A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN TRADITIONS ON MUGHAL PAINTING

THESIS SUBMITTED TO MANIPUR UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

By

BEDAVATI LAISHRAM

Ph.D. REGISTRATION NO. 1826/2003



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
MANIPUR UNIVERSITY
CANCHIPUR : IMPHAL-795 003

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Manipur University
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Manipur, India

Dated: November 15, 2006

CERTIFICATE

*This is to certify that the thesis entitled, "**A Study of the Impact of Foreign Traditions on Mughal Painting**" submitted by Bedavati Laishram for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History is the result of her serious and committed research work done under my supervision. In this work, she has utilized the materials obtained from her own survey work and relevant literary sources. To the best of my knowledge and belief, neither this thesis nor any part of it forms the basis of any research degree either in this University or in anywhere else.*

I further certify that Miss Bedavati Laishram has fulfilled all the conditions prescribed by Manipur University for submission of the present thesis.

L Kunjeswori Devi
(Laishram Kunjeswori Devi)
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Department of History.

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In loving memories
of my brother

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Bedavati

Bedavati Laishram

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INTRODUCTION

Mughal School of Painting evolved as a distinct and brilliant academy with its individual characteristics. However, in the course of its formulation up to its maturity, there are divergent iconographic traditions discernible, which are disparate in style and taste from the Mughal benchmark. This presupposes the implementation of diverse elements as derived from the Persian and European, and also the pre-Mughal Indian traditions of painting. Therefore, it is an essential effort to ascertain the degree of impact these foreign traditions had as complementary elements in the establishment of the Mughal School. Whether this was a conscious move on the part of Mughal patrons to incorporate different cultural idioms and why; and how much assimilation or mutation of these different artistic conventions were effective in determining the Mughal heritage. These are some aspects, which would be dealt with in detail.

For the above hypothesis, the thesis **"A Study of the Impact of Foreign Traditions on Mughal Painting"** proposes to analyze the impact of certain heterogeneous artistic traditions on the Mughal School of painting. The impact would be studied on both the pictorial as well as the dogmatic aspects. This impact would be seen in terms of a purposeful and progressive impetus on the part of the Mughal rulers to legitimize both their artistic as well as their imperial legacy. The period of study would be concentrated primarily during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

The aim is to bring forth the intricacies of the Mughal struggle, their policies and arrangements to justify their magnificent establishment of the Mughal legacy; and how much was their zeal affected by their adoption of different cultural ideologies in their own cultural civilization – in short, their authority and purpose in this influence on one hand to achieve an art *par excellence* and on the other hand to achieve stability of their domination in a conquered land, through artistic measures.

The Mughal School of painting, like their political supremacy, was an establishment over the longstanding and rich tradition of the Hindu classical art. Therefore, for them to surmount this age-old tradition the Mughals needed to construct a path of eternal recognition. This was mainly the reason why the Mughals were constantly exerting their power to uphold their majestic claim in every aspect – be it politics or culture. Not only did they need a strong defense against the occupied Hindus but also from other invaders who, like them, were always on vigil to look for opportunity to strike. In such a precarious situation, the Mughals were consistently designing strategies and measures to tighten their loopholes in every sphere and reaffirm their supreme status. The foundation of the Mughal School of painting further accentuated

their pursuit as they began to use it as an effective medium for expressing their ideology.

Many great works have been written on Mughal painting and to an extent, the impact of foreign traditions has also been studied. However, a study on the relative importance of the emperors' role to determine their sovereignty through artistic domination is yet to be given a commendable and complete attention. Therefore, this is an honest attempt to add to the study of the deliberate choice of the emperors in the characteristic impact of these foreign and indigenous artistic elements on the Mughal School with a view to legitimize their stand. Thus, the study has a dual perception; one aspect dealing with the characteristic impact of art and the second aspect would study the ideological impact.

The study comprises of six chapters. The first chapter discusses a brief account on the coming of the Mughals in India, their establishment of a dynamic empire and its subsequent journey during the following years. An account of their artistic penchant and the subsequent institution of a painting school follow this. This forms an inevitable forwarding chapter for a general account on the political atmosphere of India at that time, which was loosening its hold against the invaders and especially to the Muslim conquerors. It also narrates briefly the vibrant and sturdy lineage of the Mughal monarchs, that of the Turks and the Mongols, which easily explains the personality of the Mughals.

The second chapter describes the formal institution of the Mughal School of painting, the monumental painting commissions and the characteristic features of the school, progressive under the successive rulers.

Simultaneously, this chapter outlines the character and personality of the Mughal rulers, as this is an essential parallel to understand the underlying potential of the patrons, on which the school depended and which they began to exert in their artistic productions.

The third chapter examines the diverse Indian traditions of painting that prevailed before the Mughals ascended on the imperial throne of India. It also includes a brief prehistoric cultural study as to locate the beginning of an art culture in India, albeit in rudimentary form and to trace the continuity in the later traditions that emerged. This chapter breaks into two halves; the first part deals with the study of the classical tradition of wall painting, reminiscent of the Ajanta frescoes, its growth and influence in different place and time; and the second half concerns the pre-Mughal Indian miniature traditions. This intends to suffice our knowledge on the evident classic Indian features in the Mughal illustrations.

The fourth chapter contains the study of classic traditions of Persian paintings under different schools and different dynasties and its relevant impact on the Mughal School. This chapter again consists of two parts: the initial division deals with the different painting schools that developed in Persia, the characteristic ingredients and the ideological implications manifest in their productions; and the later part discuss specimens of these elements in Mughal paintings.

The fifth chapter highlights European artistic geniuses as a sparkling element in the Mughal concept of painting. It opens with the beginning of European contacts with the Mughals and a brief survey continues, on Akbar's initial acquaintance with the Jesuits and subsequently the increasing exchange

of artistic culture between the Mughals and the west, which generated the sources for the western artistic inspiration in the Mughal productions.

The sixth chapter, which is the concluding chapter, draws out the overall analysis of the whole thesis. Thus, the impending question of whether Mughal art finally molded the imperial ideology has been expectantly dealt with through this examination. All through the study, the focus therefore, is two-fold; one to examine these various traditions as supporting aspects in the growth of Mughal painting, while the second attention is to portray the associated ideology.

Methodology

The research is based on both primary and secondary sources. For the purpose of the study, extensive works have been carried out at Delhi and Agra where the Mughal imperial stronghold was dominant. In fact, a preliminary observation in these two places led to construct the proposed thesis; and the hypothesis that a vast element of both foreign and indigenous traditions had a great impact on Mughal painting. As a necessary fieldwork, various libraries, art galleries and cultural centers in Delhi, Agra, Calcutta and Hyderabad were visited. Extant manuscripts and paintings were carefully examined, as the main part of primary source collection, in the museums of India, where these works are mostly available. A comprehensive study of the autobiographies of the rulers completes the primary data for this study. Unfortunately, owing to the dispersal of majority of the original extant works abroad, much of the reference are limited to secondary sources which are in abundance. Most of the extant illustrated works are at libraries and museums outside India, therefore, there were limitations in terms of access to the primary

sources, and as a result, much of the references of the illustrations were done from reproductions in textbooks, journals and periodicals.

Review of Literature

The primary sources which are in the form of both illustrated manuscripts as well as contemporary historical accounts like ***Ain-i-Akbari***, ***Akbarnama***, ***Baburnama***, ***Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri***, etc, have been greatly used in the preparation of this thesis. It may be relevant to point out in this context that a critical analysis of the manuscripts are important in understanding the history and aesthetic values of the Mughals. Added to these are the contemporary foreign accounts like, ***Travels in the Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*** by Francois Bernier, ***Akbar and the Jesuits: An account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar*** by Father Pierre du. Jarrie, etc.

Secondary sources which are dependant on primary sources are also extensively discussed. For quotations, citations and to derive interpretation and hypothesis we referred to secondary sources. Some of the pioneering studies, notably, Percy Brown's work like, ***Indian Painting Under The Mughals A.D 1550 to A.D 1750***, Anis Farooqi's illustrative study entitled, ***Art of India and Persia***, Stuart Cary Welch's text, ***Imperial Mughal Painting***, Milo Cleveland Beach's elaborate study on the theme ***The Grand Mughal***, and lastly the collected Essays of Ebba Koch, ***Mughal Art and its Imperial Ideology*** can be mentioned in this connection. Thus by cross examining both the primary and secondary sources we have analyzed our topic to a great extent.

Apart from the above sources, to incorporate recent knowledge and information in this aspect several articles from journals as well as periodicals have been reviewed thoroughly.

CHAPTER-I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"During the period of history that corresponds to the Middle Ages in Europe, India was the prey of foreign invaders,"[1] primarily from the Central Asia. These invaders were races of conquerors, hungry for power and jostling each other for supremacy.

On the eve of these invasions, India, divided into a number of small states, had its power distributed among various independent rulers, who lost its vigour to the hands of these foreign invaders despite putting up strong resistance. There was no integrity among the people and thus it was no difficult task for the conquerors, to completely sweep the power and luxuries of the land, defeat its people, ruin the many cities and towns and loot the country of its riches. Such was the impact of the Mohammedan dominance in

[1] Percy Brown, ***Indian Painting under the Mughals A.D 1550 to A.D 1750*** (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1981). 31

India that in no time the Hindu Empire of Delhi disappeared. The Turks, the Afghans, the Arabs, the Pathans and the Mongols by their might, destroyed the Indian lands and established their supremacy for many Centuries. Hindustan was thus captured and seized by each of these relentless bloodthirsty conquerors until their rule was uprooted, by another super power. In this manner many of these invaders remained, fascinated by the wealth and health of the land they conquered, and in course of time, they built their own independent kingdoms. Dynasties after dynasties established and ruled one after the other until defeated and seized by the next power. The end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century saw the emergence of such a super power in the name of the Mughal Empire and instituted a kingdom such as, none existed before and ruled for over two centuries.

The central authority in India under the Lodi Afghans was shattered; Ibrahim Lodi's inefficient political strategies to consolidate his control at the centre proved futile and at the same time, infuriated the provincial rulers who consequently were beginning to assert their independent kingdoms. The Mewar ruler, Rana Sanga revolted against Ibrahim Lodi and in an attempt to oust his rival completely, allied with Babur in a decisive battle against the Lodi ruler. Interestingly for Babur, it was a turning point politically, as he soon realized that winning over Samarqand was becoming futile and hence needed to direct his attention elsewhere and this gave him the much-needed opportunity. Moreover, he saw the conquest of Hindustan legitimate, as his ancestor Timur had ruled over it once and therefore, it rightly belonged to him. Thus, in a sweeping twist of events, Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi in 1526 as well as Rana Sanga in 1527 and established his domain in India. Thus, Babur founded the magnificent Mughal Dynasty in 1526 and ruled robustly

throughout his short reign. He was a direct descendant of Timur through his father and through his mother, a descendant of Chengiz Khan, thus belonging to a Turko-Mongol origin. He was a dynamic and valiant conqueror. He stormed and mercilessly attacked the people and made them captives in all his battles. With one victory after another and with such war zeal he began his journey of expeditions in India and established his dominant Empire covering almost the whole of northern India. In a short span of four years, Babur created a dynasty, an identity synonymous with all the great superpowers of contemporary Asian and European world. His successors were altogether of the same indomitable personality and therefore the Mughal Empire rose strong and firm for a long period until, after the death of Aurangzeb, it began to decline.

After his death in 1530, Babur left his son Humayun a "troubled and vulnerable kingdom."[2] Humayun with his undaunted spirit took forth the expedition and resisted his enemies although eventually he failed to sustain his vigour during the intermediate stage of his reign against the strong hand of Sher Shah, the Afghan nobleman; and in 1540, this Afghan usurper defeated the Mughals. Humayun went into exile and lived at the court of Shah Tahmasp, the Safavid ruler. While in exile, Humayun did not overlook any opportunity for recovering his lost empire. With the help of the Shah of Safavi, he set up his rule in Kabul in 1545 and awaited a favourable moment to strike against the Afghans and regain his authority back in Hindustan. In 1555, Humayun successfully carried out his well-schemed attack and wiped out the Afghans and thus returned to his throne as an emperor but unfortunately died after a short span of serving as the Emperor.

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[2] Stuart Gary Welch. ***Indian Drawing and Painted Sketches – Sixteenth Through Nineteenth Centuries*** (New York: The Asia Society, 1976). p. 33

Humayun was succeeded by his son Akbar in 1556. His reign from 1556 – 1605 was regarded as the Golden Age of the Mughal Empire. This was rightly said so as his reign saw great achievements in every aspect. He set up a magnificent court and restored the legacy built by his grandfather, Babur. The Mughal Empire was once again in the realm of triumph and victory for a considerable period. Jahangir and Shah Jahan retained much of the Mughal strength and vitality. Much of the task of political consolidation was achieved during Akbar and as such, there were lesser military pursuits in the subsequent years of Jahangir and Shah Jahan. However, maintaining the glorious status that their predecessors had attained was an equally assiduous effort. This required as much the same attention and policy that was adopted by Akbar and in this regard, both Jahangir and Shah Jahan followed more or less the established pattern of norms with their subjects. Such an accomplished and splendid court however lost its strength and began to disintegrate with the disastrous wars and utopian ideals of Aurangzeb and subsequently by the weak successors until the final death knell was rung when the aged Shah Alam Shah surrendered to the British in 1858.

Such a stalwart empire has its credit to "the blood and traditions"[3] of the two great scourges of Mongol and Turk; and to the culture and civility of the Persians. With such qualities, the Mughal Emperors began their crusade and extended their supremacy over the whole of India.

Besides being valiant subjugator, the Mughals were "with few exceptions among the world's most aesthetically minded rulers."[4] They were

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[3] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 32

[4] Stuart C Welch. ***The Art of Mughal India – Painting and Precious objects*** (The Asia House Gallery, New York: The Asia Society Inc, 1963). p. 11

great lovers of art and beauty and these qualities found expression in every aspect of their culture, as we shall see in our further study. They have executed excellence in every field, especially in the field of art and learning, their contributions have been tremendous. In the art of painting, the emperors were great patrons and because of their artistic penchant, Mughal painting emerged well known all over the world. "Renowned for their brilliant colours, accuracy in line drawing, detail, realism, intricacy and variety of theme, Mughal paintings are a class by themselves, distinct from all other styles and techniques of pre-Mughal or contemporary Indian art."[5] Babur was a great admirer of art and like his Timurid forebears; he also eulogized the art of painting. However, despite the fact that he had some artistic talent he had not laid any foundation of art school in India. The School had its historic beginning only during the reign of emperor Humayun and formalized under the constructive genius of Akbar, who started the Mughal School of Painting.

During the reign of Akbar, Mughal painting pioneered as a formal establishment and from then on, the Mughal atelier saw a gradual process of growth and maturity. Enormous works were commissioned since the very inception of the school, despite the early political obstacles, which could have easily triggered a possible early decline. Conversely, the productions were of immense value, both qualitative and quantitative, which proved the steadfast and abiding spirit of the emperor. The ***Hamza-nama*** was the most prominent illustrative painting work in Islamic tradition during Akbar's reign. Vibrant and monumental, such was the kind of their commissions, projective of their strong inclination to painting and especially a style that appealed to Emperor

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[5] Som Prakash Verma. ***Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court*** (New Delhi : Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1978). p. xiii

Akbar. Jahangir's aesthetic direction generated a new style of its own, distinct from the Persian tradition, which sourced the initial inspiration of Mughal painting. Shah Jahan's supervision followed a new genre that further brightened the Mughal School. Thus, the Mughal atelier saw a gradual process of change and growth under the brilliant guidance of each of these great monarchs. Each phase saw an advancing amalgamation of new elements that added to the maturity of the School. These features with all certainty amplified the Mughal pictorial art but at the same time, it also generated a platform for voicing their opinions and ideologies.

Mughal Painting is the result of an interesting admixture of the art aficionado Mughal monarchs along with the various artistic traits and principles. Understanding such a vast culture and appreciating the impact of these foreign traditions on Mughal painting require a descriptive study of the heterogeneous elements such as the Persian context, the European elements and the pre-Mughal indigenous art style. Equally important is the nature of patronage in the art of painting. The Mughal emperors' contribution in painting crystallized their fervent interest in this art, which marked their ancestral fascination, while it also implied a necessity beyond the artistic ambition, as of a channel for publishing their continuous power. It is in these aspects of the impact that this work would focus. In the course of the research, an attempt would be made to incorporate new findings from the known to the unknown, to deduct repetitions and to finally make progression to the knowledge.

CHAPTER-III

PRE-MUGHAL TRADITIONS OF INDIAN PAINTING

The history of painting in India evolves primarily within two periods. The first period, which corresponds to the first centuries of the Christian era of medieval Europe, "begins with the official adoption of Buddhism, by the emperor Asoka,"[1] and the later, is the miniature paintings of the Medieval Age. Prior to this, any implication of an established painting tradition is obscure. An understanding of these indigenous conventional traditions of the first historical period of painting is essential as a sustaining factor for the growth and development of the later Indian miniature paintings and more specifically, for the study of the Mughal School of painting. Akbar's policy of expansionism in both the artistic wealth as well as political authority necessitated the inclusion of the native ingredients for a successive mould.

Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Treasures of Asia – Indian Painting*** (S.A. Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1978). p. 11

Moreover, the vast and rich cultural heritage of India appealed to the emperor and thus employed a large number of local artists in his artistic bandwagon.

The classical historic period characterizes naturalism, nature being the basis of every perception. This phase wielded strong and continuous for a considerable period. In North India and Deccan however, this sturdy growth was disturbed; the naturalistic approach began to deviate gradually by the tenth century, to incorporate and absorb new elements, with the advent of the Muslims in these regions. Even after attempts to retain this phase of classical culture, a definite slow departure is evident suggesting, "a shifting of emphasis familiar when a particular culture is beginning to lose its intensity and sureness of vision."[2] The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries evidenced clear process of acclimatization to the new features, in the north and the Deccan. While in Orissa and South India, the historic conventional tradition continued strong and vivacious, resisting the influence of the new invaders until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Almost all the conquered regions of India were exposed to a completely new array of culture, except the remote areas or the hills where independent small Hindu states feebly retained their position. Notwithstanding this, the contribution of the indigenous people cannot be underestimated as it is apparent that the influx of the Muslim craftsmen was only a gradual process, the initial period showing a meager figure of these skilled artisans. Local artisans and craftsmen were still invariably employed under the new rulers and the manner and taste of work still largely native. Although hints of admixture most commonly of Persian elements are noticeable in the early sixteenth century paintings, no particular school of painting was strictly adopted.

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[2] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Ibid.***, p. 11

However, one tradition belonging to this phase of the end of the classical period, which requires attention, could be traced in the illustrated Jain religious texts, in the Jain community libraries of Western India. The illustrations manifest the characteristic ingredients of the classical culture; confident and animated depictions of nature; and scenes with full of emotions and expressions.

In North India though, and specifically in the state of Mewar, which strongly resisted the Muslim forces and kept their sovereignty intact, painting flourished under the patronage of Hindu rulers and the mode of representation was recapitulated within the classical framework, with emphasis on the design and the use of colours, reminiscent of the classical era. The illustrated texts available here are indicative of the fact that given the platform for vitalizing paintings under liberal patronage, the scope for retaining and expanding the classical tradition can be achieved on a wide scale. Rightly, so, this culture continued wherever there were generous Hindu patrons. Before going into further details of the established traditions prevalent in India in the preceding years of the Mughal occupation, a brief survey of the primitive art culture is crucial for understanding the origin and growth of pictorial art in India, and also to establish a cultural connection in the diverse traditions.

Prior to the beginning of the historic Buddhist paintings, prevailed the classic culture of prehistoric cave paintings, revealing the cultural history of ancient times. This has been made available to us through excavations and the use of advanced scientific technologies, through which the use of technique, manner, style, color and even subject of these paintings are traced and identified. These experiments produced several rock paintings dating approximately from 5000 BC to present times. The excavations of several

cave shelters in places of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh among other locations have yielded primordial outline drawings of hunting scenes and general animal motifs on a large scale including elephants, bison, antelopes and lions among others and also burial scenes. A close observation of the sequence of styles in these pictures suggests a course of advancement in the techniques and in the colours used, as seen in several rock shelters. For instance, in Raisen, near Bhopal, in the third millennium B.C., animal motifs depicted showed an improved style, with interlaced shading and silhouetted shape indicating the structure of the animals from the previous crude drawings. This implies a sense of naturalism emergent in their representations. A further instance of progression is seen in the depiction of "a zebu bull at Kharvai, also near Bhopal, which has been dated to the period ca. 2500-300 B.C."[3] Here, unlike the Raisen depictions, white kaolin has been used to shade the silhouetted figure of the animal against the darker shade of the rock wall. There is an even greater sense of naturalism here than the Raisen depictions, in that the animal is drawn more smoothly with rounded body and a large hump, giving a sense of the volume and mass of the animal.

Apart from the animal designs, human motifs depicted are generally profile delineation and can be attributed to later periods, probably around the same time when pottery sites were dated, at about 1500 B.C., although cattle remained the regular subject of depiction.

Having said so, the rock paintings found, however, are certainly not an indicator of any particular tradition nor do they possibly lend any significance to the purposes and meaning of the artistic culture of that time. It is equally

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[3] Susan L. Huntington. ***The art of Ancient India – Buddhist, Hindu, Jain***. (New York: John Weatherhill, Inc., 1985). p. 4

difficult to derive a conclusion as to the intention these paintings had in religious context, although general deduction would imply perhaps a delineation of their occupation and basic livelihood. What is definitely evident conversely, is their "aesthetic interest in the shaping of their tools,"[4] and not so much their techniques or style. While a manner parallel to the earliest form of artistic traditions of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain is not possible, a cultural connection is not entirely ruled out from these primitive drawings. From the crude representations of these early wall paintings to the figural depictions of Buddhist, Jain and Hindus, a sense of continuity is inherent, naturalism being the basic criterion throughout the drawings. One other evidence pointing to this link is that, repeatedly the same prehistoric tools sites are discovered as important religious sanctuary of historic times.

While it is generally accepted that any cultural estimation before the series of invasions in India, is incomplete, the accomplishment of the Harappan civilization cannot be sidelined as mere historical growth. Archaeological excavations affirm a complex agricultural and social life in these regions but the origin is still elusive. Nonetheless, there are enough evidences supporting the occurrence of a well-defined and organized central authority: the uniformity in the town planning, the urbanized system of living, the control and regulation of food and other material supply. Moreover, trade link with Mesopotamia is also apparent and it appears that art flourished around 2000 B.C. before it was devastated by the strings of incursions. The remains of these artifacts imply a consistency in the technique and tastes, indicating an organized pattern of production under a single unit. Polished stone sculptures, although rarely found, are remarkably accomplished in their

[4] Basil Gray. Introduction: Prehistory and the Classic Tradition of Wall Painting. Basil Gray (Ed.) ***The Arts of India***. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981). p. 10

composition and format. Occasionally, the regular model found in the carved steatite seals is abandoned for a different and complex pattern, but all the same, the scope for naturalism and a keen observation is distinctly discernible although quality varies in wide range in these stone and bronze carvings. All these factors more than support the survival of a planned way of life.

An incredible exactness and professionalism is seen in the carved steatite seals in their renderings. Animal motifs such as bulls, buffaloes, rhinoceros or elephants are depicted along with some script meticulously positioned. Rarely, composite creatures of animals with human parts are depicted and sometimes mystical figures seen. The scripts inscribed are however not legible. The Harappan culture although fundamentally an Indian maturity, showed signs of continuity of the previous culture and a possible exchange with Mesopotamia resulting from its trade links. Even the potteries of this civilization confirm a clear existence of connection and development with the previous culture. For instance, the potteries at Amri, west of the bank of Indus show a growth from the potteries found at the sites in northern Baluchistan and in Afghanistan on the Mundigak plateau, which dates around 3500 B.C. and finally into the Harappan times. The features of these potteries; geometric patterns of Amri; pipal leaves characteristic of Kot Diji potteries, in the east of the Indus bank, were also linked to the designs of Nal painted potteries. The potteries of the full Harappan period show fully decorated designs with background of landscape and sometimes with animal motifs and birds and very rarely, human figures.

While on one hand, there are considerable archaeological evidences of the degeneration of the Harappan civilization found in the charred structures, scattered and strewn carcasses, ruins of towns and cities, dilapidated buildings

etc; on the other hand, there are signs of continuity and transition of material culture even after the invasion of the Aryans. This is yet another proof of the cultural connection and was true especially of the decorated potteries. The grey ware painted pottery peculiar of the period about 500 B.C. corresponded with the spread of the Aryan invaders in the Jumna and upper valleys of the Ganges. Another post-Harappan pottery, possibly a growth over the previous, is the polished black ware found around the same area and sustained for a period spanning from the fifth to the second century B.C. However, despite such achievements, unfortunately it was not until the historic period that painting had any large implication and perspective. Prehistoric painting as is evident was restricted only to the rock-wall paintings and the painted potteries, and as such, no established tradition could be successfully traced.

Most of the narrative wall paintings in India are the frescoes in the Buddhist cave temples at Ajanta revealing scenes from the ***Jatakas*** (episodes on the life of Buddha) and the representation of the Bodhisattvas. The striking features of the Ajanta friezes had the most enduring impact on the arts of other foreign idioms. Buddhism emerged as a powerful and enthralling religion, even more enhanced by Emperor Asoka, and Buddhist art inspired and transformed the native tradition wherever it was adopted. It was through the devout pilgrims who traveled to and from India to acquire knowledge on this new religion, the many decorated shrines and their accepted iconographies, sought after in different parts of the world, that propelled Buddhism far and wide, although with varying impact.

Consequently, we see that apart from the Ajanta caves, are the wall paintings found in Central Asia and China, which reveal equally significant influences of the Indian tradition. Their veneration for the Buddhist religious

doctrines is seen in the adornment of their shrines with opulent decorations, which these pilgrims conceded. Such was the effect that "all the Eastern countries coming under the spell of Buddhism possessed old-established arts of their own which, with the advent of the new religion, were directed towards the creation of pictorial and plastic representations of the Buddha and the Buddhist Hierarchy"[5] The extent of their ardor was such that the resident artist-priest of every shrine could employ local artists, who had absolute knowledge of the exact iconography, for the compositions they were commissioned to illustrate. Therefore, it was essential for these artists to acquire complete understanding of the ***Jatakas***, which they received from the itinerant pilgrims traveling in India.

Differences in the handling of techniques and designs are however discernible as and when the artists' creativity exceeded the Indian standard of severe and intensive designs and the artists formulated his own constructive brilliance. The wall paintings in these regions confirm diverse range of Indian influences. Most of these wall paintings are concentrated at Miran, on the southern route, south of the Taklamakan desert and the Kucha, on the northern route. These paintings reflect the Hellenistic style of the Kushans; wide fixated eyes, smooth and glossy flesh tones and striking pleats of the fabrics. The Kushans, with their capital at Taxila, strengthened these Hellenistic references with the capture of the Sakas. Excavations at Taxila, "by the eminent Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India, Sir John Marshall"[6] disclose close cultural ties between "the Gandhara sculptures of the

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[5] F.H. Andrews. ***Introduction: The Influences of Indian Art***. (Delhi: Delhi Printers Prakashan, 1978). p. 15

[6] Joseph Hackin. Indian Art in Tibet and Central Asia: ***The Influence of Indian Art***. (Delhi: Delhi Printers Prakashan, 1978). p. 192

first and second century A.D. and the image-makers of Turkestan."[7] This close association with Central Asia resulted in the burgeoning of the Greco-Buddhist art in this region.

The North Western part of India and especially the Gandhara region had been the most effective precinct for cross-cultural germination. This is the region where the east meets the west and for a long time it remained the experimenting ground for various political and cultural operations. Various political rulers from across the globe invaded and instituted their domain until the next power succeeded. However, in this course of succession, what remained behind, even after banishing the ruled, was their culture, imbibed in the native soil. Similarly, the retreated invaders fled taking with them what the native culture had offered during their stay. This phenomenon resulted in a series of new cultural exchange. The Persian left ground defeated by Alexander the Great, then the Greeks came and went followed by the Sakas and the Sakas in turn conquered by the Kushans around 75 B.C. Under the Kushans, a new impetus was received in culture and religion; new areas including many regions of Central Asia came under their dominion. Buddhism reached its meridian under their royal patronage and Buddhist art was uplifted. It was thus, that art and culture under the Kushans reflected a processed conglomeration of the Greco-Iranian traditions. The 'Gandhara Art' as it is generally referred, covers the manner and technique employed in architecture, painting as well as sculpture of North-Western India between the first to the fifth century. There has been several conflicting opinions concerning the precise date of this art but commonly this period from the first to the fifth has been attributed to the Gandhara art. Of the Kushana art, Dr. Ajay Kumar has

[7] Joseph Hackin. ***Ibid.***, p. 192

quoted Mario Bussagli's opinion that "the Kushana assimilated the Greeco – Iranian culture of Bactria with the local population and re-created an independent civilization of which the so-called Gandharan art is the artistic expression."[8] Since its inception, the Gandhara art evolved as the principle idiom in formulating the artistic traditions of North India as well as Central Asia. Moreover, after the evolution of the ***Mahayana*** Buddhism under Kanishka, the Greco-Roman art of Gandhara wielded direct influence of Buddhism over other art and thus this style was readily adopted wherever the new religion prevailed. In the early Gandhara style of the first and second centuries, "the favourite medium for carving of sculpture was blue schist and green phyllite stone of the country. But in the 3rd-4th century rather in 2nd period stone was replaced by stucco. The malleable nature of stucco provided a great freedom of expression to artists."[9]

That the Hellenistic Gandhara style continued even after the Kushans is exemplified by the series of wall paintings discovered at Kijil, northern part of Central Asia and at Kucha around the same area. This could be dated from the sixth century. The paintings in these regions reflect clear influence of Indian idioms along with the Iranian traits. Most of these paintings are discovered by A. Von Le Coq and preserved in the Berlin University. The powerful contoured figures, the wavering headdress, the meticulous and elaborate renderings of costumes and the balanced compositions are all reminiscent of the Gandhara style. Similar depictions are traceable at Kucha, where Gandhara art had its tremendous impact. A decorated wooden vaulted casket, "on the cover are depicted winged naked boy musicians with shaven crowns seated

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[8] A.K. Singh ***Trans-Himalayan Wall Paintings (10th-13th century A.D.).*** (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1985). p.29

[9] Ajay Kumar Singh. ***Ibid.***, p. 30

within pearled frame circles, between which are peacocks holding scarves in their beaks, while round the drum is a row of masked dancers linking hands,"[10] reflect peculiar traits of the Gandharan art. All these activity testify the cultural exchange between north-western India and Central Asia. It is also suggestive that painters and sculptors from India, even from Kashmir, followed the missionaries to Kucha and mingled with the people there, thereby spreading their artistic culture.

On close examination of the figures representing Bodhisattvas, this phase also reveal striking characteristics of the Gupta style: the subtle hints of colors, the treatment of torso, the Indian canon of beautiful female figures with strong outline, are distinctly marked in these frescoes. These features and yet others found in the paintings of Khotan, Karashar and Kijil reveal the gradual movement towards Indianization from the Hellenistic Gandharan manner. Several of the stucco figures recognized at Taxila and places in Kashmir bear resemblance with these distant lands, thus confirming the strong Buddhist influences and the burgeoning Buddhist centres wherever the religion flourished.

The wall paintings at Dandan Uilik give evidence to this conformity to the Indian idiom. "Special mention may be made to the painting of water spirit or river goddess at Dandan uililk."[11] "Any hesitation is removed when one considers the line of the arm, and still more that of the hands, with their long flexible fingers, the details of the jewels, etc. Moreover, the body exhibits the "three inclination," of neck, waist, and feet, showing the "tri-bhanga," which

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[10] Basil Gray. Introduction: Prehistory and the Classic Tradition of Wall Painting. In Basil Gray (Ed.). ***Op.cit.***, p. 17

[11] Ajay Kumar Singh. ***Op.cit.***, p. 34

brings us back directly to the Ajanta version."[12] This supports the significant existence of a cultural connection between India and other countries, especially Central Asia since a long time. Thus, the twenty-nine caves excavated at Ajanta, carved from a virtually perpendicular cliff adorned with bounteous natural beauty, help reconstruct a history of cultural globalization, evident as early as the olden times.

During the period between mid-first century B.C. and early third century A.D., the Satvahanas, who ruled the north-western Deccan excavated many of these early cave temples along the trade routes to Paithan, which was their capital. Several other places in north India, the north-eastern parts of Malwa along with many internal areas too were excavated. However, by early second century A.D., as they lost significant trading ports to the forces of the Sakas of Kardamaka family, they moved towards the Andhradesa and it was here that the Satvahanas erected well – known Buddhist monuments, the Great Stupa at Amravati being the most magnificent monument of early India. After having contributed thus, to the burgeoning Buddhist art, subsequently, the Satvahanas lost their power by the early third century A.D., to the numerous smaller kingdoms. Nonetheless, Buddhism continued to spread tremendously and the Buddhist doctrine followed intensively, giving rise to massive followers all over the world. Moreover, during Asoka's reign, this new religion reached its meridian; the monasteries received rich endowments from its believers; Buddhist dogmas of simple living and attainment of ***moksha*** widely accepted; Buddha's life and teachings studied and incorporated by the faithful; and the important events of his life became subjects of worship.

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[12] Joseph Hackin. Indian Art in Tibet and Central Asia. ***Op.cit.***, p. 193

Much of the paintings at Ajanta have disappeared owing to weather that could not sustain the materials used and due to lack of proper preservation. However, the extant pictures that have survived without uncertainty put Ajanta on the world map of spectacular art. The subject matter concentrated mainly on the principle events of Buddha's life and the ***Jatakas***, which narrates his previous incarnations, reflecting his preaching for good and selfless life and subsequently salvation. Moreover, with the emergence of the Mahayana creed, the ensuing illustration was a fusion of the earlier Hinayana attributes of spiritualism and asceticism with that of sensuous representations of the Mahayana, seen on the walls of Ajanta. "They are characterized by supple naturalism and fluid grace and reveal the rhythmic line that remained the basis of Indian painting in the succeeding centuries."[13]

The ***chaityas*** and ***viharas*** are the two main features of these cave temples. The ***chaityas*** or the rock-cut cells is where the stupa is worshipped by the monks and the laity together; and the associated ***viharas***, rectangular halls with inner cells or dormitory, is where the monks gathered for meditation and teaching. Similar structural design is seen in the caves at Bhaja from early second century B.C. and at Karle, first century B.C. The series of these caves were structured between the first and seventh century A.D. and major portion of the paintings can be dated with certainty between "the period 400-640 A.D., and was mainly executed under the patronage of the Vakataka and the Chalukya Kings."[14]

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[13] Mohinder Singh Randhawa and John Kenneth Galbraith. ***Indian Painting – The Scene, Themes and Legends***. (Calcutta: Oxford & IBH Publishers Co., 1968). p. 4

[14] R.C. Majumdar. ***Ancient India*** (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Indological Publishers and Booksellers, 1977) p. 460

Of the various caves, Cave nos. 9 and 10 are recognized as the earliest caves excavated and can be dated to the early second century B.C. Unfortunately, only traces of the wall – paintings have survived on the walls of these caves. The usual colors limited to red and yellow *ochre*, sooty black, dim green, terra verde and white. Cave no. 9 consists of a ***chaitya*** hall with a magnificent and sweeping stupa inside, "above which formerly rose a wooden umbrella and with just space enough for the ritual circumambulation; the roof being supported by twenty-one octagonal columns all cut from the rock."[15] The façade is marvelously carved in a panel with tapered entrance, surmounted by massive windows to let in natural light to the interior. Such fine architecture is seen even in Cave no. 10 although with slight variations. The right wall of Cave 10 is adorned with "the ***Syama*** and ***Shaddanta Jatakas***, stories of the Buddha's previous existence on earth which were very popular with the laity. The stories are set out episodically in a long rectangular field rather like the carved ***Jatakas***, on the crossbars of the gateways to the Sanchi stupas or the railing frieze on the Great Stupa at Amravati. The scenes, occasionally interrupted by a tree or building or group of rocks, flow smoothly, to be read by the worshipper as he moves clockwise round the temple performing his ritual circumambulation."[16]

The compositions have not acquired any intricate recession, rather the earlier paintings are more intelligently delineated and the sequences show a more restrained and cautious styling. One sees no dividing line from the first scene to the next but it is instead joined into one another, the model and the

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[15] Basil Gray. Introduction: Prehistory and the Classic Tradition of Wall Painting. In Basil Gray (Ed.) ***Op.cit.***, p. 18

[16] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Treasures of Asia – Indian Painting***. (S.A. Geneva: Editions d'Art Albert Skira, 1978). p. 24

techniques of representations cleverly directing the eyes to the main theme painted. No perspective or tradition is yet discernible in these paintings, rather a phase of experimentation and innovation, in the expressions of emotions and gestures, which they depicted with exactness of vision and confidence. There is however an impression of depth noticeable, wherein the background pictures are placed slightly over the central figure in the foreground. Thus, the artists' skill is markedly highlighted in the varied designs incorporated; the slender curvature of the body amazingly drawn with sweep stroke of the brush; the vivid and expressive human faces; graceful movements of the limbs; and the floras and faunas in full action, all give testimony to the strong and firm art work of the Ajanta murals.

In the last quarter of the third century, the Vakataka dynasty emerged the next great power. This dynasty came to be divided into two branches by mid- fourth century, the main branch in Nagpur and the other in southern Berar. The Nagpur branch lasted until the end of the fifth century with their influence spreading eastward to the Raipur and Bilaspur provinces, while the collateral branch of southern Berar, under its powerful King, Harishena 475 - 510 extended claims of political power in Maharashtra, Malwa and the Andhradesa. It was during Harishena's reign, that his minister, Varahadeva, a pious Buddhist, dedicated one of the most beautiful caves, cave no. 16. The features in this cave and of cave no. 17, which was another dedication of this period, include new elements. Whereas in the old temple, a stupa was carved in relief on the back wall, the new feature had an anteroom and a shrine, the "chaityamandiram" and the stupa replaced by a colossal figure of carved Buddha. The intrinsic feature of the ***chaitya*** hall with its sophisticated frontage, the cells with the stone beds for the monks and the verandah were maintained.

By the sixth century, the Ajanta paintings achieved a full-fledged classic style and it was this period that the ***viharas***, Caves 1 and 2 were excavated. This period saw the enhanced manner of the frescos, in that even the ceiling and columns were elaborately covered with rich paintings. The façade adorned with sculptural decorations of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas seated or standing carved in elevated relief.

The Kalachuris overpowered the Vakatakas but they too in turn lost their vigor to the Early Western Chalukyas in the early seventh century. Between the periods from the third to the middle of the fifth century, any form of progress in art is uncertain and hence any explanation of the style is incomplete. Caves 16 and 17 fall within this period and so are the two walls in the "Hariti Shrine" of Cave 2. Notwithstanding this, these are undoubtedly the most remarkable pieces of art at Ajanta. "Their still, calm beauty and the noble geometry of the compositions, especially where as in the two groups of women votarious in the "Hariti Shrine" the scale of the wall surface imposes a definite frame, invite the epithet "classical" in a qualitative sense and a comparison with the work of Piero della Francesca."[17]

One of the most striking paintings of Cave 16 is ***The Dying Princess***, where Sundari, the wife of Nanda, the Buddha's half brother, faints as she learns of her husband's renouncement. Regarding this painting, Mohinder Singh and John Kenneth have quoted John Griffith's fitting observation:

> *For pathos and sentiment and the unmistakable way of telling its story this picture, I consider cannot be surpassed in the history of art. The Florentine could have put better drawing, and the Venetian better*

[17] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Ibid.***, p. 27

colour, but neither could have thrown greater expression into it.[18]

The palette is fresh and vibrant, the emotions and sentiments expressive in the posture of the body, the exactness in the sketching of lines and the clear patterns, the shading, which indicate the warmth and elated spirit of the pictures are the distinguishing features of the Ajanta murals. The principle subject of these paintings; the chief events in the life of Buddha and his previous incarnations are well placed amidst the mundane activities of everyday life, rather a panoramic view of ancient India, both religious and secular is discernible in the Ajanta paintings. There were "princes in their palaces, ladies in their harems, coolies with loads slung over their shoulders, beggars, peasants and ascetics, together with all the many beasts and birds and flowers of India, in fact the whole life of the times, perpetuated on the dim walls of the caves by the loving hands of many craftsmen. Everything is gracefully and masterfully drawn and delicately modeled."[19] These later paintings of Ajanta manifest a matured and accomplished rendering of proficient artists producing their excellent and superb works of art. These are specimens of their confidence and yet composed mannerism achieved in this field of art.

The Gupta period has been widely accepted as the most outstanding period of pre-Muslim culture. However, the extent of its influence in the Ajanta paintings remains obscure to this day and no surviving paintings at Ajanta point with sureness to the period that corresponds to the Gupta Age. Traces of its inspirations occur here and there like the animal drawings among

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[18] Mohinder Singh Randhawa and John Kenneth Galbraith. ***Op.cit.***, pp. 4-5
[19] A.L. Basham. ***The Wonder that was India***. (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1982). p. 376

the varied decorative designs and of the apsaras with lotus flowers that adorn the ceiling of Cave 17. This reflects a slight affinity to the Gupta relief carving but no major derivations from the Gupta style is apparent.

The last chapters of any creative execution in paintings at Ajanta are those found in Caves 1 and 2 of the late sixth century. There is a movement towards a more secular and contemporary taste. A new treatment more oriented along the baroque representations rather than the previous composed and distinguished method could be identified. Cave 1 has an elaborate and massive illustration, that of the ***Mahajanaka Jataka***. Here the dancing girls are embellished with glittering rich ornaments and dresses, the surrounding glorified with opulent decorations, definitely a representation of court scene quite in contrary to the religious depictions on the back walls. Only skilled hands of the artists could execute such complexities, which suggest the possibility of an established artistic tradition burgeoning at that time. However, owing to a quick dissolution of the artists from this area, this could not be established with certainty. This phase between the fifth and the seventh century was one that reveals the greatest achievement in plasticity and consistency. Although productions did not cease at Ajanta until the eight century, the sophisticated trait and rich taste typical of Ajanta paintings ended hastily mainly due to the disintegration of Buddhist authority and the mass exodus of the Buddhist with the advent of the Muslims.

The classic tradition of wall painting was also located at Bagh in western Malwa. The paintings, contemporary to the last phase of Ajanta and largely Buddhist are however in a deplorable condition owing to the bad weather. The surviving paintings, those on the walls of the Verandah are Buddhist and the features are sometimes of remarkable disposition and

excellence that perhaps they excelled Ajanta. The outline clearer and sharper, the modeling more refined and restrained and the metaphysical representation of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas are replaced by realistic and existing composition. The tempera technique of Ajanta remains the same as at Bagh.

In the Deccan, particularly at Ellora and Badami, evidences of Ajanta frescos are seen depicted on the cave walls. Cave 3 at Badami, which was a dedication by Mangalesa, brother of the Chalukyan King Kirtivarman 1 to lord Vishnu was the finest cave, with its elaborate sculptural patterns of the lord, the horned lions and the pairs of lovers. This was certainly the earliest Brahmanical wall painting of India. At Ellora, the Kailasanatha temple is of similar significance regarding Brahmanical cave paintings. The sculptural patterns follow a close affinity to the southern Deccan tradition, while the technique and especially the renderings of the flying deities are along the Badami style.

While in north India, almost all of the Buddhist paintings have vanished with the Muslim advents, in south India traces of paintings survived in the temples. The Rajarajesvara temple commissioned by Rajaraja 1 of the Chola period, accomplished about 1010 remained the most striking example of such survival. A truly fresco rendering, these series of paintings reflect a resolute dedication to Saivism. The style is powerful and the outline strong and lucid.

That mural paintings continued even after the Muslim conquests is evidenced by the fact that several Muslim rulers like Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351-83) and even Akbar ordered their palace walls and bedroom walls to be covered with murals of garden scenes and figural pictures. Besides, the poet,

Mulla Daud has also described palace walls highlighted with scenes from the ***Ramayana*** in his poem ***Laur Chanda*** (1380). Till the fifteenth century and during the Sultanate period, this tradition of mural painting remained strongly favored over book illustration, however with the Mughals the priority shifted towards book illumination and wall painting subsequently declined giving way to miniatures.

Kashmir Tradition of Painting

The Kashmir School of painting can be dated between the Seventh and the Eighth centuries. During this period, the political as well as cultural repute wielded independent and strong in Kashmir and its impact especially in the cultural aspect spread enormously across India, Central Asia and the Punjab hills. That Kashmir School prevailed since the 7^{th}-8^{th} century is also supported by Taranatha as he states that, "In Kashmir also was followed the tradition of the early central art and of the old western (Indian) art."[20] In the initial phase, this school was oriented along the ***madhya-desa*** sub-style of the Western India School but subsequently, this school gained its distinct identity under the protégé of a brilliant artist called Hasuraja. Ever since, a separate school under the title Kashmir School burgeoned. This style is best exemplified in the paintings of Bamiyan and Fondukistan, where its influence had a tremendous effect. Most of the original works have not survived in Kashmir but there are abundant masterpieces of the original works especially in Central Asia. Dr. Ajay Kumar also supports this and reiterates Joseph Hackins's opinion, "that

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[20] Taranatha. ***Taranatha's History of Buddhism in India***. Lama Chimpa and Alaka Chattopadhyaya (Trans) and Debi Prasad Chattopadhyaya (Ed.). (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1970). p. 348

the Indian influences perceptible in the wall paintings of Central Asia most likely have been derived through the medium of Kashmir art."[21] This influence in Central Asia and also in Afghanistan is indisputable as we know of the established connections between these countries since the time of Kushan dynasty. This enhanced their cultural and artistic exchange resulting in the popularity of Kashmir school. A further momentum was received with the advent of Islam in these countries and the subsequent influx of the devoted Buddhist communities and several artists from farther countries including Syria and Egypt.

The beginning of a more profound phase of Kashmir art begins with the reign of the Karakotas in Kashmir. This marked the commencement of medieval Kashmiri art exemplified in the Pandrethan sculptures. This style gradually broadened with the assimilation of numerous artistic trends; the Gandharan art, which had been of remarkable influence in the formulation of Kashmir school, Chinese traits, Central Asian variants, Iranian, Greeco-Roman and Gupta art. However, it was during the Utpalas that Kashmir art was most opulent, the main attractive qualities being the embellishments and heavy decorations.

The discovery of the Gilgit manuscript along with its painted book covers was a defining moment in the process of reconstructing Kashmir art history. The manuscript further authenticated the existence of an accomplished Kashmir School of painting. Moreover, it also corroborated the close association between this school and Central Asia. This only accentuates the strong impression of Kashmiri art. There are again images like the ***Padmapani Bodhisattva*** that agrees to the brilliant fusion of India and Gandharan trends.

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[21] A.K. Singh. ***Op.cit.***, p. 37

"In these paintings local elements have come to surface, distinctly. The muscular treatment of chest and physiognomical features relate this example with last phase of paintings at Fondukistan and Bamiyan which are assigned as extension of Gandharan school or last phase of Ganhdaran tradition. However, stylistically the paintings on the book covers of Gilgit manuscripts appear slightly later to those of Afghanistan."[22] The Kashmir School also tremendously influenced the art of Tibet as is evident from the wall paintings of Mang nang, discovered by Tucci, in western Tibet. After acquiring a unique identity in artistic excellence, it is no wonder that this school left its imprint extensively in various other traditions. Surely, they must have exhibited their expertise in many of the Mughal illustrations, to retain their employment at a prestigious studio like the Mughal Imperial studio. There are historical records of at least seven of these talented Kashmiri artists working at Akbar's atelier.

Eastern Indian Tradition or The Pala School

Pre-Mughal Indian miniature painting can be broadly studied under two distinct categories – the Eastern tradition and the Western tradition. The Eastern Indian style concentrating at "Bengal, Bihar and Nepal – sprang directly from the Classical Gupta tradition which was marked by the plasticity of the fully rounded and modeled form contained under sweeping and continuous fluid outlines."[23] Buddhist mysticism was the main theme incorporated in these miniatures. While, "the figures in Western Indian manuscripts, on the contrary, are less esoteric and the characters are more

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[22] A.K. Singh. ***Ibid.***, pp. 39-40

[23] Jayanta Chakrabarti. Indian Miniature Painting: Development From East to West. In Pupul Jayakar Seventy (Ed.) ***Dimensions of Indian Art.*** Vol. I (Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1986). p. 68

human with their stereotyped but comparatively natural poses and textured ground."[24]

As has been substantiated by the Tibetan historian Taranatha,[25] the distinguishing Eastern School was started by a highly talented artist named Dhiman and his son Bitpalo during the reign of Dharmapala and Devepala. The School centered prominently at Bengal and Bihar and it prospered for four centuries beginning from 800 A.D. and extending beyond 1200 A.D. "under the auspices of the Palas who patronized Tantric Buddhism and subsequently by the Senas who were mainly Brahmanical."[26] The paintings produced were the earliest form of miniature paintings, which was predominantly Buddhist and it was under the Pala dynasty that this Buddhist art prospered brilliantly for the last time in India and from there on to spread to distant lands. The preoccupation with Buddhist subjects in painting could be attributed to the fact that Buddhism "had predominant influence in politics, and thus became more prolific in artistic creation, and partly because Buddhism in its origin was a protest against the tendency of Brahmanical teaching to draw all men away from the realities of life into the metaphysical atmosphere of spiritualistic speculation."[27] The Buddhist doctrines attracted a huge follower and thus achieved a widespread acceptance wherever it reached. Its influence has left an indelible mark all over the world and even today, Buddhist art has been studied and dealt with extensively. The monasteries at Nalanda, and Vikramasila served as Universities and theological institutions

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[24] Jayanta Chakrabarti. ***Ibid.***, p. 68
[25] Taranatha. ***Op.cit.***, p. 348
[26] D.P. Ghosh. ***Medieval Indian Painting – Eastern School (13th Century A.D. to Modern Times Including Folk Art)***. (Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1982). p. 1
[27] E.B. Havell. ***The Art Heritage of India comprising Indian Sculpture and Painting and Ideals of Indian Art.*** (Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd. in collaboration with John Murray (Publishers) Ltd., 1964). p. 31

where students and missionaries alike from distant places converged and discoursed in the workshops for book illustration, bronze figure casting, discussions and interaction and carried back with them knowledge of Buddhism and of Buddhist art and craft, to their native lands. This was one process whereby Buddhist art spread to places like Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Ceylon and Java.

The material employed was not paper, although paper was known to have existed by this time, rather the much-preferred material was the Palmyra leaf. The result was an exceptionally smooth and fine painting. This Palm-leaf miniature of the Pala has representations of the Buddha deities and scenes from the ***Jataka*** stories and other Buddhist themes as its primary subject. These miniature images were executed in the same treatment and style as that of Ajanta and it definitely enhanced the 'classical' status achieved during the Gupta period until the eleventh century. The colours used were the cool and soft palette reminiscent of the Ajanta and the compositions are mainly simple and less crowded.

Until the twelfth century, sacred sites to Buddhism such as Sarnath, Nalanda and Bodh Gaya, still prospered under the rich patronage from the kings and the strong and sturdy flow of devotees from South-east Asia that thronged the place continuously. However, by the late twelfth century, the setting was disrupted following the ravaging wars led by the Muslim invaders; the total destruction of temples and monasteries, loots and plunder, which dictated the scenario in brief, in an otherwise reposed status quo. Many succumbed to the Muslim havoc while several others fled to distant areas and the hills, where the Muslim hands could not reach instantaneously. Among these were the Buddhist monks and Pala-Sena artists, who migrated to

Kashmir, Nepal and Tibet, where they peacefully practiced their art and were successful in implementing this style until recent times.

Whether the impact of Pala School on Mughal painting was directly felt or not could not be ascertained, however, it could safely be concluded that features of Pala paintings did affect Mughal painting, probably from its subsidiaries in Kashmir and Tibet. The mural tradition and the plasticity of ancient Indian art is apparent in the Mughal miniature paintings and especially in the huge undertaking of the ***Hamza-nama***, one could see that "the Indian rounded body contours are displayed."[28]

Western Indian Tradition

The one school of classical Indian miniature painting that survived the Muslim invasions was the Western India School, comprising largely of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Malwa. Recent studies have however established that this style was carried farther to parts of Uttar Pradesh like Jaunpur, and in Bengal, Orissa and South India. Taranatha[29] further expands this influence and states that the Western Indian tradition spread even to Nepal and Kashmir.

The Western India School known also by several other names such as Jain, Gujarati and ***Apabhramsa*** flourished under the rich patronage of affluent Jain merchants and bankers of Gujarat. Therefore, the commissions displayed a grand choice with elements that corresponded to the material realities of life these wealthy patrons associated themselves with. As such, the tradition "characterized by vigour of movement and sincerity of expression, these

[28] S.A.A. Rizvi. ***The wonder that was India***. Vol. II (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1987). p. 298
[29] Taranatha. ***Op.cit.***, p. 348

paintings of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries were inspired by a clientele desirous not only of religious merit, but also of earthly prestige as patron of art and learning."[30] This school progressed under two phases: the initial phase characteristic of Palm leaf miniatures extended to the middle of fifteenth century and the later phase began with the popular use of paper from about the last years of the fourteenth century.

The former Palm leaf miniatures especially those productions in Gujarat were characterized by the stereotyped horizontal format and limited space for illustrations as that of Eastern India convention. The compositions were small and simple with a single deity and sometimes with the donors within the palette of simple red or blue background, yellow, white and green. The technique was restrained and the line drawing controlled and maneuvered. Unlike the classic tradition of naturalism, the early Palm leaf miniature of the Western India style adopted a more stylized and modeled lines. In the words of Bussagli, "The new manner was more than a process of stylization and two-dimensional representation: it was the result of the greater importance given to linear composition which became tense, angular and more clear-cut but less harmonious."[31]

Another striking feature of the early Western India is that "in profile head both eyes are shown – a device that anticipated twentieth century Cubism's attempt to display all sides of an object simultaneously."[32] Interestingly this was perhaps an attempt by the artists to imitate the sculptural figures of temples with wide protruding eyes to augment the accuracy of the

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[30] Leela Shiveshwarkar. ***The Pictures of The Chaurapanchasika, A Sanskrit Love Lyric*** (New Delhi: The National Museum, 1967). p. 9

[31] Mario Bussagli. ***Indian Mininature.*** (Feltham, Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, Hamlyn House, 1969). p. 36

[32] Roy C. Craven. ***A Concise History of Indian Art.*** (USA: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1976). p. 220

figure. Most of the illustrated Palm leaf manuscripts have perished and those that have survived are not earlier than the twelfth century A.D. The earliest "is the ***Nisitachuri***, preserved in the Sangrahavina padana Bhandar, Patan. According to its colophon the manuscript was written and illustrated by Devaprasad at Bhrgukachcha in 1157 Vikram Samvat, *i.e.*, A.D. 1100."[33] Another extant Palm leaf manuscript of this phase is the ***Sangrahani Sutra*** collection of Padmashri Muni Jinavijayaji where much "of its original vigour in the dancing scene painted on a wooden cover"[34] is retained.

Although Palm leaf continued to be used until around 1450, paper replaced the painting material widely and along with it, began the revival of miniature painting; the scope enhanced as also the format and style elaborated; the compositions ambitious and extended beyond the depiction of deities to include various related incidents as well. The earliest manuscript illustrated on paper is a ***Kalpasutra*** of 1370. Several versions of the ***Kalpasutra*** were illustrated in later period and are found in the British Museum, India Office, the Royal Library, Berlin, Nahar Collection in Calcutta and Lahore Dalpatbhai Institute, Ahmedabad to name a few. With the use of paper over Palm leaf, the composition became distinctly intricate and sophisticated. "The use of paper also allowed the paintings to expand vertically, and in the vertical format they tend to have a Persian flavour."[35] Apart from the format, Persian element is also discernible in the pointed beard especially of the representations of the Shahi kings and his soldiers found in the ***Kalakacharya*** story, reminiscent of the Mongol-Persian era. Other than the facial features, the costumes in the ***Kalakacharyakatha*** also reflect Persian fashion. This could have been due to

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[33] Jayanta Chakrabarti, Indian Miniature Painting: Development From East to West. In Pupul Jayakar Seventy (ed.). ***Op.cit.***, p. 70
[34] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 55
[35] Roy C. Craven. ***Ibid.***, p. 220

the fact, that the Muslim sultans of Gujarat of the fourteenth century who had great admiration for Persian art and culture, imported several Persian illustrated manuscripts, which provided the source for such delineations among the Indian artists. Moreover, the growing trade exchange with Persia also facilitated knowledge and access to the culture of this foreign land among the native Indians. These were definite sources for the Persian elements seen in the Jain illustrations of that time. However, "what is intriguing is that, when depicting the Shahis, the device of the farther projecting eye is eliminated and the farther eye remains within the outlines of the face."[36]

The incorporation of Persian idiom extended beyond the religious illustrations as is evidenced in a romantic poem, ***Vasanta Vilasa*** about 1451, painted at Ahmedabad, now at the Freer Gallery, Washington, which was one of the few secular works. This has an ancient Persian theme of a lion chasing gazelles. As there was already an established connection with Central Asia, these effects were possible. More so, as the indigenous artists were themselves engaged in creative and innovative ideas under the generous benefaction of the affluent merchants and rulers, they actively experimented with these new ideas available around that time and after, which proved the versatility of the native artists.

While in the Palm leaf, the subject remained predominantly religious, limited to images of Jain Gods and deities and occasionally the patrons, the later Western India paintings executed on paper, stretched its taste to include bedecked borders with floral pictogram and friezes of several animals or birds. The palette also expanded with the lavish use of aqua-marine and gold. This

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[36] Karl Khandalavala. ***The Development of Style In Indian Painting*** (Bombay: The Macmillan Company of India Limited, Heras Institute of Indian History and Culture, 1974). p. 60

development is best expressed by Ananda Coormaraswamy, "The pictures take the form of square panels of the full height of the page, occupying spaces left for the purpose: only in very rare cases is the whole used. The proper subject to be represented is often indicated by a marginal legend, sometimes by a diagrammatic marginal sketch, the former doubtless due to the scribe, the latter to the artist taking note of his instructions. The same subjects are repeated in the various manuscripts almost without variation: it is very evident that both in composition and style the pictures belong to an ancient and faithfully preserved tradition."[37] This development could be seen especially in the illustrations of the Gandhar ***Kalpasutra*** and the ***Kalakacharyakatha*** dated around 1475 in the Devsano Bhandar at Ahmedabad, where the border decorations are definite results of innovations, while the central theme pertained to its conventional religious descriptions.

The principle features of the Western India paintings are characterized by the two-third view of face, the long projecting nose, the protruding eyes, pointed double chin, the asymmetrical poses of hands and fingers, broad swelling chest and the shrinking waist, the limited landscape and the extensive use of gold and bright colors. A common feature is the use of halos in Jain paintings, mostly left plain and occasionally ornamented especially in the depiction of celebrations. Early pictures are drawn in black outline and other colors used are vivid yellow, crimson, and green with hints of blue. Background is mainly painted in red and black. Female faces are rendered more smoothly and far removed from the earlier angular lines. Continuity is inherent in these features of Western India in that, the narrow waist and broad chest find similarity in the earlier Eastern India trend. This could suggest, in

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[37] Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. ***Introduction to Indian Art***, Mrs. Ananda K Coomaraswamy (Ed.). (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1969). p. 71

the words of Jayanta Chakrabarti that the Western India was an offshoot of "the new experimental style of Eastern India, probably by the painters of Bengal and Bihar who did not get enough encouragement for their experimental works in their own locality, but received rich and liberal patrons in western India where they migrated for better scope and appreciation."[38]

Again, the use of bright red background against which the ***Tirthankara*** figures notably stands out lend its inspiration and influence to the ***Chaurpanchasika*** style and later paintings in Mewar and Malwa. The transparent ***orhni*** of the Western India style is also seen in the ***Chaurpanchasika*** style later. The trend of the Western India tradition surprisingly does not maintain uniformity. As it seems, the best quality of artistic realization is neither Gujarat nor Rajasthan but those works from Mandu (Malwa) and Jaunpur (Uttar Pradesh). References of these qualities can be seen in the Mandu ***Kalpasutra*** dated 1439, a ***Kalakacharyakatha*** of about the same period and same provenance, and the Jaunpur *Kalpasutra* of 1465. All these manuscripts reveal an excellent method of their own independent creation and manifest works of great results. It shows the artists' incessant efforts to enhance their quality of draughtsmanship and finesse. "There are no undue exaggerations or distortions, and the colours are used with discrimination, avoiding harsh colour contrasts. Figures are more attractive, at times even dainty, and the projecting farther eye, even though present, fails to detract the figures' eloquence."[39]

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[38] Jayanta Chakrabarti. Indian Miniature Painting: Development from East to West. In Pupul Jayakar Seventy (Ed.) ***Op.cit.***, p. 71

[39] R.K. Tandan. Medieval Miniature Paintings – Eleventh to Mid-Sixteenth Century: And A Reappraisal of the Mandu and Jaunpur Kalpasutra Vis-à-vis Origin of the Chaurpanchasika Style. In Pupul Jayakar Seventy (Ed.) ***Ibid.***, p. 498

The new element – absence of the far protruding eye was perhaps that which inspired the Malwa ***Nimat-nama*** illustration along with other original Indian elements. "The contours of the face, here represented in two profile, are more rounded, and the convention of the projecting eye is discontinued. In our miniature where the other figures are stiff and doll-like, the girl blowing at the fire with a reed, her transparent ***orhni*** making a thin veil over her cheek and shoulders, is a spontaneous passage, freshly observed and directly set down, which makes it clear that something was stirring within the Western Indian Style."[40] Along with the new facial expressions, also appeared the use of contemporary costumes worn by both the female and male figures in the Mandu and Jaunpur productions unlike the dull consistency seen in the costumes of the Gujarat illustrations, which remained unchanged for about four centuries.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, a new type of female face became apparent in the Mandu ***Kalpasutra*** and occasionally in the Jaunpur ***Kalpasutras,*** very different from the common Jain designs. The new facial feature had "a flatter head and square face where the farther protruding eye tends to be a superfluous appendage with no organic hold on the figures. The eyes are longer spreading almost across the entire face and if the farther eye is omitted, we notice a face not quite unlike the type seen in the Chaurpanchasika group of miniatures. The breasts intersect and the ***odhni,*** with jutting ends and ballooning behind the head, is worn as a broad band across the chest."[41]

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[40] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 60

[41] R.K. Tandan. Medieval Miniature Paintings – Eleventh to Mid-Sixteenth Century: And a Reappraisal of the Mandu and Jaunpur Kalpasutra Vis-à-vis Origin of the Chaurpanchasika Styl. In Pupul Jayakar Seventy (Ed.) ***Ibid.***, p. 498

This leads to the consensus that the ***Chaurpanchasika*** was a natural growth from the Western India tradition. Another less accepted view was that the ***Chaurpanchasika*** was an independent growth coeval with the Western India trend. Whatever the elucidation, there is no denying that the smooth draughtsmanship of western India achieved towards the closing years of the fifteenth century did have striking similarities with the characteristic features of the ***Chaurpanchasika*** style. And with the two profile view of the Western India school accepted and assimilated by various other traditions including the ***Chaurpanchasika***, the ***LaurChand***, the Mughal and the Rajput, this tradition of the Western India no doubt had an extensive impact on medieval Indian paintings. In fact, the dramatic effects in the Mughal compositions owe much to the Western Indian tradition where "action and drama are authentically realized in spite of the angular line."[42] The Western India tradition was derived mainly through the native artists at the Mughal court as well as the manuscripts that these emperors procured. It continued effectively at the Mughal court as a result of regular visits in and around Gujarat by the Mughal kings especially during the end of Akbar and early Jahangir period. The resulting effect was that "art of miniature painting in particular shows a new understanding in the first quarter of the 17th century in the so called popular Mughal documents but with strong Rajasthani and Gujarati flavour."[43]

The Chaurpanchasika Style of Painting

As has been generally accepted and mentioned earlier, the ***Chaurpanchasika*** School was a spontaneous outgrowth of the Western India

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[42] Krishna Chaitanya. ***A History of Indian Painting: Manuscript, Moghul and Deccani Traditions*** (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1979). p. 58

[43] Shridhar Andhare. Jain Monumental Paintings of Ahmedabad, ***Kala,*** the Journal of Indian Art History Congress, Vol. VII: 2000-2001 (New Delhi: National Museum and Sundeep Prakashan). p. 88

Style towards the beginning of the sixteenth century. This tradition probably evolved simultaneously when certain new features are evident in the Western India style, functioning around the northern India belt of Delhi, Agra and Jaunpur.

Of the alternative interpretation that the ***Chaurpanchasika*** was an independent school contemporary to the Western India School, unfortunately no illustrations of the school is available prior to the ***Aranyaka Parvana*** of 1516 A.D. and hence it cannot be summed up with historical authenticity that this tradition prevailed separately as it seems. One is preconditioned therefore, to ponder after observing the marvels of this style, the full-fledged confident dispositions, and the extraordinary precision in depicting every minute detail, if it did not have a separate brilliant heritage. The ***Aranyaka Parvana*** dated 1516 was painted at Kachchhavaha near Agra during the reign of Sikandar Lodi between 1489 and 1517. It has the same projecting ends of ***odhni*** and the bulge behind the head and the jutting ends of the skirt as that of the ***Chaurpanchasika.***

The ***Chaurpanchasika*** is a Sanskrit love poem written by a poet named Bilhana in the eleventh century. Its "romantic theme as well as the erotic treatment appear to have made the poem popular."[44] The school is appropriately named after N.C. Mehta's ***Chaurpanchasika***, considered as the landmark of this rather gathered group. The composition is of straightforwardness and lucidity; a small open porch at a corner of which is a fluttering flag often noticed in other paintings of this school, a verandah decorated with simple floral fabric with tassels and pots lying below the cot.

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[44] Leela Shiveshwarkar. ***The Pictures of The Chaurapanchasika, A Sanskrit Love Lyric*** (New Delhi: The National Museum, 1967). p. 3

There is a flowering tree, bowed in a manner carried by the breeze, a lotus pond occasionally, and Champavati, Bilhana's sweetheart and the female protagonist, is seen usually in her graceful pose expressive of feminine sensuality, her gleefully lit bright eyes, the gestures of her hands and legs; all set against a romantic ambience, carries the spirit of love and seduction. Such a narrative is seen in a vivid illustration of the ***Tutinama*** manuscript entitled, ***The Lady talking to a Parrot*** at the Cleveland Museum of Art dated 1560-68, which was a gift of Mrs. A Dean Perry. The architectural designs of the open pavilion with the sharp cornices, the tasseled curtains and the pots lying are so reminiscent of the ***Chaurpanchasika*** style. An interesting resemblance is noticed in this ***Tutinama*** miniature and that of ***Champavati standing next to a Lotus Pond*** of the N.C. Mehta Collection, Bombay. One can see similar grace in the stance of the female figure; and the braided hair with strings of white flower on it as well as the transparent ***odhni*** continued without much variation. The same depiction of female figure is seen in yet another page from the ***Tutinama, A shipwreck at sea***[45] The impact is more pronounced on the female depictions of the ***Tutinama*** illustrations as we see that even "the skirt is almost of the same type as in the ***Chaurpanchasika***, and even the patterns such as rosettes, chequers and stars on the material from which it was made follow similar patterns as in the ***Chaurpanchasika*** group."[46]

Other regular features are the checked fabrics, sometimes seen as Champavati's skirt and sometimes as bedspread, the fluttering and sweeping ***ordhnis*** with rigid pointed ends and puffed up behind the head, the projecting hem of the kilt all indicative of the energy and the animated spirit. This

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[45] Edwin Binney 3rd. ***Indian Miniature Painting from the Collection of Edwin Binney 3rd***, cat. No. 12d (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1973)

[46] Karl J, Khandalavala and Moti Chandra. ***New Documents of Indian Painting – A Reappraisal*** (Bombay: The Board of Trustees of the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, 1969). p. 111

description runs virtually in all of the illustrations of the ***Chaurpanchasika*** just as in the illustration of ***Yashoda Punishing Baby Krishna*** dated between 1530-1550 from the ***Bhagawata Purana*** manuscript of the N.C. Mehta's ***Chaurapanchasika*** in the Ahmedabad Culture Centre, which reflect certain distinctive features and another painting at the National Museum, Delhi, where Champavati is portrayed waiting anxiously for her love, near a lotus pond. Added to these, "another very characteristic feature is the ivory ornament like a long, pointed, round peg which is worn right through the lobe of the ear."[47]

Regarding the date and provenance, there are no definite evidences; however, the ***Chaurpanchasika*** is generally dated to the beginning and still largely to the middle of the sixteenth century and its provenance mainly attributed to the areas of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Among the undated manuscripts are the three ***Bhagwata Purana*** series, a ***Ragamala*** series of the Vijayendra Suri Collection and ***Gita Govinda*** of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay. The ***Gita Govinda*** illustrations are rather of an unusual impression. An attempt to incorporate the classic taste and format yielded in a rather inferior and emaciated outcome. There are however pages which compensates this angular dispositions with certain grace and excellence as the ***Chaurpanchasika.***

Other usual ***Chaurpanchasika*** features are the taut ends of the hairs, the large ***padol***-shaped eyes covering the whole profile face, the thin narrow waist and the overlapping breast of the female. The male feature "has ***padol***-shaped eyes and wears a trellised ***kulhadar*** turban and ***chakdar jama*** which usually has a decorative fringe either on the left hand side or right down the

[47] Karl J, Khandalavala and Moti Chandra. ***Ibid.***, p. 82

front,"[48] and the pyjamas worn by the male figure is shown pulled down to half the length of the foot. The ***Kulhadar*** turban was so named after the style of wearing the turban round a small conical cap or ***kulah*** by the males and thereafter all paintings, which have this style irrespective of other more significant features, are referred by the ***kulhadar group***.

The ***Chakdar jama*** however was not seen before the middle of the sixteenth century, which suggest the trend to later period and also the fashion concentrated mainly around Jaunpur area from where it spread elsewhere wherefrom it reached the Mughal court where it gained prominence since the later half of the sixteenth century.

Thus, we see that the distinctive ***Chaurpanchasika*** traits; the sophistication and certainty of the female representations in detailing every inch with amazing accuracy, the simple and yet alluring surroundings with every sense of originality and freshness speak volume of its accomplished tradition and its far reaching effect on the Mughal school especially evident in the ***Hamza-nama*** and the *Tutinama*. Indeed, of all the indigenous tradition that sourced the Akbari painting, the most favored style was that of the "warm colours and frenzied style of the ***Chaurpanchasika*** group."[49] Moreover, the ***Chaurpanchasika*** illustrations "are of exceptional importance for the history of Indian Painting. Many believe them to be the best of the sixteenth century Indian miniatures of the Gujarat School."[50] Unfortunately, such distinguished and refined attributes of artistic eloquence lost its originality from 1575

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[48] R.K. Tandan. Medieval Miniature Paintings – Eleventh to Mid-Sixteenth Century: And a Reappraisal of the Mandu and Jaunpur Kalpasutra Vis-à-vis Origin of the Chaurpanchasika Style. In Pupul Jayakar Seventy (Ed.) ***Op.cit***., p. 503

[49] R.K. Tandan. ***Ibid***.., p. 44

[50] Leela Shiveshwarkar. ***Op.cit***., p. 4

onwards with its novel flavor exposed to Mughal exploitations and by the seventeenth century, the identity of the Chaurpanchasika completely vanished.

The Laur Chand Style

The ***Laur Chand*** is of similar quality as the ***Chaurpanchasika*** and the western India mannerism, with only a minor difference in the texture of the line and in the extremely thin waist and small breast that characterized the typical ***Laur Chanda*** manner. The four-pointed ***jama*** of the Chaurpanchasika continued, which saw its reemergence during Akbar period, especially in the portraits painted.

The ***Laur Chand*** is a description of a well-known North Indian ballad composed by Maulana Daud around 1370 during the reign of Firuz Shah between 1351 and 1388, and was written in Persian script with Devanagiri translations. This romantic poem continued to be popular upto the reign of Akbar and its illustration was continued till as late as the end of fifteenth century. There are different versions illustrated, of which mention can be made of the Lahore Museum and the Punjab Museum, the ***Laur Chand*** illustrated manuscript in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, the Bharat Kala Bhavan ***Laur-Chanda***, Banaras and the other a more extensive copy in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, which was a recent discovery by P.L. Gupta. These versions reflect the same general outlook and features. However, careful study identifies certain dissimilarities in them. Of the different versions, "the ***Laur-Chanda*** of the Prince of Wales Museum and the ***Laur-Chanda*** of the Rylands Library may be regarded as a court art."[51] These

[51] Karl J, Khandalavala and Moti Chandra. ***Op.cit.***, p. 63

versions also reflect a convention of the Indo- Persian manner but the original Persian peculiarity of realism is not totally achieved as in the later Mughal paintings. However, the palette candidly satisfy a matured taste, with "a preference for cool white and violet backgrounds against which dark blue, yellow and gold, and much purple and white scrolling are set with telling effect."[52] The Lahore Museum and the Punjab Museum ***Laur-Chanda*** on the other hand are far removed from the courtly draughtsmanship and finesse. A distinctive feature of this ***Laur-Chanda*** adaptation is that the author or the poet, Maulana Daud is depicted narrating the episodes in most of the leaves.

The five illustrated miniatures of the Bharat Kala Bhavan ***Laur-Chanda*** follow the general narrative of the ***Laur-Chanda***, with the division of the whole composition into different segments, mostly two or three parts. Each part describes different episodes of the story and a simple line drawing divides these parts usually. The border is decorated on three sides with floral motifs, lotus petals and other symbols. The color remains primarily red and the skin tone is given by yellow and sometimes pink.

The ***Chaurpanchasika***, ***the Laur Chand***, ***the Western India*** groups signify practically indigenous styles of pre-Mughal painting. To an extent even the ***Indo-Persian*** constituents of the early eight and ninth centuries are predominantly Indian. It was only by the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries that the Indo-Persian trends became more distinct. In addition, any attempt to integrate two different artistic traditions became classified and more organized only with the establishment of the Mughal School. Much of these indigenous traditions owe their progressive genius to the Western India School during its relaxing mode, and when it entered the Mughal phase, these individual

[52] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 70

traditions were assimilated in the process of evolving the standard Mughal tradition. However, there is no improbability that a particular artist's original character is distinguishable in the work that he had been commissioned no matter what new traditions he had been trained. This uniqueness categorizes an artist's individuality wherever he is employed.

The Indian artists have thus stimulated the excellent indigenous traditions in the Mughal court through their brilliant executions. They could only be regarded geniuses as they belonged to such accomplished traditions before the Mughal intervention. Only a proper channel and resource was required for them to exhibit their masterly talent, which are manifest in the mannerisms as described above and this they found in the munificent Mughal patrons. Along with the Persian artists whom the Mughal emperors employed in the Imperial atelier are the native artists from Kashmir and other parts of India, trained in their initial local styles. They contributed their geniuses in the formation of the Mughal School as is apparent from the various manuscripts of the Mughals such as the Cleveland ***Tuti-nama***, the ***Hamza-nama***, the 1570 ***Anwar-i-Suhaili***, the ***Tilasm and Zodiac*** etc. all of which show clear signs of native traditions. The final and matured result was the distinct Mughal School, which evolved from a serious process of selection and deduction of the different original sources according to the taste and inclination of the patron and to the skillful hands of the artist himself.

CHAPTER-IV

PERSIAN PAINTING: ANTECEDENTS AND ITS IMPACT ON MUGHAL SCHOOL

Painting in the Islamic world was dormant due to the orthodox Muslim embargo on making likenesses of any living being. As such, the first signs of Islamic painting emerged only during the rule of the "somewhat heterodox Aiyubite sultans, whose coins bear on the reverse the head of the Byzantine Christ."[1] The Schafer ***Makamat of Hariri*** is the earliest dated manuscript at the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, dated 1237 A.D. This was the characteristic art of Arab also known generally as the 'Primitive Style'. The ***Hariri*** pictures are results of serious attempts to revive visual art after the incursion of the Arabs in the seventh century of the Christian era, had ceased. The illustrations manifest itself a fusion of divergent art cultures, thus proving the interplay of many art forms prevalent throughout this time. Among these, Byzantine traditions are inherent in the depiction of the haloes around the figures, the

[1] Vincent A. Smith. **A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon** (Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Pvt Ltd., 1969). p. 181

folds of the fabric and in the structural designs of the edifices. The Persian pottery designs, along with the ancient art form of the Sassanid period, the Chinese and also the Greco-Indian manners of painting are well highlighted in this early manuscript. It is therefore clear that Islamic painting for most part is reminiscent of several foreign traditions that were most prevalent at this time.

Persian painting as a branch of Islamic art is unique as much for its decorative and aesthetic excellence as for its constant survival for a long period. There are several factors responsible for such achievement. Firstly, the Persian rulers are great aesthetes, nature-loving, romantic, nationalistic, and great patrons of art and they "have been especially lax in their open disregard of the Koranic prohibition."[2] Their opulent patronage enabled the skilled artists to exhibit their proficiency liberally and numerous cities flourished as significant centres for the art of painting under their custody. Secondly, because these generous patrons were nationalistic, their old traditions, their individuality and the rich cultural heritage are preserved despite innumerable threats from the outsiders. The strong resistance put up by the Persians against the invaders, the energy and the enthusiasm with which they upheld their identity, sustained and continued their age-old culture and tradition.

From the seventh century onwards, Persia was laid bare to series of invasions; from the Arabs, the Seljuks, the Mongols and the Timurids. These invasions incurred a heavy price tag on Persia, razing its cities to the ground, vandalizing its large libraries and religious places, its people massacred and tormented, leaving almost everything – society, religion and polity in ruins. Perhaps the only constructive effect was that amidst these ruins and hazards, Persian culture and heritage did not altogether fall. Their artistic legacy

[2] Vincent A. Smith. ***Ibid.***, p. 185

survived these bloody feuds and far from annihilation, they enriched it with various new elements especially of the Central Asian and the Chinese. Such was the flexibility of the Persians, integrated with their steadfastness, to absorb vibrant and new elements of their conquerors while retaining its old tradition and their identity. Not only did Persia rivet to the new traditions of other countries, its distinguishing features dispersed on a wide scale and influenced other cultural traits especially in India and the Ottoman Turkey.

It is in this context that this chapter is concerned: the development and characteristics of the different painting schools in Persia and its immense effect in the Mughal School of painting.

Throughout the invasions, the Persians, despite the rigorous dominion of the conquerors and the successive patrons, maintained their familial tradition of art, making a distinctive character amidst the admixture of various other conventions introduced by these invaders. On the other hand, as was the resultant effect of war, many of the skilled craftsmen were taken to their native lands as war captives along with the plundered treasures to adorn their capitals thus ensuing the spread of the art and culture abroad. Still many others fled to far-off lands where they sought refuge and continued their art wherever they found patronage. When the Sassanids, who were by far the greatest rulers of Persia (212-650 A.D.) before the advent of the Arabs, fled to Turkestan, they carried with them proficient artists and craftsmen and established their painting studios, which eventually spread to different parts of Central Asia. There are evidences of their influence in this region from as early as the seventh century in painting as well as in metal casting and sculpturing; and subsequently harbored in India and the Ottoman Turkey, where their influences are enormously felt. It is therefore, an inevitable course to

understand the nature of the different Persian schools that had a bearing on the formation and development of the Mughal School.

Persian School of painting is generally given to understand broadly the brilliant art centres developed in Baghdad, Basrah, Wasit, Samarqand, Bukhara, Herat, Tabriz, Ispahan and Shiraz, as historically, the Persian dynasty included territories from the Tigris to the west and the Oxus to the east including all these regions during the Sassanian rule. However, of this School, the most renowned phase would be that under the Mongols, the Timurids and the Safavids.

The Arab conquest of Persia in the seventh century resulted in the Islamization of the Persians; vast territories captured and converted according to the Islamic doctrines; Arabic script given impetus and many manuscripts illuminated, both religious and secular works of Islam as well as of the native Persians.

Then by the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, Iran fell in the hands of the Seljuks, who ruled until the Mongols in turn subjugated them in the mid-thirteenth century. Although the Seljuks remained masters in art during their rule unfortunately there are no complete references regarding Seljuk manuscript illustrations as no works of that period have survived. Nonetheless, paintings of that age remained an impressive artwork as is inherent from the potteries that survived. Various techniques are apparent from the numerous designs depicted on the wares where the drawings ranged from "grand and majestic to those where the designs were delicate and flowing."[3] Of all the methods produced during Seljuk time, the most striking

[3] David Talbot Rice. ***Islamic Art*** (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965). p. 67

and admired groups are the ***Minai*** or polychrome ware and the lustrous luxury wares produced at Rayy, Kashan and Saveh. The technique was more qualified and polished and "the boldness of the drawing, though lacking the refinement of later work, had an essential vigor that was to survive in the best productions of the mature Timurid (1370-1500) and Safavid (1502-1736) periods."[4]

Notwithstanding the series of attacks, production of various indigenous Persian manuscripts, earthenware and metal objects did not altogether cease. Most of these works however, did not survive the subsequent invasions and perhaps the only extant manuscript of this period is the ***Varqa va Gulshah*** now in the Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, Teheran. This manuscript with its seventy-one miniatures is in the manner of the 'wall-painting' layout. The background is painted with a single hue of either red or gold or sometimes blue. Animal and bird motifs interweave with plants giving a beautiful arrangement. The corpulent human figures are haloed, and wear sumptuously designed fabrics and the horses are equally of weighty structure.

The Mongol patronage between 1250 and 1360 yielded significant consequence in art and culture, "as it brought into the art of painting new elements from the Far East."[5] With the advent of the Mongols, a distinct style emerged, which paved the way for the matured Persian miniature painting. Along with the ***Shahnamas*** produced during the Ilkhanid rule, there are sizeable numbers of manuscripts that evidence this new growth of style. The manuscript ***Manafi al-Hayawan*** or the 'Morgan Bestiary' at the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, written and illustrated between 1294 and 1299 at

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[4] William Lillys. ***Oriental Miniatures: Persian, Indian, Turkish*** (London: Souvenir Press, 1965). p. 10

[5] Percy Brown. ***Indian Paintings under the Mughals*** (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1981). p. 33

Maragha, Northwest Persia, discloses two separate traditions: one following the old Baghdad School characteristic of the two-dimensional and bulky figures and another adopting a new trend of "linear and three-dimensional, using light, feathery brush-strokes and employing motifs that were basically Far Eastern."[6] While these two distinct styles worked simultaneously in this manuscript, in other manuscripts these two manners are seen beautifully synthesized directing a whole new course of miniature painting in Persia beginning from mid-fourteenth century onwards. This course was however a gradual process. Miniatures from the ***Chronology of Ancient Peoples*** by al-Biruni dated 1307 at the library of Edinburgh University has traces of the beginning of such fusion. As it developed further, traits of the old Baghdad School became less apparent and replaced by the exotic Far Eastern features. Tabriz became an important centre of the developing artistic activities and the new convention with its three-dimensional and linear application became a more favored option. Several illustrations from Rashid al-Din's 'Universal History' or the ***Jami al-Tawarikh*** accounts for this tradition. One such illustration, which marks the beginning of Tabriz excellence in such fusion, is from the Edinburgh volume of Rashid al-Din, a depiction of ***Jonah and the Whale*** dated 1306. Rich in imagination and fluidity of movements, this painting surpassed all other illustrations in this book and this set the standard for the Tabriz School.

The Demotte ***Shahnama*** of Firdausi, which can be dated between 1330 and 1336, is the final proof of the exquisite Tabriz style. Magnificent and eminent and its abundant execution defines the pure Persian tradition. It does not limit either to the characteristic features of the Mesopotamian School or to

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[6] David Talbot Rice. ***Op.cit.*** p. 114

the Far Eastern exoticism and fine brush works. It has taken on new methods of realizing more realistic depiction of forms and shapes, of giving intent expressions and emotions. Miniature like ***Rustam Fights the White Div of Mazandaran*** from one of the ***Shahnamas*** of the Mongol period dated fourteenth century at the Cincinnati Art Museum, belong to this Persian-Mongol School. Another beautiful rendition of this style is that of the ***battle of Rustam and Isfandiyar*** dated about mid-fourteenth century now at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. This picture purely classifies the matured Persian-Mongol School centred at Tabriz. It has all the elements of the Mesopotamian style and traces of Chinese manners beautifully and skillfully coordinated and synthesized to enhance the expressions, thereby highlighting the effects of the incident painted and reflecting the true Persian development.

Next in line was the Timurids under whose power, Samarqand, Bukhara and Herat burgeoned as excellent centres for painting. Babur carried to India, this ancestral heritage of the Timurids, which already integrated the exotic Far-Eastern painting of the Chinese tradition practiced during the Mongol supremacy. The Mongols being of primordial nature sought for artistic motivation from the Chinese civilization and hence transported the Chinese's skilled artists, their beautiful works of art including paintings, porcelains etc. to work for them and to embellish their courts and palaces. Thus under the Mongols, Persian art virtually became a regionalized form of Chinese art as much of the works reveal a strong Chinese character until the Timurids overshadowed its precedence. This acquired tradition practiced under the Mongols, merged well into the Timurid School and resulted into a splendid fusion: of excellent calligraphic drawing and a harmonious

convention of contours and silhouettes that maintained its flavor right through its path.

The Timurid clan had an established interest in every kind of civilization and sophistication. Their rulers remained notable patrons of art and learning and encouraged any kind of literary and artistic creativity. Centres of art and learning burgeoned because of their benefaction over the vast expanse of Persia. Moreover, for them religion and art were closely associated and were nurtured simultaneously. Patronage for illustration of religious texts became a royal strategy since they "used these works of art as a vehicle for royal ideology, and a reflection of their aesthetic interest in art and their respect for religion."[7] Large numbers of painters were employed from every corner to work at these various centres and subsequently these styles became much renowned to be ascribed as separate schools of the art of painting.

Of these centres, the school headed by the superb hands of Bihzad under the royal patronage of Sultan Husain Mirza established at Herat was by far the most resplendent. Herat witnessed the most refulgent phase with the appearance of Bihzad and the generous patron, Sultan Husain in 1468-1506. An apprentice of Mirak who was himself a great artist and who was the leading artist of Sultan Husain's School, Bihzad learnt the intricacies of Persian painting and through his innovative creations, "introduced the open composition and a more subtle range and scientific use of colours."[8] Already a once established centre under the Timurids, Shah Rukh and his notable son,

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[7] Mahnaz Shayesteh Far. The Impact of The Religion on The Painting and Inscriptions of The Timurid and the early Safavid Periods. ***Central Asiatic Journal*** Vol. 47 No. 2, 2003. p. 252

[8] Norah Titley. Fifteenth Century Persian Miniature Painting, ***Persian Painting, Fifteenth Century*** (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann Publishers, 1977). p.20

Baysunghur, Herat once again emerged as the most fertile centre for artistic learning under Bihzad. To him is accredited the brilliant amalgamation of the Sino-Iranian idiom which were to leave exquisite imprints on Mughal art. Most of his works show the harmonious arrangement of the figures with the minutest of details given to every individual and a perfect placing to them as to emphasize every single character in the painting. A beautiful example highlighting these aspects is the painting of ***The Garden of Sultan Husayn Mirza*** dated 1485-1490 at the Gulestan Museum, Tehran. In fact, two gleaming qualities of Bihzad distinguish his masterpieces from the rest of the painters: increased characterization of individual figure, imparting maximum detail in each object drawn and insinuating a profound meaning behind every composition, which was mostly drawn from Sufi mysticism. However, most of Bihzad's original artistic virtuosity as Percy Brown rightly states, "was in the subject of portraiture, one of the most striking developments of the Mughal art, that the Indian school shows its closest affinity with the productions of Sultan Husain's protégé."[9] Unlike the previous representation of stereotype portraiture with only little dissimilarity, Bihzad introduced a more animated and lively facial expression with his articulated delineation of lines and structures. This enhanced and matured manner gained momentum under the Mughal School through the resolute and ardent followers of Bihzad practicing at the Mughal imperial studio.

The rise of the Safavid dynasty in the early part of the sixteenth century under the political genius of Shah Ismail reinstated the status of independent Persia once again and with it came the integration of all authorities under one rule. A fresh wave of revival followed in all spheres – cultural, political as

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[9] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 41

well as religious. Painting gathered a new strength with enormous patronage. Moreover, the absence of any dictatorial authority together with the disapproval of orthodox Islamic principle of despising painting facilitated the growth and expansion of Persian painting. During this period, the main centre of art concentrated at Tabriz, where the art of painting reached its zenith under the Safavid patronage and the artistic authority of Bihzad, who entered the court of Shah Ismail after the death of Sultan Husain of Timurid.

Although the Timurid School intermingled with the Persian Shah's atelier, the Safavid School was predominantly Sufi mysticism; romantic disposition of youths, lovers lost in their reverie under the spell of blossoming flowers, poets and musicians caught in their reflective moods, happy revelers rejoicing over food and wine, and all else that is aesthetically satiating, are evident primarily in these renderings. The compositions are opulent and variant especially the pictures of royal assembly and court scenes. Ironically, the very ingredients that were anticipated to augment this escalating tradition were the same factors that obliterated its essence. Excessive indulgence in this art form and tenacious attempt to imbibe external traditions caused the crumbling of the Persian Safavid School, which saw its decline during the rule of Shah Abbas by the end of sixteenth century. A reviving mood was anticipated under the creative artist, Ali Riza Abbasi of Tabriz but unfortunately, the art succumbed with the death of Ali Riza himself.

Mughal painting, for most of its early inspiration owes much to the Persian School. From its very inception, Mughal School manifests heavy inclination towards the Persian idiom. This was inevitable as there was dominance of Persian culture inherent in the Mughal court and again the very fact that Mughal School evolved under the initial custodian of renowned

Persian artists like Abdus Samad and Mir Sayyid Ali. Besides, the Mughal emperors had a predilection for the colorful Persian stories, epics and fables, which were collected among several manuscripts and anthologies kept in the libraries. Another plausible reason for the preference of the grandiose Persian flavor was mainly due to the Mughal painters who "were basically courtiers who worked for highly refined patrons, whose education had been much the same as that prescribed for Iranian princes and rulers."[10] This must have affected both the styles and the techniques, not to mention the subject for illustration, as were clearly discernible in the Mughal paintings.

The Iranian practice of patronization and of promoting rich libraries with epics, manuscripts and ***muraqqas*** had an abiding impact on other countries, particularly the Mughals who kept the tradition alive and endorsed it until its gradual decline. Persian poetry, epics, fables, historical records and manuscripts remained in huge favour among the Mughal royals. Babur had a small library with some valuable books, which he passed it down to his sons, Humayun and Kamran. A keen bibliophile that he was, Humayun maintained an imperial library rich with rare collections. Akbar in turn instigated a huge library and enriched it adding several more texts and illustrated manuscripts and maintaining it under his direct supervision. This tradition was further carried on by his successors until it collapsed along with the empire.

Akbar and his affiliation to Persian artistic idioms

Primarily, it was the rich cultural heritage of Persia, amassed in the form of books and albums in the Mughal libraries that provided for the

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[10] Mario Bussagli. ***Indian Miniatures*** (Feltham, Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1969). p. 67

extravagant subjects for painting in the Mughal court. To this, was added the sophisticated and cultured trait manifest in their paintings; its prolific decorations and lively palette; "structural composition and color usage inherited from a mature Islamic tradition."[11]

The early paintings of the Mughal School are heavily imbued with the typical Persian features exemplified by its aerial perspective; flat, two-dimensional architectural treatment; lush vegetation; vivid palette; high horizons and vertical format; and the bejeweled costumes. This was mainly for the aesthetic purpose and the elements are to enhance the central figure and to give a complete finish to the events painted. As has been already described, this was much to the fact that Persian culture as well as Persian artists permeated the Mughal court at least for a considerable period of the initial phase.

The Persian landscape of high horizon and rich blue sky with a hint of gold, trees mushrooming with flowers, the lush and budding floras of cypress, chinar and the almond trees, birds alighted on the trees, the gushing streams along the hills, green pastures and the blossoming shrubs, are generously borrowed in most of the early Mughal paintings. Throughout Akbari period and the early part of Jahangir's reign, the Persian standard of landscape was preferred; however, there is a gradual variation even in this depiction, in that the horizon is higher in most of the early paintings of Akbar's court but increasingly the receding lines of horizon is implemented later. This adaptation of the Persian landscape virtually ended during the reign of Jahangir, from 1610 onwards.

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[11] Heather Marshall. Painting in Islamic India until the Sixteenth Century: Art in the Islamic Period. In Basil Gray (ed.) ***The Arts of India.*** (New York: Cornell University Press, 1981). p. 125

The hills in the early works are generally painted with different colors to give an idea of the different planes separating the varied composition, which was an innovation of Bihzad. "Moreover, in the absence of correct knowledge of perspective, the painters made use of the hills and such other objects for portraying distance and depth."[12] In the depiction of hills, mountains and rocks while retaining the Persian style of curved rounded top hills, inclined rocks, a departure from this typical treatment of angular rocks and hills is apparent as seen especially in the various animal fables such as the ***Kalilah wa Dimnah*** and the ***Anwar-i Suhaili.*** Here the outlines of the rocks and hills are transformed using various shading and toning with a wide range of colors to choose from.

In the representation of water streams, no change is visible, throughout Akbar and Jahangir's reign, from the Persian style of surging streams often seen with floating ducks and sometimes fishes generally placed in the lower margin of the picture frame. The usual thick blue color streak between mounds or lush green planes of the Persian manner is continued well into the Mughal School, forming part of the landscape feature. There are several illustrations indicating the best part of such features, such as the painting ***Monkeys*** of the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** dated 1570 at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, ***Behram Gur and Fitnah before the hunt*** attributed to Miskin from the ***Khamsa-i Amir Khusrau*** dated 1596 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, a gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913, and an illustration of an episode of the poem, ***The Nine Paradise***[13]from the ***Khamsa*** by Amir Khusraw Dihlawi, painted during the seventeenth century.

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[12] Som Prakash Verma. ***Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court*** (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1978). p. 24

[13] The Freer Gallery of Art, Washington: Mario Bussagli, ***Indian Miniatures*** Pl. 52 (Feltham, Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1969). p. 113

However, despite the fundamental aspect of river drawing being that of Persian origin, the setting of rivers and trees in the background picture take after the pre-Mughal Indian convention. Rivers are drawn, enclosed within the natural environs of riverside shingles and shrubs while the trees are often with dense foliage and slender trunks reminiscent of the Indian tradition. Overall, the proclivity towards Indian naturalism, of animals and the Indian variety of trees begin to appear in the subsequent works.

The division of the whole composition into several planes by hills and mountains, classic example of the Herat School, which found its way in the later Persian schools of the Safavid and Bukhara, has been carried further into the Mughal atelier from these early Persian schools. This method was to give a sense of the multiplicity of events taking place simultaneously and the idea of elevation and expanse. This aspect can be noticed in the illustrations of the ***Harivamsa*** dated 1585-90; and the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** dated 1596 of the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras. A ***Baburnama*** illustration of ***A Scene of Changing Horse,***[14]attributed to Mahesh and dated 1598 at the National Museum, Delhi, and ***Expedition for hunting with Cheetah***[15] from ***Akbarnama*** also show clear adaptation of this Persian variant. An original Persian work by the master hand of Bihzad of this style is seen in ***Nobleman being confronted,*** miniature from a Khamsa of ***Nizami*** dated 1490 at the British Museum, London. (Add.25900)

Another striking version of the Persian idiom is the cutting of figures at the margin of the picture frame, the manner seen in the ***Akbarnama*** series of the Chester Beatty Library and Gallery of Oriental Art, Dublin. From the same

[14] Anis Farooqi. ***Art of India and Persia***, Pl.62 (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1979). p. 68
[15] Attributed to Mukund c. 1600 at the Chester Beatty Library and Gallery of Oriental Art, Dublin: Anis Farooqi. ***Op.cit.***, p. 80

series, the illustrations of ***Akbar Struggling with Man Singh*** attributed to Daulat and dated 1600 and ***Akbar Receiving His Mother*** painted by Dhanraj and belonging to the same year can be cited as instances of such features. The original Persian display of the same can be traced in the ***Demotte Shah-nama*** of Firdausi (1330-36), at the collection of Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University. Much of these Persian derivations are discernible in the manuscripts of ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** dated 1570 in the School of Oriental and African Studies, London; the ***Tuti-nama*** (1565-70) of the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland; the ***Hamza-nama*** (1565-80); the ***Gulistan of Sadi*** dated 1567-8; and the ***Deval Rani Khizr Khan*** (1567).

A peculiar feature of the primitive Persian tradition is the depiction of rocks and hills in human and animal silhouettes. This can be attributed to Shiraz and early Safavid style and a continuity of this manner is traceable in some of the Akbari paintings, such as a miniature where Akbar watches a lion in combat, where in the drawings of the rocks, one can see "human and animal profiles that verge on caricature."[16] Similar representations can also be seen in the painting, ***An Old Shepherd and His Flock*** from the ***Diwan-i Hafiz*** (fol.177) C. 1590s[17] and in yet another illustration from the ***Baburnama, Babur and His Two Chieftains Race during Their Retreat from Samarqand*** dated 1593 at the State Museum of Oriental Cultures, Moscow in which "one of the stones of the rock in the background resembles a figure of a bearded old man."[18] Apart from the representation of rocks and hills in the manner of Persian tradition, the Rampur ***Diwan-i Hafiz*** also reveals a strong inclination towards Persian convention in depicting the floras and faunas, the aerial

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[16] Stuart Cary Welch. ***The Art of Mughal India – Paintings and Precious Objects*** (The Asia House Gallery, New York: The Asia Society Inc., 1963). p. 29

[17] The Rampur Raza Library: Anis Farooqi. ***Op.cit.***, p. 59

[18] S. Tyulayev. ***Miniatures of Babur Nama*** (Moscow: State Fine Arts Publishing House, 1960). p. 27

perspective, the three-quarter profile, long and flowing costumes, the highly embellished carpets and often the lighter shades of colors and swaying figures of animals.

The typical Persian landscape has layers of rocks rising high up forming the background and a river or a stream flowing through the mountains coursing its way through the blossoming trees that complete the foreground decoration. Persian painting sources most of its themes from poetries with beautiful verses deliberately composed and therefore one can naturally imagine how captivating the visualization of such fanciful perception is. In the process of delineation, "natural objects such as rocks, trees and clouds are crystallized into idealized formulae of great beauty and conscious unreality."[19] Such a picturesque set up is seen since a very early phase of the Mughal paintings and this style is mainly attributed to Mir Sayyid Ali proving his expertise in landscape representation from the time of Humayun throughout Akbar's reign. One early example of Humayuni period attributed to Mir Sayyid Ali is the miniature of ***Humayun in a mountain clearing*** in a British Museum album, (f. 6) an eighteenth century copy of an original work of circa 1553, which manifest clearly these distinct Persian features. Another painting attributed to Mir Sayyid Ali is that of a surreal depiction of a picnic scene, of the Mughal male ancestors with Timur occupying the central position and his sons and successors on a lower plain enjoying an outdoor gathering. This large picture, now in the British Museum is the earliest extant painting of the Mughal School and the manner is completely in the early Safavid style and suggest the Mongolian wandering tradition of tent hangings. "The gold

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[19] Krishna Chaitanya. ***A History of Indian Painting: Manuscript, Moghul and Deccani Traditions*** (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1979), p. 53

painted sky and other coloring are Persian, and so is the illuminated frame of floral arabesques which surrounds it."[20]

While most Persian features were being discarded as Mughal School matured, certain elements of Persian origin remained largely incorporated such as, the Tabrizi feature of large peony flowers in the arabesques embellishment painted in gold on a blue background apparent in most Tabrizi album in Istanbul. The ***Hamzanama*** has certain miniatures with such traits seen mostly on textiles, architecture, canopies and even on carpets.

Among the animals depicted, the horse, the camel and the dog reflect Persian character while the elephants are distinctly of the indigenous tradition of Pre-Mughal India. "The treatment of the horse reflects the Persian concept of the ideal qualities of the animal – small face, fleshy, heavy body, thin, strong forelegs and a long tail."[21] An improvement was seen in the depiction of horses from the Persian convention, in that the two-dimensional flat coloring was given a more sturdy appearance with "an effective color modeling creating a three-dimensional effect and hence full of life."[22]

Besides assimilation of Persian styles and techniques, the Mughal School also take after the Persian concepts in painting – the hunting scene that dominates the pages of the Persian ***Shahnama***, warfare and valiant battle against the forces of evil, all inspired by the gallant adventures of the legendary heroes apart from humor are depicted in the paintings. The Mughal emperors, like their ancestors exult in their laudable conquests and war zeal,

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[20] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Treasures of Asia: Indian Painting*** (S.A. Geneva: Editions d'Art, 1978) 77-78)

[21] Som Prakash Verma. ***Op.cit.***, p. 38

[22] Anis Farooqi. ***Art of India and Persia*** (New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1979). p. 70

which often provide subjects for their illustrations. The Mughal emperors were enthused by their ancestral heroic escapades of Rustam, Iskander and Bahram Gur. The violent combat of these heroes, their fights with giants and dragons, etc. provided sources for the thematic content of Mughal Painting in battle, hunting and combat against the evil forces. The Mughal artists were in their turn continuously encouraged by their patrons to depict vigorous and forceful battle and hunting scenes and they were mostly inspired by the presence of great Persian texts with such dynamic themes.

Such Mughal parallels can be seen in the miniature entitled ***Battle Scene*** from the ***Akbarnama*** dated 1600 at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Another miniature from the same manuscript and at the same library is ***Battle Scene: Akbar on an armoured elephant, leading his troops*** dated 1600, from the ***Dastan-i Amir Hamza, Ibrahim carried to battle by giants*** dated 1558-73 at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. Persian version of the same description are seen in ***Battle between Dara & Iskandar*** from a Khamsa by Nizami at The British Library, London (Add.25900 folio.231b) and a miniature from the Khamsa of ***Nizami*** dated 1490, ***The battle of the Clans*** by Bihzad now at The British Library, London. The turbulent battle scene with great display of infantry, cavalry, armaments and elephants take after the Persian tradition where the soldiers are engaged in a fiery combat.

A very arresting feature of the Persian derivation, which is rather contrasting in depicting war scene, evident in this illustration, is the lack of aggressive and intense facial expression, one that would denote a violent struggle. The expression of the warriors and even that of Emperor Akbar is rather unattached and apathetic in an otherwise forceful composition. Another characteristic of Persian source, that of the fifteenth and sixteenth century

Shiraz school apparent in this miniature is the technique where fighting scene occupies the whole foreground and steadily weakens in the background. Such copious and varied exposition was largely an attempt to satisfy the patron's aspiration rather than a hobby on the part of the artists. The wide range of subjects depicted was primarily to reflect the taste, the vigor and personality of the patron, which the artists endeavor to achieve with utmost determination in their execution.

Hunting remained a favorite sport for the Mughal emperors and there are many contemporary references that narrate the excitement and fervor at such sport. Many illustrations on hunting scene therefore depict such action-filled game. The typical features of the Persian tradition that cover the whole composition; the different species of animal crammed and running amuck in fear continued in the Mughal representation as well. This is where the emperors reveal their spirit and fearlessness. For the painters, naturally it remained one of the most favored themes as their patrons encouraged the very violent depictions of hunting scenes. The Mughal artists have exhibited their expertise and their acute observation while depicting the various postures of the animals, running helter-skelter in different direction, the intensity of the chase and the spatial atmosphere with very few hills and sparse vegetation. A beautiful rendition of such manner executed by the superb hands of Abdus-Samad is the illustration of ***Khusraw hunting*** dated 1595 at The British Library. This miniature is indicative of the consistency of the traditional Safavid manner even at a stage when the Akbari School benchmark was fully realized. Similar illustrations are: ***A Hunting Expedition in Difficulty*** dated 1600 from the ***Iyar-i Danish*** at the India Office Library, London, from the Akbarnama, ***Kamargah*** by Miskin and Sarwan dated 1600 at the Victoria and

Albert Museum, London, and from the Allahabad studio of Salim, ***Prince Salim hunting with his companion*** at the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. W. 650.

Hunting of lions, tigers or cheetahs is an even more exciting sport for the Mughal emperors. The illustrations of such themes release a grand arrangement of an imperial hunt very similar to the Persian prototypes, where a huge crowd gathers outside an enclosure forming a major event and the beaters drive the game inside the enclosure after which the emperor begins the slaughter. Striking examples of the Mughal version of such depictions are the paintings of ***Akbar Hunting in an Enclosure*** from the ***Akbarnama***, painted by Mansur and the outlines given by Miskin, dated 1590 at the Victoria and Albert Museum and ***Shah Jahan Hunting Lions***.[23] Slightly different setting but with the same subject are ***Hunting Scene*** from the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, a miniature from the ***Anwar-i-Suhayli***; from the Akbarnama, ***Expedition for Hunting with Cheetah*** by Mukund dated 1600 at the Chester Beatty Library and Gallery of Oriental Art, Dublin; and ***Prince Khurram Attacking a Lion***, Bari, late 1610 by Balchand dated 1640, from the ***Padshahnama*** at the Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

Giants and demons are other subjects in several of the illustrations, both Mughal and Persian. Huge and often petrifying figures fill up the whole pages of the manuscripts illustrated in the Mughal School. In the depiction of demons, which occur more frequently in the manuscripts of ***Harivamsha***, ***Ramayana*** and ***Hamzanamah***, the spotted and colossal monstrous head with horns, clad in kilts is to an extent a survival of the early Persian frescoes of seventh century. There is however a single miniature in the collection of

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[23] ***Shahjahan-nama*** manuscript dated 1657 now at the collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Windsor Castle.

Edwin Binney 3rd, which suggests a genre scene "probably composed directly for inclusion in an album rather than a manuscript illustration."[24] This particular picture, ***Demons Preparing Food By A Torrent*** dated 1600, is a superb example of the kind, rich with Persian narratives with the rocky landscape on a flat background. Although Hindu mythological figures of giants and demons continued, the Persian models were a more widely acceptable selection at the Mughal studio probably because of the abundance of sources from the various Persian texts available at the Imperial library.

Themes of hunting, combat with ferocious animals, dragon fights, demons etc. were originally derived from the ancient Persian philosophy of the darkness and light and of the evil and the good. According to the Iranian theory, the envoy of good on earth, Hormuzd was sent to fight against Ahriman, the representative of the forces of evil embodied in their principle enemy, the Turanians. Several instances reflect these beliefs and are beautifully rendered in illustrations. Legendary heroes like Rustam upholding the torch of the good theory throughout his existence against the evil forces, remained an intriguing subject for painting among the Persian artists as evidenced by the illustrated ***Shahnama*** manuscript. Other depictions remained in the Persian studios of the "intervening agents; the angel Surush and the fabulous bird Simurg appear for the former, and the ***divs***, dragons, sorcerers, and witches for the latter."[25] These pictures have provided tremendous sources among the Mughal artists.

While representing human faces, the Mughal School have tactically retained both the Persian convention of a three-quarter view as well as the

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[24] Edwin Binney 3rd. ***Indian Miniature Painting From the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd*** Cat. No. 27. The Portland Art Museum Exhibition. Portland, 1973. p.51

[25] William Lillys. ***Oriental Miniatures: Persian, Indian, Turkish*** (London: Souvenir Press, 1965). p. 12

Indian tradition of an austere profile view according to the necessity of the composition for most part of Akbar and Jahangir's reign. The strict profile view has been preferably used in portrait illustrations, while the three-quarter outline generally applied to other composite illustrations such as battle scenes or hunting scenes. For a brief span during the initial years of the Mughal School, the human faces reveal a close affinity to the Persian Safavid manner of rounded bulky cheeks often rouged, reminiscent of several illustrations in the Hougton ***Shahnama***. Mughal prototype of this feature can be seen in the early productions of the ***Hamzanama***, at the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna. After the first few years however, this manner was replaced by a more Indianised convention. From the time of Shah Jahan, however, the three-quarter profile of the Persian tradition had been virtually substituted by the Indian style of the complete profile.

An improvisation of the otherwise inexpressive and lifeless facial depiction of the Persian model was apparent in some illustrations with the introduction of a new approach in expressing emotion where a finger touches the lips as a mark of amazement. This particular trait has been considerably adopted in various Mughal works well into Shah Jahan's reign. Very interestingly in the aspect of facial depiction, the Mughal artists have displayed much superiority in terms of a more animated, natural and vivid expression. The Indian artist like Basawan excelled particularly in the representation of bold and forceful human figures clearly showing the association of every part of the body in full action. The emphasis of these illustrations is primarily on depicting action and hence the expressions of the human figures and of animals alike and the rhythmic lines have been correctly rendered to suit the violent action depicted.

Of humor and caricature in Mughal painting, there are comparatively larger instances. While generally agreed that such elements drew inspiration from the Persian Master Muhammadi who excelled in painting animated and sparkling scenes mostly of reveling dervishes, the Mughal artists progressed rapidly in such depictions and have successfully produced several illustrations. The miniatures entitled ***Sultan Sanjar and the Old Woman*** from the ***Khamsa*** of Nizami (f. 15v) dated 1595 at the British Library, London; and a ***Drunken Scene*** – a detached miniature from the ***Hamzanama*** in the British Museum collection, sixteenth century show Persian depiction of caricature. This shows the Mughal artists' familiarity with a variety of Persian subjects as to include even humour in painting. Another Mughal prototype displaying a sense of humour is the painting of ***The Eternal Triangle*** of the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** dated 1570 at the School of Oriental and African Studies. This picture is simple in composition and yet the comical aspect of the theme is clearly stated.

As is frequently observed in the illustrations of the ***Tutinama*** and the ***Hamzanama***, the architectural treatment favorably conformed to the Persian convention of the flat two-dimensional composition, structures richly decorated and with sharp geometric precision. This remained noticeably so until the end of the sixteenth century, when the Mughal School began to show signs of individuality and maturity. Nonetheless, there are occasional appearances of it in the later paintings owing to those Persian variants in the Mughal atelier, those who prefer to stick to their native norms. Best instances along the Persian architectural composition are the ***Hamza-namah*** illustrations of ***Supernatural Elephant Rider*** dated 1558-73 at the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banares, ***Zardhank Khani brings the ring to the Prison-keeper*** dated 1558-73 now at the Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art

Washington D.C. and ***Mihrdukht shoots her bow at the ring***[26] from the collection of Mrs. Maria Sarrae-Hermann, Ascona Switzerland, of the same period.

One interesting element of the Persian architectural representation mainly attributed to Bihzad's taste is that of rendering the central theme inside a pavilion within a royal enclosure or inside a building and placing the less important events outside the main premises and usually cutting the figures at the front margin. This technique appears to give a certain height, enabling the whole scene to be easily visible to the onlookers. Such a method is clearly discernible in Mughal paintings throughout its prevailing years and especially in the depiction of court scenes, as can be seen in the illustrations like, ***Akbar Hears a Petition***[27] in the ***Akbarnama*** (60.28) dated 1604, the ***Darbar of Jahangir***, in the ***Jahangir-nama*** (14.654) dated 1620 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Again, in two other illustrations in the British Museum ***Gulistan*** of Sadi that bears Akbar's name. This manuscript was copied at Bukhara in 1567 and is signed by an artist Shahm who is not otherwise heard of. The architectural representation clearly takes after the Bukhara School, the horizontal flat structural layout and the typical palette of blues and reds. "The gold is rich and metallic and there is the fine illumination characteristic of Bukhara."[28]

As has been previously discussed, the Mughal emperors, especially Akbar and Jahangir venerated the saints and holy men and often visited their

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[26] Anis Farooqi. ***Op.cit.***, p. 29

[27] The Freer Gallery of Art, Washington: Reproduced in Milo C. Beach. ***The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court***, Cat. No. 12g.

[28] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Treasures of Asia: Indian Painting*** (S.A. Geneva: Editions d'Art, 1978). p. 81

dwellings. There are several illustrations of this genre and they reveal a close affinity to the Persian Herati schools of the fifteenth century and the sixteenth century Safavid schools, where the landscape dominates the whole composition. Such a theme of 'visit to holy men' remained well into Shah Jahani paintings as well. However, a variation in the compositional approach is markedly visible as can be understood from these illustrations of the respective periods. An illustration entitled ***Visit to a holy man***[29] dated mid-seventeenth century clearly shows western landscape of receding horizon and spacious composition while in the paintings, ***Encounter with a hermit in the wilderness***, of the period 1598-1599[30] and ***Iskander Visiting a Hermit***[31] attributed to Basawan, the Persian convention of crowded composition still persisted. The original Persian model of this theme is inherent in the miniature of the same title ***Iskandar Visiting a Hermit*** from the Khamsa of ***Nizami***, at the British Museum attributed to Bihzad and Qasim Ali.

Besides the regular Persian features of landscapes, animals, or architecture, an interesting observation is the occasional traces of angels in the Persian manner as can be seen in Mughal illustration, ***The Prince enjoying music and dance*** dated 1568 from the ***Deval Devi Khizir Khan*** at the National Museum, New Delhi. Persian models of similar depictions of angels are noticed in the painting of ***The Ascent of the Prophet to Heaven*** in the British Museum probably painted by Mirak and agreed to be the most splendid painting in Persia.

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[29] Musée Guimet, Paris and Mario Bussagli. ***Indian Miniatures*** Pl. 63 (Feltham, Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1969).
[30] The Freer Gallery of Art, Washington: Mario Bussagli. ***Ibid.***, p.
[31] Khamsa of Amir Khusrau Dihlawi (No. 13.228.30) 1597-98 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

Early Persian convention of animal combat, of the pre-Sassanian period is imbibed into the Mughal atelier by the Mughal artists. Such motifs are often seen on Persian carpets and along the margins of illustrated manuscripts. Apart from animal combats, mention could be made of other popular themes used as motifs on Persian carpets like angels and "everyday activities such as hunting and hawking."[32] Under the Mughals similar motifs re-emerges on the fringes of Jahangiri paintings.

Often in Persian paintings, grief and sorrow is indicated by the tearing of clothes, tossing of the arms, covering the face, anxiously nibbling the back of the hand etc. as is the scene in the picture, ***The Mourning for the Death of Laila's Husband*** from the ***Khamsa*** of Nizami fol. 135v and a product of Bihzad's school at Herat dated 1494, now at the British Museum, London. Another illustration of similar features of the period of Mongol-Persian School is that of ***The Funeral of Isfandyar***[33] from the ***Firdausi Shanameh*** dated 1330-1350. The expressions in both pictures are strikingly similar and there is every possibility that the first miniature was after the model of the second one. The facial expressions remained visibly poor, which denote the lack of emotive demonstration of Persian painting, yet other signs of anguish and distress are starkly lucid.

The Mughal artists' adaptation of the Persian idiom can be seen in the painting of ***The death of the Emperor Timur*** in the ***Tarikh-i Khandan-i Timuria*** fol. 134 dated c. 1584, at the Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library, Patna and in ***A Princess on Her Death Bed*** from the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** fol.100

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[32] Jane Merritt. Gardens and Poetic Images: The Woven Silks of Persia. ***Marg***. Volume XL, No.3 (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1987). p.60

[33] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Joseph Pulitzer Fund, 1983: Douglas Barrett, Norah Titley, Mulk Raj Anand. ***Persian Painting Fourteenth Century*** (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann Publishers, 1977). p. 33

dated 1596 and painted by Manohar, at the Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banares. A comparative study however reveals that the Mughal manner was far superior in terms of emotional representation. Thus, we see that the inspiration from Persian tradition of painting prevailed on a large extent, although, the pace of maturity of the Mughal School of painting during Akbar's period was on an upward scale.

The Jahangiri School and Persian painting

Jahangir's reign saw a decline in the use of Persian influence. Several factors could be responsible for this shift. Firstly, the partiality in book illustrations during Akbar's reign, which comprised majority of the productions – Persian literature, epics or historical documents greatly declined, replaced by the albums. Secondly, Jahangir preferred productions of natural histories; the study of flowers, birds and animals from life around, which transferred the emphasis from mere imitation to a comprehensive knowledge of the subject concerned. Nature study was the order of Jahangir's atelier. This considerably shifted the significance from any acquired tradition to competence among the artists to depict the subject closest to reality.

Therefore, clearly, it was the potential of the artist that the emperor favored and as such, book illustrations "are not the best vehicles for the imagination and virtuosity of the artist. In place of the flow of manuscripts came the ***muraqqa*** or album."[34] Nonetheless, this does not altogether uproot Persian convention in his atelier, for Jahangir had in his employ many Persian artists who still adhered to the traditional Persian ***qalam*** in certain drawings.

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[34] Toby Falk and Mildred Archer. ***Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*** (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1981). p. 57

Jahangir had as a prince employed Aqa Riza, a Persian painter at his Allahabad studio (Salim studio). His acquaintance with the Persian brush therefore started early on and remained effective during the first few years of his accession. There were several works of Aqa Riza and other Persian artists, employed in Jahangir's atelier and naturally, they displayed favoritism of the Persian tradition. Among these artists are Abul Hasan, son of Aqa Riza upon whom Jahangir conferred the title ***Nadir-al Zaman*** (the wonder of the age) for his artistic excellence, Muhammad 'Abd, brother of Abul Hasan, Muhammad Fakirullah Khan, Muhammad Sharif ***Amir al-Umara***, and Farukh Beg to name some. These artists were mainly responsible for the revival of Persian tradition in Jahangir's court until the gradual shift towards the Indian taste.

Jahangir also had in his possession several Persian works apart from those collections already in the Imperial library. These provided enormous sources for painting themes if not altogether the technique and manner of Persian painting. Among these prized possessions were included four miniatures of the Bihzad School dated 1499, a copy of the ***Yusuf and Zulaikha*** and most special was a picture by Khalil Mirza, a renowned Timurid artist of olden times. This was "the picture of the fight of Sahib Qiran (Timur) with Tuqtamish K, and the likenesses of him and his glorious children and the great Amirs who had the good fortune to be with him in that fight, and near each figure was written whose portrait it was."[35] This picture is in its most tattered form in the British Museum London. The governor of Thatta, Mustafa Khan had also presented a Shah-nama and Khamsa of Shaikh Nizami, "illustrated by masters (of painting), along with other presents."[36] For the

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[35] Henry Beveridge (Ed.) and Alexander Rogers (Trans). ***Tuzuk i-Jahangiri***, Vol. II. (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Oriental Publishers and Booksellers, 1968). p. 116

[36] Henry Beveridge (Ed.) and Alexander Rogers (Trans). ***Ibid.***, p. 232

purpose of close study, he had sent his best portrait painter, Bishandas among the delegates who went for a task to Persia, to paint the likeness of Shah Abbas, the Shah of Persia and all the chief men of his state.

The extent of Persian influence can be studied from the albums that the emperor compiled for his personal collection. Best display of Persian idiom can be examined from the margin pages of these albums, in portraits, some genre paintings and also in few instances in the themes of the paintings. Of all the albums, four have been kept with great care, one in the State Library of Berlin; the second is The Wantage Bequest Album in the South Kensington Museum, the third in the Gulistan Museum at Tehran and the fourth in the A.C. Aedhesir Collection.

The albums of Jahangir are proof of his love for paintings. Filled with a variety of pictures and calligraphy, these are the emperor's personal collection including "even a small number of first-class Persian drawings going back to the last quarter of the fifteenth century."[37] The instant attraction of these albums are the margin pages, which are beautifully decorated with floral arabesque as well as animals and birds, scenes of hunting or of different craftsmen at work and sometimes even portraits of calligraphers and painters. This is a continuation of the Timurid phase of margin decoration of about 1400, which developed gradually into broad patterns with new elements and eventually shaping up into single work of art. To this, Mughal artists induced human figures painted in natural tones, reorganized the floral patterns, added new features and transformed the whole composition into typical Mughal character. A handsome example of such order is that of an album page of

[37] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 101

Jahangir reproduced in Stuart Cary Welch[38] fig. 13 lent by the Musée Guimet, Paris and dated 1615. Daulat Khan was perhaps the best artist at border illumination.

Portrait painting was not an uncommon feature of either Persian or Indian painting. The Persian emperors had their likenesses painted and of the nobles, saints and dervishes. The Mongols had brought skilled Chinese painters along with their hordes and these painters depicted distinguished portraits in Persia. Apart from the Chinese portraiture technique, the Persians had their own separate tradition of portrait painting as practiced under the Sassanian rule, which they kept alive for years with little or no significant variation under the subsequent Persian schools.

In India, portraiture had the same historical relevance as that of literature, as it is more frequently used for exemplifying these ancient literatures than the Persian counterparts. Portrait painting was therefore not certainly a new concept for the Mughals. There are innumerable collections of portraits in India prior to the Mughal accession. During the Mughal dominion, several portraits were painted at the command of the emperor not only of themselves but also of their nobles, courtiers, dervishes, scholars and craftsmen; many foreign nationalities, the Jesuits were also among the portraits depicted beginning especially from Jahangir's reign. There were also portraits of their ancestors often filling up pages of the album collections.

Portrait painting was practiced during Akbar's reign but the significance of individual characterization given to portraiture was fully

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[38] Stuart C. Welch. ***Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches: Sixteenth Through Nineteenth Centuries*** (New York: The Asia Society, 1976). p. 43

realized only during Jahangir's period. "One of the reasons why so many pictures of Jahangir exist is because he instituted the custom of presentation portraits, which he gave to all those whom he wished to honour."[39] There were many portraits of him painted and also of variety of other subjects including birds and animals, flowers and plants alike. Indeed, portraiture painting was primary during his reign and not book illustration, as his predecessors carried out. Akbar's period witnessed only few numbers of portraits of himself besides those found in the ***Akbarnama***. These early instances of portraits manifest the Persian tradition and it remained so for a period after Jahangir's accession after which there was receptiveness towards a new convention inspired by the European Renaissance tradition. An illustration of Jahangiri period, which could have been a direct copy from a Persian manner, is the portrait of ***Shah Tahmasp in solitary Meditation*** dated early seventeenth century attributed to Sahifa Banu. This copy has the same compositional features as that of an "earlier portrait painted by the celebrated Agha Mirak of Persian School of Bihzad, about 1540."[40] The impeccable white turban around the conical cap fashionable of the Tahmaspi period and the costumes are reminiscent of the typical Tahmaspi School.

Bishandas was the best painter for portraits and virtually all his works are sourced from Persia as they are in the same manner that he saw and painted in Persia during his visit there. These early portraits of Jahangir's reign are characteristic of the soft and gentle display of the lines and colours, the figures mostly of "adolescent persons, seated on straight-backed golden chair, amidst vegetation, and holding a book, or flower, or wine-glass in one

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[39] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 151

[40] Stanley C. Clarke. ***Mughal Paintings: The School of Jahangir*** (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1983) No. 27 Pl. 18)

hand, are usually associated with the romantic phase during the early years of Jahangir's reign when the court-painters responded to his preference for Persian art."[41] The portrait of a ***Prince Smelling Flower***[42] remarkably highlights the same disposition. This was probably a continuation of the style as begun during Akbar's reign as the later portraits of Jahangiri period show "full-length standing figure in either profile or three-quarter face against a turquoise blue or dark green ground."[43] Another technique of portraiture painting was the ***Siyah Qalam,*** a manner of sketching with light strokes of color, introduced during Jahangiri period by the Persian artist Muhammad Nadir Samarqandi.

Aqa Riza was among the premiere painters of prince Salim at the Allahabad studio. Much of the earlier works therefore follow the strict Persian conventions. An individual miniature, ***Portrait of a Head Gardener*** signed: "Devout and True Servant of Shah Salim, Aqa Riza." at the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, cat. No. 42 shows the manner of portraiture characteristic of the Safavid tradition, of the disproportionate size of the body, stiff pose, of the blank expression and of the rather inapt dressing. Similar examples are the ***Portraits of a Prince*** and ***A Man Playing Pan Pipes*** by the same artist at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, dated between 1590 and 1600, which manifest a manner far from the burgeoning Mughal School. Apart from portraiture, a more serious display of the Persian orientation of this phase is the ***Anwar i-Suhaili*** illustrations at the British Museum Ms. Add. 18579 completed about 1610, where Aqa Riza have delivered his extraordinary and strong Persian

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[41] R.K. Tandan. ***Indian Miniature Painting: 16th Through 19th Centuries*** (Bangalore: Natesan Publishers, 1982). p. 53

[42] R.K. Tandan. ***Ibid.***, Fig. 15 (Pl. VII) dated c.1610 by Mansur.

[43] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 102

affinities. These miniatures are manifestations of the typical Persian landscape, the slender trees, the architectural structure, the three-quarter profile and the decorative aspects of Persian Schools and especially along the Safavid manner to which Aqa Riza originally trained.

Among the artists with Persian orientation, Abul Hasan was a well-acclaimed artist of Jahangiri School. His style was brilliant and it was much to the appreciation of the emperor, even more so as he was a ***khanzad***, born at the royal court, and personally reared by the emperor himself. Jahangir, convinced of Abul Hasan's superior artistic qualities, conferred upon him the title, ***Nadir uz-Zaman***. Instances of his exquisite hands can be perceived in the paintings like the frontispiece of the ***Jahangirnama***, ***Squirrels on a Chinar tree*** dated 1610 from the Johnson Album 1 folio 30 at the India Office Library, London. The latter picture has admiration beyond description. A close scrutiny of this picture reveals radiant attributes of not one tradition but a perfect synchronization of several styles. The Persian narratives in this picture are the rocky landscape, the golden tinted sky, the distant hills, the flowering shrubs near the margin and the grazing goats, traits of the Safavid manner that complete the scene. Abul Hasan was such an accomplished artist and the most favored of all Jahangiri painters in his studio. Through him, Jahangir realized his vision and aspiration of capturing all of his delights in the form of picture, which filled his album pages. According to Percy Brown, Abul Hasan's "work was perfect, and his picture is one of the ***chefs-d'oeuvre*** of the age."[44] As would be expected from a favorite painter, Abul Hasan was assigned the task of illustrating several of the most significant episodes of the ***Tuzuk i-Jahangiri*** and he indeed proved his mettle in displaying results of

[44] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 82

gratifying descriptions. Instances like ***Dervishes Preparing Food for the Enthroned*** dated 1620 from the Edwin Binney 3rd collection and a ***darbar*** of Jahangir in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Vol. VI no LXXIV, pl. XXXIV. In the first miniature, Jahangir is seen seated in the Shalimar Garden in Kashmir, which was his favourite place amidst the serene ambiance of nature. The flowering shrubs, the long slender trees, the staired ***chadar*** all add to the soothing harmony of the garden scene and such a perfect disposition could be achieved only by skilled hands as that of Abul Hasan.

That Abul Hasan inherited the Persian ***qalam*** from his father is true but the manner he incorporated these traits excelled that of his father, in that he blended the Persian aspects along with other diverse elements in a perfect accord as was preferred by his patron. This resulted in the most excellent form of maturity, in character and style, one that defines Mughal School at its best. Of the earlier works of Abul Hasan, three miniatures from the manuscript of the ***Bostan of Sa'di*** are of remarkable execution. ***The devotee and the fox***, folio 67v, ***The old man and the physician*** folio 178v, and ***Ibrahim receives a Zoroastrian*** folio 58v.[45] All three are dated between 1605 and 1606, painted at the initial year of Jahangir's accession when the tradition of Akbari book illustration was still continued. The general style and format of the manuscript is still in conformity with the late Akbari phase, however, the three miniatures by Abul Hasan are discernibly with prospective scope for development under his extraordinary hand, "anticipating the developed style that one associates with Jahangiri painting after the year 1610."[46] In the first miniature, Persian

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[45] Art and History Trust. (Photo courtesy Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.)

[46] Terence McInerney. Three Paintings by Abul Hasan In a Manuscript of The Boston of Sa'di. Rosemary Crill, Susan Stronge, Andrew Topsfield (Eds.). ***Arts of Mughal India: Studies in Honour of Robert Skelton*** (Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd., 2004). p. 83

elements are obviously seen in the rocky landscape, the multi-colored and the animal shaped rocks. Although there are telltale signs of naturalistic approach in these miniatures in the rendering, the composition being of depicting textual narratives as manuscripts, has limited the expression from being totally realistic.

Among the Persian artists in portrait painting, Farrukh Beg, who left his brilliant imprints during Akbar's reign continued to show his expertise during Jahangir's period and well into his age. An example of his skilled hand is seen in the ***Portrait of an aged Mullah*** from the Wantage Bequest Album in the South Kensington Museum, which he painted at an old age of seventy. From portraits to genre scenes, Farrukh Beg proved himself a true artist, his legitimate artistic persona attested by the emperor's remarks: "Two thousand rupees were given to Farrukh Beg, the painter, who is unrivalled in the age."[47] There is a curious painting compiled in an album for Warren Hastings dated between 1610-20 at the Edwin Binney 3rd, Collection, ***Alexander Greeting Two Sages*** which interprets qualities attributable to Farrukh Beg. The complex dynamic composition of this painting confirms the continuity of the Akbari period genre scenes characteristic of its busy intricate expressions derived from the Persian idiom. The divisions of the planes unfolding multiplicity of events, characteristic of Herati tradition, the trees atop the mountains, the landscape are still purely Persian. Farrukh Beg's style is best described in the words of Som Prakash Verma, "The sky represented in gold pigment, two dimensional shape, symmetrical buildings with profusely decorated columns, human figures drawn with longish faces and attenuated

[47] Henry Beveridge (Ed.) and A Rogers (Trans.). ***Op.cit.***, p. 159

and elegant bodies characterize Farrukh Beg's work."[48] There are several other accomplished artists of Persian origin whose works predictably reflect Persian tradition. Ali Raza khanzad was another well-acclaimed portrait painter of the Persian institution.

The Mughal artists' adaptation to the Persian manner included not only the technique or the themes but also sometimes reproduced virtually identical Persian works. As is clear there were several Persian original works in the Imperial library that served as models, many of the artists both Persian and Indian copied from them. Aqa Riza has reproduced many copies of Persian originals like the ***Youth Reading from a book*** at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, folio LIII 14.656, another of a ***Youth on a horseback*** folio 15.31 XLVII from the same collection. As has been mentioned earlier, Jahangir had the greatest admiration of the works of the Persian master painter Bihzad, therefore among these originals are many by the Persian ***Ustad*** himself. Apart from the portraits of Abdur Rahmin Jami or of his patron, Sultan Husayn which he painted, preserved at the Muraqqa Gulshan, Teheran, there are beautiful genre works like the painting of ***Building of the Castle in Khawarnaq*** from the ***Khamsa*** of Nizami dated 1494 now at the British Museum Or.6810 which the Mughal artists duplicated.

On the subjects of animal combat along Persian derivation that have found continuity in the Jahangiri School, Camel fight also has received much interest among the Mughal artists and even more so as it was a favorite means of relaxation for the Mughal rulers. The artists look up to the Persian paintings of Camel fights to inspire in their delineation. An original source of

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[48] Som Prakash Verma. ***Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court*** (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Ltd., 1978). p. 9

inspiration could be that of ***Two Camels Fighting*** by Bihzad dated 1525 at the Murraqqa Gulshan Library, Teheran Pl. LXXXVII A. Several Mughal versions were painted based on this original but the best result of all is that of ***Camel Fight***[49] attributed generally to Nanha dated 1610-1620 at the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay This painting apart from the theme has the typical Persian decorativeness seen in the shrubs and the landscape with the scroll clouds borrowed from Chinese painting.

Depicting Polo games played by the royalties, although rare, was another subject of Persian miniature that saw its adaptation in the Mughal atelier. The miniature ***Salim Playing Polo***[50] from the ***Diwan*** of Amir Hasan Dihlawi. Attributed to Balchand, Allahabad, 1602 is presumably a copy from the Persian original ***Mihr Playing Polo***[51] in the ***Mihr u Mushtari*** attributed to Assar of the Tabriz School, dated 1420. Another similar Mughal representation is ***Jahangir plays polo with his sons Parviz and Khurram, and brother-in-law Mirza Abul Hasan*** at the British Library, London, painted most probably after 1611 as indicated by the presence of Mirza Abul Hasan and attributable to the hands of Manohar.

Themes of lovers continued to be depicted throughout Akbar, Jahangir and increasingly during Shah Jahan's reign. Such themes of romantic display, as painted during the Mughal rule have shown attributes of Persian behavior and customs of mainly mid-sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. A Jahangiri painting of a ***Youth offering wine to a girl seated on his lap*** by Aqa Riza at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts No. 15.29 is discernibly Persian in

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[49] Rai Krishnadasa. ***Mughal Miniatures***. Lalit Kala Akademi, 1955. Plate 5.
[50] The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Acc.No. W.650. By Rosemary Crill, Susan Stronge & Andrew Topsfield (Eds). ***Op.cit.***
[51] From a private collection: Norah Titley. ***Persian Miniature Paintings and Its Influence on the Art of Turkey and India*** (London: British Library Reference Division Publication, 1983 fig. 24 on p. 57)

the portrayal of the general features of the figures, besides the theme being Persian. It suggests the probability of a copy from a Persian original. There are abundant works on romantic disposition in Persian painting as there were generous romantic tales like Laila and Majnu, Shirin and Farhad and Yusuf and Zulaikha available as source materials. The Mughal artists too exhibited their works, influenced by these captivating representations and took delight in painting these themes. A miniature of ***Laila visiting Majnun*** dated 1690 of the Johnson Album 10, no.9 at the India Office Library, London, implies the continuity of copying original Persian concept like ***Layla and Majnun in the Desert*** from a Khamsa of Amir Khusraw dated 1485 at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin No.163. Other original Persian sources from where the Mughal artists more than drew their inspiration are miniatures like, ***Prince Humay and Princess Humayun feast together in the Jasmine Garden***,[52] beautiful rendition of romantic display, and another entitled ***A Warrior entertained*** dated 1370 at the Topkapi Serai, Istanbul H.2153 (fol.54). This miniature depicts a woman, graceful and charming, coyly consenting to the warrior's charm while her playmates are peeking from behind the scene, enjoying the romantic discourse.

Mughal atelier continued to produce several miniatures along the same theme or have sometimes copied original works as that of Aqa Riza above. Another miniature by the same hand is ***Youth and Girl*** dated end of sixteenth century at the Boston Museum of Fine Art, where a youth is offering his love interest a cup of wine. Akbari period miniatures on this theme showed a clear delineation of the Persian Bukhara feature as in ***A Prince reading poetry to a***

[52] From a manuscript of the poems of Khwaja of Kirmani, copied at Baghdad by Mir Ali ibn Ilyas of Tabriz, 1396 at the British Library, London. Norah Titley. ***Persian Miniature – Fourteenth Century*** (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann Publishers (India) Pvt.Ltd., 1977)

Princess dated 1560-70 at the India Office Library, London. While the theme remained in the Mughal court studio, the styles of the Shah Jahani period and later depiction of lovers began to show a departure from the typical Persian style and more towards a matured outlook that became a characteristic of the Mughal School. A miniature of the period of Muhammad Shah entitled ***A Prince offering wine to his Mistress*** dated 1740 in the Edwin Binney 3rd, collection shows an inclination towards the Indian convention.

Jahangiri School overall, reflect a well-processed phase of the continuing amalgamation and elimination of the various diverse elements in the extraction of Mughal School. However, the transition was gradual. The presence of many Akbari artists at Jahangir's atelier still adhered to the earlier tradition, which they practiced, steeped with Persian flavor and moreover, there were Persian artists still attached to their ancestral convention who could not make instant adaptation. Even though earnest attempts to characterize a distinct Mughal School at this phase was crystallizing, the connectivity with the former tradition could not be snapped immediately.

Shah Jahan and the Persian connection

Any form of a formal linkage with Persian traditions at the court studio of Shah Jahan was evidently condensed leaving Mughal School to advance independently. Nonetheless, evidences of Persian constituents can still be traced no matter how considerably less the degree reflected. This influence can be studied both in the compositions as well as the styles in the Mughal works produced during Shah Jahan and thereafter. Of the original Persian themes that reemerged during Shah Jahan, dancing dervishes, lovers on a

terrace, visit to hermitage and ascetics or divines in discussion can be mentioned with certainty. There are several other Persian elements apparent in the genre scene paintings as well, as shall be seen.

An individual miniature at the Edwin Binney, 3rd Collection entitled, ***A Prophet (Probably Yusuf) With A Flaming Halo*** dated 1650 attributed by Robert Skelton[53] to Mohammad Nadar Samarqandi, reflects features reminiscent of the typical Persian order of the flaming halo around Yusuf's head in the ***Bostan of Sadi*** manuscript, the original Persian version of the period 1488-89, by Bihzad. Other similar portrayal of the flaming halo, among Muslim saints, which was a common scene, is seen in the miniatures entitled, ***The Ship of Shi'ism*** from Firdausi, ***Houghton*** Shahnamah, Qazvin dated 1530 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, ***To the Gardens of Paradise,***[54] ***Mirajnamah*** Timurid period, fifteenth century at the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris Other prevalent Persian components in the Mughal version are the decorative background of the flowering trees, the facial depiction of the figures, the costumes and also the three-quarter profile. This picture in fact recalls the earlier phase of Mughal School with heavy Persian inclination except for the foreground carpet designs, which brings us back to the ***Pietre dure*** floral motifs which were being regularly used at this time.

We see yet another instance with a seemingly Persian theme in group portraits entitled ***Timur hands his imperial crown to Babur*** from the Minto album dated 1630 and inscribed by Shah Jahan himself: 'The work of Govardhan'[55] and ***The emperor Timur enthroned with his descendants*** dated 1650 attributed to Hashim, at the India office Library, London. These show the

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[53] Edwin Binney 3rd. ***Op.cit.***, p. 88

[54] ***Central Asiatic Journal***, Vol.47, No.2, 2003. pp. 275, 277

[55] The Indian Heritage. ***Court Life and Arts under the Mughal Rule.*** (Great Britain: The Victoria and Albert Museum and The Herbert Press, 1982)

regular Persian theme of representing their ruler and his children set against a backdrop of Persian landscape of low hills and rivers and the floral carpet with the central cartouche design. This Mughal version more than suggests its continuity. Such a depiction probably takes after the manner of Bihzad, Tabriz School of the fifteenth century as "such family groups were popular with the Timurids"[56] and moreover Jahangir already had an original painting on this theme, of Timur and his children as already mentioned, which could have served as a model for the Mughal artists. Such theme continued even during the later years although the imperial qualities were discernibly diminished. Examples like ***The Sons of Shah Jahan enthroned: Shah Shuja, Dara Shikoh, Murad Baksh, Aurangzeb, and Azam Shah*** attributed to Amal-i-Bhowani Das painted in the late seventeenth century in the collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd reveal the same inherent theme of the Persian composition although the approach lacks the fluid expression of the previous Mughal adaptation. The figures are inflexible and tedious and clearly indicate the loosening of the imperial strong hold.

There are several miniatures in the Mughal School, depicting the dervishes whirling around dancing in an act of ecstasy. The dervishes are an order of wandering Sufi mystics in search for revelation of the truth. They are often seen dancing in holy places of Islam in a state of transcendence inspired by the sound of music. This theme of the levitation of spirit, an absolute means to reach God is practiced in many cultures, like India, Egypt and Greece. In the Islamic world, it gained momentum with the growing sect of Sufism. Bihzad was greatly motivated by the Sufi theology and most of his paintings are reflective of this instinct. He showed through his paintings his knowledge and "the philosophy of the Sama, that the world does not rest for a

[56] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 149

single moment and everything moves towards the radiant sun of life."[57] In his brilliant miniature, ***Dancing Dervishes*** from a ***Khamsa*** of Amir Khusrau c. 1485 at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Bihzad superbly delivered the true essence of the elated dervishes, in his use of the right color, the mesmerized expressions of the sheikhs and the audience, the fervent musicians giving a perfect harmony to the whole composition. This culture became very much a part of the Mughal domain and continued well into the dynasty until late seventeenth century. Many illustrations on the same theme are found in the Mughal School especially during the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan with few instances of its continuity in the later period. Two miniatures of the Jahangiri School, one of the Allahabad studio and the other of the imperial atelier clearly projects this concept; first one is, ***Sufis dancing rapturously***[58] from the ***Diwan*** of Amir Hasan Dihlavi attributed to Abdal Salim dated 1602, Allahabad. The second one of the imperial school is that of ***Dancing Dervishes***[59]dated 1610 from a ***Diwan*** by Hafiz. A Shah Jahani period painting on the same theme discloses a more closer affinity to the Persian convention especially to that same hand of Bihzad's work as cited above. This miniature of ***Sufis in ecstasy*** by Muhammad Nadir al-Samarqandi, the ***siyah-qalam*** master painter of Jahangir, dated 1650-55 Johnson album 7 no.3 at the India Office Library, London used the same style of the Bukhara genius, Bihzad, in the costumes with flowing sleeves, the floral carpets, the decorated shrines and the description of the figures. The same theme, but of slightly diminished quality can be seen in ***Sufi dervishes exercising in a garden*** dated 1650-60,

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[57] Mulk Raj Anand, Norah Titley, Basil Gray and B.W. Robinson. **Persian Painting Fifteenth Century** (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1977). p.47

[58] The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, Acc. No.W.650. By Rosemary Crill, Susan Stronge and Andrew Topsfield (Eds). ***Op.cit.***, p. 100

[59] The British Museum, London: Mario Bussagli. ***Indian Miniature*** (Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1969). p.96

Johnson Album 7 no.4, and no. 5 of the same album with the same title dated 1670 and another, entitled ***A Sufi dervish*** dated 1670, Johnson Album 7 no. 9, all at the India Office Library, London. This confirms that Persian mannerism continues to prevail even at this stage although there is variation in the style rendered.

As is recorded in several references, occasionally there are instances where the Mughal artists produced copies of the earlier phase, including Persian original theme, apart from taking up new subjects, as part of a constant effort to sustain the royal studio. As such, this was no sign of a deliberate attempt to revive Persian tradition characteristically.

A fitting example of the grandeur of the Mughal court is best exemplified by the miniatures depicting ***darbar*** scene, where every thing complements the opulence of these rulers; a lavish court, sumptuously clothed ruler, highly embellished pavilion and bejeweled throne, exquisite artifacts adorning the premises and a complete sign of regality shown by the magnificent elephants and horses lined up and saluting outside the gate. Many illustrations on this theme occurred during Akbar and Jahangir but the best exhibit were those painted during Shah Jahan's reign. This owes to Shah Jahan's extravagant life style, distinct in both the paintings and architecture of his time. The Taj Mahal, an epitome of royal splendor, marked the emperor's radiant qualities. In painting too, Shah Jahan transferred the emphasis of collecting exotic and favored compilations in the ***muraqqas*** as was organized by his father Jahangir, to production of copious portraits of himself and his courtiers in the most glorious manner. An ***Akbarnama*** miniature ***Akbar receiving the submission of the rebel brother*** dated 1590 by Kesu Kalan and Madhu Kalan, ***Darbar of Jahangir*** dated 1620 attributable to Manohar, ***The***

Submission of Rana Amar Singh of Mewar to Prince Khurram[60] dated 1615 attributed to Lalchand show the early instances of such a theme. While a more accomplished result of Shah Jahani period is evidenced in the miniature ***The Darbar of Shah Jahan***[61] dated 1645 and ***Jahangir bids farewell to Khurram at the Start of a military campaign***[62] by Balchand This theme no doubt reached India from Persia but most likely it reached during the pre-Mughal period as has been "sometimes claimed that the establishment of the standard western India style in the century from 1350 to 1450 owed much to Persian example."[63] This is further attested by the fact that the Persian rulers' preoccupation with magnificence began to enter the pictorial scene since the time of the Sassanids and imprints of their influence were felt wherever their art scattered. Jain manuscripts of the Western Indian School reveal hints of such motifs associated with the royalty of the Sassanid Kings as is evident in the Kalpasutra, ***The Transference of the Embryo*** of the western India school dated 1439 at the National Museum of India, New Delhi. These sources were "probably derived from 13th-century Mesopotamian manuscripts imported into India."[64]

An attribution of Bukharan tradition actually defined a characteristic of Shah Jahan period paintings. This was the stiff pose of the figures depicting mostly in court events. A hypothesis however, of this technique could be that it was less of Persian imitation but rather a pre-requisite entailed by the

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[60] Pictures from the ***Padshahnama***: King of the World: Milo Cleveland Beach and Ebba Koch. Newly translated by Wheeler Thackston (London: Azimuth Editions Limited, 1997) fig.27, 29 &16 respectively.

[61] Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras: Rai Krishnadasa. ***Mughal Miniatures*** (New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi, 1955), Plate 8

[62] Jeremiah P Losty. ***The Art of the Book in India***, Plate XXXII 82F.43b (London: The British Library Board, 1982)

[63] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 56

[64] Norah M. Titley. ***Op.cit.***, p. 12

increased emphasis on the production of formal court occasions which were normally rendered after the actual event "from the pre-existing portraits of those known to have been present,"[65] resulting in the rigid positioning of the characters. This kind of stance are pervasive in many illustrations of formal events like ***The Meeting of Prince Murad and Nazar Muhammad Ruler of Balkh and Bukhara***[66] attributed to Fateh Chand dated 1645 and ***Shah Jahan in durbar.***[67]

The device of such a theme as composite animals, originally from Persia continued to be painted in the Mughal studio as late as eighteenth century, however without much relevance to its meaning. A miniature entitled ***Page with a Horse***, of early seventeenth century at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts shows a composite horse with men, animals and a *peri* (angel) leading the horse in a Persian manner. Another similar work is ***A Composite Elephant With Demons*** of the Akbari period, 1600 in the Edwin Binney 3rd collection with an inscription at the bottom "Ashraf," "Sadiq." Production of composite animals continued well into the second half of eighteenth century. The India Office Library, London has a miniature of this period entitled ***A composite horse and rider*** in its Johnson Album 12 no. 1 which shows a ***peri*** driven horse composed of animals and a girl.

By the time of Shah Jahan, portraits remained characteristically Mughal with a true profile rendering of the sitter from head to toe, except for occasional appearance of the Persian nature discernible mostly in the works of those Persian artists. The ***muraqqa*** of Shah Jahan manifests wonderful

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[65] J.P. Losty. ***Ibid.***, p. 41
[66] The Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras: Rai Krishnadasa. ***Ibid.***, Plate 6
[67] Dated around 1660, at the British Library: J.P. Losty. ***Ibid.***, 41

portraits, as were his other illustrations. The style was more elaborate and sometimes even more impressive than any portraiture of the previous productions whether Persian or Mughal. The rulers and courtiers were represented in the most sophisticated fashion and even the saints and dervishes were in absolute contrast with the preceding creations; the Shah Jahani period showing mostly hale and hearty images. There are portraits of birds and animals as well, which however manifest closer affinity to the European adaptation. The more apparent Persian feature inherent, however sporadically in the portraits of this time is the three-quarter profile depiction. Instances of this style are seen mostly in the works of Muhammad Khan. ***A Prince seated on a white carpet*** dated 1630-35 from the Dara Shikoh Album in the India Office Library, London and another entitled, ***A Prince in Persian Costume*** dated 1633-34 from the same collection. The latter reflects Persian orientation beyond the three-quarter profile view, in the costumes, the dishes and also in the background landscape seen in the flight of the birds.

Aurangzeb's reign saw continuity in the production of the same elegance but did not survive long. Unfortunately, any attempt of retaining such a brilliant academy was lacking. Aurangzeb's futile military campaigns and his religious bigotry left both the royal treasury and the spirit and resources of the artists exhausted. Mammoth assignments undertaken by his predecessors practically ceased and the few illustrations commenced saw a random selection of the available sources; a Persian original theme copied, a European motif inserted or a direct Deccani source incorporated.

Conversation among the divines is yet another innovation of Bihzad's spiritualistic manifestations in miniature painting. While depicting such themes, the artist seems to have conveyed the most solemn and peaceful means to attain

salvation. This message is extolled in many of his illustrations like, for instance in the ***Conversations in the Mosque*** from a ***Bostan of Sa'adi*** dated 1488-89 now at the Egyptian Library, Cairo. While in the Persian version, the place of worship has been given due importance, where quiet discourses could be easily carried out, in the Mughal adaptation of this theme, a more open space is where the divines are seen normally engaged in discussions – in open fields and meadows near a shrine, often isolated far from the crowd. Some Mughal prototypes are the miniatures, ***Kanphat Yogis in a Landscape*** dated 1605, Johnson Album 6 no. 11, India Office Library, London. Although the subjects are of pure Indian origin, Kanphat sect of Gorakhnath, devotees of Shiva, the concept is originally Persian. Another example is from the Shah Jahan album, ***Six Sages in a Landscape*** attributed to Bichitr and dated 1640-50 at the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection. Later period continuity is evidenced from the miniature; ***Muslim divines*** dated 1700 in the Johnson Album 58 no. 12 of the India Office Library, London.

After Shah Jahan, there were not much significant endeavors to stimulate the Mughal School from its subsequent collapse. The eclectic vitality with which it evolved during Akbar's reign was demolished mercilessly. In a last attempt revival under Muhammad Shah, (1719-1748) Mughal painting received a little hope only to be crushed under the ruthless marauding force of the Persian ruler, Nadir Shah.

The extent and nature of Persian influence on Mughal painting as is clear remained strong for most part of the formative period until the last decade of the sixteenth century. The next phase began a stage of maturity and a process of Indianization in Mughal art. The majority of the artists at Mughal court, who were Indian began to discard the typical Persian convention and in its place sought for Indian realism in the representation of landscape, gestures, movements, emotion, costumes and in architectural composition. Throughout

Akbari period, a series of fusion art, that of the Persian decorative and Indian realism is apparent and as the school progressed, the Persian tradition was seldom adhered to. Each feature that was incorporated by the Mughal artists became evidently fewer and rarely depicted as the School progressed. This was true of the European elements too, as shall been seen in the following chapter.

CHAPTER-V

SOME ASPECTS OF EUROPEAN SOURCES IN MUGHAL PAINTING

Among the various artistic traditions inherent in Mughal painting, European elements too remained a highly delectable source of inspiration for the Mughal School. Naturalism had become the *modus operandi* for the matured Mughal School and obviously, the European realistic approach of painting offered a delightful choice and very much at the opportune time. The presence of European traits is also believed to be due to a revivalist tendency beginning with sixteenth century Mughal India.

Although historically, European connection with India began in 1498 with the discovery of the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama, there had been indirect communication between the two countries since a very long time. However, as far as Mughal India is concerned, relation with the west was prominently set in motion during Akbar's reign. It was in 1573 during the siege of Surat, that Akbar was first introduced to the Europeans. Hereafter, a

delegation of Portuguese Christians arrived from Goa led by Antoine Cabral to Akbar's court, sent by the Viceroy of Goa, Don Antonio de Noronha. In this occasion Akbar was presented with "many of the rarities of their country,"[1] and among these rarities must have included exotic European paintings as the emperor showed much awe over their gifts. Moreover, Akbar was fascinated by the new race and was curious to know more about the people and their land therefore, he "made inquiries about the wonders of Portugal and the manners and customs of Europe."[2]

Akbar was as much intrigued by the religious and social attributes of this new sect as he was of their political organization. Every effort was made to acquire the knowledge regarding these aspects of the European civilization.

At the same time, it must not be overlooked that, while Akbar was deeply influenced by this new faith and held them in high esteem, yet he still considered them as intruders and always kept them under constant surveillance. Conversely, at this moment there was a potential exchange of cultural traits, among other things between India and Europe at Akbar's court. Thus, increasing numbers of European traders, missionaries and craftsmen led to an increase in the knowledge among the indigenous people about their trade, their religion; and also an increase in European artifacts among other rarities. This must have heightened Akbar's curiosity even more as is evident that a commission under the supervision of Haji Habibullah was sent to Goa in 1578 to procure these foreign goods along with their artistic expertise. This is attested by Abul Fazl as he narrates the episodes of 1578 and added that, "there were sent along with him many clever craftsmen, who to ability and

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[1] Allami Abul Fazl. ***Akbarnama*** H. Beveridge (Trams.), Vol. III. (New Delhi: Rare Books, 1973). p. 37

[2] Allami Abul Fazl. ***Ibid.***, p. 37

skill added industry, in order that just as the wonderful productions of that country (Goa and Europe) were being brought away, so also might rare crafts be imported (into Akbar's dominion)."[3] On their return, the skilled craftsmen exhibited excellent artistic knowledge of the new culture as evidenced by many illustrations of the Mughal school at that time and thus appeased the Emperor's wishes.

Having thus acquainted with the new race, Akbar was prompted further to learn everything there was of the Christian faith. A Portuguese officer, Pietro Tavares serving as "a military servant of Akbar and also as captain of a port in Bengal,"[4] while staying at his court "enlightened him still further on certain aspects of the Christian law."[5] Eager to discover more he wrote a letter to the authorities at Goa asking for "two learned priests, who should bring with them the chief books of the Law and the Gospel."[6] Accordingly, on the request of the emperor, in the year 1580, the first Jesuit mission headed by Father Rudolph Aquaviva along with Father Anthony Monserrate and Father Francis Henriquez arrived at the Mughal imperial court at Fatehpur Sikri. The learned Fathers presented to Akbar seven of the eight volumes of ***Plantyn's Polyglot Bible***, printed for Philip 11 in 1569-1573 in Antwerp. The emperor expressed utmost joy in receiving this gift and revered it zealously. Along with the copies of the Royal Bible, Akbar was also presented with two remarkable portraits of the Virgin Mary and of Christ. The Bible presented contained several outstanding engravings by famous German and Flemish

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[3] Allami Abul Fazl. ***Ibid.***, p. 207
[4] Abul Fazl. ***Ibid.***, p 350
[5] Father Pierre du Jarrie. ***Akbar and the Jesuits: An account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar.*** Sir E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power (Eds.) and C.H. Paynen (Trans.). (New Delhi: Tulsi Publishing House, 1979). p. 15
[6] Edward Maclagan. ***The Missions and Mogul Painting in the Jesuits and the Great Mogul*** (London: Burns Oates and Wash Bourne Ltd., 1932). p. 24

engravers, Jan Wieriex, Philip Galle, Peter van der Heyden and other illustrators of the Quentin Matsys School (1466-1531). It is almost certain therefore, that any influences seen in Mughal paintings during this time were directly from the European engravings and illuminations in these religious pictures. Akbar's celebrated artist, Kesu was the first to have drawn inspirations from these Christian pictures and copied from their engravings. One such engraving of which Kesu produced copy is that of *St. Matthew* by Heemskerck, in the Bodleian library dated 1587. Several other copies of original European pictures were accessible in the Mughal court as Kesu compiled an album in 1588. Various other artists followed suit and Abul Hasan made an excellent copy of ***St John*** from the ***Crucifixion*** of 1511, by Dürer in 1600. Another work of Dürer, ***Virgin and Child*** impressed in 1513 was copied at the Mughal atelier, now at the Windsor Royal Library, unnamed but definitely a work of an ace artist. These and numerous other illustrated copies displayed a marked familiarity with Western taste and format among the Mughal artists.

Akbar's eagerness in acquiring knowledge on Christianity and its principles hastened the course of European influence on Mughal art. Between 1580 and 1583, he ordered for certain changes and additions within the royal dominion. He collected several volumes of Christian literatures, which were maintained at the imperial library. He included the Jesuits missionaries in the ***Ibadat Khana*** for discussions on religious discourses, together with the Hindu sages and the ***ulemas***. In 1581, he ordered the painting of a European organ, which he so fancied, in a margin painting of Jahangir's album folios. This change in the personality of Akbar further accentuated after a stint with spiritualism, which he experienced at a hunting expedition. Thereafter, he set

forth for a quest for eternal truth, for a universal religion for which he deemed himself the arbitrator, the chosen one. Thus, he perceived his own religious ideology, the ***din-i-illahi*** in 1582. He consulted every possible religious texts, its principles and laws and after having conversed with all the limitations and drawbacks, he created on his own ideal philosophy of ***din-i-illahi***, which he regarded above every religion and law. This change affected the whole course of his rule until the end of his time.

Upon learning the various aspects of European life and culture, Akbar was deeply fascinated and commanded to educate his own court after the European customs and styles. He permitted members of European dignitaries at his court assemblies and greeted them amicably wherever they convened. Such was his interest in the western culture that he ordered European tapestries to adorn his palace in 1582 and in the same year, the Mughal artists at Fatehpur Sikri made copies of the Virgin Mary and Christ, which unfortunately did not survive Aurangzeb's religious fanaticism as he ordered all images to be destroyed in 1691.

A second Jesuit commissary was sent for, in 1591. King Philip II of Spain, complying with the emperor's wishes sent this mission under the command of Fathers Edoüard, Leïoton, and Christofle de Vega. The emperor received them with much pleasure and delights at his royal palace at Lahore and entrusted them to impart the emperor and his subjects with the knowledge of their land. However, the Christian priests had a different motive for their visit – to convince the emperor to embrace Christianity and since this was not achieved to their satisfaction, returned from whence they came.

A third mission followed headed by Father Jerome Xavier in 1595 and by this time Akbar and his eldest son had shown a profound veneration for the

Christian faith and principles and had acquired insightful knowledge they could gather. The Christian priests were granted privileges to exercise their religious rights and as such permitted and allocated land to construct a Church, to freely profess their religion and approved anyone who desired to adopt the new faith. The church also served as a picture gallery from where the Mughal artists drew their inspirations; many religious pictures were on display within the church premises. These together with the paintings presented to the king as well as his son on various occasions formed considerable sources to inspire Mughal court paintings following the western idioms. In 1602, among other paintings, Akbar ordered a copy of the ***Madonna del Popolo*** to be made while in Agra, the original copy of which left every viewer wonderstruck with the dazzling portrait.

It is now evident that the Jesuit missionaries were mainly responsible for transmitting European artistic technique into the Mughal studio especially between 1580 and 1615. The paintings of these periods reveal many instances of a methodical integration of European pictorial manner. Thus, a new perspective in painting came into being; an emphasis on symbolic representation increased manifold. Through the Jesuits, the Mughals found rhetoric expressions in art and they quickly learned the meanings of various figurative images. What these paintings manifest, "were neither mythological in their presentation of religious themes nor merely secular. The religious was shown in a human context making the divine transparent in human form. Here were human persons with their feelings, joys and sufferings, in a religious context which was something new."[7] This was of utmost importance to the Mughal rulers as it mirrored their own ideologies. But then again, it would be

[7] Matthew Lederle, S.J. ***Christian Painting in India through the Centuries*** (Gujarat: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash Anand, 1987). p. 54

of no surprise that such a concept of symbolic representation was not alien to their knowledge as it "belong to one of the oldest pictorial traditions in Islamic painting and were also a favorite subject with the Mughal court."[8] Such abstract illustrations are found in the earliest manuscripts of the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** dated 1570-71 of the School of Oriental and African Studies and Abul Fazl's composition of the ***Kalilah wa Dimnah*** published under the label ***Ayar Danish***, which were "full of rhetorical difficulties."[9]

Heavy impact of western technique during Akbar's reign was felt mostly in perspective; while Jahangir's period and thereafter saw immense symbolism introduced in the paintings. Realism in European art appealed most to the aesthete Mughal rulers as it amplified the one significant feature of Mughal painting. There were however certain other aspects of their artistic culture that facilitated both artistic and majestic principles of the Mughals. A graphic study of some of these features in Mughal painting would clearly outline the successful impact of western culture in the Mughal dominion.

Early European influences are apparent in the treatment of landscape where emphasis was laid on the receding perspective of horizontal lines; clouds like amassed vapor; the sky depicted closer to reality with changes in colour tones of grey, pink and azure distinguishing dawn from dusk; and star lit night skies with impressive effects. Once the Mughal artists became aware of European technique of painting, the prominence on landscape was soon realized and they began depicting the background with numerous features such as distant hills, rising towns and cities, open fields, rivers and trees occasionally leaving the vast expanse of sky as it was with floating clouds, as

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[8] Ebba Koch. ***Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Essays*** (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001). p. 2

[9] Allami Abul Fazl. ***Ain-i-Akbari*** (New Delhi: New Imperial Book Depot, 1965). p. 112

in the manner of idyllic European landscape. The effective impression of introducing scenic landscape background was soon realized to be a better choice in representing pictures closer to reality, than the flat background of Persian tradition.

Instances of European manner of painting are also detected in the treatment of trees, especially in its naturalistic rendering of the tree trunks with details on lines and the granny knots, as also in the rich and luscious foliage. This can well be understood from the ***Tilasm and Zodiac*** manuscript dated 1567-1570 A.D. at the Raza Library, Rampur, especially in the paintings where ***A man utters unintelligible words*** **and** ***Slave girls sporting in a stream.*** Some other illustrations which depict treatment of trees in the manner of the European idiom can be seen in ***Three young men go to Kabul and present themselves to the father of Zuhra to ask for her hand***[10] and ***When the donkey starts to bray, the gardener suddenly appears, ties him to a tree, and punishes him***[11]

The western technique of giving graceful and drapery flow in garments by shading rendered a virtual sense of the mass and volume of the body. This resulted in a very effective and natural finesse of the figures painted. This very idea was seen transported in several works of the Mughal artists, like for instance in the miniature entitled ***Lady Reading a Book***[12] dated 1600 attributed to Kamali of the Akbari School. In this regard, it can be said that while occasionally there were instances of mere reproductions of western

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Ziyauddin Nakhshabi. ***Tales of a Parrot.*** The Cleveland Museum of Arts, ***Tuti-Nama*** folio 225r (Ohio: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1978). p. 216

Ziyauddin Nakhshabi. ***Ibid.***, p. 256

Jagdish Mittal (Published): Islamic Paintings of the North and the Deccan. ***Roopa Lekha*** Vol. XXXVII, Nos. 1 &2, 1968, fig 4 p. 131; R.K. Tandon. ***Indian Miniature Painting 16th Through 19th Centuries*** (Bangalore: Natesan Publishers, 1982: picture on p. 44:)

originals, there were increasing use of western details like perspective, volume, scientific planning in architecture, toning and shading in colors, which required understanding of the art. This proved beyond doubt the achievement of the Mughal artists, who by that time showed immense knowledge of the western technique of painting and not merely skilled copyists. Similar achievement can be seen in the miniature, ***A Lady and Child in a Landscape*** from the Edwin Binney 3rd, Collection dated between 1590 and 1605.

In the Cleveland Museum ***Tuti Nama***, certain illustrations have European depiction of shaded curtains and attires such as the painting where ***A Fowler extolling the virtues of a parrot*** dated 1560-68[13] and ***the monkey is slain so that his blood can be used as an antidote***[14] folio 33v.

There are several other illustrations in the ***Hamza-nama***, the ***Tilasm and Zodiac*** and the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** where the European convention of tapestries, costumes, the drapery folds of textile; the representation of objects in the background in diminishing size and proportion, the handling of space and the treatment of trees, which was added not just as an element to fill the atmospheric landscape but which formed an integral part, signifying the whole theme are noticeable. Considering these early illustrations, which show elements of European painting such as in the Cleveland ***Tuti Nama*** series dated 1557-60; the ***Hamza-nama***, 1558-73, the Rampur ***Tilasm and Zodiac*** dated 1565 and the ***Anwar-i Suhaili*** dated 1570; it can certainly be agreed that western influence began before the Jesuits intervened and that it gained impetus after 1573.

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[13] Attributed to Basawan at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio, gift of Mrs. A. Dean Perry. Anis Farooqi. ***Art of India and Persia*** Pl. 37 (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1979). p. 42

[14] Ziyauddin Nakhshabi and Ziyauddin Nakhshabi. ***Tales of a Parrot*** (The Cleveland Museum of Arts, Tuti-Nama) (Ohio: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1978). p.38.

Quite interestingly, the influence of western artistic tradition extended beyond the technique and style, to include even European figures as early as the illustrations of the early Akbari period. The Mughal artists picked up pieces directly from European painting and inserted such as "a Christian saint or European town into otherwise Mughal compositions."[15] Both the historical as well as lyrical manuscripts have many pictures with European figures as part of the composition. However, this does not necessarily indicate any significant reason. It was perhaps a kind of acknowledgement for the artists' exposure and skill to western art, as we see sometimes that the technique and manner of the west had been simply adopted without much relevance to the proper knowledge of the art, as is observed in some illustrations cited below. An early instance of such inclusion is the miniature, ***A Shipwreck At Sea*** from the Cleveland ***Tuti Nama*** at the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd in the European figures in black costumes and the golden haired figure, apart from the fluttering sail of the western style. One other illustration from a historical manuscript, ***Idris giving instruction to mankind in the art of weaving*** dated 1590 in the Johnson Album 8 no.5 at the India Office Library, London, brilliantly portrays Idris, the Biblical Enoch demonstrating the art of weaving. He is seen dressed in European costumes with the calf-length boot as also several others, listening to him. The background landscape also suggests European imitation in the distant fortified township reminiscent of Flemish engravings.

Similar inclusion of European figures in the Mughal composition can be seen in many miniatures of the ***Babur-nama***. The miniatures ***Babur Receives Chieftains*** and ***Uzbeks Attack the Envoys Bringing Gifts from the***

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[5] Stuart C Welch. ***The Art of Mughal India – Painting and Precious Objects*** (New York: The Asia House Gallery: The Asia Society, 1963). p. 29

Traitor Shah Mansur (pl. 27) of the ***Babur-nama*** in the Moscow State Museum of Oriental Cultures depict European figures with full European costumes and figurative composition laying stress "on volumetric proportions"[16] which distinguishes from the usual representation of the Mughal style. More than just enclosure of European figures is a miniature from the ***Akbarnama***, the incident of ***The death of Sultan Bahadur of Gujarat*** dated about 1604 attributed to Lal, which shows the Mughal artists' adeptness of the European technique in the whole composition.

Mughal India experienced a fresh wave of atmosphere in both scientific and artistic field with the induction of European culture. There was a growing propensity to acquire not only the artistic brilliance of the west but also to adopt their manner and customs in everyday life. The logical consequence was the germination of a hybrid art culture in the Mughal court. This is exemplified by considerable illustrations at the Mughal studio. A brilliant description of this crossbreed art can be seen in a miniature of the manuscript, ***Khamsa*** of Amir Khusrau dated about 1595 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, which was a gift of Alexander Smith Cochran in 1913. The miniature entitled ***Alexander lowered into the sea*** not only instills European realism with its aesthetic landscape perceptively receding in space and its calm and subtle coloring but also has depiction of Christian images. A beautiful imagination captured and given form with the soft hues, confident organization of the rich composition, to complete the whole dramatic event. In this miniature, one sees that "for all practical purposes, a sixteenth-century Flemish scene, complete with aerial perspective has been transplanted into an Indian miniature."[17]

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[16] Semen Tyulayev. ***Miniatures of Babur Nama*** (Moscow: State Fine Arts Publishing House, 1960). p. 26

[17] Roy C. Cavern. ***A Concise History of Indian Art*** (New York: Praeger Publishers Inc., 1976). p. 202

European influences on anatomy, can certainly be seen but not so much on a wide scale during Akbar's reign. The semi-naked bodies of sailors, saints and sometimes fishermen are the limited figures which lend us with some ideas about the artists' knowledge on human anatomy during this time. The priority was however on the display of action defined by the outlines rather than on muscular exhibition. Some illustrations attributed to Basawan can be held similar to European prototype of monochromatic representation, where the emphasis was placed on the linear expressions. One such instance is a picture by Basawan of ***A Miserable Horse, Man and Dog*** dated 1585-90, lent by the Indian Museum, London. It shows the horse and the dog reduced to a carcass with each distinct bone and scraggly hair catching the eyes of the viewer. The man is equally scrawny with his rib bones protruding as can be easily counted. The artist has displayed immense cautiousness in trying to attempt a virtually real depiction of such emaciated figures, which accounts for his keen observation and accuracy in his drawings. This technique, which is purely after some great European disposition of emphasizing the function or the knowledge of anatomy developed significantly under Jahangir. The most scrupulous example on anatomy during Jahangir's period is the miniature of ***Inayat Khan Dying*** dated 1618 at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Ouseley add.171b4r). This also adds up to another striking instance of Jahangir's obsession for recording rare sights. This miniature has been compared by Dalu Jones to a portrait of Ferdinand II painted by Sustermane when he was ill with small pox, dated 1626, Palazzo Pitti, Florence, not just for the emperor's interest in exceptional and singular subjects but also for the "same ruthless attention to details that Ferdinand II de Medici (1626) demands from his painter when he wants his own illness observed and recorded."[18]

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[18] Dalu Jones. Patronage Under The Medici and The Mughals: Cultural Parallel and Artistic Exchange, ***Marg***. Vol. XXXIX No.1 (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1986). p. 16

There are instances of the new method of shading along the western ***chiaroscuro*** orientation apparent in the depiction of animals as in other features. This gives a naturalistic effect and is "typically of European Renaissance painting since this kind of treatment of light and shade is not to be found either in the classical Persian or Indian tradition."[19] Such trends are apparent in the depiction of the lion, monkeys and goats in the painting, ***Kausaj Finds Zamurrad Sleeping*** of the ***Hamzanama*** series, dated 1558-73 at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. One also notices in the same painting, a sense of space and distance in the representation of the village scene in its relatively reduced size and scale, which is suggestive of the Renaissance European art even at this early stage.

There are certain miniatures in the Mughal studio that reflect a semblance of western themes and concepts which suggest inspiration of western originals beyond the portraits of saints and the floras and faunas. Illustration of ***A European scene with Portuguese figures*** dated 1595 in the Johnson Album 16. no. 6 at the India Office Library, London has the whole composition mirrored in a western atmosphere; a European gentleman reading from a book, the employee before him holding the book and the two servants in European costumes, serving from European designed crockery. Another miniature from the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, ***An Angel Greets a Delegation of Nobles in European Dress***, Cat. No. 29c not only evidences the style in western idiom but the whole composition is suggestively sourced from works of Durer, Georg Penz and Van Heemskerck among many other European artists.

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[19] Anis Farooqi. ***Op.cit.***, p. 18

Besides taking western adaptations, the Mughal School also illustrated certain western religious texts such as the ***Dastan-i Masih***, a Persian version of Father Jerome Xavier's ***Life of Christ***, translated from the Portuguese original with the help of Abu's –Sattar ibn Qasim of Lahore. Two miniatures from the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, ***Moses and The Plague of Serpents*** and ***The Ascension of Jesus Dressed as a Jesuit*** dated between 1601-05 are Mughal versions from the manuscript.

Basawan was among the painters who showed a fascination and genuine understanding for European painting. This is reflected in his depiction of "European figure and drapery drawing, and his mastery of chiaroscuro."[20] An illustration of the ***Mulla Rebuking the Dervish for Pride in his Patched Dress*** from the ***Baharistan-i Jami***[21] at the Bodelian Library, Oxford, dated 1595 highlights the artist's skills in European painting. The British Museum ***Darab-nama*** undated but probably around 1580-83 also has many works of the artist that has remarkable exhibition of the western chiaroscuro effect. By 1595, the western chiaroscuro device on Mughal paintings became strong and clear, which remained so well into the School. These examples stated above and several other illustrations of the late sixteenth century are confirmation of the thorough absorption of the western technique of lighting and shading.

Individual characterization was a criterion that the Mughal artists sought to enhance, since the introduction of portraiture, beginning towards the end of Akbar's reign. This was best analyzed in their lucid rendering of sadhus and fakirs since the end of Akbar's reign and with a greater impetus during Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Basawan's skilled hands were delegated for such

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Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 84
Anis Farooqi. ***Op.cit.***, (Plate 56)

precise study during Akbar as can be seen in ***Two Dervishes with a Shepherd boy*** dated 1585-90, lent by the India Office Library, London. Later productions of this genre is evident in the miniature ***Holy Man Meditating*** dated 1640 from an anonymous collector.[22]

Jahangir and the European Connection

Although essentially it was the biblical representations since the beginning of its impact, European intervention in Akbari painting was limited to the external idiomatic expressions of art, as obtained in the distant perspective, the garments, the three-dimensional view and the restraint outlook etc, the mythical intensity however, was not transmitted yet on a large scale. The few instances on allegorical representations evident towards the end of Akbar's reign were mostly copies of western originals, without much insight of the allegory. However, during Jahangir's period, symbolism in western art had the most profound impact. It propelled the beginning of using art as a medium for expressing their ideals. In fact, western contacts enlightened the School of Jahangiri painting, "in both its doctrinal and its purely figurative aspects."[23] Jahangir's interest in western paintings started early while he was a prince and deepened along time. There are several contemporary references that attest Jahangir's predilection for western paintings over Persian; and that he had in his possession various pictures, such as that of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ, St. John the Baptist, St. Anthony, St. Paul, St. Gregory, St. Anne, St Ambrose and St. Susannah etc. In 1607, Father

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Stuart Cary Welch. ***Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches*** (New York: The Asia Society, in Association with John Weatherhill, Inc., 1976), Plate 19, p. 50

Mario Bussagli. ***Op.cit.***, pp. 91-92

Jerome Xavier also presented him an "illustrated copy of the Persian version of the Acts of the Apostles, (***Dastan i-Ahwal i-Hawariyan***)."[24] Apart from the religious pictures, Jahangir also had western paintings on secular subjects. These were among the gifts presented by the western traders that reached the Mughal court in increasing numbers by that time. These pictures found places in his ***muraqqas*** and as frescoes that adorned his palace walls. Sir Thomas Roe, the English Ambassador, affirmed Jahangir's growing penchant for western art as he described the walls of the Daulat Bagh (Garden of Splendour) that Jahangir constructed on the Ana Sagar Lake, "rooms which were Paynted with Antique, and in some Panes Copyes of the French kings and other Christian Princes."[25] Among his collections were included portraits of "the King of England, the Queene, my Lady Elizabeth, the Countesse(s) of Sommersett and Salisbury, and of a citizens wife of London"[26]; "another of Sir Thomas Smyth, Governor of the East India Company."[27] These were excellent works that the Mughal artists drew their inspirations from and made numerous copies of these prints, engravings and paintings, which these traders brought to the court, sometimes even adopting the whole content and transforming it into a Mughal theme.

The inspiration was strong mainly of the biblical symbolic representations, which the Jesuits had brought. These religious depictions had a profound impact on the figurative delineation of Mughal painting during Jahangir's reign, as it further intensified his growing spiritualism. Considering some illustrations under the Jahangiri School, striking resemblance of

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[24] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Op.cit.***, p. 87

[25] Sir William Foster (Ed.). ***The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-19*** (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990). pp. 159 &240

[26] Sir William Foster (Ed.). ***Ibid.***, p. 125

[27] Sir William Foster (Ed.). ***Ibid.***, p. 126

symbolic depictions are traced in the title pages of the Polyglot Bible. The painting of ***Jahangir Embracing Shah Abbas*** dated 1618 from the Leningrad Album, attributed to Abul Hasan and ***Jahangir Standing on a Globe and Shooting at the Head of His Enemy Malik Ambar*** dated 1620 at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin by the same artist has the peaceful harboring of the lion with the sheep and sometimes the goat on the globe, affected by the virtuous rule of the emperor. Besides the regular use of globes symbolizing the universe, and animals, an intense connection runs parallel between the Chester Beatty painting referred above and the ***Pietas Regia*** by Pieter van der Borcht, on the second title page of the Plantyn's Bible, volume 1. In the words of Ebba Koch, the ***Pietas Regia*** in "its content and meaning were translated into the pictorial language of the Mughals."[28] The centrally positioned figures of pious and righteous rulers; the allotment of detrimental and vicious objects indicating malevolence on the left side and on the right, of prolific and venerable attributes. The divine acceptance of their pious rule is also connoted by the majestic insignias, such as the laurel wreath, sword and arrows carried by the ***putti*** through the clouds in both the pictures. In yet another picture, these elements are beautifully arrayed and every symbolic meaning is given their due significance. This is the ***Allegorical portrait of Jahangir as the Just Ruler triumphing over Poverty*** dated 1625[29] and indicates Abul Hasan's superb renditions of such style. Here, Jahangir is seen embodied as the sun and exterminating the old scrawny figure in the darkness symbolizing poverty, by shooting arrows at it and the ***putti*** acknowledging the divine rule of the emperor, providing arrows and bearing him the regal crown. Another sign of justice is the depiction of the long chain of bells suspended from above the

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[28] Ebba Koch. ***Op.cit.***, p. 8

[29] Lent by Los Angeles County Museum of Art M.75.4.28: published by: Victoria and Albert Museum with The Herbert Press, Great Britain, 1982)

cloud and held by another ***putto***, gesturing approval of the emperor's rule. There is continuity of the globe from the ***Pietas Regia*** and of the peaceful sheltering of the lion and sheep under his harmonious rule. The miniature of ***Meeting of Jahangir with Shah Abbas***[30] dated 1620 also symbolizes the elimination of hostility under the righteous rule, and the triumph of virtue and integrity. Therefore, the triumphant rule of Jahangir over Shah Abbas of Persia, and the conformity of the Persian Shah implied by the subdued facial expression as also by the white dove that symbolizes peace. The putti above similarly represent the divine acceptance, holding an emblem of recognition.

With the growing intensity of the myth, surrounding the Mughal rulers especially Jahangir, of the supreme power vested on them by divine virtue, there was a parallel increase in the production of symbolic representations to augment their image. In such productions, the stimulation from European images tremendously promoted Jahangir's goal. Thus, this became "a characteristic Mughal hybrid expressing visually Jahangir's literary concepts of rulership by means of composition techniques derived from European allegories."[31] In these demonstrations, the ***putto*** angel developed into a relatively significant feature and this device was an innovation at the Jahangiri studio. Moreover, as Ebba Koch relates Luschey Schmeisser's interpretation of "winged beings in connection with Muslim rulers as symbols of victory and power going back to the victories of classical times. She views them further as an expression of rulership in search of the blessing of the angels and as winged beings who protect and serve the ruler."[32] This clearly explains Jahangir's indulgence with the western allegoric images and the necessity of

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[30] Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, by courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution: Mario Bussagli: ***Indian Miniatures*** (Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limted, 1969 Plate 50)
[31] Ebba Koch. ***Ibid.***, p. 21
[32] Ebba Koch. ***Ibid.***, p. 29

employing angels in most of his miniatures and even in the frescoes that adorn his palace walls in conformity with the realistic approach of western style and taste.

The allegorical impact was also tremendous on the portraits, which developed significantly under Jahangir and extended until the final phase of the Mughal dynasty. The exalted spirit of the emperor was best manifested in the portraits with the crowning glory symbolized by the use of the round golden halo around the emperor's head.

There are several references of the origin of the halo in Persia, in the form of the flame halo as has been described in the earlier chapter and "as a circular disk, it is first seen in the Graeco-Buddhist sculpture of the north-western frontier of India, anciently known as Gandhara, about the beginning of the Christian era."[33] With the dispersal of the Buddhist faith throughout Asia and beyond, this symbol too followed different expressions in different routes of culture and subsequently entered the European scene. It was this variety of the European nimbus that saw its entry in the Mughal period, predominantly during the reign of Jahangir, signifying the divine status of the ruler. However, during the subsequent years after Shah Jahan, increase use of it tarnished its spiritual affiliation. The miniature ***Jahangir preferring a Sufi shaykh to the Turkish sultan and James 1 of England*** dated 1615-1618 at the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, by courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, has the halo reminiscent of the western expression. The same halo is seen in another miniature, in both the figures, ***the official portrait of Jahangir holding his father Akbar's portrait*** dated 1599 at the Musée Guimet, Paris attributed to Abul Hasan. As far as the allegoric reflection here

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Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 172

implied is concerned, it could have been a later addition with the growing significance of the intrinsic values of symbolism, as and when this work was "retouched in 1605."[34] Similar delineation of the halo during Shah Jahan period are the single miniatures, ***Shah Jahan Enthroned With His Son Dara Shikoh*** attributed to Govardhan dated 1630-1640 and ***Shah Jahan On The Peacock Throne*** dated 1639 and signed "raqam walad-i-Aqa Reza 'Abid'" and in another portrait of ***Aurangzeb, Mounted And Armed*** all at the Edwin Binney, 3rd Collection. These are the remaining few instances of the European golden halo used exclusively for identifying the royal authorities, before it began to lose its significance subsequently as it became an excessive feature in later productions.

These allegorical representations especially adapted during Jahangir's time and after, to legitimize their prodigious status were mostly after the Italian Mannerist technique, those that "rise in Gothic steepness and clearly work out the medieval tendencies in the art of Michelangelo."[35] Mannerism in Italy was a result of a profound dedication to art, which developed in the middle ages. It was a veneration for their faith and it served as "an expression of an essentially Christian civilization; its function was to hold before the community a moving and prominent reminder of a lofty and dedicated religious purpose."[36] While the goal was purely religious for the Italian Mannerists, the Mughal rulers used the same vehicle for a multi purpose end – religious, artistic as well as political. Other Italian artists ascribed for the commencement of Mannerist tradition were Pontormo and Rosso whose works reveal heavy proclivity towards the Mannerist feature of transcendence.

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[34] Mario Bussagli. ***Op.cit.***, p. 86

[35] Werner L Gundersheimer (Ed.). ***French Humanism 1470-1600*** (London: Macmillan And Co Ltd., 1969). p. 212

[36] Peter Laven. ***Renaissance Italy 1464-1534*** (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1971). p. 220

This trend remained prominent for a significant period and its influence spread extensively, that it became "customary to call the long era of late Renaissance which follows the very short, almost episode like era of high Renaissance also the era of Mannerism."[37]

Prior to Jahangir's period, such allegorical representations were mostly adaptations from original works, done more as an implementation of the technique and had not quite indicated the underlying symbolic connotation. Miniatures such as ***Allegorical figure*** dated 1590 and ***Allegorical figure of a woman with a string instrument*** attributed to Basawan and dated 16th century at the Musée Guimet, Paris and another picture ***Allegorical portrait of the God Mars***[38] attributed to Madhu dated 1595 from a private collection are such instances, which were clearly inspired by the illustrations on the title pages of the Polyglot Bible presented to Akbar. That these allegorical pictures had an enduring impact on the Mughal rulers' majestic claims to authority is well established from the increasing works commissioned on the same theme, at the subsequent periods. These pictures served as a medium through which the emperors expressed their legitimate rule as a divine entity.

Apart from importing western symbolic images in the Mughal illustrations, reproduction of European originals continued during Jahangir's period and well into later Mughal period as shall be seen. Of the various European original works, an excellent illustration is that of ***The Martyrdom of Saint Cecilia***[39] painted by Nini, a court painter of Jahangiri School around the early years of seventeenth century. This work was copied from among the

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[37] Werner L Gundersheimer (Ed). ***Ibid.***, p. 212
[38] ***Marg***, Vol XXXIX No. 1, 1986 (Plate 4). p 12
[39] C Stanley Clarke. ***Mughal Paintings: The School of Jahangir***: Plate 21 (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1983)

Italian originals brought by the Jesuit missionaries. Yet another original work, ***Scoffing of Christ*** was copied in the Mughal atelier, now at The British Museum, Stowe Or.16, folio 18, London, artist unnamed but "probably executed by a Hindu painter about 1625."[40] A miniature at the India Office Library entitled, ***A European gentleman and lady in Elizabethan costume*** dated 1620-30 from the Dara Shikoh album is yet another Mughal edition from an original western print.

Among the original western prints and engravings, the most extensively copied picture is that of the Virgin and Child. Although with variations in the productions, the theme had been used in several illustrations throughout the Mughal School. Jahangiri period varieties are miniatures like, ***A mother and child in landscape*** dated early seventeenth century and signed Raqamahu Mirza Muhammad al-Hasani at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, ***The Virgin and Child with a white cat*** dated 1615 at the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, ***The Madonna and Child***[41] of the Jahangiri school signed Chulam-i Shah Salim at the British Museum, London, which is an inspired work from an original engraving by Bernaert van Orley (1492-1542) and also ***The Virgin and Child with Anna the Prophetess*** dated 1610 from the Johnson album 14 No. 4 where the child Christ is seen climbing and trying to reach Mary and Anna seen gesturing a man sitting besides the Virgin and an attendant waiting behind him holding a gun. The foreground is filled with a goat suckling a kid and another female attendant pouring drink from a jug. This is a rather narrative composition from the other versions of the same theme and probably suggests an incident of a religious passage. Akbar's period already saw the

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[40] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 168

[41] Mario Bussagli. ***5000 years of the Art of India***. (Bombay: The Tulsi Shah Enterprises with assistance from Harry N. Abrams, Incorporated, New York) (No year)

copy of Durer's ***Madonna and Child***. In the Mughal version of the ***Madonna and Child***[42] dated 1600 the distinct European feel is apparent in the figure and landscape depiction while a later copy of the Shah Jahani period, dated 1630 from the Johnson Album XIV, folio 2 at the India Office Library, London gives the impression of Indian orientation especially in the costume of the Virgin as well as in the sharp angular feature even though its exact source is from the engraving of the Flemish artist Egidius Sadeler (1570-1629)

In addition to depicting Virgin and Child, scenes of Nativity have also greatly inspired the Mughal artists and there are many Mughal versions of this theme. There are no definite historical references that support the notion that Mughal artists were permitted entry to the royal Mughal harem let alone painting pictures of such exclusive event. Therefore, in all probability, it was the artists' imagination to recreate such scenes visually and in this, the western original works must have aided enormously in their perception. Mughal miniatures like ***Celebrations at the birth of Timur***[43] dated 1604 attributed to Sur Das Gujarati and ***Rejoicing on the Birth of Prince Salim in Fatehpur Sikri*** from the ***Akbarnama*** dated 1590 at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, attributed to Kesu the elder for the outline and to Dharam Das for coloring, were works based on the western composition of the birth of Christ. Apart from pictorially recapturing such themes in Mughal composition, the artists were also great copyists and have reproduced great originals, such as the miniature, ***Birth of a child*** dated around the first quarter of the seventeenth century now at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which is discernibly a replica of an original European engraving.

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[42] Mario Bussagli. ***Indian Miniature*** (Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1969) Plate 31.

[43] J.P. Losty. ***Indian Book Painting*** (London: The British Library Board, 1986: Fig. 25). p 32

A slightly altered version of the Nativity is one where the infant Christ is born in a remote place and the angels are seen lingering above and adoring the child Christ or where the virgin is seen kneeling before him and praying to him. Such expressions are apparent in the miniatures, ***A Nativity with the Virgin Praying*** dated 1620-30 at the Edwin Binney 3rd, collection and ***Christ with angels*** dated 1700 from the Johnson album 1, No. 1a at the India Office Library, London.

Among the new aspects that were incorporated in Mughal painting with the introduction of western art, inclusion of Christian saints as well as of prominent Christian figures and angels in the panel pictures that adorned the walls of the pavilion behind the throne became a well practiced tendency among the Mughal artists and continued well into the Mughal School. Such instances saw its beginning towards the end of Akbar's reign as part of a decorative aspect and continued regularly thereafter. A miniature by Miskina of ***The Physicians' duel***[44] dated 1595 shows his fair execution of the European taste in the panel picture of the revelation of St. John. Later evidences are seen in the miniature of ***Nur Jahan feasting Jahangir and Prince Khurram*** from an album page of Jahangir. There are images of the Christ and the Virgin in the upper panel of the pavilion wall. A miniature from the ***Padshanama*** of the Royal Library, Windsor Castle, ***Jahangir presents Prince Khurram with a turban ornament*** in the Diwan-i 'Amm of Mandu in late 1617, attributed to Payag dated 1640 shows the panel with pictures of Christian religious figures. Later period productions also carried this application, as is seen in the miniature ***Shah Jahan in the Jharoka Receiving a Persian Delegation*** dated 1640 and attributed to Payag, now at the Bodleian

[44] J.P. Losty. ***Ibid.***, (Plate 20)

Library, Oxford, where the panel picture shows cherubim appearing amidst clouds.

The enclosure of Christian subjects was also found in the album pages of Jahangir and especially in the border illumination, of "European subjects, taken from the Flemish and German prints which so appealed to Jahangir."[45] This is evident in a miniature of the opening phrases of the ***Akbarnama***,[46] the border of which is decorated with pictures of saints and angels. This was among the works, which were enclosed within new borders during the initial years of Jahangir. The ***Sarlavh*** is attributed to Mansur. Another example is an ***album Page of Jahangir*** dated 1615, Lent by the Musée Guimet and has an assembly of various craftsmen among which is a European figure. Unlike the border illumination, there is a miniature with Christian subjects on the main picture frame, from an ***album page of Jahangir*** dated 1610-11 attributed to Farrukh Beg[47] which shows the portrait of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur and the upper portion of the picture is mounted by two late sixteenth century Flemish engravings of the saints Francis and Teresa.

That there were copious prints, engravings and paintings available in the Mughal court is attested by various contemporary accounts. Another fact is that there are also some references that speak of the presence of European artists at the Mughal court in the late sixteenth and beginning of seventeenth century. The Jesuits accounts refer to a "Portuguese painter"[48] who copied a picture of the

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[45] Jeremiah P. Losty. ***The Art of the Book in India*** (London: The British Library Reference Division Publications 1982). p. 96

[46] Ascetics, saints and angels surround the opening phrases of the ***Akbarnama*** in praise of Speech, Pl. XXX 70 ff.1b, 2: J.P. Losty. ***Ibid***.

[47] Lent by the Naprstek Museum, Prague: The Indian Heritage, Court Life and Arts under Mughal Rule (London: The Victoria and Albert Museum and The Herbert Press, 1982) Fig. 44a

[48] Father Pierre du Jarrie. ***Akbar and the Jesuits – An account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar***. Sir E. Denison Ross and Eileen Power (Eds.) and C.H. Payne (Trans). (New Delhi: Tulsi Publishing House, 1979). p. 67

Virgin Mary. Apart from the Portuguese' presence, Sir Thomas Roe mentions at least two painters at Jahangir's court, Robert Hewes and another "painter whom the Mogol would have to take his pictures; and because hee could not speake the language, Master Steele (who could speake the language of the court, which is Persian) was admitted (a thing not permitted to men) into the Mogols lodgings, where he did sit for the said limner."[49] The English's influence was derived mainly from these painters and from the prints and engravings that the Ambassador brought as presents. The famous English miniaturist, Isaac Oliver's work, which was gifted to the emperor served as a source for several copies, one of which was even offered to Sir Thomas Roe himself, as he reiterated in his letters, of the emperor's present, "yow shall choose any of these coppies to showe in England wee are not unskillfull as yow esteeme us. Soe hee pressed mee to choose one, which I did."[50] Considering the Mughal rulers' growing interest in western art, these European artists certainly must have imparted their knowledge to their Indian counterparts besides making copies for them.

Jahangir was deeply fascinated by the variety of flowers and especially of those varieties he saw in Kashmir during his sojourn at the place. He often wrote beautiful verses in admiration of these flowers. Delighted with the beauty he once proclaimed:

> *Kashmir is a garden of eternal spring, or an iron fort to a palace of kings – a delightful flower-bed, and a heart-expanding heritage for dervishes. Its pleasant meads and enchanting cascades are beyond all description. There are running streams and fountains beyond count. Wherever the eye reaches, there are verdure and running water. The red rose, the violet, and the narcissus grow of themselves; in the fields*

[49] Sir William Foster (Ed.). ***The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-19*** (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1990). p. 468
[50] Sir Thomas Roe. ***Ibid.***, p. 200

> *there are all kinds of flowers and all sorts of sweet-scented herbs more than can be calculated. In the soul-enchanting spring the hills and plains are filled with blossoms; the gates, the walls, the courts, the roofs, are lighted up by the torches of banquet-adorning tulips. What shall we say of these things or of the wide meadows and the fragment trefoil.*[51]

Here is where we see the other category of western influence, in the delineation of floras and faunas and in landscape – naturalism, which is the singular characteristic of Mughal School.

Jahangir delegated Mansur, his best painter on animals, the task of painting likenesses of variety of flowers and stated, "those that Nadir al asri Ustad Mansur has painted are more than 100."[52] Of the extant pictures on floral painting, the best is that of ***Red Tulips*** in the Habibganj Library, Aligarh, India dated 1620. Robert Skelton confirms this variety of tulip "is not native to Kashmir but could easily have been introduced there at that date."[53] This picture bears similarity with the ***Martagon Lily*** from Pierre Vallet's ***Le Jardin du tres Chrestian Henry IV*** of 1608. The depiction of butterfly fluttering above the flowers "is a cliché in certain of the European herbals."[54] Such depiction of floral display with butterflies is also seen in the decorative plaques of cabinets in Europe, which was in vogue in the seventeenth century, as in the cabinet at Kaiserliches Hofmobiliendepot, Vienna.[55] Another Mughal rendering of the Pierre Vallet Martagon Lily formerly owned by Lord Clive is

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[51] Henry Beveridge (Ed.) and Alexander Rogers (Trans). ***Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*** or ***Memoirs of Jahangir*** Vol. II (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Oriental Publishers and Booksellers, 1968) pp. 143-144

[52] Henry Beveridge (Ed.) and Alexander Rogers (Trans). ***Ibid.***, p. 145

[53] R. Skelton. ***A Decorative Motif in Mughal Art, in Aspects of Indian Art***, Pratapaditya Pal (Ed.) (Los Angeles: Tuta Sub Aegide Pallas. E.J. Brill, 1972) p. 151

[54] R. Skelton. ***Ibid.***, 151

[55] Vase with flowers, set into the central door of the cabinet: Ebba Koch. ***Op.cit.*** (Fig 4.29 detail of Fig 4.30)

in the Victoria and Albert Museum painted probably after 1620. The possible hypothesis, if the flower was not grown in Kashmir, is that western prints on floras and faunas had also reached the Mughal court with the increased influx of Europeans by this time.

Besides such single studies, there are flowering plants that adorn the borders, carefully spaced and manifest a taste of western herbals in their frontal and side views as well as in their different stages of the bloom. A Wantage album page probably painted around the first quarter of the seventeenth century now in the Victoria and Albert Museum has beautiful floral decorated borders, which show remarkable likeness with the Pierre Vallet original cited above. This ascertains the increasing use of such floral motifs in western manner and style.

Jahangir's curiosity for rare and strange birds and animals are best exemplified by the series of paintings of the different species of the faunas by his master painters, Mansur and Manohar. The ***Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*** recounts the emperor's possession of "some animals that were very strange and wonderful,"[56] which arrived from the port of Goa. Among these was a ***turkey-cock***[57]painted by Ustad Mansur in 1612. This picture is yet another proof of Jahangir's interest in natural history and also the fact that most of its renderings are done from life, convinced his ambition for realistic results in painting. This called for acute observation from the artists, of the subjects to be painted, to obtain a precise idea of its mass and volume. Such precision is also seen in another miniature, ***Himalayan Markhur*** painted by Inayat dated 1607, in the Wantage Album at Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Here

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[56] Henry Beveridge (Ed.) and Alexander Rogers (Trans). ***Ibid.***, p. 215

[57] The Wantage Bequest collection among its thirty-six paintings: Stanley C Clarke. ***Mughal Paintings: The School of Jahangir*** Pl. 15 (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1983)

the sense of volume is given in the long fur around the neck of the ***markhur***. Such inspiration for detailed study and meticulousness is derived from the western artistic knowledge.

Jahangir's preference for naturalistic representation and of cool palette averted the Persian ornamented outlook in painting and greatly fancied the western flavor. This is reflected vividly in the landscape painting with the western characteristic of spaciousness, low horizon that is well formulated and better delivered than the Akbari adaptations. An illustration of ***Mirza Kamran Meeting an Envoy Near Kabul*** by an unnamed artist painted during the early part of seventeenth century at Jahangir's court clearly shows this development in the soft hues, the distant horizon with more perfection and the architectural designs of the buildings reminiscent of European, mostly Italian or Swiss township. This was the result of the growing influence throughout Jahangir and Shah Jahan's period, of western art and especially Italian tradition. ***Music at an encampment*** dated around 1620 and attributed to Govardhan, now at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin is another superb achievement of landscape representation along the western manner. The technique of precise geometric calculation of giving a clear perspective of distance and depth is seen in the beautiful allocation of diminished objects at the topmost margin and the gradual enlargement of the subjects as we move nearer to the foreground. This became a successful technique of a realistic presentation of landscape used in the subsequent years although with slight variations occasionally. This is evidenced in ***Prince Aurangzeb facing a maddened elephant named Sudhakar (7June 1633)*** by an unnamed artist dated 1635, from the ***Padshahnama***, fol 134a (KoW, 29) at the Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

European artistic sources in the School of Shah Jahan (1627-58)

Shah Jahan's period witnessed a decline in the importation of western prints and engravings unlike his predecessors. This owed much to the fact that the emperor was more expressive of his interest in architecture over paintings. Nonetheless, there were no constraints in the production of miniatures, which reflected an affinity to western artistic norms. There are certain plausible reasons behind this: firstly, there were already abundant supplies of European pictures at the imperial atelier, which his predecessors had accumulated. This provided enough sources for the Shah Jahani artists to draw inspirations for their work. Secondly, the artists at the studio of Shah Jahan were those who had already been exposed to western technique and style during Akbar and Jahangir and hence they continued to produce the same skill they had acquired. Moreover, a Persian artist Muhammad Zaman was presumably among those artists sent to acquire western artistic knowledge by the Persian ruler Shah Abbas II (1642-67). While he was a trainee in Rome he converted himself into the Christian faith, for which the Persian Shah abandoned him and consequently, Muhammad Zaman entered the court of Shah Jahan. Therefore, in all probability, Muhammad Zaman could be the one accredited for introducing new western idioms among the Mughal artists of the Shah Jahani studio. His works are insightful of the Occidental style, "of flying angels on billowing clouds, with a background of rainbows and radiant suns, which, while fantastic in some respects, is not unconnected with the art of Raphael or his school."[58]

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[58] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 177

While it is true that Shah Jahan professed architectural predilection over pictorial art, yet none of his illustrative commissions missed his perfectionist scrutiny. His pictures were as matchless and singular as his architectural accomplishments. However, after the initial years, Shah Jahan delegated the supervision of the atelier to his son, Dara Shikoh. A keen art lover that he was, under his custody many excellent works of art were compiled in his album. This time also saw European influence and especially Italian convention permeating very effectively, as the Italian adventurer Niccolao Manucci was a loyal friend of Dara Shikoh. His album also contains various specimens of other European adaptation especially in the floras with "the distinctive placing of butterflies in the manner of Dutch flower pieces."[59] ***A blue Iris plant with a butterfly alighting*** dated 1635, ***Exotic flowers and insects*** attributed to Muhammad Khan dated 1630-35, ***Two butterflies on a plant*** dated 1630-35 by the same artist are few examples on the European prototype of floral depictions.

Among the direct copies of European originals around the time of Shah Jahan and after, religious pictures still remained a favorite by and large, which suggests the continuity of Jesuit influence and the underlying principles derived from these religious illustrations. ***A Christian priest kneeling at his prayers*** dated 1650 from the Johnson Album 14, no. 5 at the India Office Library, London, the two European engravings in the Dara Shikoh album, the ***Virgin and Child*** dated late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and another of ***St. Catherine of Sienna*** dated 1585 and ***St. Margaret*** are proof of this consistency. There is one other miniature entitled ***A Christian knight fighting with a Saracen foot soldier*** dated 1630 from the Johnson album 14 no. 8a at

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[59] Toby Falk and Mildred Archer. ***Indian Miniatures In The India Office Library*** (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet Publications, 1981) p. 73

the India office Library, which depicts a Christian wearing a rather huge crucifix and riding a white stallion, in combat with a Saracen on foot. The composition is rather suggestive of Persian narrative than European, with the flight of birds atop and the rocky landscape behind; however, the western figure is possibly an insertion from an earlier European print. Such inclusion was still inherent as was the enclosure of European township in the distance and the receding landscape. This is clear in the miniatures of ***A lady holding a cup and a bottle*** dated 1635 at the India office Library, London which has a church and a large estate and another of ***A girl holding a bottle of wine and a cup*** dated 1635 at the India office Library, London with a European rural scene of open field in the distance.

Western chiaroscuro became an increasingly used feature and it continued well into the phase of Shah Jahan and the later Mughals "eventually assuming status as one of the clichés of later Mughal painting."[60] This device was used largely for night scene depictions as "night and effects of artificial light have an especial attraction for the Indian painter of Mogul times."[61] And as such the western chiaroscuro technique offered the much needed tool for this achievement. This experimentation has found impressive expression in the delineation of hunting scenes at night, of romantic rendezvous, of congregation of men around campfire etc. In the miniatures like ***Worshipping Siva at night*** dated seventeenth century at the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, ***Shooting Deer at Night*** attributed to Inayat Khan dated 1630 at the Bodleian Library, Ouseley Collection, Oxford, ***An Assembly of Holy Men***

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[60] Edwin Binney, 3rd. ***Indian Miniature Painting From The Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd*** (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1974) p. 84

[61] E.B. Havell. ***The Art Heritage of India, Revised Edition with Notes by Pramod Chandra*** (Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd. By arrangement with John Murray (Publishers) Ltd: London, 1964) p. 92

dated 1640 at the Indian Museum, Calcutta (no. R.13031/S.54) and ***Izzat Khan With Officers And Wise Men*** dated 1640-50 and attributed to Bichitr at the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, the focus is drawn on the captivating stillness and tranquil atmosphere of night. The only source of light in these illustrations was derived either from the torch they carry or from the glaze emanating from the bon-fire around which the men gather or from the dim light of a single candle. The rest of the glow poured in by the luminous star-lit sky. Often the effect of such shading resulted marvelously and the artists, delighted in testing additional method with this device, resulted in entirely novel productions. This improvisation is evident in later productions where terrace festivities became a new genre of the chiaroscuro innovation. The miniature ***A Princess and her ladies celebrate fireworks festival*** dated 1720 attributed to Hashim and ***Ladies being entertained by actors in Portuguese costumes*** dated 1742, attributable to Mir Kalan Khan, at the collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd are results of such innovation. The artists were especially successful in their subtle use of colour and shading effect obtaining the actual occurrence of subjects at night where darkness engulfs any strong and clear appearance, leaving only the silhouettes visible in the flickering night light.

Symbolism achieved an even greater significance during Shah Jahan. There is the continuity of the globe, the golden halo, the cherubim and the royal insignias; all attributes that glorify the emperor's just and divine rule. A miniature, probably one of the earliest productions of Shah Jahan's atelier is ***Shah Jahan and his sons*** by Balchand, from the Minto Album dated 1627, at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, which proves the prevailing stability of the imperial ideology. The portrait of ***The emperor Shah Jahan standing upon a globe*** dated 1630 and painted by Bichitr, also from the Chester Beatty

Library, Dublin conveys the same meaning of divine rule as did in Jahangir's time. Here is also seen the peaceful harboring of the lion and the sheep affected by the virtuous rule of the emperor. An apt allegorical representation, which display Shah Jahan's absolute justice is the panel picture behind his durbar hall, of ***Orpheus playing to the beasts***, "Orpheus who by the power of his music brought wild and tame animals to a peaceful co-existence was able to illustrate the character of Shah Jahan's just rule, and all the more so since in Islamic mirrors of princes the Laws of music were likened to the laws of justice."[62] This is yet another evidence of the strong influence from the Florentine Medici tradition where symbolism runs deep in the illustrations to patent absolute rulership.

Thus, we see that the growing intensity of the Mughal rulers' divine theory of kingship, further heightened the adoption of western symbolic images. This as we have seen, was seriously retained and developed on a wider scale during Shah Jahan's reign. Other than the allegorical impact, the ongoing implementation of western techniques of artistic applications, like perspective, chiaroscuro, scientific architectural estimations, landscape etc. continued to be adopted by the painters at the studio of Shah Jahan.

European inclination during later Mughal rulers

By the mid-seventeenth century onwards, European emergence was in abundance in India. These included both artists as well as large quantities of

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[62] Ebba Koch. Pietre Dure and Other Artistic Contacts between The Court of the Mughals And That Of The Medici, ***Marg*** Vol. XXXIX No. 1, 1986 (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1986) pp 55-56

prints and engravings. In 1772, an English painter Tilly Kettle reached Calcutta and "he was followed by Hodges, Zoffany, Longcroft, and Home, all of whom came to India towards the end of the eighteenth century and practiced their art in several of the larger cities."[63] With their penetration, large numbers of Indian artists were heavily influenced by their format and taste, so much, so "that Indian painting had become merely a stagnant reflection of that of the west."[64] In the Mughal scenario however, since by this time Mughal painting was considerably losing its earlier luminosity, most of the works at the atelier was of no significant attribution. The imperial quality was discernibly removed and the works were suggestive of the lesser skilled artists. Nonetheless, productions along western conventions or reproduction of their original works continued fairly.

Among the reproductions from original works, the miniature, ***A Lady With Two Maids*** dated 1700 at the Edwin Binney, 3rd collection, is the Mughal version of the Annunciation of the Virgin from a European model. Similar copies of western works are the miniature entitled ***European Lady Dressed in Style of Queen Anne***, an early eighteenth century work and ***Solomon And The Queen Of Sheba, Enthroned*** dated 1740-45, both from the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection. These are evidences of the continuity of the European works at the Mughal School but the technique and style are far detached from the exquisite charm of the earlier productions.

It is now evident that the impact of European artistic tradition and ideology is more comprehensive than is outwardly manifest. Of the technical excellence, such realistic features as depth, dimension, and scientific

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[63] Percy Brown. ***Op.cit.***, p. 179
[64] Percy Brown. ***Ibid***, p. 179

perspective have lent a successful mechanism, as is clear from the achievements seen at the different stages of Mughal painting. The cooler and softer hues and the subtle expressions well harmonized with the Mughal standard of refined artistic taste. Thus, their inclination towards the western naturalistic delineation began early on, as they too were renowned for their naturalistic penchant in art. Both the patron and the artists were instantly receptive to this tradition and a further deeper knowledge of this convention expounded an even more suitable expression of their imperialistic ideology, hence they experimented with almost every aspects of this art form and incorporated it into their own artistic norm. However, one must bear in mind that such applications of external traits were not without crucial examination and every selected feature or theme was always in conformity with the established Mughal characteristic. It was the emperors' eclectic and dynamic spirit, that attracted them to the best artistic knowledge around, but it totally depended on their intrinsic originality and tasteful wisdom. Therefore, there were purposeful restraints in the adoption method; the emperors only complied with those features, which served their artistic as well as their majestic principles.

CHAPTER-VI

CONCLUSION

The art of painting is a universal language, the one common thread that binds diverse cultures. It is the most expressive form of communication, unspoken and yet more meaningful and complete than any written languages in the world. It also forms a significant source for reconstructing the history of a society or a culture. It is no surprise therefore, that the Mughal rulers instantly gave an impetus to this art form as their successful medium for expressing their ideologies, which the written literatures had hitherto served them that purpose.

The foregoing chapters analyzing the impact of foreign traditions on Mughal painting have successfully made known our objective to find out firstly, the extent of impact, these distinct artistic elements had, on the Mughal School of painting. This aspect is seen in several facets, like the subjects painted, which included historical events, rare incidents, religious texts,

manuscripts illustrations, etc. to other details like, costumes, caricature, natural history, landscape, portraiture, architectural disposition, floras and faunas, etc. Furthermore, it has also revealed the other aspect of our study to trace the underlying connotation and purpose of certain figurative traits that were incorporated in the illustrations, on the behest of the Mughal rulers.

While studying the impact of these various traditions of painting on the Mughal School, a realization has been clearly marked out in that, the original traits of Mughal painting are distinctly laid out. The level of absorption and transmutation of these external traditions into the Mughal artistic circle also graphically defined. No doubt, the contributions of these traditions, remarkably enhanced the Mughal character in its selection of style and subject and subsequently, in the final restructuring of a separate school of painting.

However, to attribute the Mughal School of painting solely to the inspirations of these diverse artistic mannerisms is to completely lack knowledge of the whole Mughal novelty. In this respect, neither the aesthete qualities of the Mughal rulers can be treated with total disregard nor can their personal involvement in this art be ignored. It was their originality in their character and their genuine interest in the art of painting that successfully carved out a niche for Mughal painting in world art. Added to these attributes of the Mughal rulers, were their guiding principles, as also their strategies in the process of making Mughal School of painting an identity of their own personality.

The Mughal Empire, once established began its instant pursuit of expansion and amplification of their domain over the vast conquered land

through various plans and policies. Along with the process of consolidation, Akbar's reign saw the institution of the Royal School of painting and this too was entrusted as an agency for publicizing their ideals, manifest through the enormous commissions undertaken. Since Mughal painting remained primarily a court art, the productions soon began to manifest signs of royalty. More than customary, it developed as a necessary objective that their character and personality reveal, in their artistic productions. These are manifest in the huge and sophisticated assignments commissioned, the lavish workshops organized, the exclusive and elaborate tutelages; an establishment, inconceivable for any order of ordinary repute.

Again, it had been a Mughal policy to combine traditional manners with new elements in every aspect of their undertakings, be it political, cultural, and religious or even in military diplomacy. Thus, it is of no surprise that this same strategy had been successfully implemented in the art of painting. This aspect has been clearly detailed in the many artistic idioms inherent in the huge commissions of the Mughals. As such, it would not be wrong to deduce that "Mughal art is dominated by the personal leanings of the ruler,"[1] which is why it shone for as long as the glory of the emperors remained and waned when they dwindled.

The incorporation of Indian artists at the Mughal atelier was at face value, their accomplished artistic skills, which they exhibited. However, this was also a well-planned policy initiated by Akbar – to appease the large Hindu population. The Mughals were aware that they were Muslim minority ruling over a large expanse of the Hindu country and also that they were foreign invaders. The glorious empire that they built was over the vast lands of these

[1] Ebba Koch. ***Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology*** (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001) p. 63

Hindus and had to be always kept under protection. Again, the Hindu rulers were no feeble opponents and this was a known fact to the Mughals. Therefore, for them to design an independent identity such as the one they created, amidst the conquered Hindu population, a strong will and an intellectual aptitude was essential. Akbar incorporated numerous Hindus into various strata: political, cultural as well as religious, as part of his expansion policy. Jahangir and Shah Jahan's reigns also saw continuity of this policy in their administration as well as in the Royal atelier. Culturally, this strategy was manifest in their imposing execution in architecture as well as in painting, well into the Mughal rule. In painting, we saw that, apart from employing artists, many Hindu religious texts were translated and illustrated.

Moreover, far from being a policy, this is also attributed to Akbar's penchant for expanding his wisdom on different religious knowledge, which resulted in the translation and illustration of many Hindu religious as well as Hindu epics. What is more is that, in addition to political ambition, the classical Hindu art offered an entirely new ground for artistic experimentation, in the rich colors, the techniques and the marvelous finesse. Akbar was fully acquainted with the rich cultural heritage that adorned India and the natural adeptness of the artists. We must also not overlook the fact that, Akbar was born in the Indian soil and felt himself more Indian than his predecessors and therefore, he developed an inclination to the natural environment of India. Thus, he soon realized this, as much an important objective as their political ambition to assimilate the Indians under his supervision.

It was therefore through these local artists employed in the Mughal atelier that the native traditions were transmitted into the Mughal scenario. The Mughal School since its very initialization began its function with

mammoth assignments, which makes it clear that it could not have run so, with just the few Persian artists that reached the Mughal court at that time. Again, the early works already reveal telltale features of native Indian traditions. This authenticates the employment of a large number of indigenous artists at the Mughal court from the very beginning of the school. We have already referred to historical accounts as well, that confirmed the services of the native artists at the royal studio.

In the chapter examining the pre-Mughal Indian traditions of art, the context of Buddhist artistic influences outside India, and in particular, the Central Asian connection has been briefed. Several references point out that the classical Indian art, especially Buddhist art spread across the globe and flourished in places wherever it reached. This supports the hypothesis along with the already established theory of the local artists, that the Indian elements traced in Mughal painting could also have been brought along with the Persian tradition, which was already imbibed with the classical Indian tradition of the Ajanta era since the Kushan period.

Although early traditions of pre-Mughal Indian paintings did not lend much to the symbolic enhancement of Mughal ideology, yet in terms of technique and manner, their impact have been remarkable. We have seen that Mughal paintings imbibed the classical Indian mannerism reminiscent of Ajanta art as well as the later idioms that developed as outgrowths of the classical culture. This impact was inherent since an early phase of the school, as we saw in the various early productions like the Cleveland ***Tutinama***, the ***Hamzanama*** and the ***Anwar-i Suhaili***, etc. and remained influential throughout the course of maturity.

Persian artistic impact, as we have seen was more than just the thematic contents. In the vast illustrations of the Mughal School and more specifically during Akbar's period, we saw an extensive use of Persian idiomatic expressions – ranging from colors, to the technique and display, seen in the main figures as well as on the border decoration. As has been discussed, the early paintings of the Mughal School showcase pure Safavid idioms especially the "high ridge against the skyline, of filling one side of the picture with architecture, of the central carpet, not in perspective, but as a flat rectangular design, of coral hills, of ornamental flowers and shrubs, and of laying the scenes in ravines between two mountains."[2] The Herat manner of placing the compositions into different planes, the marginal cutting of figures and also the depiction of rocks and hills in human or animal shapes, etc. have motivated the Mughal productions tremendously.

We have also seen other expressions like that of the Mongol-Persian School and the Timurid School evident in Mughal painting. Most of the delicate line drawings and soft brush works apparent in the early paintings of Mughal are derived from these Schools. The Chinese idiomatic features, particularly the flame like clouds in the Mughal paintings are inspirations from the Mongol-Persian traditions. The Persian tradition of painting is well known for their decorative and aesthetic qualities, their rich colors, vibrant and eventful compositions. These same attributes attracted the Mughal rulers and as such incorporated several of these features in their work. These features remained traceable throughout the Mughal rule as we have seen, although the scale was considerably reduced after the initial period of Akbar's rule.

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[2] Krishna Chaitanya. ***A History of Indian Painting: Manuscript, Mughal and Deccani Traditions*** (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1979) p. 53

This initial inclination to the Persian convention could also be seen as an acknowledgment of their ancestral inheritance. The Mughals' taste for refinery and sophistication owed much to their rich Persian lineage. Therefore, it was only natural for them to turn to their forebears for inspiration, to relive their civilization and culture, which also explains Akbar's motive behind making Persian, the court language. Moreover, Akbar "had been aware that painting was considered one of the privileges of rulership by his ancestors the Timurids and thus he had utilized the art as a manifestation of dynastic power."[3] Such an inclination was the reason why Akbar transmitted the Persian culture into his court and these changes began to reflect even in the paintings produced under his command.

The Persian rulers were strongly inclined to works of art and especially to painting, as it served their means to show their veneration for religion and more so, as it formed a device for publishing their royal ideology. The enormous Persian manuscripts manifest the lofty ideas of the Persian rulers and at the same time, the religious works that they illustrated show their devoutness to their religion. Therefore, for them religion and painting were interrelated in a significant way and this was why most of their illustrated works, especially those of the master painter Bihzad were steeped with spiritual manifestations.

Again, we have seen in various Persian illustrations, that the themes bear the ideology of the good and the evil, of Hormuzd, the representative of the virtuous on earth and his battle against Ahriman, the representative of the evil forces, of the victorious heroes eliminating the forces of evil and the

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[3] Linda York Leach. ***Later Mughal Painting: Arts in the Islamic Period: The Arts of India***, Basil Gray (Ed.) (Oxford: Phaidon Press Limited, 1981) p.141

righteousness of the kings. These themes often outshine the whole composition and the eminent heroes like, Rustam, Behram Gur and Iskandar pose as champions for the moral cause. Akbar recreated the same principles through translations and illustrations of the same themes present in the Persian literatures, to highlight his own dynamic personality. The hunting scenes, the violent and forceful battles, the combat against animals etc. are all manifestations of this theory reminiscent of the Persian prototype. Along with this, the Persian literary sources offered gallant subjects as well as introduced in the Mughal court, the sumptuous paraphernalia associated with elegance and grandeur, which corresponded to the emperors' taste and style.

The introduction of the Europeans at the Mughal court corresponded with a new atmosphere that was developing at Akbar's court. The Christian missionaries that arrived at Akbar's court regarded themselves fortunate to learn that the emperor was on the path for enlightenment as they thought it an opportune time to convince the emperor on adopting Christianity as the ultimate faith. Akbar wanted to establish an absolute and conclusive empire universally recognized, based on truth and solidarity among all, one religion, one faith, and a congenial atmosphere for everyone. He embarked on a quest for the ultimate truth in all religions. He "had declined to definite hostility to the exclusive claims of Islam, and had set himself up as an arbiter of religious truth."[4] He therefore instituted the ***Din-i Ilahi*** (Divine Faith) in pursuit for the truth. He included the best sages and the most religious persons, Hindus and Muslims both in the discourse. The Christian Jesuits were also later included among the scholarly assembly. Akbar was amenable to most of their ideologies but of all other theories, he was greatly impressed by their defense

[4] Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray. ***Treasures of Asia: Indian Painting*** (Geneva: Editions d' Art, 1978) p. 78

on the use of images, which pleased him extremely and "recognized them as suitable for justifying their own interest in figural naturalistic representations vis-à-vis the orthodox factions."[5] Akbar was fascinated by their iconographic principles and their religious eulogy expressed in their pictures, as it corresponded with his own ideals. More than this, the style and format stated in their prints and engravings commenced a motivating artistic endeavor. The accurate calculation in architectural dispositions as well as landscape representation in perspective remarkably enhanced Akbari paintings although it began to effect only during the last few years of his reign. Moreover, as naturalism was already an established idiom for the Mughal School, the pictures that these Jesuits presented were an appropriate means for a prospective synthesis, for in them were seen an immense disposition of European realism.

Since Jahangiri paintings comprise mainly depictions of natural sciences, of the floras and faunas, human portraits, there was more scope for inspirations from the European realistic representations, than had been during Akbar's period. Moreover, the scientific estimation, whether in architectural representation or the masterly use of perspective in landscape seen in European paintings, harmonized well with Jahangir's selection of subjects. Added to these are the figurative idioms of the west, which lent the best means for the portrayal of Mughal rulers' ideologies. The inspiration from the western figurative representations found in the prints and engravings brought by the Jesuits and the traders crystallized the growing spiritualism of Emperor Jahangir. The motifs such as the globe, the laurel wreath, the golden halo and the angels served as symbols for justice as well as for power and as such, these

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[5] Ebba Koch. Pietre Dure And Other Artistic Contacts Between the Court of the Mughals and that of the Medici, ***Marg*** Vol. XXXIX No.1, 1986. p. 30

were increasingly transported into the paintings of Jahangir and continued successfully into the later period.

The question of rulership was discernibly intrinsic in virtually all the paintings of Mughal atelier throughout its course. However, the approach under each ruler was distinct. In most of Akbari paintings, as we saw, the themes were mostly loud and expressive with emphasis on the heroic and forceful spirit of the emperor. "The active and exciting tone of the tales is in keeping with Akbar's character, and reflects the side of him of which he was proud – his ability to handle dangerous and unexpected situations and his frequent displays of deft strength both in action, and in politics."[6] He himself would be delivered as the hero in the illustrations, exemplified in the violent and aggressive scenes of battle, hunting, combat with wild animals etc, again, a supreme and powerful potentate reflected in the extravagant court scene depictions, directing and commanding, as seen illustrated in the ***Akbarnama***, of the ferocious and daring feats, of the invincible warrior in the battlefield, or in the scenes of visits to saints and dervishes to sanctify their pious rule. In various other illustrations, the protagonist of the theme depicted, would serve as a reflection of his personality. Such characterizations are seen reflected in the ***Hamzanama*** pictures.

Jahangir's supervision in painting, ensued a more subtle expression, a figurative disguise mainly used to imply the emperor's lofty spirit. A sharp contrast is seen in the often flamboyant and voluble pictures of Akbar and in his restrained productions. The commissions also shifted from the huge undertakings of book illustrations to individual study of men, animals and

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[6] ***Paintings from Mughal India***, Catalogue by Toby Falk and Simon Digby, Introduction by Michael Goedhius, (London: Colnaghi, 1979) p. 24

birds. This also greatly reduced the requirements of flashy tones in the pictures. Naturalism remained throughout the Mughal productions and any measure that offered to enhance this mode of representation was readily experimented. Other than this concern was the successful expression of their majestic theory of divine kingship, in the art of painting. In this, Western symbolism introduced an intense mode of expressing the theory of divine rulership.

Shah Jahan continued with the same professed manner of Jahangiri allegory and at the same time, there was a strong statement of hierarchical rule, a rather pronounced disposition of royalty inherent in his pictures. This was more lucid in the court scene depictions with rigid and strict symmetrical composition as a manner of bringing order and "to complete its transformation from the record of a historical gathering into a standardized image of the imperial authority of Shah Jahan."[7] This composition was very much in contrast to the Akbari darbar scenes with the positioning of the courtiers that gestures movement and action and the Jahangiri manner of cramped and cloistered attendants.

Since prehistoric times, the art of painting has remained a crucial factor for bridging the knowledge of the cultural, social, political as well as religious milieu of that particular time. More than a methodological aspect of art, painting serves as an expressive instrument for certain ideals and occupations that a particular community or an organization followed. The ancient paintings on walls, although it disclosed a crude and often obscure manner in terms of creative achievement, yet it helped portray their purposes and practices, which

[7] Ebba Koch. ***Op.cit.***, p. 137

are discernible in the subjects painted; of hunting scenes which was the primary occupation of primitive times, of the burial system, from the funeral scenes depicted etc. among other subjects. The different subjects painted on these walls probably highlight their predetermined aims and occupations.

As far as the Mughal School of Painting is concerned, it succeeded as a glorious Indian art, in so far, where the intrinsic quality of artistic excellence as well as the ideological implications of the rulers expressed, remained in perfect accord. The Mughals' belief, of being the representatives of God on earth, their superlative rule, were well expressed in art and especially in painting, their divine personality is clearly defined. Their paintings manifest a concoction of high symbolism and realism simultaneously. This with all assurance negates the professed opinions of some art critics several years back, who regarded Indian art as "no more than a pretty chintz, a rich brocade, or gorgeous carpet, fantastic carving, or curious inlay; and an ancient architecture fascinating to the archaeologist and tourist with its reminiscences of bygone pomp and splendor, but an extinct art useless for the needs and ideals of our prosaic and practical times."[8]

While it can be maintained that Mughal School of painting manifest several external elements and that it effectively served the banner of Mughal supremacy through these narratives, artistically it still cannot be concluded that it was merely a result of a brilliant synthesis of these various traditions. This would limit the superior qualities of the artists as much as it would undermine the originality of the patrons. Quite interestingly, it would have been an intricate task for the artists to arrive at a defining standard of the

[8] E.B. Havell. ***The Art Heritage of India comprising Indian Sculpture and Painting And Ideals of Indian Art*** (Bombay: DB Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd. with arrangement with John Murray (Publishers) Ltd., 1964) p. 5

characteristic Mughal School. Working under such exacting patrons who measured artistic perfection against nature's exquisiteness, the objective they set to obtain through art and the short span of time. Despite such criteria, the Mughal artists succeeded in their projects and produce works of rewarding nature, which authenticates their skill and dexterity. They perfected over these incongruent traditions and "had completely succeeded in dominating the foreign elements in their art."[9] Although the initial years of the school showed a marked Persian inclination, which was indispensable, owing to the subjects being mainly of Persian literary and religious texts, the course of maturity was indeed rapid. There were already the established Mughal characteristics inherent in many of the works produced, since the end of sixteenth century. These characteristic Mughal features are seen in the colors, which are cooler and sober as compared to the strong Persian palette. Again, in terms of emotive expressions, gestures or moods, the Mughal School has shown greater superiority over the Persian narrative and hence imparts more realism in the character portrayed. These are seen in the later works of Akbar where there is also seen, an elaborate and narrative composition. Another matured Mughal trait is that, "instead of the flat representation of forms in Persian painting we get a plastic roundness in Mughal painting realized through fine shading."[10]

As is clear, the inspirations from the disparate artistic idioms remained as and when the emperors believed it might enhance a particular aspect and again, only after considerable filtering. At the same time, the emperors were far too individualistic to only lean on outside elements for its stimulation. The Mughal emperors from Babur himself to his successors were marked for their

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[9] Mario Bussagli. ***Indian Miniatures*** (Middlesex: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Limited, 1969) p. 115

[10] Krishna Chaitanya. ***Op.cit.***, p. 54

originality and their exclusiveness. Ingenious that they were, the Mughal emperors hand picked the best of foreign elements and incorporated it to their own institution as per their requirement and necessity. As opined by E.B. Havell, "the common philosophic basis of art in all countries assumes that art is not merely an imitation or record of facts and phenomena in Nature, but an interpretation – the effort of the human mind to grasp the inner beauty and meaning of the external facts of Nature,"[11] Mughal School of painting too was purely the creation of the pioneering and introspective minds of the patrons together with the skilled execution of the artists that resulted in a splendid harmony. However, this splendor in the art of painting remained in conjunction with the glory and eminence of the court and sank at the same time when the majestic Mughal Empire crumbled to its end.

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[11] E.B. Havell. ***Ibid.***, p. 6

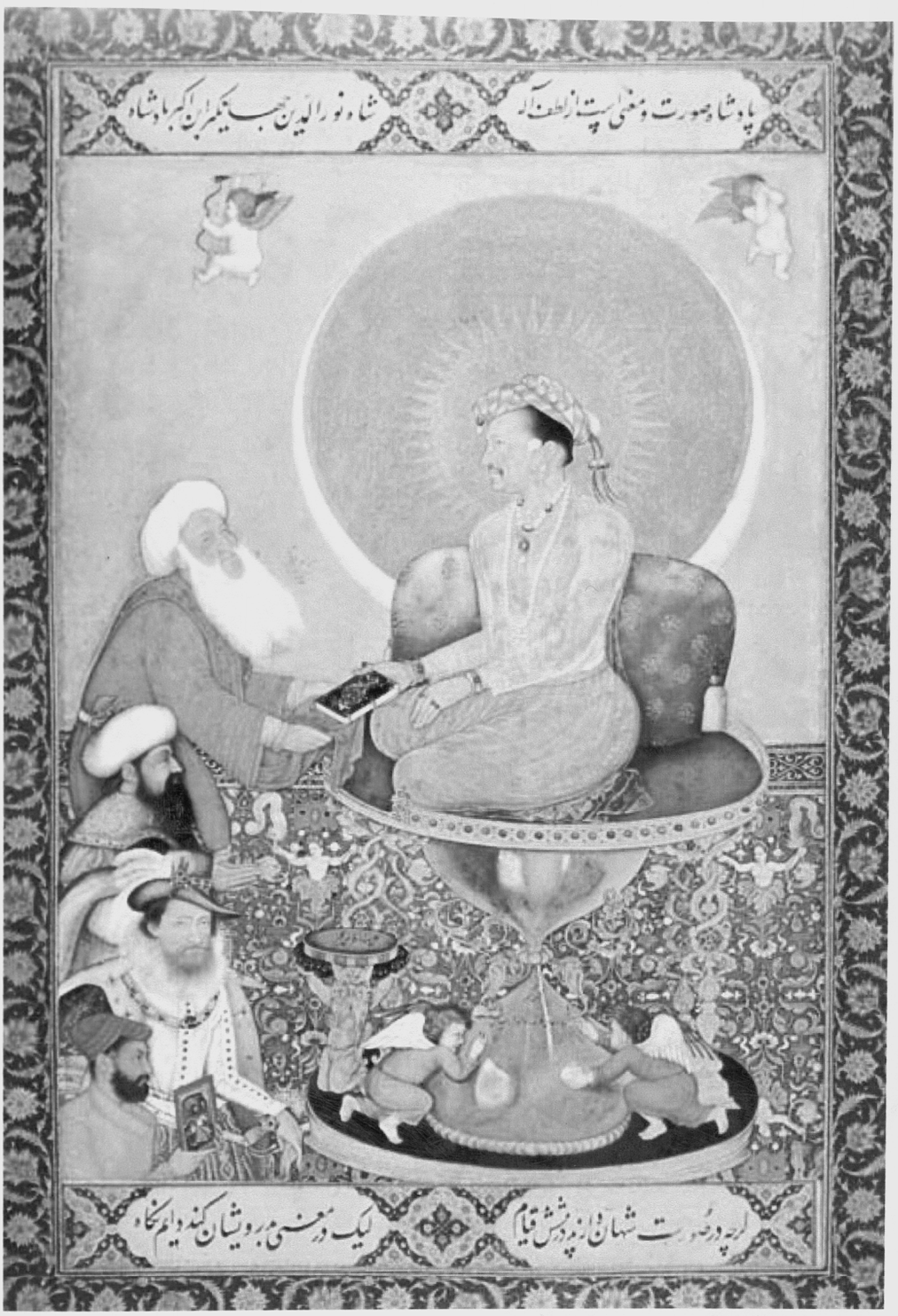


Plate 1. Jahangir preferring a Sufi Shaykh to the Turkish Sultan & James I of England. C,1615-18. Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Institution, courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Acc. No. 42.15.



Plate. 2. Squirrels in Plane Tree, Abul Hasan.c. 1610. Johnson Album 1. no.30. India office Library, London.



Plate 3. The Emperor Jahangir shoots a large lion, dated 1623, Indian Museum. Calcutta.



Plate 4. Jahangir weighing Prince Khurram on his sixteenth birthday. C. 1615-25. Lent by the Trustees of the British Museum.



Plate 5. Idris giving instruction to mankind in the art of weaving.c. 1590. Johnson Album 8.no.5 India Office Library, London.



Plate 6. Two young men in a garden by Abdus Samad c. 1551. Collection: Imperial Library, Tehran.



Plate 7. Night Scene. Priest in Council, dated 1640. Indian Museum, Calcutta No. 13031



Plate 8. Madonna and Child. 1625-1628. Johnson Album XIV, folio 2. India Office Library, London.



Plate 9. Akbar and a *mast* elephant. *Akbarnama*. 1595. Painted by Basawan and Chatai. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

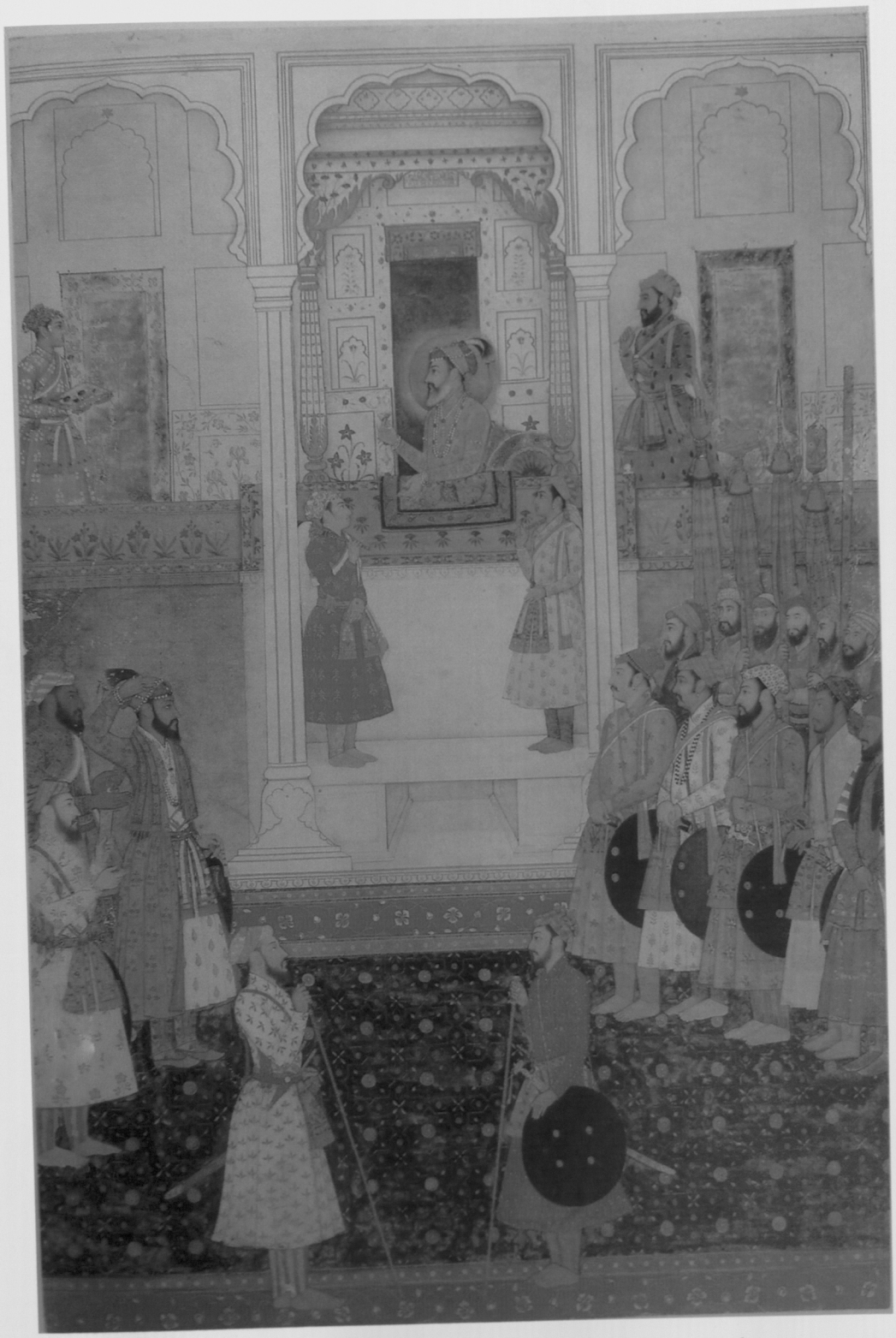


Plate 10. Shah Jahan in durbar. C. 1650, India Office Library, London.

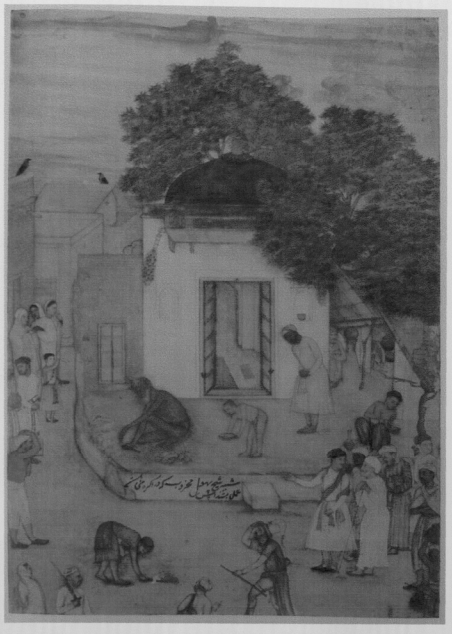


Plate 11. The House of Shaikh Phul by Bishandas. C. 1625. Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras.



Plate 12.Shah Jahan hunting lions. Shahjahan-nama. 1657. Windsor Castle Royal Library.



Plate 13. Jahangir embracing Shah Abbas, signed Abul Hasan. C. 1618-1622. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art.

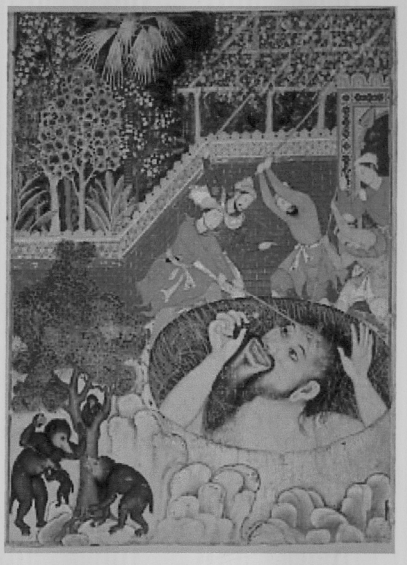


Plate 14. Gardeners beating the giant Zamurrad entrapped in a well. From the *Hamzanama*.1555-79. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Plate. 1 A Palace Scene (Not identified) Jataka: Cave XVII



2. Biraspat describing the beauty of ak to Chanda. From the *Laur Chanda*. Late century.A.D. Bharat Kala Bhavan, ras.

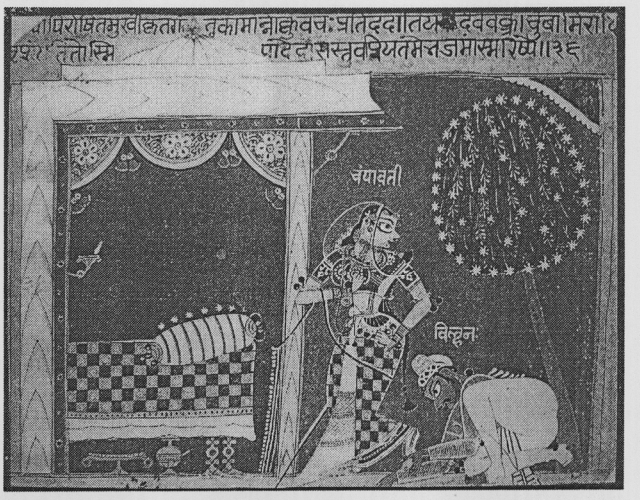


Plate 3. Bilhana and Champavati. From the *Chaurapanchasika*. The National Museum, New Delhi.



Plate 4. Inayat Khan Dying; c.1618; Oxford, The Bodleian Library, Ouseley add. 171 b 4 r.

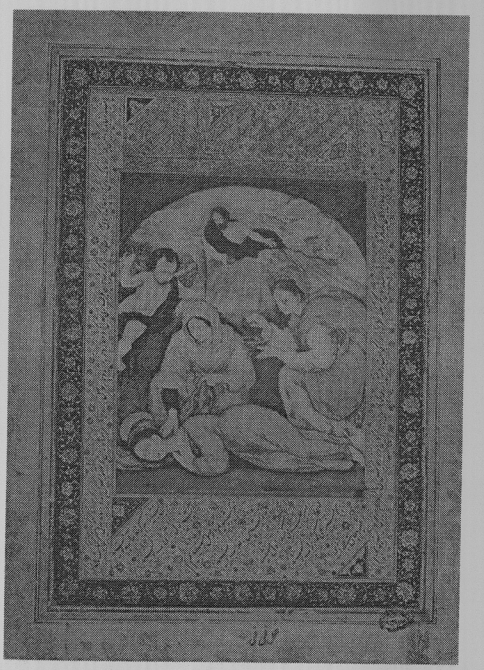


Plate 5. The Martyrdom of St. Cecilia, In the Wantage Bequest. c. Early 17th Painted by Nini.



Plate 6. Allegorical Portrait of the God Mars, attributed to Madhu, c. 1595. From a Private Collection.

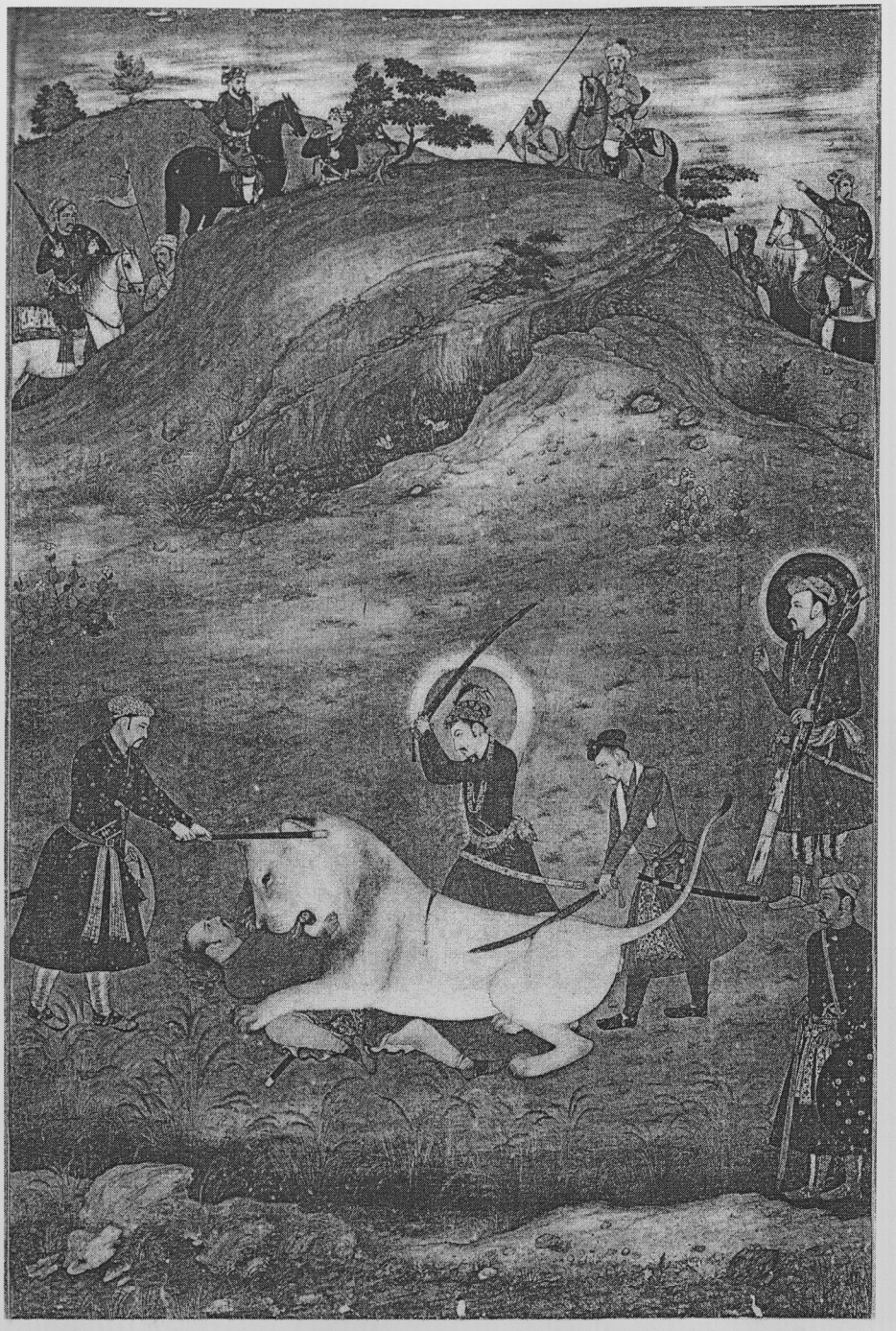


Plate 7. Prince Khurram attacking a lion, Bari, Late 1610. From the *Padshahnama*, folio 135B, painted by Balchand, circa 1640, Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

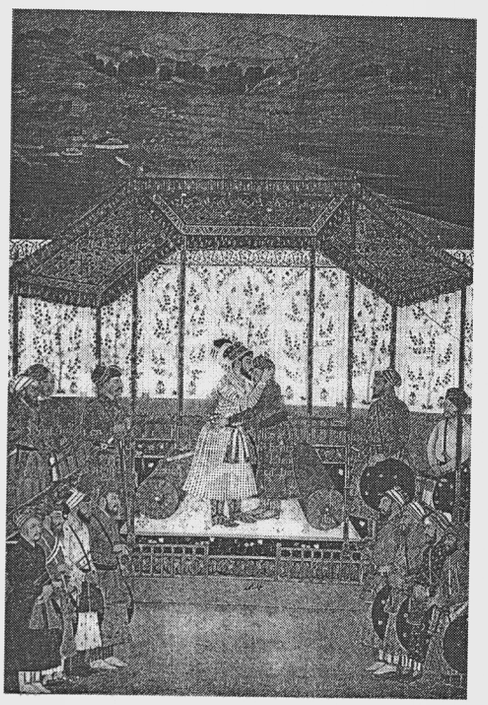


Plate 8. The Meeting of Prince Murad and Nazar Muhamad, Ruler of Balkh and Bukhara, By Fateh Chand. C.1645 A.D. Bharat kala Bhawan, Banaras.



Plate 9. An Album Page of Jahangir dated 1610-11 attributed to Farrukh Beg. Lent by the Naprstek Museum, Prague.

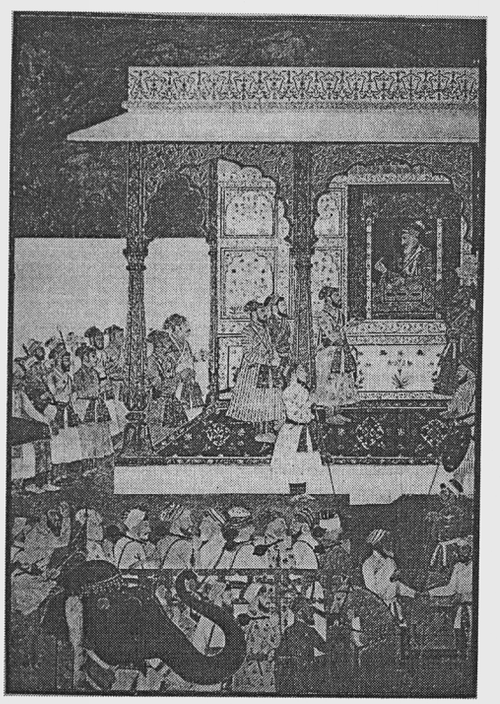


Plate 10. The Darbar of Shah Jahan. Circa 1645 A.D. Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras.

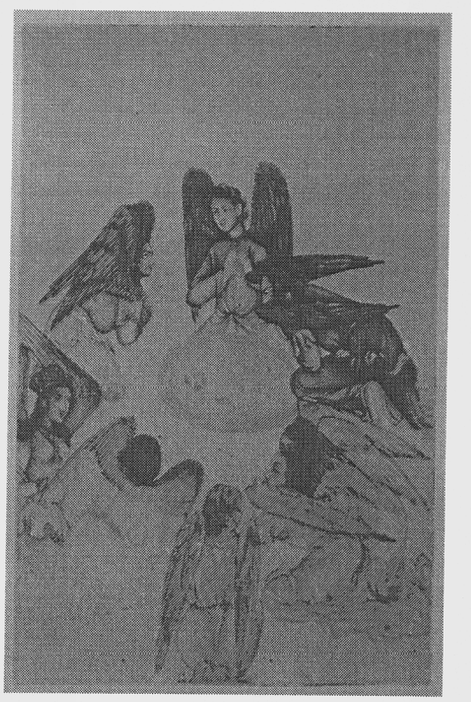


Plate 11. Christ with Angels c. 1700. Johnson Album 1, no.1a. India Office Library, London.

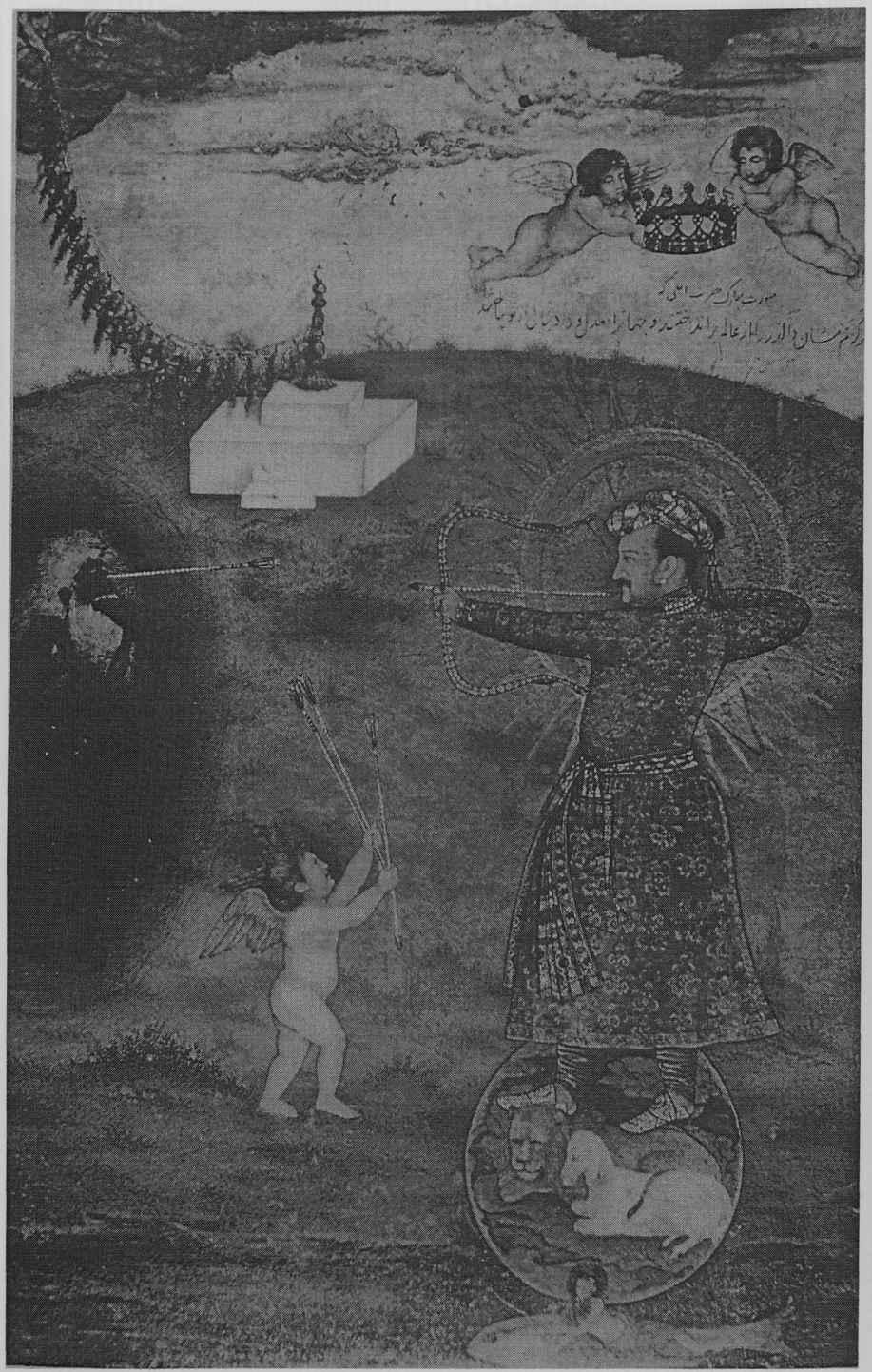


Plate 12. Emperor Jahangir Standing on a Globe Shooting Poverty. Attributed to Abul Hasan, 1625. From Nasli & Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

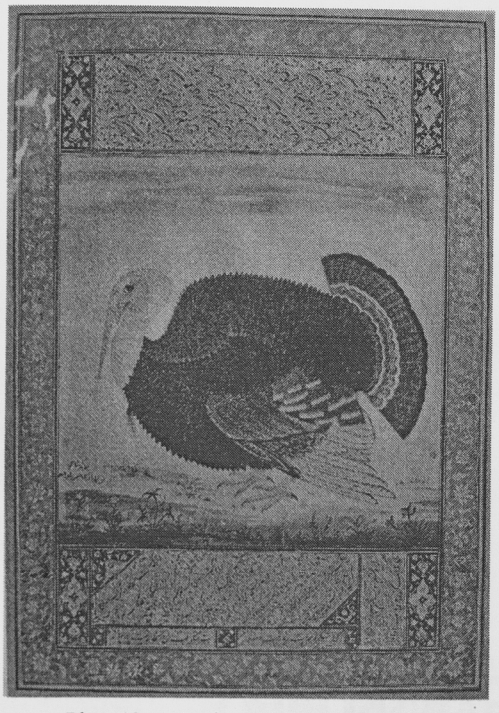


Plate 13. A Turkey Cock, by Ustad Mansur. Calcutta Art Gallery.



Plate 14. A Prince in Persian Costume, India Office Library, London.



Plate 15. A Lady holding a cup and bottle. 1635. India Office Library, London.

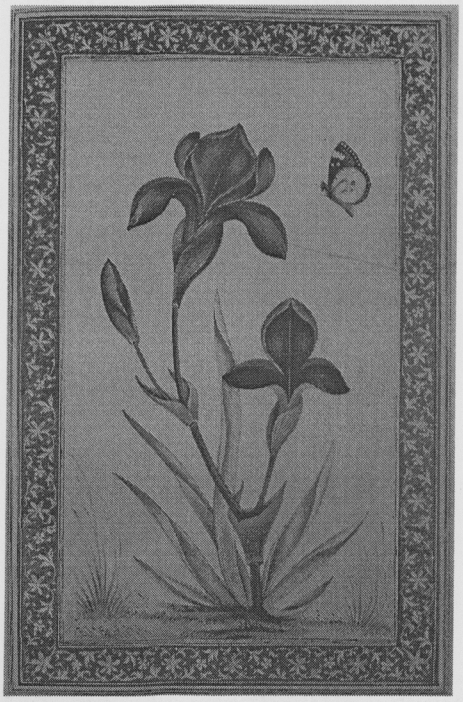


Plate 16. An Iris Plant & butterfly, 1635. India Office Library, London.

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