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xxi. INDIAN INFLUENCES ON PERSIAN PAINTING

During the 17th century, the flow of artistic influences between Persia and India reversed. Paintings and drawings in the developed Mughal style of the first quarter of the century were imported to the courts and bazaars of Isfahan. There the “new Indian art—”with its appealing coloration (dependent on Persian miniature painting techniques) and incorporating European perspectival organization, modeling, and figure characterization—was eagerly sought out and copied by painters such as Shaikh ʿAbbāsi, Moḥammad-Zamān, and ʿAliqoli Jabbadār. It has long been thought that the three artists made trips to India or Kashmir to learn the new aesthetic, but this need not have been the case. At least one Persia-trained artist, Moḥammad Khan, who was patronized by Dārā Šokōh, was back in Isfahan in 1670. Due to exposure to Mughal art, Persian painting of the 17th century underwent a mammoth stylistic change, a change less dependent on direct exposure to European art than heretofore imagined.

Shaikh ʿAbbasi (ʿAbbāsi, fl. 1650-84; q.v.), Mohammad Zaman (Moḥammad

Zamān, fl. 1649-1704), and ʿAliqoli Jobbadar (Jobbadār, fl. 1657-1716; q.v.), Persian artists who adopted European perspective and themes in their work on paper and papier-maché, also produced paintings that copy Indian works of art or are heavily influenced by them. Shaikh ʿAbbasi was attached to the courts of Shah ʿAbbās II (r. 1642-66) and Shah Solaymān (r. 1666-94). In his work, European influence is sifted through an Indian veneer, probably coming from Golconda (Skelton, in *EIr*. I, pp. 86-88; Karimzāda, I, pp. 251-52, no. 490). He made portraits of the Safavid rulers of Persia and Mughal rulers and princes, such as a posthumous picture of Prince Dārā Šokōh (q.v.), dated 1080/1669-70 in the Keir Collection, London (Plate X). The prince's headwear resembles a Scottish tam-o'-shanter more than a Mughal turban; his swarthy face and his clothing (*jāma*) are modeled by stippling. He stands in front of a rounded hill broken up into hillocks by dark, stippled outlines and clumps of large leaves, ʿAbbasi's usual type of distinctive background. Probably the models for Shaikh ʿAbbasi's portraits were sets of pictures of rulers of Golconda and Bijapur, the Mughal emperors and nobles, and the Safavid shahs that were sold as mementos by Golconda artists (cf. Soudavar, 1992, p. 355, no. 140). Shaikh ʿAbbasi often painted young Indian women, sometimes paired with or embraced by young men wearing Persian costume. A portrait of 1057/1647 in the Art and History Trust Collection shows a gracefully posed young woman standing in front of willow trees and plants typical of Shaikh ʿAbbasi's mentor Reżā ʿAbbāsi (Soudavar, 1992, pp. 367-68, no. 146). The woman's "Indian" dress is much misunderstood—for instance, ruffles outlining the V-neck of her garment. It is doubtful that the artist had seen Indian garments actually worn. Thirty-five years later Shaikh ʿAbbasi signed and dated another tinted drawing of a woman in Indian dress, now held in the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (Adamova, p. 242, no. 33). While the earlier figure was notable for the lifelike swing of her pose, the later woman stands rigidly; the outlines of the figure and her costume are hard and precise, reinforced by pronounced chiaroscuro and modeled volumes, a technique probably derived from European engravings. The background of overlapping hills has stippled vegetation and includes the artist's signature box prominently on the hillside. As Ada T. Adamova notes, "the pictorial elements of the earlier Isfahan style are superseded increasingly by stiffness and formalized rigidity in the representation of figures" (Adamova, p. 82). Why did Shaikh ʿAbbasi portray so many Indian women? Abolala Soudavar suggests that it was due to a growing religious conservatism in Safavid society. He believes that, due to a new emphasis on the sequestering and veiling of Persian women, the artists turned to representations of Indian women (1992,

p. 368). Although the *ʿolamā* gained progressively more influence over the Persian government during the reigns of Shah Solaymān and Shah Sultan Ḥosayn, this was not the case under Shah ʿAbbās II, when Shaikh ʿAbbasi first adopted this theme. Shaikh ʿAbbasi was influenced by a new Persian taste for exotic European and Indian subject matter, and he apparently had access to Indian and Deccani works of art in the royal Persian *ketāb-ḵāna* and the Isfahan bazaars. Mohammad Zaman's name appears on a painting of a group of Indian men seated in candlelight, held in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Davis Album, 30.95.174.1; as first read by Robert Skelton, in museum records). The picture once faced another "Mughal" miniature with similar subject matter signed by ʿAliqoli Jobbadar and dated 1085/1674-75 (ibid., 30.95.174.2). Six other copies of Indian paintings closely related to these two and bearing ascriptions to ʿAliqoli are in the St. Petersburg Album (Ivanov, Grek, and Akimushkin, 1962, pls. 76-78). One of these is inscribed "ʿAliqoli Beg Jobbadār," and another, *raqam-e ʿAliqoli ḡolāmzāda-ye Šāh ʿAbbās ṯāni* (r. 1642-66; Plate XI). The eight figures in Mughal dress surrounding an old Shaikh are illuminated by a single candle, and the competency of their drawing varies. The Shaikh and three men immediately next to him are fine copies of a work by a Mughal master painter; the face of the standing boy is in the style of a follower of Reżā ʿAbbāsi; and the strongly modeled backs of the two armed soldiers on the lower right are based on yet a third source. While the faces are duplicated in an admirable manner, folds of the garments are not descriptive of bodies underneath, particularly of the bodies of the two men on the lower left. The background, too, is made up of disparate elements. ʿAliqoli Jobbadar borrowed motifs from several sources, and failed to integrate them in a convincing manner. At the beginning of his career, in his first dated painting, of 1068/1657-58, ʿAliqoli made a fine copy of a Mughal painting of circa 1630-40, believed to be by Govar-dhan. It shows a dervish before an encampment, perhaps to be identified as Majnun before Laylā's camp. The original and the copy once appeared side by side in an album broken up and sold in Paris in 1982 (Nouveau Drouot, *Art Islamique* [Sales Cat.], 23 June 1982, H, nos. 12-13; Falk, ed., p. 126, no. 98). A second picture from the "Drouot Album" (no. 4), of a young Mughal prince surrounded by a circle of teachers, has also been attributed to ʿAliqoli Jobbadar (Falk, ed., p. 127, no. 99). ʿAliqoli Beg Jobbadar copied Indian miniatures intermittently for twenty-seven years. The direct copies of his early years are the most successful, for he was never to learn how to create new works in a Mughal style that preserved the modeling and spatial relationships of actual Mughal work. If ʿAliqoli Jobbadar was a house-born slave of Shah ʿAbbās II, as the literal reading of the inscription on

the St. Petersburg miniature would suggest, he could not have traveled to India to make his studies of Mughal miniatures. He and possibly Mohammad Zaman as well were simply copying Indian miniatures of the 1630s-1650s that had passed into Persian collections, including probably the collection of Shah ʿAbbās II himself. The Persian painter Mohammad Khan, who worked in Kashmir, was employed by, or perhaps his pictures were simply collected by, Dārā Šokōh, the eldest son of Shah Jahān. Paintings by him are in a *moraqqaʿ* (an album in which paintings, drawings, and calligraphy specimens are mounted) now in the British Library, that Dārā Šokōh presented to his wife, Nādera Bānu Begom in 1051/1641-42 (Add. Or. 3129; Falk and Archer, 1981, pp. 72-81, no. 62). Mohammad Khan signed and dated, 1043/1633-34, a fine picture of a young man in Persian costume, kneeling and pouring wine into a small jeweled cup (fol. 21b; Falk and Archer, p. 385, color pl. 7), and five unsigned miniatures are attributed to him (foll. 15a, 22a, 23b, 50a, and 65b, illus. on pp. 382, 384, 394, and 398). His dated miniature is notable for its detailed rendering of an elaborate, bejeweled wine bottle, cup, and dagger and a plaid waist sash. A row of flowering plants and a band of small stones colored in grey to reddish tones line the bank of a stream. Pale depictions of trees and white birds on the horizon follow a Mughal model. While the face of the young man (as well as faces on foll. 15a and 22a) indicates an interest in realistic modeling, the figures are otherwise flat and show the painter's training in traditional Persian style. Three paintings attributed to Mohammad Khan in the Dārā Šokōh Album are of flowers and insects, a theme inspired by European herbals and notably developed by the Safavid artist Šafiʿ ʿAbbāsi between 1044/1634-35 and 1063/1652-53 (Akimushkin and Ivanov, nos. 71-73). An even closer comparison, however, is a study of a yellow narcissus and butterfly signed by the painter Moḥammad-Nāder Samarqandi in the collection of Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Khandalavala and Chandra, 1965, color plate E; cf. Falk and Archer, no. 68, fol. 65b, p. 398). Both are large and sturdy representations of flowers with a butterfly hovering over them, and are probably from the same workshop. Moḥammad-Nāder illustrated a *Yusof o Zolayḵā* in Kashmir (modern Srinagar) in 1651 and is generally associated with this city (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ms 31; Leach, figs. 2-4). Probably the then 19-year-old Dārā Šokōh purchased flower paintings as well as other work by Mohammad Khan during the royal visit to Kashmir in 1634 (ʿEnāyat Khan, tr., pp. 124-28, 136-39). An album in the Royal Library, Windsor Castle, contains miniatures that duplicate some of those in the Dārā Šokōh Album, and Falk and Archer attribute one of these to Mohammad Khan too (A.13, fol. 67v). Two other painters working on the Dārā Šokōh Album followed the style of Mohammad

Khan (Falk and Archer, p. 73), and Mohammad Khan may have been head of a "Persian" painting workshop in the city of Kashmir by 1633. A fine drawing of a Persian nobleman by Mohammad Khan has been discovered in the Raza Library, Rampur (Album 13, fol. 13a; Schmitz and Desai, pl. 95). The man stands facing left, his gaze averted to a small flower held in his raised right hand. His face and turban are colored, but the body is rendered in line, as a finished drawing. He wears an elaborate coat with fur collar, and his large turban of red, blue, gold, and black plaid cloth is carefully executed. His face with its prominent nose is an obvious likeness rather than an idealized portrait. A line of verse to the left of the figure translates: "The least servant of Shah ʿAbbās [II], Mohammad Khan, makes the realistic picture with the point of a pen, 1070 [1659-60]." An inscription in the lower right corner identifies the subject as "a picture of ʿAliqoli Khan." A copy of this work, by a less skilled hand, in the Golestān Library, Tehran, includes the same verse, date, and identification of the portrait (Kubičkova, pl. 40). This same nobleman was the subject of a painting in the Art and History Trust Collection. The kneeling man wears a grey-fur-collared, striped red coat over a striped lavender coat, the narrow stripes carefully describing the volumes of the body underneath. The hands are large and rather flaccid, with henna-dyed nails; the thumbs are extremely short in comparison to the long curling fingers. In the background a partially drawn-up curtain reveals a row of tall, thick leaves and two deeply eroded mountainsides. From the partially cut off inscription on the lower left corner Soudavar has read "ʿAliqoli," and then, mistakenly we believe, identified the words as the signature of the painter ʿAliqoli Jobbadār (p. 373). We believe this to be another work by Mohammad Khan and the subject a portrait of ʿAliqoli (Khan). Striped robes describing the body underneath in such a lifelike manner are not found in the work of Isfahan masters of this period. Striped clothing does appear in illustrations of a *Maṯnawi* by Ḵᵛāja Aḥsan-Allāh Ẓafar Khan, the poet and intermittent governor of Kashmir (1633-38, 1642-58; Royal Asiatic Society, London, no. 203; Pinder-Wilson, pp. 418-22, figs. 18-21). In a double-page miniature of Zafar (Ẓafar) Khan in discussion with a clergyman in the presence of his court (foll. 19b-20a; Pinder-Wilson, figs. 18-19, or Losty, 1982, p. 100, fig. 83), robes have stripes of varying widths and include ones similar to those in Moḥammad-ʿAli's signed portrait. Other characteristics of Mohammad Khan's style are also present: the large and awkward rendering of hands, the slightly-off positioning of the nose in three-quarter faces; the arched, thin eyebrows, the deeply eroded mountains seen through the window; and, in a scene of Zafar Khan and his son in a garden, streams are closely edged by rocks, as in Mohammad Khan's picture of

a cupbearer (*sāqi*) pouring wine, held in the British Library (Pinder-Wilson, figs. 20-21; cf. Falk and Archer, color pl. 7). An inscription on the flyleaf written by ʿEnāyat Khan b. Ẓafar Khan on 14 Ḏu'l-ḥejja 1077/6 June 1667 in Kashmir attributes the paintings to Bešndās-e Khan ʿĀlam. Zafar Khan's colophon is dated 1073/1662-63 at Lahore; but the miniatures are not contiguous with the text, and it is generally assumed that they were painted around 1640-45. Bešndās, who accompanied the Ḵān-e ʿĀlam Mirzā Barḵʷordār Khan on a long diplomatic visit to the court of Shah ʿAbbās I (r. 1587-1629), was renowned as a portrait painter. Although Ẓafar Khan's son has confused the name of Bešndās's patron, there is some likeness to Bešndās's style in the *Maṯnawi* miniatures, as Milo Beach has noted (1978, pp. 110-11). Some of the portrait faces may well be by Bešndās, but the several characteristics of Mohammad Khan's style we see in these paintings would argue that he was the painter of the bodies of the men, the interiors, and gardens. Inscriptions on the portraits of ʿAliqoli Khan make it possible to document a Persian artist, whose style shows years of Indian influence assimilated in Kashmir, and who finally returned to work for Shah ʿAbbās II in Isfahan. During his reign unnamed artists trained in the realistic Mughal style painted four large murals on Persian historical subjects in the grand hall of the Čehel Sotun Palace (q.v.) in Isfahan, as well as a smaller mural in a corridor showing an episode from the Indian story *Suz o godāz* of Nawʿi Ḵabušāni. Further research may indicate that Mohammad Khan was an artist on this project.

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