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DRAWING

DRAWING, an art form primarily dependent on expressive line. The high quality of Persian drawings maintained from the late 13th to the early 20th century provides a clear indication that this art form was appreciated by the Persian cultural elite. All artists were trained in ateliers under an arduous apprenticeship system, absorbing through practice and emulation Persian artistic traditions and ideals.

There are two main categories of Persian drawings: preparatory or exploratory and finished works of art (Swietochowki and Babaie, p. 8). The first category includes underdrawings, the skeleton of all Persian painting, invisible in the final product (e.g., Swietochowski and Babaie, fig. 5); rare practice sketches filling every corner of paper scraps; drawings of figures or groups, animals, landscape and architectural elements that served as models for finished drawings or elements in compositions of varying complexity (e.g., Swietochowski and Babaie, fig. 15); preparatory drawings transferred to another surface by means of pouncing (Swietochowski and Babaie, fig. 3, no. 22; Atıl, fig. 60); and decorative drawings to be used as patterns on media other than paper: ceramics, textiles and costumes, leather, wood, and the like. A number of the last type survive in albums in the Topkapı Saray, Istanbul, and in the “Diez album” in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin (e.g., Lentz and Lowry, no. 91). One of the Istanbul albums (ms. no. H 2153, fol. 98r) includes a report on the progress of work, believed to be in the hand of Jaʿfar Tabrīzī, director of the manuscript atelier (*ketāb-ḵāna*) of the Timurid prince Bāysonḡor (d. 837/1433). Beside manuscripts the artists were preparing decorative drawings

for a saddle, a bookbinding, a chest, and tent poles, and one artist was busy exclusively with designs for binders, illuminators, tentmakers, and tilemakers (Thackston, p. 325). On the other hand, the finish and detail of some drawings are evidence that they were intended as works of art. They range from fully developed compositions that are the visual equivalent of paintings and are often embellished with restrained touches of color to seemingly spontaneous sketches executed for the artist's own pleasure, as a gift for a friend, or even in hopes of a sale. Often internal evidence alone is all that helps to distinguish these groups, but occasionally the artist inscribed his drawing with details of the circumstances in which he made it (Swietochowski and Babaie, pp. 18, 20).

The Il-khanid period. Any attempt at a summary of the history of Persian drawings is hindered by insufficient surviving examples, especially from the earlier periods, and insufficient information from surviving contemporary texts. Nevertheless, it seems that Persian drawing developed as an art form under the Il-khanids at the turn of the 14th century, when the first wave of Chinese influence manifested itself in Persian art (Ettinghausen, pp. 52-56, figs. 6-9). A painting style in which line is dominant and colors washed in emerged, as in two fragmentary manuscripts of Rašīd-al-Dīn's *Jāmeʿ al-tawārīḵ* of 706/1307 and 714/1314 (Rice; Gray, 1978), in marked contrast to an earlier style characterized by areas of flat, strong color. In Persia this early style and the new Chinese elements become integrated during the course of the 14th century, but the new emphasis on line gave impetus to an independent evolution of drawing.

A clue to the development of Persian drawing is provided by the 16th-century Persian artist Dūst-Moḥammad Heravī. in his famous preface to the album (Topkapı Saray, ms. no. H 2154) he prepared in 951/1544 for the Safavid prince Bahrām Mīrzā: "Amir Dawlatyar, a slave (*gulam*) of Sultan Abu- Saʿid (717-36/1317-35), was ennobled by being a pupil of Master Ahmad Musa and was outstanding in this regard, especially in *qalam-sīyahi* . . ."; it was Aḥmad Mūsā who "lifted the veil from the face of depiction, and the [style of] depiction that is now current was invented by him" (Thackston, p. 345). Dūst-Moḥammad thus provided an unequivocal statement that an artist of the first half of the 14th century was particularly esteemed for his black-and-white drawings. Several examples signed by Mīr Dawlatyār survive in the Istanbul and Diez albums (Tanindi, p. 38; Kühnel, p. 68 fig. 2). According to Dūst-Moḥammad, one of his pupils, Šams-al-Dīn, was trained in the time of the Jalayerid sultan Ovays (757-76/1356-74; Thackston, p. 345); a finished drawing

in the Diez album, showing a stylistic affinity with the drawings of his teacher, is ascribed to Šams-al-Dīn (Kühnel, p. 69).

Under the Jalayerids(736-835/1336-1432). After the fall of the Il-khanids the Jalayerids succeeded to their western and northwestern domains. The Jalayerids were dedicated patrons of the book arts, and under their tutelage the classic canons of Persian painting and drawing evolved. Although varying considerably in subject matter and finish, drawings, by their immediacy, provide a closer view of artistic creativity in this period than would surviving paintings alone. The Istanbul and Diez albums contain preliminary sketches, usually undated and unsigned, that can be identified as Jalayerid from comparison with dated paintings and from internal evidence. Human figures tend to be elongated and long-waisted, with tall caps or turbans pulled down on one side. The horses are small in body and have proportionally smaller heads; other animals, like lions, appear in both naturalistic and improbable poses, while swimming ducks and birds in flight are abundant. Landscape elements are very diverse. Hunting and animal-combat scenes were particularly popular (e.g., Topkapı Saray, ms. no. H 2152, fols. 8r, 14r, 34v, 53r, 63v, 45v, 70, 74v, 79r, 90v, 51r, 53r, 64v, 68r, 91, 45v, 50v, 83v, 95r, 98v; Lentz and Lowry, nos. 75-79, 82, 83). These drawings help to clarify artistic relations between the Jalayerids and the contemporary Muzaffarid rulers (713-95/1314-93) of Fārs, on one hand, and the Timurid courts of the 15th century, on the other. The Muzaffarid style appears to have been a provincial offshoot of the Jalayerid.

Dūst-Moḥammad reported that ʿAbd-al-Ḥayy, a pupil of Šams-al-Dīn, “instructed Sultan Aḥmad [784-813/1382-1410] in depiction so that the sultan himself produced a scene . . . in *qalam-siyahi*” (Thackston, p. 345). Tīmūr, who invaded Persia in 795/1392, took ʿAbd al-Ḥayy back to Samarqand, where he remained the rest of his life and “all masters imitated his work” (Thackston, p. 345). Moḥammad Ḵayyām, though not mentioned by Dūst-Moḥammad, was a prolific and imaginative Jalayerid master, who frequently signed his drawings (Plate XLVII). His output included single animals, especially lions, and animal and human combat scenes, all characterized by a simple, undifferentiated line, with the addition of spots of gold and red (Lentz and Lowry, nos. 82-83 n. 91; Kühnel, figs. 4-10). Two of his drawings (Kühnel, figs. 4, 5) are after drawings by ʿAbd-al-Ḥayy. A single artistic lineage can thus be traced from Aḥmad Mūsā in the time of the Il-khanid Abū Saʿīd to Moḥammad Ḵayyām in the early 15th century. Although Moḥammad Ḵayyām apparently lived long enough to be

employed in Bāysonḡor's *ketāb-ḵāna* (Sakisian, pp. 60-61, mentioning a piece of calligraphy dated 812/1409), his style remained quintessentially Jalayerid (e.g., Kühnel, figs. 6-8; Lentz and Lowry, no. 83).

The culminating achievements of Jalayerid art are the marginal drawings (actually each seeming a full-page drawing with text panels superimposed) of the *Dīvān* of Sultan Aḥmad Jalāyer, from the opening years of the 15th century and now in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. These drawings, with touches of gold and washes of blue, are imbued with a combination of naturalism and lyricism in which Chinese influence is evident but in which there is also a suggestion of familiarity with European manuscript painting (Atıl, nos. 1, 4; Plate XLVIII).

The Timurid period. Sultan Aḥmad Jalāyer's son-in-law Eskandar Solṭān, Timurid governor of Fārs from 812/1409 to 817/1414 during the reign of his uncle Šāhroḵ (807-50/1405-47), fell heir to the Jalayerid tradition of cultivated patronage. A series of manuscripts made for Eskandar Solṭān, who seemed to prefer small portable volumes like two miscellanies of 813/1410-11 (in the Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, and the British Museum, London, respectively), are adorned with lively and delicate decorative drawings, in addition to their painted illustrations: "Another distinguishing element of several of Iskandar's manuscripts is the accompanying illumination and drawing . . . in the margins, in scalloped medallions, and on entire pages" (Lentz and Lowry, p. 119 no. 36; Akimushkin and Ivanov, pl. IX; Plate XLIX). When Eskandar Solṭān was blinded for rebelling against Šāhroḵ in 817/1414 the center of court patronage shifted to the Timurid capital, Herat, under the aegis of Bāysonḡor. The tradition established under the Jalayerids and carried on by Eskandar Solṭān was further developed at Herat. Timurid court artists adopted similar subject matter, though their work was less experimental and varied than that produced under the Jalayerids. For example, a drawing that has been labeled "Bāysonḡor Slays a Wolf," representing the theme of princely valor and skill, is characterized by economy of line and a sense of effortless power (Lentz and Lowry, no. 33). The face of the prince is too idealized to justify identification with Bāysonḡōr, however; he seems to have been more accurately depicted in frontispieces to manuscripts made for him (Lentz and Lowry, pp. 66, 125).

Timurid decorative designs, often within shaped cartouches, follow their predecessors so closely that distinguishing material from the two periods is very difficult (see, e.g., Lentz and Lowry, nos. 75, 90-96). Although much of the

vocabulary in these drawings had originally been borrowed from China, by the 15th century it had been thoroughly assimilated. Nevertheless, a renewed interest in Chinese art may have been stimulated by missions to and from China during the reign of Šāhroḵ, as suggested by a drawing of two arhats copied from a Yüan dynasty original (Swietochowski and Babaie, no. 2). Extant underdrawing from the early Timurid period attests the mastery of draftsmanship achieved by court artists (see, e.g., Soucek, fig. 4; Lentz and Lowry, nos. 64, 65).

In his aforementioned preface Dūst-Moḥammad described Herat as an artistic center during the reign of Sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā (875-912/1470-1506). He had high praise for Behzād, best known for his paintings but demonstrably also a great draftsman. A late 15th-century drawing of a youth teasingly removing a bottle from the reach of an older man has been assigned to him by Stuart Cary Welch; the economy of line and keen observation of the figures seem to confirm the attribution (Lentz and Lowry, no. 158). Among other late 15th-century Herat artists one was particularly recognized for his drawings. In *Tārīḵ-e rašīdī* Mīrzā Moḥammad-Ḥaydār Doḡlāt (905-58/1500-51), a Central Asian cousin of Bābor, founder of the Mughal dynasty, praised Šāh Moẓaffar even above Behzād: “His pen and ink drawings (*qalam-sīāhī*) are to be found in the possession of some people [and] the masters of this art consider them very dear” (Thackston, p. 361). Little of Šāh Moẓaffar’s work seems to have survived, perhaps because he died at the age of twenty-four years; it is not clear whether two of his unpublished works in the Bahrām Mīrzā album are drawings or paintings (Lentz and Lowry, p. 326 n. 376; Stchoukine, pp. 18-20, mentioning a citation to Šāh Moẓaffar in a chronicle but without identification of his work).

Although the chroniclers did not mention artists who worked for the contemporary Turkman sultans, two Istanbul albums (mss. nos. H 2153, H 2160) are treasure troves of Turkman paintings and drawings through the reign of the Āq Qoyunlū sultan Yaʿqūb (883-96/1478-90). Quite a number bear what appear to be valid ascriptions to the artists Šayḵī and Dārvīš Moḥammad (Çağman, pp. 31-33; Tanindi, p. 38). More problematic are works ascribed to Moḥammad Sīāh-qalam (lit., “black pen,” suggesting his preference for drawing as a medium). This name is most closely associated with a series of pictures of demons and nomads in black and reddish tones that have aroused much speculation but are not relevant here; there are also a few drawings ascribed to him that seem to fit stylistically into the period of Sultan Yaʿqūb

(e.g., ms. no. H 2160, fols. 34r, 75r, 78r; Çağman, fig. 461).

The Safavid period. The Timurid dynasty came to an end in Persia with the death of Sultan Ḥosayn. In 907/1501 the first Safavid shah, Esmāʿīl I (907-30/1501-24), was crowned in Tabrīz, and in 916/1510 he took Herat from the Uzbek conquerors. The Safavid court style thus developed from a combination of the Timurid Herat style with the Āq Qoyunlū style of Tabrīz.

Shāh Ṭahmāsb (930-84/1524-76) was, like his father, a great patron of the arts during the first half of his reign. Under his patronage there seems to have been increased appreciation of drawings, for a considerable number of finished examples survive. The themes continued to parallel those of painting (see, e.g., Atıl, no. 14; Swietochowski and Babaie, nos. 7, 9). The two artists of this period who received the most unstinted praise from Dūst-Moḥammad were Solṭān-Moḥammad and Āqā Mīrak (Thackston, p. 348); although both were superb draftsmen, it is for their paintings that they are admired today. Welch has convincingly attributed to Solṭān-Moḥammad several border drawings in a dispersed copy of Saʿdī's *Golestān*, executed in shades of gold and silver and filled with real and imagined beasts and birds, figures, and angels amid trees, foliage, and rocks. Āqā Mīrak was noted for his ornamental drawings and was cited by Ṣādeqī Beg Afšār in *Qānūn-e ṣowar* for his animal designs; Welch has attributed to him the original borders of a manuscript of Neẓāmī's *Ḵamsa* in the British Museum, with birds, beasts, and foliage in silver and shades of gold (S. C. Welch, 1979, no. 52).

In the mid-16th century the Safavid capital was moved from Tabrīz to Qazvīn, but Ṭahmāsb himself turned away from artistic patronage, and court artists sought employment with such cultivated princes as the shah's brother Bahrām Mīrzā and the latter's son Ebrāhīm Mīrzā, as well as at the Mughal court of Homāyūn at Kabul and later at Delhi. Paintings and drawings for albums (*moraqqaʿ*s) began to overshadow manuscript illustrations in importance as sources of patronage spread outward from court circles; more affordable drawings were increasingly in demand among discerning but less affluent collectors. Patrons sought the drawings of individual artists, who became increasingly aware of their own worth and began to sign their works more frequently. A number of talented artists, most notably Shaikḥ Moḥammad, Moḥammadī, and Ṣādeqī Beg, became fascinated by the innovative possibilities of line drawings. Unlike their manuscript illustrations, their drawings tend to be of single or paired figures and occasional scenes unrelated to any narrative (Plate L). Stimulated by one another's work, they

developed a fluid, calligraphic style at the court of Qazvīn before migrating to Khorasan in search of princely patronage there. Shaikh Moḥammad, for example, was also a calligrapher who exploited the calligraphic line in his drawings (for an extensive study of his work, see Dickson and Welch, pp. 166-68; S. C. Welch, 1979, nos. 73, 76, 77, 80, 84; idem, 1976, pls. 39, 41, 46, 47, 48; cf. A. Welch, 1974, pp. 459-66; Simpson, pp. 99-112). After leaving Shah Ṭahmāsb's atelier he accompanied Ebrāhīm Mīrzā to Mašhad, remaining in his employ from about 1556 to about 1576, then serving at the court at Qazvīn until the accession of Shah ʿAbbās I (996-1038/1588-1629). As Welch noted, "Shaykh-Muhammad's spirited drawings were eagerly sought after. . . . It could be argued that he was responsible for the surge of interest in drawing for its own sake. . . ." (S. C. Welch, 1979, pp. 190-91). Moḥammadī is admired today principally for his delicately rendered pastoral drawings heightened with colored washes and for graceful figures derived from those of his predecessors in Ṭahmāsb's atelier (Robinson, 1965, pl. 39; idem, 1976, pl. V). Ṣādeqī Beg worked at the court of Esmāʿīl II (984-85/1576-78), moved on to Khorasan, then served as head of the royal library of Shāh ʿAbbās for approximately ten years. He was an exponent of the calligraphic line, which swells, diminishes, disappears, re-emerges, yet defines form, face, and drapery (A. Welch, 1973, no. 2).

The "Qazvīn style" influenced the greatest artist of the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Reżā ʿAbbāsī (d. 1045/1635), also known as Āqā Reżā, son of the painter ʿAlī-Aṣḡar and universally recognized not only as the greatest artist of the reign of Shāh ʿAbbās I but also as one of the most talented in the history of Persian painting and drawing (A. Welch, 1974. pp. 478-82; Canby, pp. 71-84). Even as a young man his influence on his contemporaries was profound, and his style and subject matter dominated the 17th century. His drawings reveal not only his mastery of fluid line contrasted with sputtering strokes but also nuances of form, drapery folds, and textures, as well as psychological depth (see, e.g., A. Welch, 1973, no. 9). Among his preferred subjects were studies of single figures, especially graceful youths and contemplative older men, often darvishes (A. Welch, 1973, no. 7; Atıl, nos. 19, 32; Canby, nos. 9, 11, 13; Swietochowski and Babaie, no. 32; Plate LI). He also drew closely observed genre scenes (e.g., Atıl, no. 33, a camp scene, dated 1048/1639). That Reżā drew from life is known from his sketch of a bald man holding his turban and scratching his head; according to the inscription, it was drawn in Mašhad on Friday, 10 Moḥarram 1007/13 August 1598 in the house of Mīrzā Ḵᵛājagī, from which it can be deduced that the figure was a pilgrim to the holy city, that the

evening was uncomfortably warm, and that Reżā's host on this anniversary of Shiʿite martyrdom was a pious man (Swietochowski and Babaie, fig. 4). Reżā copied works of Behzād and was familiar with those of Moḥammadī and Shaikḥ Moḥammad. Ṣadeqī Beg in turn imitated Reżā's calligraphic line.

What may be a self-portrait of Reżā's son Moḥammad-Šafīʿ ʿAbbāsī is mounted next to a portrait of his father in the so-called "Reżā ʿAbbāsī album" in the Freer Gallery (Atıl, no. 47); it shows a sharp-featured youth absorbed in a flower drawing (Stchoukine, 1964, p. 90). A remarkable early drawing (dated 1038/1627-28) of Yūsof at the court of Zolayḵā, filled with figures, architecture, and landscape elements, appears to have been a cartoon for a mural like those in the Čehel Sotūn in Isfahan; if so, it is the only one surviving from the Safavid period (Rogers, no. 58). Although Šafīʿ ʿAbbāsī could produce fine drawings in the accepted 17th-century mode (see, e.g., Falk, no. 88), he is particularly noted for bird and flower paintings and drawings, a departure from the usual subjects of the time. The vogue that he introduced lasted into the 20th century. The largest extant collection of his works, in the so-called "Cobb album" in the British Museum includes drawings dated from 1050/1640 until his death in 1082/1672. The European source for at least one of them was verified by Basil Gray, who concluded that the floral drawings were designs for textile patterns (1959). No doubt designs of this sort were transferred to other media, but many of the pieces from this album are finished drawings inscribed by the artist, in the manner of Reżā, a practice unlikely in pattern books (Farhad, p. 198).

The drawings of three of the most prominent artists working in the mid-17th century "style of Isfahan," where the Safavid capital had been moved, grew directly out of the work of Reżā. Moḥammad-Qāsem, Moḥammad-Yūsof, and Moḥammad-ʿAlī evolved a style that, despite individual differences, was fluently linear, though somewhat mannered, with repetitive patterns of lines creating both decorative and dynamic effects. The same single figure types, particularly of contemplative older men and idealized androgynous young men and women, are generally shown at ease in landscapes with touches of washed color and occasional brighter accents. Moḥammad-Qāsem was the most innovative of the three (Plate LII), but all were highly accomplished. By far the most gifted of Reżā's students was Moʿīn Moṣawwer, whose career lasted from the 1630s to the end of the century. He was extraordinarily prolific, producing manuscript and detached illustrations and drawings of single figures or small groups. His famous painted portrait of Reżā, begun,

according to the inscription, in 1044/1635, shortly before the master's death, and completed forty years later, confirms his sure and sensitive draftsmanship (A. Welch, 1973, no. 76). Moʿīn adopted Reżā's habit of jotting notations on his drawings, some of which reveal that the sketches were spontaneous, if not drawn from life (Atıl, nos. 34, 41). A drawing of the unusual subject of a youth carrying a rooster attests his powers of observation; according to the inscription, it was drawn in haste for his son Āqā Zamān on 15 Ḏu'l-Hejja 1066/4 October 1656 (Farhad, 1990, fig. 4). The most detailed notation by the artist appears on a drawing made at the end of February 1672 in his own home, in order to distract himself from the extreme rigors of winter. At the palace gates a lion, a royal gift to Shah Solaymān (1077-1105/1666-94), had suddenly attacked and killed a youth, tearing away half his face. Moʿīn was probably not present at this event, but his drawing has the drama of an eyewitness rendition, except that the lion has been adorned with tiger stripes (A. Welch, 1973, no. 75). Moʿīn was active until about 1697 and appears to have had many pupils.

The 18th century was a turbulent period in Persian history, and the production, or at least survival, of works of art on paper diminished dramatically. Artists seem to have turned away from manuscripts and album pages to produce lacquer paintings on penboxes and other luxury objects. Nevertheless, surviving works by Moḥammad-Bāqer (Swietochowski and Babaie, no. 19; Plate LIII) and others demonstrate that there was still a market for drawings and artists who were fine draftsmen. Moḥammad-Bāqer carried on the tradition of Šafīʿ ʿAbbāsī in painting and drawing flowers, birds, and insects.

During the 19th century Qajar patrons preferred oil painting and portraiture, but artists of the 19th and 20th centuries continued to draw subjects evolved in the 15-17th centuries.

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[Plate numbers in this entry have been corrected; the numbers given in the print edition's version of the entry are in error.]