



## ABU'L-ḤASAN NĀDER-AL-ZAMĀN

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**ABU'L-ḤASAN NĀDER-AL-ZAMĀN**, noted Mughal painter. He was born in 997/1589 at the court of Prince Salīm (later the emperor **Jahāngīr**), where his father, Āqā Reżā from Herat, lived and worked as a painter. He was held in great esteem by Jahāngīr (977-1037/1569-1627), who had him trained to be a court painter like his father and gave him the honorary title Nāder-al-zamān (Wonder of the Age; *Tūzok-e Jahāngīrī*, tr. A. Rogers, London, 1909-14, II, p. 20). His father's preeminence at the Mughal court is indicated by his sobriquet Morīd-e Pādešāh (disciple of the Emperor), attested by his own hand in an album from Golestān palace (L. Binyon et al., *Persian Miniature Painting*, London, 1933, pp. 160, 192) and in a manuscript of *Anwār-e sohaylī* (London, B.M. Add. 18579; cf. J. Wilkinson, *The Lights of Canopus; Anwār i Suhailī*, London, 1929). By their use of color and line, father and son together noticeably strengthened the Persian elements in the Mughal painting of the period. However, Abu'l-Ḥasan went on to become the best portrait painter of his day, perhaps in part because he studied the techniques of European pictures and engravings and frequently copied them. (See [PLATE XV](#).) His own portrait, together with the likenesses of four other contemporary painters (including the artist Dawlat, who executed the whole folio), can be found on an album page originating from the Golestān palace (D. Barrett and B. Gray, *Indische Malerei*, Geneva, 1963, pp. 99, 100, 102, 104, 105).

In all, some twenty pictures are known to be by Abu'l-Ḥasan, or hitherto been



ascribed to him, though only a small number seem to bear authentic signatures. The best catalogue of his work is in I. Stchoukine, “Portraits Moghols III,” *Arts Asiatiques* 7, 1933, p. 233, n. 2. A complementary source of reference is R. H. Pinder-Wilson, *Paintings from the Muslim Courts of India*, Exhibition for World of Islam Festival, British Museum, London, 1976, nos. 87, 100, 113, 114, 117, together with the secondary literature cited there.

The pictures that have come down to us encompass themes from Christian iconography, portraits of rulers decked out in symbolic apotheosizing garb, scenes of *darbārs* (public audiences) designed as group portraits of the ruler and his retinue, and representations of old darvishes, as well as portraits of kinsmen and high-ranking Mughal officials. The best known are the “Portrait of Jahāngīr holding a picture of his father Akbar in his hands” (Paris, Musée Guimet, formerly in the Louvre, no. 3676B) and the picture of “Squirrels in a plane-tree,” attributed to Abu'l-Ḥasan but possibly by another artist (London, India Office Library, Johnson Album I, no. 30).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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See also: H. Goetz, “Zur Biographie der indischen Miniaturmaler,” *Jahrbuch der Asiatischen Kunst* 2, 1925, pp. 143, 146.

W. C. Beach, *The Grand Mogul, Imperial Painting in India 1600-1660*, Williamstown, Mass., 1978, pp. 86-92.