this program was prepared with the help of Acharya Nand Lal Bose in 1937. 

Apart from the artists who had been directly or indirectly involved with the Mayo, there were a large number of active painters in Punjab, a majority of whom had been trained in the schools of industry, but had honed the technical training as draughtsmen etc that they had received to such an extent that their works finally transcended it emerging as unique artistic expressions. Such artists like Allah Baksh, S.G Thakur Singh and Sobha Singh who sought to paint essentially in the academic style, also had a great impact of the Punjabi art scene.

Perhaps the most popular and commercially successful artist was S.G Thakur Singh (1894-1976) who sought to paint the beauty of the visible world and people around them. Born in the village of Verka near Amritsar in 1894 Thakur Singh took his early lessons in art by drawing figures on the mud walls of the village houses. At about the age of ten he drew mural sketches on the walls of his ancestral home at Verka. He was admitted to the Victoria

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72 Rabindranath Tagore also advocated the idea of creative activities to be viewed as an important part of the education. According to Tagore there are three centres of education: mother tongue, nature and creative activities. The system of education that the colonial rulers had developed in India had not only ignored these elements rather it utterly ruled out their presence in the process of education at every level.

Diamond Jubilee Technical Institute in Lahore for the study of Engineering. He went to Bombay at the age of sixteen with Mohammad Alam, an artist from his native place who later became an art director of a theatrical company. Thakur Singh was a close collaborator of Hemen Majumdar in Calcutta who was greatly impacted by Raja Ravi Verma. His work was first acclaimed at the international level in 1924 when his painting “After the bath” won the second prize in the British Empire Exhibition held in London (pl-137). The sensuous appeal of the feminine figure in this remarkable painting was further accentuated due to the glowing realism and also by the choice of colour. Thakur Singh believed that nature was the primary source of inspiration for his art. He derives his technique of painting from European academic art. There is a never-ending freshness in his painting that always appeals to the onlooker. He believed that a piece of art must speak directly to the beholder.

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73 The impulse for the motif of Indian woman initially came from Raja Ravi Verma and became extremely popular while M.V Dhurandhar in Bombay and Damerela Rama Rao in Rajamundhry made excessive use of it. Kessar, Urmi, op.cit, p127.


75 His main areas of interest were portraiture and landscape painting. He gained quite an unrivalled excellence in these fields. He painted several commissioned portraits of ruling princes, nobles and leaders of the nation. His portrait studies of ‘Gandhiji’, ‘Hari Singh Nalwa’, are particularly famous masterpieces. “They have the same solid virtues which distinguishes the commissioned portraits of the Royal Academicians of Britain”
earned much popularity by winning the First Prize in the Simla Art Exhibition for his seascape “Early Morning on the Sea Beach”\(^7\)\footnote{Shamsher Singh, pub. Thakur Singh School of Art, Amritsar, p1.}. In the exhibition opened by the Duchess of York in December 1934 in the New Burlington Galleries in London his painting Ganesh Puja attracted particular attraction. By the middle of 1935 he organized the Punjab Fine Arts Association which also published his selected works in three volumes under the title of “The Art of Thakur Singh”. Also this society published an art album entitled “Glimpses of India”, which was a composite of scenic and architectural beauties of India. He won several awards and held a number of exhibitions in India as well as in foreign countries. Among such important exhibitions were those held in Moscow, Leningrad and Budapest in 1957. He had a great love for landscape painting and it remained his favorite motif throughout. There is always a lyrical essence in his landscapes. He captured various scenes of colorful Indian life for example- pilgrims taking bath in the sacred river of Godavari, fisherboats setting out to sea in the early dawn at Madras and the country sailing boats returning on the Hoogly at dusk. His landscape “Vally of Ladakh” is a beautiful pictorial record of a remote and desolate part of India (plates 138-139). “Parting Kiss” he captures the icy solitude of the Mount Everest and the glistening golden light that touches it as the day comes to an end. In this painting “he is as avid of flamboyant colour
as Turner"77. His other works like “Diamond Harbour, Calcutta” and “Sunset on Chamba”, are bewitching due to their sheer beauty. His paintings of the historical monuments like the Qutub, the Sanchi Gateway and the Golden Temple Amritsar are excellent pictorial records of these sites of historical and religious importance. Some of these paintings are not only visual record of these monuments but do represent a certain mood as in the painting “Her Last Desire” the Taj seems bathed in ‘ethereal light which evokes nostalgic reverie. Also in “A Glimpse of the Royal Palace, Bhopal”, the mood in the painting becomes a dominating feature. He nurtured his artistic ideals by imparting training to the younger artists. S. G Thakur Singh established The Indian Academy of Fine-Art was in 1928 in Amritsar78. The academy aimed at promoting the study of art and nurturing art appreciation. S.G Thakur Singh not only worked as a backbone of this set up rather he began the practice of art teaching by beginning an art school in its premises that was named as Thakur Singh School of Art. As is evident from his personal style of naturalistic painting, Thakur Singh encouraged his students to always

78 In an interview (22nd June, 2001) with the President of the Indian Academy of Fine Arts Mr. Avtar Singh informed me that before the establishment of the academy, artists used to exhibit their works in the Company Bagh or at other places like the Khalsa College Amritsar. Then the Municipal Corporation was requested to provide land for this purpose. Gradually the money also flowed in from not only the rich but the public as well for the construction of the building of the academy. S.G Thakur Singh made a great efforts to materialize this thought. He was also the founder President of the IAFA.
achieve a realistic rendering of an object. Most of the students were thus oriented to follow the style of their teacher himself and began painting in a similar manner. The Thakur Singh School of Art almost became a 'phenomenon' in Punjab at that time\textsuperscript{79}. The artistic movement initiated by him made Amritsar a cultural and artistic hub.

Another important artist of this period was Sobha Singh, the famous Sikh painter who earned immense popularity for his portraits of the Sikh Gurus. He was born on 29 November 1901 in a Ramgarhia family of Sri Hargobindpur, in Gurdaspur district of the Punjab. His father, Deva Singh, had been in the Indian cavalry. He had lost his mother at the age of five. He joined the Industrial School at Amritsar for a one-year course in art and craft when he was fifteen years of age. In 1919 he joined the Indian Army as a draughtsman and spent four years in Baghdad, where he studied books on European painting and also got inspiration from the works of amateur English painters\textsuperscript{80}. In 1923 Sobha Singh returned to India and set up

\textsuperscript{79} In an interview dated June 18, 2002, Late Mr. B.C Sanyal, while discussing art scene in Punjab in the pre-independence period revealed to me that he once he paid a visit to S.G Thakur Singh who firmly believed that oil-painting in the manner of European Naturalism was the most relevant stylistic idiom.

\textsuperscript{80} As an example of his work, a poster showing the pomp and splendour of the princely 'State of Jaipur,- - is worthy of mention. The Maharaja is riding on a splendidly caparisoned elephant. In the foreground are musicians and elegantly dressed retainers. From the balconies, women of the harem are enjoying the sight of the royal procession.
his studio near Chowk Phawara at Amritsar to work as a freelance painter. His medium was oil-painting. The influence of the academic art is visible in one of his earliest painting of Guru Nanak, dated 1924 reflects his understanding of academic stylistic features that he had assimilated through personal effort. In 1926 he shifted to Lahore and had his studio in an upper storey near the crossing of Anarkali Bazaar and the College Road.

After the division of the country he settled down in Andretta, a remote and then little-known place in the Kangra valley in 1949 and from there began the most productive period of his life. His works show remarkable understanding of the western classical technique of oil painting (pl-140). His themes ranged from the romantic lore of the Punjab, Indian epics to the portrayal of the Sikh Gurus. He earned enormous fame for his paintings of Punjabi lovers Sohni and Mahiwal and Hir and Ranjha (plates 41-142). Sohni-Mahinval was rated to be a real masterpiece; its impact upon the Puniabi consciousness was of a lasting nature. Although his paintings of genre themes and love-lores were received well by the public yet his greatest achievement lies in creating “...a perceptible

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81 ibid.
form for the Guru which would become fixed in the minds of the Sikhs as the permanent and authentic image of the Guru84 (pl-143).

Not all artists of contemporary Punjab had however the same degree of professional training. There were others who even though passing through totally informal routes succeeded in contributing to a general awareness of art in a major way. One such artist in Lahore was Ustad Allah Baksh. Born in 1895 in Wazirabad (Pakistan) Allah Baksh was a great commercial success. He began painting at the age of five in his home town when he became an apprentice of Master Mohammad Abdullah who was a local signboard painter (pl-144). Under M. Abdullah he spent several years in learning and mastering the art of letter-writing. Thus he got a job in the Railway Workshop where he would paint words and designs on the railway carriages. Later he also worked in an English Automobile Firm85. His visit to Calcutta gave a new turn to his life as an artist. There he started working in a theatrical company and used to paint various scenes as backdrops for dramatic effect. His work as a scene painter had a deep impact on him as well as his style of painting. He earned immense popularity as a painter of the Krishna theme86. He continued to work meticulously

84 Kessar, Urmi, Ibid, p123.
85 Choudhury, Nazir Ahmad, op.cit,p-246.
86 But the partition of India in 1947 did affect the artist's clientele as earlier the majority of his customers were Hindus and these people had migrated to the other side of the border and there was no more a demand for such paintings in West Punjab. Thus he began to concentrate on other themes that he of course,
on his paintings and also began to send these for display in the exhibitions held in Calcutta or Bombay. From time to time. His talent was first acknowledged in 1923 when he won the First Prize in an exhibition in Bombay. Finally he got settled in Lahore where he worked in Kapur Printing Works for some time and later set up his studio late.

In his paintings, Allah Baksh pays particular attention to the details of costumes, jewelery and other accessories but sometimes his figures appear somewhat mannered and have stereotypical faces. He would however, always attempt to give a realistic rendering to his figures, dresses the facial features and other elements in a composition. His female figures are quite impressive and at times these figures remind one of the slender female type of Chugtai but the realistic proportions instead of distortions or exaggerations and also the effect of light and shade defines the distinction between the two styles. In a number of his works he goes beyond the general realistic genre and reveals an imaginative creativity that moves beyond the general (pl-145). It may be summarized that the art of Allah Baksh has many levels and a great variety. His style does not fall in any of the 'isms' as he followed none

had been painting but only secondarily. Folk legends and rural culture of Punjab became his prominent subject-matter. There is a great bulk of paintings of different subject-matter by Allah Baksh that is not easy even to be categorized in order to do a proper analysis as his multidimensional work includes three dimensional theatrical figures, scenes of Punjab.
and the great bulk of his work is like a kind of kaleidoscope of all types of influences that spurred the artist's imagination into creative endeavor. His paintings may be seen hanging in the Lahore Museum and the Permanent Art Gallery of Alhamra in Pakistan.

Another famous artist who went through the process was Hari Singh (1894-1970). He was born in 1894 in Amritsar. He belonged to a family famous for producing architects, designers and decorators. His father S. Ganda Singh was a famous architect. After getting primary education in school he joined S. Ram Singh, principal of Mayo Art School of Art. Discovering the talent in him, Ram Singh provided him precise training, teaching all the fundamentals and technical details of the art. He was an expert in architectural and geometrical drawing that he learnt in his family itself. Excellent sketches of pillars may be seen in his sketchbook in possession of his son (plates 146A-146B). He learnt the rudiments of art education from artist Malla Ram who had been employed in the Kapurthala court before settling down in Amritsar where he set up his own studio. Malla Ram had earned enough popularity in his time and had almost become 'a phenomenon' due to his personality. Though he painted historical scenes and portraits, yet he was popularly known as a painter of theatrical scenes. Being his disciple, Hari Singh

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88 Hari Singh’s son S.Kuldeep Singh of Amritsar showed me the sketchbook of his father Hari Singh and also kindly allowed me to take photographs.
was inspired to work as a scene painter (pl-147). He became a painter in the Maiden Theater, Calcutta where he remained for nearly fourteen years (pl-148). Later he returned to his native place and worked in the Royal Talkies, Amritsar. Here he accomplished some of his best works in the form of frescos on the walls of this theater. Unfortunately, it was set on fire in the riots of 1947. Therefore, no finished specimens of his style and technique of wall painting have remained accessible to us today. He made a great contribution to the architectural and ornamental painting in Punjab. He had set up his own studio in Khoti Hatta near Municipal Corporation, Amritsar.

Another important artist from this period was G.S Sohan Singh, born in August 1914 in the house of the famous fresco artist, Bhai Gian Singh Naqash who worked in the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Sohan Singh had his schooling in the Government High School, Town Hall, Amritsar up to the middle

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89 Bhai Gian Singh Naqash was the son of Dr. Charan Singh. He was a man of great talent and worked in the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, for three decades. He was a pupil of Nihal Singh artist and painted in a manner that later came to be known as Sikh School of Painting. To Gian Singh goes the credit of dissociating Sikh Painting from the strong influence of Kangra and Iranian technique of painting. He was also responsible for introducing birds, flowers as decorative motifs in Sikh painting. His main areas of excellence were Naqashi and Mohahakashi. He made a deliberate effort to make the figures in his work appear as Punjabi both in features as well as in attire. He shared his knowledge of the traditional art of Naqashi with the art community in the form of books namely “Naqashi Darpan”, Visvakarma Darpan".
Since he had strong leanings towards drawing, he was sent to work with a sign painter as an apprentice by his father at an early age. Later in 1930 he became a pupil of the well known artist Hari Singh. Hari Singh was a very famous artist of Amritsar at that time. He had been working in the famous Elphinston Theatrical Company, which was also known as the Corinthian, Madan Theatrical Company. As a pupil of Hari Singh had an opportunity to visit several places namely, Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Allahabad, Bombay and Calcutta etc. Thus he also happened to meet a number of artists and understand their techniques as well. About 1931-32 both master and the pupil came back to Amritsar after the company was closed. After getting settled in his home town Sohan Singh started working on the religious themes especially under the influence of his father Gian Singh Naqash who had by now retired from his service in the Golden Temple. He got early commercial success when he painted the picture of Baba Banda Bahadur. This picture was printed as well as marketed by the artist himself in 1932\textsuperscript{90}. Thus Sohan Singh gained proficiency in block line. Various subject-matter was handled by the artist in different styles, mediums and techniques. He made calendar designs, oil and water colour paintings, commercial labels, designs

\textsuperscript{90} Though, during partition days all such artistic activity ceased and he had to go through tough times. However in 1954 he got his father’s works published in the form of a book due to the encouragement of the famous poet, Giani Harinder Singh Roop. Later, another book “Gian Chittraval” was also published in 1956 in order to commemorate the memory of his father.


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for book jackets and subject illustrations, newspaper advertisements etc. He also painted scenes of Indian monuments, landscapes, and thematic paintings (pl-149). The artist’s belief in and commitment to the style of realistic painting is clearly reflected in his painting ‘Satyamev Jayate’ that brings forth the idea that devotion to truth always has triumph over the forces of evil. Here Prahlad’s devotion to truth in the face of evil designs of Holika and Hiranya Kashapa symbolizes the ongoing war between the practitioners of new stylistic dimensions and who painted in their so called realistic style. This painting may also be a metaphorical rendering of Sohan Singh’s approach towards academic rendering and the newer and more experimental contemporary movements in painting. ‘Literary Campaign’ is one of the more popular works of Sohan Singh. Here an elderly man is shown learning alphabet as if realizing the need of literacy in modern life\(^{91}\) (pl-150). This excellent painting won him a Gold Medal at the All India Exhibition, Trivandrum in 1954. His water-colour ‘Winnowing’ is the picture of a sturdy Punjabi farmer separating the corn from the chaff in his field. This is a nature study made on the spot and the artist’s powerful brushstrokes have actually put life in the picture. The style of painting shows control of the artist’s over the media of water-colour.

On basis of the information available regarding the art and art education of the above mentioned artists in Punjab it

\(^{91}\) It so happened that the artist went to see an ailing old relative. While he saw the old man relaxing in the sun, suddenly an idea struck his mind and he prepared the life-sketch of the old man holding a student’s tablet in his hand.
may be concluded that customarily, about the first half of the twentieth century quite a few of those who aspired to be artists generally became the disciples of some famous or master artist. In case a child was found to have an inclination for drawing and painting, he was sent to work as an apprentice with an artist in the vicinity. A quick look at the art education of most of the artists in Punjab that have been referred to in the previous pages, proves that almost all of them had been tutored at their initial stage by one or the other practicing artist who were essentially commercial painters. Besides there were artists who belonged to some family of traditional artists or decorators, like old ‘Mussavars’ or ‘Naqashes’ and were thus heir to a rich cultural and artistic background and continued their inherited occupation though at times in a modified manner. Therefore, besides the system of art education comprising of an art school, industrial and technical schools and the inclusion of fine-art as a feature of liberal education in university, the traditional pattern of art training continued to hold its place even in the modern period, though with an altogether new approach. Some of the popular or commercially successful artists started to impart training in painting. At times they would also set up privately owned schools or academies where aspiring young men and women came to get lessons in art. Sometimes private art galleries or other such associations and societies also provided though with a much limited scope, an opportunity to practice art more as a hobby than a profession. It is utterly impossible to trace any set pattern of such a training as these private schools did not follow as such a Government
structured curriculum rather the features of art training primarily depended on the temperament of the artist concerned.

It is however interesting to see that apart from two broad categories of artists active in Punjab who were trained either at academies like ISOA or under direct apprenticeship under Bengal School masters like Chugtai so on and the others who practiced an idiom based loosely on the principles of western academic realism especially derived from schools of art and industrial schools etc., there was active in Lahore another category of artists who transcended their initial formal training patterns and sought to chart a new path for themselves. Roop and Mary Krishna were two very important names of artists active in Lahore before 1947. Roop Krishna belonged to the well known house of booksellers in Lahore named Rama Krishna and Sons. He had his earlier initiation in art at the Mayo School of Arts and had close contact with the Tagores and Nand Lal Bose in Calcutta and Shantiniketan. Later Roop went to London and had opportunity to study under Rothenstein at the Royal College of Art. There he married Mary who was given the Indian name of Indumati afterwards. Mary was also a very good artist. He usually used to paint at night. In his choice of colours, rhythm and composition sense there was an echo of his early association with the style of Bengal School of painting. A strong Indian attitude is reflected in his paintings though not in the technique that he employed. His wife Mary Krishna usually painted large canvases. In his paintings

92 Sanyal, B.C., Vertical Woman, p37.
there could be seen recurring images of men and horses as also there was “foreshadowing of gloom and sadness”\textsuperscript{93}.

Another important name in the art world of Lahore was Amrita Sher Gill whose artistic career however was shortened due to her early death. She was born in 1913 in Budapest and spent her early years in Hungary, India, as well as France, she studied at the renowned Ecole des Beaux Arts. Thus, she had all the opportunity of learning the anatomy of human body ‘in all its fleshy and bony contours’. Her work from this period was naturally typical of the Ecole students (pl-151). Her teacher at the Art school, Lucien Simon was a well known artist who painted in the styles of post-impressionism. Amrita too got inspired by the Postimpressionists’ idiom\textsuperscript{94}, and later made Indian painters aware of the new avenues of art through her work. From 1934 after her return to India, she made herself acquainted with of the traditions of Indian art. Mughal miniature tradition and the Ajanta paintings had a strong impact on her work as is clearly visible in her ‘The Bride’s toilet’, ‘Brahmacharis’ and ‘Villagers going to the market’ (plates 152-153). Her stay in the city of Lahore was short yet she made a niche for herself in the art scene of Lahore. She died in 1941. She appears to be one of those singular contemporary artists who transcended any formal training that she might have received and mutated the remanants, through sheer genius into a uniquely individual idiom.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid, p37.

It was B.C Sanyal, however, who provided great stimulus to the development of semi-formal or informal art education in Punjab, leading to a turnover in the concept of art education. In the words of P.N Mago, “During my early school days in high school, the only artist I heard about was B.C Sanyal who had gained fame due to his statue of Lala Lajpat Rai. He was an ideal for the budding artists”\textsuperscript{95}. He began a new creative wave in the art world of Lahore due to his studio turned art school that gained immense popularity by the name of Lahore School of Fine-Arts (pl-154 A). This art school of Sanyal gave a new direction to the parallel current of informal art education in Punjab. After some time Sanyal was suggested to set up a studio in the Forman Christian College by the Principal Dr. S.K Dutta who believed in the concept of complete education that included various forms of Fine Art and wanted Sanyal to create an environment of creative arts in his college. There was also a pottery and ceramics department in the college. He was provided with quite an adequate space for the studio close to this department. His old students from the Mayo School of Art also joined his new studio\textsuperscript{96}.

Since there was very limited space and very little furniture and equipment for such a large number of students he split them in different groups. Among some of the promising students

\textsuperscript{95} From an interview Oct. 6 2002 with Mr. P.N Mago.

\textsuperscript{96} Sanyal used to charge only Rs. 5/- as tuition fee from his students.
in his studio were – Damyanti Batra and Ashghari among women\textsuperscript{97}. Damyanti Batra took art as a serious profession and pursued with it after completing her college education and for many years continued to work as a member of the studio. Asghari also took genuine interest in art \textsuperscript{148}. Intellectuals from the Punjab University or other institutions used to visit his studio. Among the frequent visitors were Baldoon Dhingra who was quite enthusiastic about arts and literature and also wrote about the same and Mrinalini Chattopadhaya, Principal of Sir Ganga Ram Training Institute and High School for girls\textsuperscript{98}. Later, when the F.C College shifted to the new campus, Sanyal had to look for a new place. He then occupied the basement of Shalimar Paints on rent in Dayal Singh buildings on the Mall. He converted this spacious but dimly lit hall into his studio-cum teaching workshop and named it as the Lahore School of Fine-Arts\textsuperscript{99}. A remarkable exhibition of works of renowned artists like—A.R Chugtai, Roop and Mary Krishna, Allah Bux, Hall Bevan Petman and Hallet was organized. Bevan Petman, Roop and Mary Krishna offered to teach the students in the Sanyal’s school. Soon the school earned great popularity and was visited by every artist who came to Lahore namely—Sudhir Khastgir, Paritosh


\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{99} The Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University Mian Afzal Hussain inaugurated the School.
Sen, Kanwal Krishna, Mukul Dey, Samarendranath Gupta, and Ramen Chakraborty.

Also people who had interest in music and performing arts would visit him in his studio. With its informal atmosphere the studio became an ideal place for activities like rehearsals of plays or talks in art etc. In Lahore School of Fine-Arts the teaching methods that were adopted by Sanyal were suitable for individual requirements. He sought active participation in the entire activity of the studio by his students and to share the experience of work with the teacher. He would engage in sketching, painting or modeling in the company of his students.

Apart from students who had a desire for art education, a few local artists also began to associate with Sanyal. These young painters were Harkrishan Lall, Pran Nath Mago, Amarnath Sehgal, Damayanti Batra, Swatantrata Bhagat, Ratna Mathur, Tuffail Ahmad, Krishen Khanna, Zubaida Agha, Mohammad Latif, Usha Kashyap, Usha Dogra, Sheila Pasricha and the two

101 Certain young enthusiasts about art, literature and life had organized themselves into a group called the Renaissance Club. Principal promoters of this club were Daniel, Latifi, Perin Barucha, Romesh Rama Chandra and Romesh Chandra who had firm faith in the Leftist movement for progress and prosperity. Ibid, p58.
102 Harkrishan Lall was introduced to B.C Sanyal by the Principal of the Government College Ludhiana, Mr. Harvey. Harkrishan Lall was a student of his college. Ibid, p59.
Americans Mr. Lucas and Miss Porter. Sanyal always encouraged his students to discover their own artistic identity. In the Lahore School of Fine Arts there was no predetermined course of study. He would prescribe some foundation exercises in the beginning and allowed them unrestricted freedom after gradual development. Such a method of teaching could only be practically workable in the studio environment and with a limited number of students. The school used to hold an annual exhibition every year. The third exhibition was inaugurated by Mrs. Skrine, wife of the Hon'ble Mr. C.P Skrine, Resident for the Punjab state at Regal building on February 17, 1941. There were over 150 art works on display by the students of the art school. Sanyal's landscapes in water-colour were also on display. Particularly interesting was the “Sunday corner” in which he had skillfully achieved the sunlight effects. His sculptures like “Mother and Child”, Norah Richards’ portrait entitled “Head” and “Women” also excited interest (pl-154B). Amongst his students the most promising was Damayanti Batra whose “Reapers” and “Pensive” and the two figures shown involved in doing hard work in her “Burden” proves her skill as a colorist since she handled bright colours

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104 Dr. Charles Fabri acclaimed that in the portrait head of Norah Richards, B.C Sanyal had ‘reached the highest standard of portraiture he has ever touched; it is a masterly depicting of the character and individuality of the model, the artistic value of which is greatly enhanced by the shadow thrown by an interesting hat’. “Painting and sculpture Annual Art Exhibition of Lahore School of Fine Arts”. Feb. The Tribune, 18, 1941.

105 “Lahore School of Fine Arts Third Exhibition”, The Statesman, Feb. 18, 1941.
intrepidly and her brush strokes also show strength. Among the paintings done in the Indian Style or the so-called Modern Bengal School the best work was the water colours by Iswar Singh. Quite imaginative sculptures based on the themes of Punjabi life were exhibited by Dhanraj Bhagat. Also there were good examples of pictures by Mohammad Tuffail and M. Latif. In her opening address Mrs. Skrine said that the Art School of Mr. Sanyal was helping to create a future for art in this Province and the young artists-to-be were getting the necessary training to develop the technique of painting and modeling. An anonymous write up published in The Filmo, Lahore, in December 1939 while referring to the Lahore School of Fine-Arts rightly declares, “Mr. Sanyal’s school of fine-arts (The Punjab Literary league Hall) is an attempt to catch young budding artists and mould them into finished products worthy of the Institute and worthy of the traditions of this great country...Bhabesh Sanyal is a multitude of arts in himself ...That is what makes him a great artist as well as a great teacher who, through his insight and the readiness to grasp the smallest details of the apparent as well as the grotesque and the Truth behind things, can impart to his students of

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106 Ibid.
107 “…as one who has the privilege of watching with interest and admiration the growth of this independent, non-government school of art, I do not hesitate at all to say that the improvement in the standard of the pupils’ work in these years is most impressive...the conclusion is inevitable that Mr. Sanyal must be a good teacher”.
Ibid.
The paintings of Pran Nath Mago were highly appreciated particularly for the quality of composition sense in his works. Pran Nath Mago and Harkrishan Lall were probably the best and the most gifted of the Sanyal’s students. As far as the handling of oil-medium was concerned both artists showed great originality as well as keenness for new experiments (plates 155, 156A-156B). Both of these artists had a sound background of art training. Pran Nath Mago (b. Aug 22, 1923) had joined Sir J.J School of Art, Bombay in 1940 and completed the Government Diploma in Art in 1945. Later he joined the Mayo School of Art in 1946 with the objective of learning the art of miniature painting in the Class of Miniature Painting in the school. Harkrishan Lall (b. March 8, 1921) graduated from Punjab University in 1940 and pursued studies in art at the Sir J.J School of Art. Though his studies were disrupted for two years because of some personal reasons, yet he obtained Government Diploma in 1947. Both these artists became celebrated painters later.

108 “Pran Nath Mago stands out as the most gifted of Sanyal’s pupils. His compositions are original, his angle of vision often reminiscent of Japanese and Chinese scroll-paintings, and his handling of brush is certainly something quite new. There is strength and vitality in everything he touches, even in such a delightful small painting as “The Evening of Life” or in such more powerful compositions as men struggling with a reluctant bull, a painting of disturbing force”

ibid, p117.
During the communal riots in Lahore before 1947 the artistic activities in Lahore School of Fine arts completely came to halt. At this time most of these artists associated with Sanyal had moved away except Pran Nath Mago, Dhanraj Bhagat and Amarnath Sehgal continued to explore the ‘possibilities of some renumerative works’ while working at the studio (pl-157). During this time they were engaged in making illustrations for a volume on the Indian National Congress that Prabodh Chandra had compiled. Most of these young artists were now moving on their own and had developed their own individualistic styles.

It can be seen thus, Sanyal played an important role in familiarizing the budding artists not only with new currents in art but also in allowing them a free play of creative imagination, thus setting the stage for the later creative efflorescence in the region.