

# **Between the Safavids and the Mughals: Art and Artists in Transition\***

In the year 1544, the Mughal emperor Humāyūn (r. 1530-40, and 1555-56) came to the Safavid court seeking Shāh Tahmāsb's help to recapture his kingdom. Tahmāsb (r. 1524-76) obliged and Humāyūn eventually recovered his throne.

The political consequences of the Safavid encounter notwithstanding, Humāyūn's visit is mostly remembered as a fortuitous event that launched the development of the Mughal school of painting. From an art historical perspective, its timing couldn't be more propitious: Persian courtly painting had reached new heights but, at the same time, the royal Safavid library-atelier was sliding into disarray. It thus prompted, the departure of the celebrated painters Mīr Sayyīd `Alī and `Abd al-ḥamad for the Mughal court. Other artists followed suit. Some remained there, and some came back and paved the way for the migration of the next generation of painters.

This study focuses on the conditions that led to three successive migratory waves between the Safavid and Mughal courts from 1544 to 1585, with an emphasis on the stylistic development of one particular third wave artist, the famous Farrukh Beyg.

## The First Wave

### ***The Discovery of Persian Painting Masterpieces***

Humāyūn arrived in Iran accompanied by his Khurasanian wife, Ḥamida Bānū (d. 1604).<sup>1</sup> Both were interested in illustrated manuscripts, and the trip to the Safavid

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\* I am indebted to Sheila Canby who allowed me to present this paper at the British Museum on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1998 and suggested its publication to *IRAN*, and to John Seyller who, by sending me a copy of his article on Farrukh Beyg, prompted my research on earlier works of this artist and the compilation of this paper. I am also indebted to Marianna Shreve Simpson who made available to me her own set of slides while I was waiting for a set that I had requested from the Topkapi Saray Museum.

domain provided an opportunity to see Persian painting at its best: Herāt library treasures that Timurid princes - who had fled the Shibānid occupation of Khurasan - had brought westward, and the new Safavid synthesis that emerged from the blending of the Herāt and Turkaman styles of painting. Each had a different reaction towards the old and the new. While Humāyūn sought Safavid artists for his own library-atelier, Ḥamida Bānū expressed a preference for the acquisition of Timurid manuscripts from her ancestral Khurasan. Indeed, notations on the famous 1486 *Gulistān* of Sa`dī (AHT, no. 36) copied by Sultan-`Alī Mashhadī and probably commissioned by Mīr `Alī-Shīr as a present for Sultan-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā (r. 1470-1506),<sup>2</sup> specify that it was Ḥamida Bānū and not Humāyūn, who acquired this *Gulistān* manuscript (PI. 1a).<sup>3</sup> At her death, it was inherited by her son and was integrated into the Mughal royal library.

### ***A Timurid and Safavid Jousting Field***

Another *Gulistān* manuscript (FGA, F1998.5) that found its way into the Mughal royal library, probably came to India as a gift from Tahmāsb. Although there are no direct references to this effect, an array of circumstantial evidence upholds the contention that through the gift of this manuscript, Tahmāsb had sought to honor Humāyūn's lineage.

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<sup>1</sup> Ḥamida Bānū was a descendant of the celebrated Shaykh Aḥmad of Jām (1049-1141); Riazul Islam (1970), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Soudavar (1992), pp. 134-75.

<sup>3</sup> There are two notations by Mughal librarians on this colophon page which refer to Ḥamida Bānū as Maryam Makānī (the one with the dignity of Mary), and one inscription on the first page by Emperor Jahāngīr – who refers to her as *mādar-i kalān* (grandmother); *ibid.*, p. 101. The earliest inscription is written in a beautiful Persian style *nasta`liq* with a seal that reads “Ghiyās al-din the follower of Akbar Shāh 996/1587,” perhaps the handwriting of Ghiyās Beyg of Tehran later known as I`timād al-daula. Another Timurid manuscript, the *Khamsa* of Mīr `Alī-Shīr copied by Sultan-`Alī Mashhadī in 1492 (Royal Library, Windsor, RCIN 1005032), that bears the signs of a passage through Bukhara, was acquired by Ḥamida Bānū after the death of her husband; Seyller (1997), p. 295. The manuscript has two seal marks that reads:

خاتم هرکس توقيع محبت باشد \* (حمیده بانو بیگم) \* مهر او آئینه چهره دولت باشد

When one's seal bears the sign of love \* (Ḥamida Bānū Beygom)\* His (her) stamp shall become a reflection of good fortune.

The seal marks are reportedly dated 968/1560 although not visible in the reproduction (*ibid.*, fig.6).

Another manuscript that once belonged to Ḥamida Bānū is a copy of *Rāmāyānā* (private collection), copied by the Persian expatriate `Abdorrhāshīd-i Daylamī in 1594, the nephew of the celebrated Mīr `Imād; *ibid.*, p. 304.

Copied by Sultan `Alī Mashhadī in 1468, and originally illustrated with five Timurid paintings, this small scale *Gulistān*'s calligraphy was rather weak and inferior to the prevailing *nasta`liq* standards of the 1540's; and apart from a small illuminated opening heading, it had no other illumination or embellishing detail.<sup>4</sup> And yet, very elaborate Safavid margin paintings, mostly attributable to Āghā Mīrak, were added over some sixteen pages.<sup>5</sup> As the margin paintings are stylistically more colorful and intricate than those of the Shāh Tahmāsb *Khamsa* (BL, Or. 2265) of c. 1539-43,<sup>6</sup> they should be dated to the mid 1540's.<sup>7</sup> This dating, in conjunction with the facts that the manuscript was copied in 1468 during the last year of the reign of Humāyūn's great grandfather, the Timurid Sultan Abū-Sa`īd (r. 1451-69), and that it was still in the Mughal library in the early years of Akbar's reign (r. 1556-1605),<sup>8</sup> leads to the conclusion that Humāyūn was thus honored by Shāh Tahmāsb with a manuscript from the library of his direct ancestor.<sup>9</sup> No other explanation can account for the addition of elaborate margins by the hand of the *shāh's* chief-painter and household superintendent, Āghā Mīrak, to a manuscript that did not seem to merit such extra embellishment.

While the apparent intent of the gift was to honor Humāyūn, the unusually elaborate Safavid margins<sup>10</sup> were also meant to overshadow the Timurid illumination

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<sup>4</sup> An inscription by Mon`im Beyg who received the manuscript from Akbar in 1567, notes that the manuscript had only five illustrations then; Soudavar (1992), pp. 332-38.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 178-79.

<sup>6</sup> For reproductions of some of the original margins of the *Khamsa* see Welch (1979), pp. 137, 144 and 145.

<sup>7</sup> A previous dating of 1530's is hereby corrected; Soudavar (1992), pp. 178-79.

<sup>8</sup> It was in Akbar's library up to the year 1567; *ibid.*, p. 332.

<sup>9</sup> Despite a reference by Mīrzā Haydar Dūghlāt that master painter Mansūr was working in the library-atelier of Sultan Abū-Sa`īd, no illustrated manuscript from Abū-Sa`īd's library and attributable to him has survived; the 1468 *Gulistān* may have originally included some works by him; *ibid.* p. 122.

<sup>10</sup> It is unusual to have highly elaborate margins added to an older manuscript. It is also significant that these margins are even more intricate than the original illuminated margins of the prestigious and exquisite Shāh Tahmāsb *Khamsa* of the British Library. The only comparable margins – albeit not as colorful – are from a 16<sup>th</sup> century manuscript, the text area of which was replaced by page sections from a seventeenth century *Gulistān* copied by the celebrated calligrapher Mīr `Imād; see Sotheby's Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>, 1990, lot 255. Some of these margins have been attributed to Sultan-Muhammad, see Welch (1979), nos. 45-46, and Soudavar (1992), p. 267. However, it is not clear whether they constituted integral parts of an original manuscript or were conceived as decorative margins for the embellishment of an older manuscript, and then reused to enhance the presentation of the Mīr's calligraphy.

and illustrations, and hint at the superiority of the new Safavid style.<sup>11</sup> In the same vein, the subsequent repainting of the original Timurid illustrations may have been an attempt to counter the earlier Safavid taunt with the highly developed Mughal style of the Shāh Jahān period (r. 1628-57).

Although a recent study attributes the cause of Mughal repainting to water damage sustained during a palace fire in 1644,<sup>12</sup> two distinctive sets of water-stains - from two different periods - are indications to the contrary. One set can be seen near the outer edge of the Safavid margins with no extension to the text area (see **PI. 1b**). Had flooding damaged illustrations during the palace incident, water-stains would have extended from edge to center.

A second set lies within the text area only and does not appear on the Safavid margins (see **PI. 1b**). It is the result of water damage sustained prior to the addition of those margins. If the paintings had suffered damage then, it would have been minimal for, judging from the remains of the Timurid painting apparent under a flaked area of the *Prophet and the Zoroastrian* (see **PI. 1c**), the old pigments seem complete and solidly attached to the paper substrate.<sup>13</sup> Also the Safavids would have most likely restored any such damage prior to giving the manuscript to Humāyūn. Furthermore, the Mughal paintings number six, one more than the original five, which means that at least one of the Mughal paintings was a net addition.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the Shāh Jahān period repainting seems to have been motivated by a factor other than a desire to cover water damage. It was probably an attempt to overshadow the Safavid work with the finest quality of imperial Mughal painting, and that is why six of the top Shāh Jahānī painters were chosen for this task: Govardhan, `Ābid, Bālchand, Payāg, Lālchand and Murār.<sup>15</sup> For

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<sup>11</sup> The idea to impress the Mughals with dazzling margins must have developed gradually, for the illumination on the first page is rather conventional and the shift to the highly elaborate green and gold style occurs only from the second page onwards, see Soudavar (1992), p. 179, where a detail of the first page illumination is reproduced.

<sup>12</sup> Welch (1985), p. 242.

<sup>13</sup> For most pages with painting, the stains hardly reach the painted area, see Soudavar (1992), pp. 332-33.

<sup>14</sup> This means that one of the paintings was added to a space that was originally left blank; perhaps *Sa`di in the Rose Garden* (fol.6v) on the reverse of which, the reflection of oxidizing paint duplicates the Mughal painting without hinting at the prior existence of a Timurid one, *ibid.* p. 333 and 335.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 335-38

two centuries this *Rose Garden* of Sa`di had turned into a jousting field between Timurid and Safavid artists.<sup>16</sup>

### ***Humāyūn's Invitation***

Humāyūn arrived at a time when the two great Shāh Tahmāsb manuscripts, the *Shāhnāma* and the *Khamsa*, had been substantially completed.<sup>17</sup> In the process, a new generation of artists had been trained most important of whom were the three `Alīs: Mīrzā `Alī son of Sultan-Muḥammad the lead artist of the Tabriz studio, Muẓaffar `Alī, a grand-nephew of the celebrated Bihzād, and Mīr Sayyīd `Alī son of Mīr Muśavvir; each a master in his own right. If Tahmāsb wished to impress Humāyūn with the prowess of his painters, it was wholly unnecessary. Humāyūn was captivated by their works and expressed his exuberance by offering a huge sum for the discharge of one of the *shāh's* painters: "if the emperor (i.e. Tahmāsb) releases Mīr Muśavvir to me I shall offer one thousand *tumāns* in exchange."<sup>18</sup> This proposal is related by Būdāq-i Munshī-yi Qazvinī who, in 1544, as secretary of Tahmāsb's brother, Bahrām Mīrzā (1517-49), was well placed to comment on the event.<sup>19</sup> Būdāq then adds: "it is thus that the Mir's son who had become better than his father, went earlier to India, and the father followed him there." Būdāq's text is subsequently plagiarized by `Qāẓī Aḥmad in his famous *Gulistān-i Hunar* treatise with one exception: he omits the important information that "Mīr Muśavvir was undoubtedly a man (of strong character), and was in disgrace" at the time of Humāyūn's arrival.<sup>20</sup> This omitted information is the key to the understanding why Humāyūn picked the aging Mīr Muśavvir instead of a younger and more promising second generation painter: as a guest of Tahmāsb it was improper for him to ask for painters who were still official employees of the royal library-atelier. He therefore chose

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<sup>16</sup> The Mughals were descendants of Timur and therefore, Timurids as well.

<sup>17</sup> Both of these manuscripts display unfinished areas.

<sup>18</sup> Būdāq (1576), p. 111b.

<sup>19</sup> Būdāq was Bahrām's secretary from c. 1536 to 1549; *ibid.* pp. 316a,b and Soudavar (1992), p.258. Bahrām Mīrzā was one of the official hosts of Humāyūn during his sojourn in Safavid territory, Qomī (1980), vol. 1, p. 307.

<sup>20</sup> Būdāq (1576), p. 111a:

میر مصور...مرد بود لایب، در آخر پریشان اوقات شد و میرزا همایون که بعراق آمد اظهار کرد که اگر پادشاه میرمصور را بمن دهند هزار تومان پیشکش میدهم، بدین حکایت پسر میر که از پدر بهتر شده بود، پیشتر بهند رفت، پدر هم از دنباله رفت.

the one master-painter that the Shāh had dismissed.<sup>21</sup> Būdāq's contention that Humāyūn's invitation was addressed to the Mīr and that his son seized upon the occasion and went to the Mughal court first, is corroborated by the text of Mīr Muśavvir's letter to Humāyūn, reproduced in a painting attributed to Mīrzā Sayyīd `Alī (PI. 1d). This letter is illustrated as a petition in the hands of a kneeling old man that has been erroneously assumed to represent Mīr Muśavvir.<sup>22</sup> The Mīr cannot be writing a letter from afar and present it to Humāyūn at the same time. Indeed, in his letter, the Mīr is apologizing to the emperor for his delay in joining the Mughal court and promises that he will soon do so:

Petition from the old and long time slave, Mīr Muśavvir,

It is a great honor to report that it has been a while since this slave's son (i.e. Mīr Sayyīd `Alī) has entered the services of Your Majesty. It is hoped that he shall become the subject of royal munificence. (As for me) I am hopeful to start my journey soon and join Your Majesty's services. God willing, the shadow of your radiance [shall protect us forever].<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, the kneeling old man is portrayed with a sumptuous gold embroidered robe, and a dark skin, which, according to Persian painting conventions,

<sup>21</sup> Mīr Mośavvir's fall in disgrace must have been in mid 1530's since he did not contribute to the British Library *Khamsa* (a signature on the wall of *Nushīravān Listening to the Owls in the Ruined Palace* (fol. 15v) previously thought as one from Mīr Muśavvir has been argued by this author to be that of Āghā Mīrak, Soudavar (1992), p. 178). His downfall may have been due to a close association with Tahmāsb's rebellious brother, Sām Mīrzā, who was arrested in 1535; Soudavar (1997), p. 67.

<sup>22</sup> Okada (1989), p. 130, Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, p. 189. Both publications accept the attribution to Mīr Sayyīd `Alī reportedly inscribed below the painting.

<sup>23</sup> Okada refers to Stchoukine and Minorsky's spotty and produces an undecipherable text; Okada (1989), p. 132. The letter must be reconfigured by reinserting within the text, important words that are traditionally pulled to the margin or the top of the document:

هو  
(الله تعالی)

عرضه داشت پیرغلام دیرینه میرمصور. بجز عرض میرساند که مدت مدید شد که بنده زاده  
در غلامی بسر میبرد، امیدوار [چندانست که عنایت [از] او دریغ نفرمایند، امید  
[که] فقیر هم عنقریب از سر قدم ساخته، بملازمت آید، انشاء(الله تعالی) که سایه آفتاب... باد

designates a man from India. He is therefore most probably a vizier or secretary to Humāyūn in charge of presenting and reading petitions to the emperor.

The letter clearly indicates that Mīr Muṣavvir was expected at the Mughal court, and that the presence of his son did not relieve him from his obligation to join Humāyūn. The Mughal chronicler Bāyazīd reports that Humāyūn summoned `Abd al-ḥamad and Mīrzā Sayyīd `Alī, through an imperial rescript entrusted to a returning Safavid envoy in 1546.<sup>24</sup> However, a more likely scenario is that once artists discovered Humāyūn's enthusiasm for Persian painting, they expressed their interest in joining his library-atelier, and Humāyūn replied favorably only after he regained Qandahār and partially recovered his kingdom. Bāyazīd's subsequent observation that the painter Dūst-Muḥammad came without a prior *permission* seems to imply that most other artists had conveyed - on their own initiatives - their desire to join the Mughal library-atelier and were then granted permission to do so.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Tahmāsb's Disinterest***

Humāyūn's largess and the Timurids reputation for generous patronage certainly influenced some artists to join the Mughal emperor,<sup>26</sup> and the wine-drinking prohibition imposed by Tahmāsb induced others to consider such move.<sup>27</sup> But, these factors alone didn't generate the massive disaffection of artists from what should be perhaps considered as the greatest library-atelier of all times. The fundamental reason was Tahmāsb's waning interest in the activities of his library-atelier, which eventually led to the dismissal of most of the remaining artists.

Dickson and Welch have surmised that Tahmāsb's estrangement from painting culminated with the 963/1556 Edict of Sincere Repentance "which formally banned secular arts from his realm," thus insinuating that religious considerations were at the

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<sup>24</sup> Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, p. 178.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. vol.1, p. 119.

<sup>26</sup> The 1000 *tūmāns* proposed by Humāyūn for Mīr Muṣavvir was quite a hefty compensation. By way of comparison, and according to the same source, calligraphy pieces (*qiḍ`a*) by the celebrated Mīr `Alī fetched 2-3000 *dīnārs* while entire Qorāns by such renowned calligraphers as Mullā Kamāl (the father of Shaykh-Muḥammad) was worth 3-4 *tūmāns* (1 *tūmān* = 10'000 *dīnārs*); Būdāq (1576), pp. 109a, and 112a. Both were active in the first half of 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>27</sup> Such seems to be the case for the painter Dūst-Muḥammad who had a hard time finding wine in Safavid territory, Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, p. 119.

root of such decision.<sup>28</sup> The Edict of Sincere Repentance though, was not for Tahmāsb to repent but addressed the Qizilbāsh *amirs* and Safavid nobles who were required to take an oath of abstinence from forbidden worldly pleasures and repent from past sins.<sup>29</sup> Tahmāsb's own "sincere repentance" had most probably occurred at Jājarm in 1534, and was subsequently proclaimed in Herāt.<sup>30</sup> It was followed by a decree that banned "irreligious" activities (*nā-mashrū`āt*) such as pigeon-flying (*kabūtar-bāzī*), shaving one's beard, and *tanbūr* and *naqāra* music,<sup>31</sup> and ordered the closing of taverns, opium dens and brothels where the "forbidden" (*manāhī*, such as wine drinking), was pursued.<sup>32</sup> It caused a substantial loss of revenue for the royal treasury that amounted by one estimate to 12,000 *tūmāns* per year.<sup>33</sup> By this measure alone, the repentance of the avaricious Tahmāsb must be considered as quite sincere.<sup>34</sup> Conspicuously absent from this decree is any reference to painting and calligraphy. Tahmāsb not only didn't ban painting but tolerated painters' infractions to the decree. Thus, Būdāq reported: "that master Bihzād who reached the age of seventy, could not live a moment without ruby-red wine or the ruby-red lips of a wine-bearer; constant wine had kept him young and despite the ban, he continued drinking and the *shāh* knew it (but didn't mind)."<sup>35</sup> And this is in sharp contrast with Tahmāsb's reaction towards Qizilbāsh *amirs* such as the long trusted Vizier of the *Qūrchīs* (royal guards) Shāh-qulī, whom he ordered decapitated for the sin of wine-drinking in spite of the ban.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Dickson & Welch (1981), p. 45. The present author had previously accepted the Dickson & Welch proposition, Soudavar (1992), p. 221.

<sup>29</sup> Qomī (1980), p. 386.

<sup>30</sup> Soudavar (1997), p. 53 and 75.

<sup>31</sup> The *tanbūr* is a string instrument and the *naqāra* is a double-drum.

<sup>32</sup> Navai (1989), pp. 512-13, Būdāq (1576), p.306a.

<sup>33</sup> Qomī (1980), p. 226. Tahmāsb reportedly destroyed 500 *tumāns* worth of high quality opium (*taryāq-i fāruq*), Vāla-yi Isfahanī (1993), p. 395.

<sup>34</sup> Such was Tahmāsb's thirst for money that he kept his seal-bearer, Khāja Amīr Beyg-i Muhr-dār, imprisoned in the Alamut fortress for 33 years on the accusation that he had "gold" and would not divulge its whereabouts; Qomī (1980), vol. 1, pp. 611-14. For fourteen years prior to Tahmāsb's death the military had not been paid, even though the treasury coffers were full. Ismā`īl II's first act after ascending the throne was to pay these arrears; Rūmlū (1978), p.623.

<sup>35</sup> Būdāq (1576), folio 111a.

<sup>36</sup> Ghifārī (1953), Qomī (1980), p. 226. In the twenty-two years time span stretching from his own repentance to the Edict of 1556, Tahmāsb must have indulged from time to time into the worldly pleasures that he had banned. According to Hasan Beyg Rūmlū, at the wedding of his son Ismā`īl in

Painting was not banned by the Qurān. The cloud of uncertainty that hung over painting was associative in nature: orthodox Sunni theologians considered it as duplicating creation or an attempt to return to idolatry.<sup>37</sup> Shiite theologians may have never addressed the issue. Had there been a Shiite prohibition of painting, Tahmāsb, was a master at finding ways to circumvent it. A point in case is Tahmāsb's annulment of the immunity he had granted the Ottoman prince Bāyazīd in the year 1559. Vying for the Ottoman throne, prince Bāyazīd had fought unsuccessfully against the combined forces of his father, Suleymān the Magnificent (r. 1520-66), and brother, Salīm (the future Salīm II, r. 1566-74). He was defeated and took refuge with Tahmāsb; but before reaching the capital city of Qazvin he obtained through a religiously binding oath, a grant of immunity that was supposed to block every avenue of treachery. Tahmāsb avowed in his own diaries that for the sake of good relationship with Suleymān – with whom he had finally concluded a peace treaty in 1555 – he had to return the prince, but was bound by his oath neither to kill him, nor to hand him to Suleymān or his men.<sup>38</sup> However, Tahmāsb pretended that he “had not vowed not to return him to his brother Salīm” and so, the unfortunate prince and his four sons were delivered to Salīm's men who decapitated them on the spot.

In the case of painting, Tahmāsb didn't even have to invent a justification: there was a ready made theory that his contemporary, the calligrapher Dūst-Muḥammad had referred to in his preface to the Bahrām Mīrẓā album c. 1545. By this theory, the art of illumination and painting that adorned the written Word went back to the venerated first Shiite imam, `Alī, who was also credited with the invention of the Islamic scroll pattern.<sup>39</sup> Painting was thus protected by the sanction of the highest Shiite authority, the Imam `Alī himself.

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1556, “Tahmāsb danced to the tune of singers and musicians,” Rūmlū (1978), p. 500. Since Tahmāsb had repented once before, the 1556 Edict of Sincere Repentance which addressed the Qizilbāsh *amirs*, was perhaps proclaimed in lieu of a second Tahmāsb repentance.

<sup>37</sup> The archconservative theologian Abū-,āmid Muḥammad-i Ghazzālī considered animal depiction (*ṣūrat-i ḥaywān*) as forbidden, especially those on the walls of public baths, which had to be removed; Ghazzālī (1983), pp. 407-408.

<sup>38</sup> Tahmāsb (1562), folio 86a,b. Another stipulation of Tahmāsb's oath was a pledge not to blind Bāyazīd, Qomī 1980, p. 418.

<sup>39</sup> Bayānī (1966), p. 196; Thackston (1989), p. 343. The same theory was later on quoted by `Qāṭī Aḥmad in a lengthy poem, Qomī (1974), p. 129.

Interestingly, Būdāq emphasized in separate instances that Tahmāsb repudiated both calligraphers and painters from his library-atelier. If painting had been from time to time the subject of religious controversy, calligraphy was not only immune from such controversy but represented Islamic art *par excellence*. Therefore, if Tahmāsb expelled calligraphers along with painters, a reason other than religious fanaticism must be sought. That reason may be a weakening of Tahmāsb's eyesight caused by a hereditary ophthalmic disease that was accelerated by a severe illness contracted in the year 1543 and reported by the chronicler `Qāḥī Ahmad-i Ghifārī. In contrast to his usual concise reporting style, Ghifārī devoted considerable space to the incident and wrote verses which oddly make repeated use of the word “*ayn*” (eye) and seem to indicate that the illness had affected Tahmāsb's eyes:

From today to eternity, it is incumbent upon mankind

To praise the Lord one thousand times a day

For the “Seeing Eye of Created Beings” (*ayn-i bāsira-yi āfarīnīsh*) is

in absolute health (*ayn-i shīḥat*), by the will of the Creator

You are the soul of worldly events, and as all souls are

linked to yours, may you live as long as the world shall be<sup>40</sup>

By calling Tahmāsb the Seeing Eye of Created Beings, the author is implicitly attributing to him a vision so strong that it encompasses the seeing power of all created beings. It is an odd and uncommon way to praise a king in Persian poetry, and perhaps an indication to the contrary.

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<sup>40</sup> Ghifārī (1963), p. 295:

شکرانه واجبست بروزی هزار بار	امروز تا بحشر بر ابنای روزگار
در عین صحت از اثر لطف کردگار	زیرا که عین باصرة آفرینش است
وابسته اند، جان تو و جان روزگار	تو جان روزگاری و جانها بجان تو

Despite the fact that Rūmlū, Qomī and Shirāzī usually copy all the information provided by Ghifārī, none of them reproduces this poem.

The possibility of a hereditary ophthalmic disease is strengthened by the fact that the eyesight of Tahmāsb's eldest son, the future Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda (1531-1588), inexplicably deteriorated when he was 16 or 17 years old, and that he was almost blind soon after.<sup>41</sup> Medically speaking, it is a very rare phenomenon to have a young man go blind at such an early age and it strongly suggests "macular degeneracy" (a retina disease) of a *hereditary* type. Tahmāsb was thus likely to have been afflicted by macular degeneracy as well; perhaps not as extreme as his son's, but severe enough to impair his ability to focus and see clearly, as people with Best's Disease, Starguard Disease or other macular degeneracy problems.<sup>42</sup>

Three other considerations may reinforce this theory. The first is the concept of the *Fālnāma*, a large format manuscript produced c. 1550, with unusual large-size calligraphy and bold designs that are devoid of minute detail-work; as if the manuscript was prepared for a patron unable to see miniature details yet appreciated coloration and elegant composition (see **Pl. 2d**).<sup>43</sup> It was possibly a last ditch attempt by members of the royal library-atelier to keep alive the artistic interest of a patron with a vision problem.

The second is the continued activity of artists, calligraphers (such as Mālik-i Deylamī) as well as painters (such as Muḥaffar-`Alī), in the architectural decorations of the Qazvin palace of Tahmāsb, for several years after 1544.<sup>44</sup> According to the contemporary chronicler `Abdī Beyg-i Shirāzī, Tahmāsb returned to Qazvin after the departure of Humāyūn for Qandahār, and decided that "from then on (i.e. 1544) the court would winter (*qishlāq*) in Qazvin, and that a new government palace

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<sup>41</sup> Iskandar Beyg (1971), vol. 1, p. 126. It is to be noted that contrary to some recent assertions (see for instance Membré (1993), p. 81), Iskandar Beyg's text clearly states that the prince's vision deteriorated inexplicably (*ḥāḥ-i bāšira*) without reference to illness or infection.

<sup>42</sup> I am indebted to Drs. M. Soechting and S. Nader for providing me information on macular degeneracy problems and the hereditary aspects of certain type of this disease.

<sup>43</sup> For the reproduction of other pages from this manuscript see for instance Lowry and Nemazee (1988), pp. 120-29; Falk (1985), pp. 95-99, Soudavar (1992), p. 188. The famous Akbarian *amzanāma*, and *Fālnāma* manuscripts in the TKS have a large format as well. However, they are all posterior to the Tahmāsb *Fālnāma* and may well have emulated a genre instituted by this manuscript.

<sup>44</sup> The painter Muḥaffar `Alī added painting and the calligrapher Mālek-i Daylamī contributed calligraphy panels for Tahmāsb's palace in Qazvin, Iskandar Beyg (1971), p. 174, Qomī (1974), p. 94. Also to be noted is the fact that unlike musicians, painters were not ordered to abandon their career; they were free to continue their activity outside the royal library-atelier, Vāla-yi Isfahanī (1993), p. 467.

(*daulatkhāna*), surrounded by [appropriate] gardens, would be erected there.”<sup>45</sup> As 1544 is also the approximate date of expulsion of calligraphers and painters from the royal Safavid library-atelier (see below), the further work of artists at the Qazvin palace seems to indicate once again, that Tahmāsb could see – albeit not very clearly – large scale calligraphy and architectural painting, but not manuscript size detail-work.

Finally, a very odd aspect of Tahmāsb’s reign is that he seldom went hunting. Hunting was an essential activity of Turco-Mongol princes, one that was believed to develop the combat skills of the warrior. Prowess in hunting was equated with prowess in combat and a substitute for it. Thus, the Persian chronicler who wished to gloss over Shāh Ismā’īl’s defeat at Chāldurān (1514), portrayed him as leaving the battle scene for quail hunting while the Qizilbāsh troops were being massacred by the Ottomans!<sup>46</sup> Strangely, Tahmāsb didn’t go hunting; he went fishing. To ennoble this peculiar activity, the chroniclers, and Tahmāsb himself, termed it as *shikār-i māhī* (lit. fish-hunting), as if like some North-American Indians, he was shooting trout with a bow and arrow up and down mountain streams.<sup>47</sup> Luckily, we have the account of an eyewitness, the Venetian Michele Membré, who mentions that Tahmāsb, carried a thin cane for fishing and spent considerable time at it.<sup>48</sup>

Most sources, seem to indicate that Tahmāsb was present at a hunting expedition in honor of Humāyūn, which was organized as a *jarga* hunt (beat hunt)– an easy hunt in which the game is driven towards the hunter. Still, it is not clear from the

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<sup>45</sup> Shirāzī (1990), p. 94. The *daulatkhāna* mainly related to the audience halls. It was in a way the seat of government. The surrounding gardens were necessary to harbor the royal encampment for periods that Tahmāsb and his retinue would stay in Qazvin. For a detailed account of the gradual move of the seat of government to Qazvin, see Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, p. 250, n. 10.

<sup>46</sup> Ghifārī (1963), p. 277; quail-hunting is a highly difficult hunt if practiced with bow and arrow; by emphasizing the type of hunt Ismā’īl undertook, Ghifārī was trying to portray him as a warrior in full control of his skills and not much concerned about the outcome of the battle with the Ottomans.

<sup>47</sup> Ghifārī (1963), pp. 290 and 307; Qomī (1980), p.428; Tahmāsb (1562).

<sup>48</sup> Membré (1993), p. 27. Membré specifies that Tahmāsb spent the whole of October 1539 fishing; *ibid.*, p. 28. A sentence in Rūmlū (1978), p.383, subsequently copied in Qomī (1980), p. 294, stating that in the year 1540, Tahmāsb went to Georgia “hunting all the way” (*shikār-kunān*), is very suspect in light of Membré’s descriptions of the *shāh*’s lengthy fishing expedition the year before, unless it meant that Tahmāsb went “fish hunting;” neither ‘Qā’īm Ahmad-i Ghifārī nor ‘Abdi Beyg-i Shirāzī allude to this supposed hunting trip.

sources whether Tahmāsb was actively participating or not.<sup>49</sup> While the reference to this *jarga* hunt is very concise in Persian chronicles, a lengthy, and relatively unnecessary, sentence in the same sources is devoted to the death of the *shāh*'s standard-bearer (*ʿalam-dār-i khāssā*), who was accidentally shot during this hunt.<sup>50</sup> One wonders if Tahmāsb mistook the standard-bearer for a deer!

### ***The Dispersal of Safavid Artists***

Whatever was the reason for Tahmāsb's disaffection from painting, by the year of Humāyūn's arrival, artists of the *shāh* had sought alternative patronage. The likeliest choice was of course the younger brother of Tahmāsb, Bahrām Mīrzā, a bon-vivant and talented calligrapher and painter, who was in the process of assembling his famous album (TKS, H2154, completed c. 1544) with the help of one of the *shāh*'s calligraphers, Dūst Muḥammad.<sup>51</sup> Works from a number of other artists appear in the same album and it is more than likely that some were produced specifically for inclusion in the album, and that a few artists had switched to Bahrām's library-atelier. Most informative in this respect is a recently published manuscript (TKS, R.957) that bears a dedication to the library of the prince and incorporates the signatures of three artists who had previously worked on Shāh Tahmāsb's *Khamsa*.<sup>52</sup> On folio 2a, the painting of a seated prince is incorporated in a colophon-looking page with a legend that reads: "Has painted it `Alī al-Ḥusaynī and has copied it Shāh Maḥmūd al-Nishāburi" (see **PI. 2a**). The calligrapher has not only signed his name on this page but also included by proxy, the signature-name of the painter Mīr Sayyīd `Alī. One should note that since *Mīr* and *Sayyīd* both

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<sup>49</sup> The earliest - and usually the most reliable - source, the *Tārīkh-i Jahānārā*, simply mentions that a *jarga* hunt was organized without further detail, Ghifārī (1963), p. 295. Qomī repeats the same. Rūmlū seems to have altered the *Tārīkh-i Jahānārā* information by only mentioning Tahmāsb's presence at the *jarga* hunt; Rūmlū (1976), p. 400. Iskandar Beyg who writes at a later date, gives a lengthy but improbable account that the honor of inaugurating the hunt went to Humāyūn, Bahrām and Sām Mīrzā, and that Tahmāsb shot only the second day to teach the Chaghatāyids (i.e. Humāyūn's retinue) a lesson in hunting; Iskandar Beyg (1971), p. 99. On the Mughal side, the sister of Humāyūn, Gul-badan Beygum, relates that according to her brother, Tahmāsb and his sister Sultānum both watched the hunt mounted on a horse side by side, with the reins of Sultānum's horse held by an old man with a white beard, a position hardly suitable for hunting; Gul-badan (1996), p. 114.

<sup>50</sup> The standard-bearer is named as Abū'l-Qāsim Khulafā-yi Qājār, Ghifārī (1963), p. 295.

<sup>51</sup> Since the album was completed circa 1545, work had to be carried on over the previous two to three years. According to Būdāq, the calligrapher Dūst-Muḥammad was the only one who remained in the royal library-atelier after Tahmāsb evicted all others; Būdāq (1576), folio 111b. He must have rejoined Tahmāsb's library-atelier after the completion of the album or after the death of Bahrām Mīrzā.

<sup>52</sup> Simpson (1991), pp. 376-84.

indicate descent from the Prophet Muḥammad, their simultaneous inclusion in a signature-name that already emphasizes descent from the Ḥusayni branch of the Prophet's progenies, would have been redundant and were therefore omitted.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, a quick comparison of this seated prince, with the seated ruler in *Night-time in Palace* (Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, 1958.76) that has been attributed to Mīr Sayyīd `Alī,<sup>54</sup> brings to light many of his stylistic particularities: high distance between eye and eyebrow, earth-tone carpet with a white stenciled border, fine details, precise fingernails and a seated posture that depicts a comfortable and stable seated position in perfect harmony with the laws of gravity. As noted by M. S. Simpson, a page from the Bahrām Mīrzā album (TKS, H. 2154, fol. 148a), with a similar calligraphic layout and the same poems written by the same hand on the top of the page, shows a sumptuously dressed standing prince with a *sitār* in his hands (PI. 2c). Because of the elaborate textile details and the same facial characteristics as those of the prince in the previous painting, this too is attributable to Mīr Sayyīd `Alī. It most probably depicts Bahrām Mīrzā whose musical talents is highly praised by his brother Sām Mīrzā (1517-67) in his *Tuḥfa-yi Sāmi*.<sup>55</sup> Its slightly different legend reads: "Has copied this by way of practice, Shāh Mahmud al-Nishāburi, may God forgive his sins and cover his shortcomings; in the year 950 A.H. (1543-44 A.D.)." The strong affinity between the two pages suggests a close date of production for both.

Facing the seated prince, and on the opposite page of this manuscript, is depicted the portrait of a kneeling prince presenting a petition addressed to the king and signed by the artist Muḥaffar-`Alī who is undoubtedly the author of the painting. Unlike Mīr Sayyīd `Alī, Muḥaffar `Alī has no sense of weight and his kneeling prince seems to float in space. The petition reads:

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<sup>53</sup> Such is the case of the celebrated calligrapher Mīr `Imād whose signatures are mostly in the form of `Imād al-*asanī* and seldom include the redundant "mīr."

<sup>54</sup> See for instance Welch (1979), pp. 180-81, Dickson & Welch, vol. 1, p. 184, Kevorkian & Sicre (1983), p.169.

<sup>55</sup> Sām Mīrzā (1925), p. 9.

The least of the slaves Muḥaffar `Alī, submits to the loftiest court that His Imperial Majesty (*nawāb jahān-bānī*) is well aware that the stipend of this lowly [servant] was six *tūmāns* while in the services of His Fortunate Majesty (*nawāb kāmrānī*), but is now [reduced] to three *tūmāns*, as a result of which the life of this lowly [servant] is quite distressed. Your orders shall be obeyed whatever they shall be.<sup>56</sup>

The kneeling prince is wearing a sumptuous robe and a turban with an ostrich feather, he is therefore of high rank, and because the painting has been inserted at the very beginning of a manuscript made for Bahrām Mīrzā, it must depict him in the process of presenting a petition to the *shāh* on behalf of Muḥaffar-`Alī, perhaps on the very occasion of Humāyūn's visit when Bahrām joined Tahmāsb in Abhar (between Qazvin and Zanjān). Since the time of the Mongols court protocol dictated that princes and dignitaries, as well as attendants and wine-bearers, had to approach the ruler on their knees. The positioning of the kneeling Bahrām opposite a seated prince with three ostrich feathers in his turban (usually an attribute of kingship), may suggest that the latter represents Tahmāsb.<sup>57</sup> Speculating on the sequence of events, it seems that the portrait of Bahrām Mīrzā with a *sitār* was the first to be incorporated in the manuscript followed by the addition of the kneeling Bahrām. But to make the double page more meaningful, the portrait to the left was "upgraded" to represent the *shāh* as the receiver of the petition. The same – rather weak – poem appears on the original and replacement page; perhaps a poem of Bahrām that the seated Tahmāsb was meant to read.

<sup>56</sup> It is to be noted that in compliance with scribal conventions, two important attributes (*a`lā*) and (*kāmrānī*) that were pulled out of the text and written on the top of the petition, have been reincorporated here in between parentheses:

بنده کمتترین، مظفرعلی بذروه عرض (اعلی) میرساند که بر نواب جهانبانی واضح است  
 که موجب این کمینه در سر کار نواب (کامرانی) شش تومانست و ازین ممر اوقات کمینه  
 پریشان میگردد، بهر چه فرمایند، حاکمند.

<sup>57</sup> An intriguing aspect of the painting is the lack of Safavid baton for the prince, which sometimes indicates a non-Safavid prince.

More importantly, the petition reveals that circa 1544, Muḥaffar `Alī, and most probably the other artists whose names appear in this manuscript,<sup>58</sup> had left the royal library-atelier or had been affected to the library-atelier of Tahmāsb's brother with a reduced stipend.<sup>59</sup>

A manuscript of *Silsilat al-Ḥahab* of Jāmī (St. Petersburg, Dorn 434), copied by Shāh Maḥmūd al-Neyshāburi in Ardabil at the very beginning of Sām Mīrzā's tenure as governor of that city,<sup>60</sup> and dated 1 Sha`bān 956/ 25 August 1549, with a double-page frontispiece attributable to Mīrzā `Alī,<sup>61</sup> is a further testimony to the precarious situation of master painters and calligraphers who had sought the patronage of this rebellious prince.<sup>62</sup> Any association with Sām Mīrzā, was susceptible to attract the wrath of Tahmāsb – as perhaps it did in the case of Mīr Muṣavvir in prior years.<sup>63</sup>

With his appointment to Ardabil, Sām Mīrzā may have nurtured the idea to revive his own library-atelier. But Tahmāsb stripped his brother of all sources of revenue and so reduced his stipend that the prince had to engage in commerce (*tijārat*) to generate a meager income.<sup>64</sup> In such case, Sām Mīrzā could hardly afford a library-atelier of his own.

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<sup>58</sup> Dickson and Welch also argue that since according to the *Gulistān-i Hunar*, the calligrapher Shāh Maḥmūd died in 972/1565 and had spent 20 years in Mashhad, he must have left the royal Library-atelier c. 1545; Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, p. 178. While their conclusion is correct, it is based on an erroneous information by `Qāḥī Aḥmad: as we shall see, Shāh Maḥmūd was in Ardabil in 1549 and therefore did not spend all of those 20 years in Mashhad.

<sup>59</sup> This may also explain why Mīrak was chosen to illuminate the 1468 *Gulistān* manuscript: as the household superintendent of Tahmāsb, he was the only master painter left in the retinue of the *shāh*.

<sup>60</sup> Sām Mīrzā was appointed governor of Ardabil in that same year of 1549 and remained in that post for twelve years; Qomī (1980), vol. 1, p. 550.

<sup>61</sup> Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, pp. 138-39; for a color reproduction see Loukonin & Ivanov (1996), p. 182.

<sup>62</sup> Sām Mīrzā had rebelled twice before and was placed on house arrest the second time; Soudavar (1997), pp. 52-67, Dickson (1958), pp. 285-95.

<sup>63</sup> See supra 21. Maybe for this very reason, Mīrzā `Alī preferred not to join the prince in Ardabil, and sent his work for later insertion in the manuscript. Indeed, the double-page frontispiece has been pasted into the manuscript: a sign that the painter was not located at the production site; Loukonin & Ivanov (1996) p. 183.

<sup>64</sup> Qomī (1980), vol. I, p. 550. With no revenue, Sām Mīrzā was a lesser threat since he could neither buy influence nor raise and maintain a private army.

## The Second Wave

### ***The reverse tide***

The premature death of Bahrām Mīrzā in 1549 dashed all hopes for a continuing Safavid princely patronage, and amplified the wave of migrating artists. But like so many other instances in the history of Turco-Mongol princes, wine and opium suddenly changed the course of events. In early 1556, leaning on a staff and under the spell of opium, Humāyūn dozed off in the middle of a discussion with his generals and fell to his death from a rooftop.<sup>65</sup> This tragedy, in conjunction with the appointment of Sultan Ibrāhīm Mīrzā (1544-77) as governor of Mashhad a few months later, reversed the migration tide, and some of the artists who had gone to the Mughal court, came back to join the library-atelier of this talented and enthusiastic young prince. Būdāq-i Munshī provides information on two such artists, Mīrzā `Alī and Shaykh Muḥammad.<sup>66</sup> On the latter he wrote:

Mullā Shaykh-Muḥammad is from Sabzevār. His father was Mullā Kamāl, pupil of Mowlānā `Abdol-Hayy; he wrote well in *sols* and *naskh* and Qorāns copied by him were being sold at three to four *tumāns*. Together with his children he joined the services of [the Mughal emperor] Mīrzā Humāyūn. His son, Mullā Shaykh-Muḥammad, was a pupil of Dūst-i Dīvāna and matured there. Later on, when he came to Khurasan, Ibrāhīm Mīrzā, son of Bahrām Mīrzā, tutored him. Without exaggeration, he was an excellent painter, illuminator, and outliner (*moḥarrir*) and wrote well in *nasta`liq*. [In painting] he rivaled Chinese painters, and for the likeness of his Chinese-style portraiture people exclaimed: “Well done!”<sup>67</sup>

Less explicit and more problematic is his information on Mīrzā `Alī which comes at the end of an entry for Sultan-Muḥammad: “he had an equally talented son who, after

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<sup>65</sup> Qomī (1980), vol. I, p. 378. The death of Bahrām Mīrzā was also caused by excess in wine and opium.

<sup>66</sup> It is noteworthy that `Qāṭī Aḥmad who systematically plagiarized Būdāq’s text for his *Gulistān-i Hunar*, omitted references to Safavid artist’s temporary sojourns in “India,” Qomī (1974), pp. 137-42.

<sup>67</sup> Būdāq (1576), fol. 113b.

the death of his father, went to India and prospered there.”<sup>68</sup> Oddly, he is silent on Mīrzā `Alī’s activity at the library-atelier of Sultan Ibrāhīm Mīrzā in Mashhad; perhaps, because this section of Būdāq’s *Javāhir al-akhbār* was written earlier, and not fully updated when he hastily dedicated his work to Ismā`īl II (r. 1576-77) in 1576.<sup>69</sup> But since he is usually accurate, his account carries weight. Moreover, the reference to both of these artists’ passage to India was suppressed in the *Gulistān-i Honar* of `Qā`ī Aḥmad. Patterns of omission are sometimes more telling in Persian sources than written words. In this case, the omissions were probably to minimize in Safavid chronicles both the rising fortunes of the Mughals and the state of disarray at Tahmāsb’s library-atelier.

A scenario by which Mīrzā `Alī went to ‘India’ (i.e. Mughal court), and returned to Mashhad c. 1556, does not conflict with the chronology of works attributable to him. His last works before the 1556-65 *Haft-Aurang* of Sultan Ibrāhīm Mīrzā (FGA, 46.12) are datable to the year 1549:

- the aforementioned frontispiece of the St. Petersburg manuscript, and
- three paintings (fols. 66a, 102b, 139a) from another copy of the *Silsilat al-`Āḥab* of Jāmī dated 1549 (AMSG, S86.0044).<sup>70</sup>

A recently published painting from the *Gulshan Album* that was assembled for the Mughal emperor Jahāngir (r. 1605-1627), reinforces the prospects for a brief stay of Mīrzā `Alī at the Mughal court (GPL, nos. 1663, folio 46, see **PI. 3a**).<sup>71</sup> It displays many characteristics of his paintings: the majestic and serene appearance of the seated king, the shape of the turbans (bulging in the front with dipping curves in the back), his favorite plane tree with yellow and red leaves, the division of the crowd into interacting

<sup>68</sup> Būdāq (1576), fol. 112b.

<sup>69</sup> The *Javāhir al-akhbār* seems to have been intended initially prepared for Tahmāsb, but Būdāq who repeatedly complained about the *shāh*’s lack of interest in his work (perhaps he was unable to read it), managed to present his manuscript to Ismā`īl II in 1576, four months after Tahmāsb’s death; Soudavar (1992), p. 200. The section on the artists of the royal Safavid library-atelier is oddly inserted in the middle of the history of the `Abbāsīd caliphs, and in there, he refers to Princess Sultanum, who died in 1562, as still living; Būdāq (1576), fol. 111b.

<sup>70</sup> Lowry, et al. (1988), pp. 148-49; the folio number of the last painting is erroneously written as 130a in the aforementioned catalog. Folio 66a of this manuscript had been previously attributed to Mīrzā `Alī by this author, Soudavar (1992), p. 201.

<sup>71</sup> This painting, along with a detail, has been reproduced in Tehran as a new-year greeting card. I am indebted to Mr. Massoud Nader for sending me this beautiful and interesting card.

pairs (see for instance the top right corner where the hand of one party is naturally resting on the other's shoulder and the latter is reciprocating the affectionate gesture by grabbing his counterpart's belt) and finally the wonderful sense of balance that his characters can convey in the most awkward positions (such as the pageboy hanging a lantern in the plane tree, see Pl. 3b). The size, general composition and gold painted borders of this miniature recall paintings of the Shāh Tahmāsb *Khamsa*, especially folio 202v, *Bahrām Gur Exhibiting his Hunting Prowess*, painted by Mīrzā `Alī's father.<sup>72</sup> Furthermore, the margin rulings of the painting follow the unique pattern and sequence of the *Khamsa*: (from inside out) gold, black, natural paper, red, natural paper, green, thick gold, two thin black lines, natural and dark blue (see Pl. 3b).<sup>73</sup> It was intended for the *Khamsa*, yet it was integrated in the first section of the *Gulshan Album* no later than 1610.<sup>74</sup> The question then is how did such an important painting end up in Mughal hands? Most likely, its presumed author, Mīrzā `Alī, finished it at a time when Tahmāsb became disinterested with painting and took it to "India" as a present for Humāyūn (or as proof of his prowess). The only other transfer scenario within the seventy year time span – from the production of the *Khamsa* to the assembly of the *Gulshan Album* – is a gift from Shāh `Abbās I (r. 1588-1629) to Jahāngīr. However, it is highly improbable that Shāh `Abbās would have sent a single page – instead of a complete manuscript – as a gift to the Mughal Emperor.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, the first major Persian embassy sent by Shāh `Abbās reached the Mughal court in 1611; by then, the first section of the album was probably closed and any gift-page from would have been incorporated in the second section.

In light of this discovery, we may reconsider the previously accepted notion that other dispersed pages of the Shāh Tahmāsb *Khamsa* were removed c. 1675, when the painter Muhammad Zamān inserted some new pages, and retouched the faces on

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<sup>72</sup> See for instance Welch (1979), p. 173.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 134-75.

<sup>74</sup> The part of the album that is in Tehran seems to include earlier works, up to 1609, and the Berlin portion seems to include later ones, with dates as late as 1618; Beach (1978), p. 43.

<sup>75</sup> Jahāngīr requested Shāh `Abbās to send him Ulugh Beyg's astrolabe; the *shāh* duplicated the astrolabe and sent the original to India; Riazul Islam (1970), p. 72. One could conceive that if a painting was somehow related to the Timurids and meaningful to Jahāngīr it would have been sent as a single page, but no such connection can be imagined for this Mīrzā `Alī painting.

some existing pages. Since all the previously known paintings – that were removed from that manuscript – are attributable to Mīrzā Sayyīd `Alī,<sup>76</sup> we may assume that these too were taken by their author to the Mughal court.<sup>77</sup>

Also, the dating of another painting attributed to Mīrzā `Alī, *Princely Lovers* (AHT, no. 65; see **Pl. 3b**) should perhaps be revised from c. 1544 to c. 1550.<sup>78</sup> It was previously argued that the painting hinted at a love affair between Humāyūn's trusted companion, Bayrām Khān, and Tahmāsb's sister, Princess Sultanum.<sup>79</sup> But considering that Tahmāsb had betrothed his sister to the – disappeared – Shiite Twelfth Imam, and taking into account his violent reaction towards possible suitors,<sup>80</sup> it now seems more likely that Mīrzā `Alī painted the *Princely Lovers* on his way to the Mughal court, with the intent of offering it to Bayrām Khān, the second most powerful man of the Mughal empire.

### ***The Mashhad Library-atelier and Stylistic Expectations for Farrukh Beyg***

Generally hailed as one of the great schools of Persian painting, the vigorous and eccentric Mashhad style that emanated from the library-atelier of Sultan Ibrāhīm Mīrzā, is as much a reflection of the taste of a refined patron as the genius of its two lead artists, Mīrzā `Alī and Shaykh Muḥammad, who after exploring distant horizons injected new blood into the veins of the stagnating Safavid style of painting.<sup>81</sup> The Mashhad style of Mīrzā `Alī and Shaykh Muḥammad inevitably influenced the next generation of painters, the most talented of which were undoubtedly Muḥammadī and

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<sup>76</sup> Welch (1979), pp. 176-81.

<sup>77</sup> One should also note that if any of the paintings was removed by Muḥammad Zamān, he would have replaced it with a similar subject; but none of his added paintings are replacements for the dispersed pages by Mīrzā `Alī or Mīrzā Sayyīd `Alī.

<sup>78</sup> Soudavar (1992), pp. 170-73

<sup>79</sup> . Idem.

<sup>80</sup> Membré (1993), p. 25; Badauni (1868), p. 444, Soudavar (1998).

<sup>81</sup> Other artists who contributed to the Freer *Haft Aurang* were: Āghā Mīrak who had probably reached the end of his career and produced uninspiring paintings for this manuscript, `Abd al-`Azīz, still a very able artist but whose style did not influence the next generation, Muḥammad Jaffar `Alī who was an excellent craftsman but not an innovator and always a follower of Mīrzā `Alī, `Abdallāh-i Moḥabbat-i Shirāzī who was primarily a good illuminator. Mīrzā `Alī was probably recruited early on to lead the Freer *Haft Aurang* project. His work dominates the first section of the manuscript: three out of four of the paintings in the first 50 pages of the manuscript are by him.

Farrukh Beyg. Since both artists ended up in library-ateliers of rivals of the Safavids, no individual entry was devoted to them in Safavid sources. Any reference to their works was accidental or *en passant*.<sup>82</sup> In an entry on the painter of Georgian origin, Siyāvosh, Iskandar Beyg mentioned that he “was the pupil of Ustād `Alī (i.e. Mīrzā `Alī),<sup>83</sup> and under the reign of the Nawāb with the Dignity of Alexander (i.e. Shāh Muḥammad Khodābanda), he (Siyāvush ) and his brother Farrukh Beyg were among the trusted companions (*mu`tamidān*) of the young and fortunate prince, Ḥamza Mīrzā; and under the reign of his Exalted Majesty (i.e. Shāh `Abbās I), he served His Majesty for quite a while and lost his life while in the retinue of his Holiness (i.e. Shāh `Abbās I).”<sup>84</sup>

Even though the Mughal and Deccani works of Farrukh Beyg have been extensively analyzed in recent studies, no attempt – beyond an ink drawing (Musée Guimet, Paris; **PI. 4a**) and a manuscript (King’s College Library, Cambridge, K11, see **PI. 4b**) with five miniatures bearing attributions to him – has been made to discover pre-Mughal works of the artist.<sup>85</sup> As for the written attributions on the Safavid works, they have remained controversial since the connection to later paintings of Farrukh Beyg is not easily recognizable.<sup>86</sup>

In an attempt to identify other Safavid paintings of Farrukh Beyg, and prior to a stylistic analysis of his works, we may already make certain assumptions based on the information provided by Iskandar Beyg, and test their validity as we proceed forward:

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<sup>82</sup> Because he ended up working for the Uzbaks after the capture of Herāt in 1588, reference to Muḥammadī is scant; Soudavar (1992), p. 237. The lack of a specific entry for Farrukh Beyg was probably due to a similar reason.

<sup>83</sup> For a discussion on Mīrzā `Alī’s name and signature see Soudavar (1992), p. 170.

<sup>84</sup> Iskandar Beyg (1976), p. 176. The last section of the entry in the present printed version of the chronicles of Iskandar Beyg, due to a minor scribal error (*‘umrash* instead of *‘umrīshān*) reads as if both brothers joined the services of Shāh `Abbās and *both* lost their lives at the same time there. Farrukh Beyg’s departure for India notwithstanding, the syntax of the sentence shows that it should only relate to Siyāvosh and that the plural for the end-sentence is wrong; idem. However, this may have been an error perpetrated by the author himself as Vāla-yi Isfahanī who half a century later, in his *Khuld-i Barīn* scrupulously follows Iskandar Beyg’s text, commits the same mistake; Vāla-yi Isfahanī (1993), p. 470.

<sup>85</sup> Skelton (1957), pl. 2, fig. 4 and pl. 9, fig. 18; Okada (1992), p. 120; Robinson (1992), pl. IXb

<sup>86</sup> Skelton expresses his doubts on the Cambridge manuscript attributions but accepts the Paris one, Skelton (1957), pp. 395 and 403. Okada accepts the attribution on the Paris drawing and discusses its merits, Okada (1989), p. 123; Robinson accepts the attributions on the Cambridge manuscript, but does not offer any stylistic comparison with other works of Farrukh Beyg, Robinson (1992), p. 28.

- since Siyāvosh was taught by Mīrzā `Alī, works of his brother Farrukh Beyg are likely to show the influence of Mīrzā `Alī
- equally likely is the influence of Shaykh Muḥammad
- since Farrukh Beyg was a contemporary of Muḥammadī,<sup>87</sup> some of his works may evoke Muḥammadī's style.

Testing our assumptions against the above mentioned attributed works, we can readily see that the Cambridge set is very much in the style of Muḥammadī,<sup>88</sup> and that the Paris drawing is yet another replica of the yoked Uzbek prisoner, originated by Shaykh Muḥammad. Following the portraiture style of Shaykh Muḥammad, the artist has drawn here an elaborate three quarter portrait with a flat nose.<sup>89</sup>

An interesting aspect of the work is the Mughal inscription that identifies the yoked prisoner as Bayrām Ughlān, the Uzbek ruler of Gharjestān who surrendered in the year 1551 to the Safavid governor of Herāt.<sup>90</sup> This was a relatively minor incident unlikely to be well known at the Mughal court half a century later. Therefore, the identity of the prisoner was most probably provided by the author himself. We may then surmise that, similar to the *Khamsa* page by Mīrzā `Alī – and perhaps those by Mīrzā Sayyīd `Alī – these Safavid period works were brought to India by Farrukh Beyg as samples of his work and/or as exchange goods to allow him a fresh start there.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Farrukh Beyg was approximately 40 years old when he arrived at the Mughal court in 1585; Seyller (1995), p. 319, Okada (1989), p. 117. His career therefore overlapped that of Muḥammadī who was active c. 1560-90.

<sup>88</sup> For a similar Muḥammadī composition see for instance Robinson (1965), p. 76; Papadopoulo (1976), pl. 59.

<sup>89</sup> For Shaykh Muḥammad's portraits of Uzbek princes see Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, pp. 251-52; Welch (1979), nos. 77, 80; Soudavar (1992), p. 236.

<sup>90</sup> Dickson & Welch (1981), vol. 1, pp. 251-52; Welch (1974), pp.463-64. For a painting of the same subject signed by Shaykh Muḥammad, see *ibid.*, p. 499. The effective governor of Herāt at that time was Muḥammad Khān-i Sharaf al-din Ughlū Takallū; Rūmlū (1978), pp. 436-37. But the nominal governor of Herāt was - the almost blind - Prince Muḥammad Mīrzā, who later ruled as Shāh Muḥammad Khudābanda. The popularity of the yoked prisoner subject may be due to the fact that the capture of the Uzbek warlord was later on, reinterpreted as a feat attributable to Shāh Muḥammad. Farrukh Beyg who was in the retinue of prince .amza Mīrzā, thus chose to glorify his patron's father by drawing the defeated Uzbek warlord. The numerous yoked prisoners of Shaykh Muḥammad, also painted in this period, may have been drawn for the same reasons.

<sup>91</sup> This recalls the well-known practice of poets who would arrive at a court reciting new poems in the hope of remuneration from an appreciative ruler.

Although stylistically different from his later paintings, each of these early works include characteristics that remain with Farrukh Beyg until the very end of his career.

- The Cambridge painting has a very high and vertical background which surrounds the painted figure and makes it the focal point of the composition.
- The portrait of the yoked prisoner is highly elaborate, and
- his left sleeve is partially turned inside out and displays its inner lining (see **PI. 3a**). More generally, Farrukh Beyg frequently tries to show the lining – or the back side – of a skirt or a sash blowing in the wind. This, is a direct influence of Mīrzā `Alī most noticeable in the sleeve and the robe of Absāl, in *Salāmān and Absāl Repose on the Happy Isle* (see **PI. 6c**). However, as we shall see, Farrukh Beyg’s sashes and rippled robes tend to be starch stiff and less fluid than the elegant curves created by Mīrzā `Alī.

These are too few characteristics to establish a precise stylistic profile for the works of Farrukh Beyg. To do so, we need to start with later paintings and work our way back to some of his earlier masterpieces.

### ***Backtracking Farrukh Beyg’s Works***

We shall begin with two – almost identical – paintings of a *Deccani Youth Holding a Narcissus*. The first is a painting from the *Gulshan Album* (GPL no. 1663, fol. 86) that reportedly bears an inscription “has drawn it (*rāqimahu*) Farrukh Beyg at the age of seventy;” it may be a reliable attribution, even though the second part of the legend, “at the age of seventy,” appears on so many paintings attributed to this artist that makes it a priori suspect (**PI. 7a**).<sup>92</sup> The second is a close duplicate from the Binney Collection (San Diego Museum of Art, 1990:0318) and bears an attribution to Farrukh Beyg (**PI. 7b**).<sup>93</sup> The following characteristics can immediately be detected:

- as in the Cambridge paintings, both have a very high vertical background but with an added distinction: they are horizontally stratified with parallel rows of green tufts;

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<sup>92</sup> In the hopelessly disorganized catalog of the GPL albums a color reproduction of this painting appears next to p. 352 and the entry appears on p. 356, under the entry for Folio 86; Ātābāy (1974).

<sup>93</sup> A color reproduction appears in Okada (1992), p. 124. The attribution reads “*`amal-i Farrukh Beyg.*”

- two dominant color schemes are used, one is the “pink family” with hues that range from pink red to violet, and the other is the “green family” that encompasses many shades of green, from light to dark;
- a geometric pattern is favored for the design of the sashes that comprise a multitude of juxtaposed zigzag lines that create a string of diamond motifs in between.

A recently discovered minute inscription (see appendix) on *Ibrāhīm `Ādil Shāh Hawking* (Institute of Oriental Studies St. Petersburg, ms. E. 14, f.2) attributes this magnificent painting to Farrukh Beyg and firmly establishes him as a Deccani court painter (**PI. 4c**).<sup>94</sup> The painting is dominated by a combination of the previously mentioned green and pink scheme of colors, and the sash is drawn with Farrukh Beyg’s usual geometric pattern. Two other characteristics can be noticed:

- the horse is drawn with a heavy upper body, rounded hind quarters smoothly ending in a reverse concave curve above the back knee, and extra large kidney-shaped nostrils that in some other painting look as if they were stuck on the horse’s nose,
- rainbow colored peonies adorn the gold saddle cloth.

John Seyller and Ellen Smart who discovered the above inscription, also attribute two paintings from the *Gulshan Album* (AHT, nos. 128b and c) to Farrukh Beyg (**PIs. 4d and 5**) which come from a dispersed *ʿafarnāma*.<sup>95</sup> The attributions are based on certain similarities between these two and Farrukh Beyg’s paintings from the c. 1586 *Akbarnāma* pages (VAM, I.S. 2-1896), the most important of which are “the doleful bearded figures in gray holding the standard and riding beside the parasol bearer.”<sup>96</sup>

As in the two Deccani paintings, these two *ʿafarnāma* pages are dominated by the green and pink family of colors. Both have high vertical backgrounds with a mounted Timur (r. 1370-1405) as their focal point. The horses have the large kidney-shaped nostrils. Similar to the saddle cloth in the St. Petersburg painting, the one in **PI. 5** is in gold with rainbow colored peonies and Timur’s armor has the same geometric pattern

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<sup>94</sup> Seyller (1995), p. 320.

<sup>95</sup> For color reproductions see Soudavar (1992), p. 308-309.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

as Farrukh Beyg's Deccani sashes. The sleeve of the foot-soldier beneath Timur is turned inside out (**PI. 5**). The three-quarter elaborate portraits of Timur and some other warriors are reminiscent of Shaykh Muḥammad's style of portraiture. More generally,

- we recognize Farrukh Beyg's tendency to striate white beards (and yak-tails hanging from the horses' necks) with black – or red – lines or vice versa, and
- horse-covers, parasols – and awnings – have an indigo blue section covered with gold floral motifs.<sup>97</sup>

Based on the above, the *Horse and a Groom* drawing from the Musée Guimet,<sup>98</sup> can now be attributed to Farrukh Beyg (**PI. 6a**). The horse is typical with large nostrils, strong upper body and rounded hindquarters; and the belt of the horse-cover displays Farrukh Beyg's favorite geometric pattern. The left sleeve of the groom is turned inside-out to show its inner lining and the back side of the groom's frozen-looking sash can be detected in between the ripples. These similarities notwithstanding, the most important element – and usually easiest – in stylistic attributions is facial similarity. Here, the groom's face is similar to the face of the prince in *Youth with a Wine-cup and a Falcon* (GPL, no.1663, fol. 47),<sup>99</sup> and the face of the *khān* in *Mīr Mu'iz al-molk and Bahādor Khān Meet in 1567* (**PI. 6b**),<sup>100</sup> a type that is described by Seyller as “oval-shaped, squinty eyes, and thin dark eyebrows” and a drooping mustache.<sup>101</sup>

### ***Farrukh Beyg's Haft Aurang Paintings***

It would have been rather odd if Farrukh Beyg arrived at the Akbar's court in 1585, a mature painter at the age of forty,<sup>102</sup> ready to tackle major projects such as the above mentioned *ʿafarnāma* or the c. 1586 *Akbarnāma*, without prior accomplishments. He must have had solid credentials. We shall propose that Farrukh Beyg's major Safavid period accomplishment was the painting series for a *Haft Aurang* copied by the

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<sup>97</sup> Besides the two *ʿafarnāma* pages, the motif of gold peonies on a blue awning/parasol can be seen on a *Bāburnāma* page (ASG, S86. 0230), Lowry and Nemazee (1988), p. 163, and an *Akbarnāma* page in Seyller (1995), fig. 6, Okada (1992), p.118.

<sup>98</sup> See Okada (1992), p. 66, where the drawing is wrongly attributed to `Abd al-ḥamad. For a color reproduction see Okada (1989), p. 29.

<sup>99</sup> Ātābāy (1974), p. 357 and 362; Skelton (1957), fig. 13.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 1; Seyller (1995), fig. 6, Okada (1992), p.118.

<sup>101</sup> Seyller (1995), p. 339.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 319.

scribe Muḥibb `Alī between 1570 and 1572 (TKS, H.1483), a lavish manuscript that rivals in many ways the Sultan Ibrāhīm Mīrzā *Haft Aurang* of 1556-65. All but one of the miniatures (25 text illustration, 1 frontispiece and 4 colophon finispieces in total) of the manuscript are attributable to Farrukh Beyg. The one exception, fol. 109a, as we shall see is attributable to Muḥammadī.

The 29 paintings attributable to Farrukh Beyg are so strikingly different from other contemporary works that they can be immediately recognized as a homogeneous group and the work of one artist.<sup>103</sup> Therefore we shall limit the justification for our attributions to a few examples.

Folio 55a, *Choosing a vizier (PI. 9a)*, and folio 77a, *Majnun's Father Requesting Layli's Hand in Marriage for his Son (PI. 9c)*, have each the characteristic high vertical background with the horizontal stratification. The dominant color scheme for the first painting is the pink family and for the second, the green family.<sup>104</sup> Elongated faces noticed by Seyller,<sup>105</sup> and visible in **PI. 6b** appear in both, and a number of the faces are depicted with striated black and white beards. Another painting, folio 86, *Layli and Majnun Meet at the Ka`ba (PI. 9b)*, have the same high vertical background but is devoid of the stratification with green tufts as the scene takes place in the desert near the Ka`ba. Instead, the ground is covered with pebbles thrown by the pilgrims during the *hajj* procession; the color scheme nonetheless is of the pink family.<sup>106</sup> Men with elongated faces appear in the top right, and striated black and white beards appear on the left side of the painting.

Besides the intensity of colors, what is most striking about these illustrations is the elaborate individualized portraiture that often exaggerates facial features. It is in continuation of a trend set by Mīrzā `Alī and Shaykh Muḥammad. By mid 1560's, Mīrzā `Alī's portraits have elongated cone-shaped necks and bulging eyes (**PI. 3d**),<sup>107</sup> and

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<sup>103</sup> Stchoukine (1974), pp. 5-11; Simpson (1997), p. 244, both consider the paintings as a coherent group but neither makes an exception for fol. 109a that we attribute here to Muḥammadī.

<sup>104</sup> For color reproduction see Rogers et al. (1986), nos. 114-15.

<sup>105</sup> Seyller (1997), p. 339.

<sup>106</sup> For color reproduction see Rogers et al. (1986), nos. 116.

<sup>107</sup> See Welch (1979), pp. 201, 209 and 210; Welch & Welch (1982), pp. 85-86.

Shaykh Muḥammad portraits get increasingly eccentric.<sup>108</sup> Farrukh Beyg not only created elongated faces but also further individualized his characters by playing with the position of their chin:

- in the Mughal period he often opted for a small, depressed and vanishing chin (**PI. 10a**), whereas in the Safavid period he was bent on producing protruded jaws with forward chins (**PI. 10b**).

Finally, the double page frontispiece with a Mīrzā `Alī inspired composition (**Pis. 11a-b**), has facial types very similar to the previous ones, and horses that are drawn with the previously observed characteristics. Noteworthy is the special shape of cloud bands, which as a repeat pattern usually represents a distinctive signature-like motif for each individual artist. The color scheme of the left cloud bands, which differs from the more conventional one on the right, juxtaposes black against white and beige, similar to Farrukh Beyg's striation of beards and yak-tails. While the color scheme is different on the two sides, they have a common motif in the fibulae shaped spirals at the center of cloud formations. This fibulae shaped motif not only appears in other illustrations of this manuscript (see for instance **PI. 8**), but resurfaces in a Deccani period painting of Farrukh Beyg, as gold embroidery on the robe of *Youth in a Garden* (**PI. 11d**).<sup>109</sup>

### ***Farrukh Beyg's Safavid Period Works***

At this stage of our inquiry, four other paintings are attributable to Farrukh Beyg. The first is an ex-Rothschild painting depicting two seated learned men (**PI. 12a**),<sup>110</sup> one of them with a typical heavy protruding jaw (**PI. 13a**). As one can see, the inner lining of the robes of both men is visible through the bottom ripples.

The next two come from a dispersed manuscript with the *Gulistān* of Sa`di penned in the center, and the *Bustān* on three sides in a diagonal disposition. These two pages are now in the Rizā `Abbāsī Museum in Tehran.<sup>111</sup> The elaborate portraits

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<sup>108</sup> See Welch (1976), pp. 122-26; Simpson (1997), pp. 201, 220.

<sup>109</sup> For a color reproduction see Okada (1992), p. 122.

<sup>110</sup> For a color reproduction see Kevorkian & Sicre (1983), p. 24.

<sup>111</sup> See Mahboubian (1970), no. 978; Melikian (1978), fig. 2. Two other paintings from the same manuscript exist and are attributable to Muḥammadī (see appendix 2). One is in the Rizā `Abbāsī Museum, and the other is an ex-Krauss Collection now in private hands; see Grube (n.d.), no. 70, pl. XVII.

drawn in *Sa`dī and The Fallen Pious Man* (PI. 12c) are unmistakably by Farrukh Beyg, especially that of the fallen man with its protruded heavy jaw (PI. 13d) that recalls the portrait in PI. 13a and the faces of the *Haft Aurang*. The black Scythian-like cap worn by Khurasani peasants is another Farrukh Beyg favorite (see for instance PI. 9c) and appears here on the head of the dark-skinned man hidden behind the rocks.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, the landscape is depicted with a pink and green color, and the intense green and yellow coloration of Sa`dī's robes evokes Farrukh Beyg's color scheme in another Gulshan album page *Sultan Ibrāhīm `Ādil-Shāh II Playing the Tanbur*.<sup>113</sup> Another painting from the same manuscript can be divided into two distinct parts: one depicting the *Holy Man Making Love to a Prostitute*, that relates to the *Gulistān* story in the center and the other, illustrates a story of the Bustān, *A Holy Man and the King's Envoys* (PI. 12d). Again the elaborate portraits offer the main clue to the identity of the painter: one of the envoys with thick white beard (PI. 13b) is very similar to the second figure in *The Two Learned Men* (see PI. 13c).

The fourth is a page of yet another Jāmī manuscript (AHT, no. 72). Many of the previously defined characteristics are visible (PI. 12b): elongated faces with striated beards, youths with red cheeks resembling those in PI. 13f, indigo blue awning with gold motifs, and a geometric pattern of bricks that produces an horizontal string of diamond shapes. It is probably the earliest of the group that we have just attributed to Farrukh Beyg.<sup>114</sup>

### ***Muḥammadī and the Dating of Farrukh Beyg's Haft Aurang Paintings***

Stylistically, the above mentioned four paintings should be dated c.1570-80. Such dating necessitates a reconsideration of the dating of the Topkapi *Haft Aurang* paintings as being contemporary with the text (1570-72)<sup>115</sup> because they all seem to be posterior to the above four paintings. Also, if the illustrations of the Topkapi *Haft Aurang* were contemporary with the text we would still be left with a dilemma similar to the one

<sup>112</sup> The margins of an ex-Vever album page that includes a very fine painting by Farrukh Beyg (AMSG, s86.0230) displays multiple traces of black "Scythian" caps left as wet imprints from a facing page. That facing page probably contained another important Farrukh Beyg painting.

<sup>113</sup> Zebrowski (1983), pl. X.

<sup>114</sup> For a color reproduction see Soudavar (1992), p. 225.

<sup>115</sup> For the calligraphy and its dating see Simpson (1997), pp. 278-83.

we evoked at the beginning of the previous section: what happened to Farrukh Beyg between 1572 and 1585, and why didn't he produce other masterpieces at the Safavid court? The answer is that the painting series of this manuscript was Farrukh Beyg's last Safavid project and executed c. 1580-83.

A first observation is that colophon pages are illustrated in this manuscript; a fact that usually points to a post calligraphy attempt to use the maximum available space for decoration purposes by a painter who does not have access to the initial production team of the manuscript and cannot request a new arrangement of the text with more space devoted to illustration. Also, in comparing two of these pages, we can see that in **PI. 14b** there are six illuminated cartouches plus the illustration at the bottom, while in **PI. 14a** the six cartouches are filled with tiny paintings. It suggests that, in the first production phase of the manuscript, the calligraphy of the manuscript was terminated, the illumination was halfway through. Most probably, no illustration had been added because in the regular course of manuscript decoration, painting came last. The cartouches of **PI. 14a** were probably left empty and were painted later on by Farrukh Beyg. *Choosing a vizier (PI. 9a)*, seems to confirm this: the section heading space in the middle of the page is still devoid of illumination. Left with a previously designed page with an empty section reserved for painting and little room to maneuver, Farrukh Beyg used in a major *tour de force* every bit of space, including the inter-columnar one, to squeeze in a maximum number of his elaborate portraits. To avoid a visual clash between the central cartouche and surrounding painting, Farrukh Beyg left it unfilled. The fact that it remained empty suggests that perhaps the renewed project lacked an accomplished illuminator and Farrukh Beyg was single-handedly refurbishing the manuscript.

Because his style is so different and no dated landmark exist for comparison purposes, the dating of Farrukh Beyg's *Haft Aurang* series is difficult. Fortunately, the single painting that is not by him, *The Prophet Moses bearing a stray sheep on his shoulders (PI. 14c)*, allows a fairly accurate dating of that body of work. The similarity of Moses' faces in this page with *Moses debating with a Heterodox (PI. 14d)* from another Jāmī manuscript (GPB, Dorn 429, f.37)<sup>116</sup> is striking and is proof that both were painted

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<sup>116</sup> For a color reproduction see Ashrafi (1974), p. 59.

by the same hand. However, what is of use here is not the similarity but the contrast between the two paintings. The landscape of **PI. 14d** is in the conventional style of the 1570's while the edges of the rock formations in **PI. 14c** are filled with white patches that are characteristic of the 1580's.

Both of these paintings are discussed and attributed to Muḥammadī in a forthcoming article by this author that shall focus on the artist's painting activity rather than his famous ink drawings.<sup>117</sup> Interestingly, **PI. 14c** has also much in common with another painting attributed to Muḥammadī, *Throwing Down the Impostor*, which belongs to a *ḥifāt al-`āshiqīn* manuscript (AHT no. 90) copied in 1582.<sup>118</sup> The most visible similarity resides in the treatment of the leopard skin in the two paintings (see **figs.45** and **46**). Each artist develops his own peculiar style of small repetitive details such as leopard spots. Here, the spots are identical in both paintings: they are mostly painted as clusters of five *loose* dots in a regular pentagon formation. Other Muḥammadī favorites are the emerging necks of what are supposed to be mountain goats,<sup>119</sup> from the rock formations under the leopards in both paintings, and the depiction of white spotted domesticated goats. Muḥammadī's single painting thus allows a 1580's dating for the series.

Based on the above observations, we now have a preliminary framing of Farrukh Beyg's *Haft Aurang* paintings: they must have been created c.1580 but no later than 1585, the year of his departure for India.

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<sup>117</sup> In a recent article (Robinson (1997), p. 40), Robinson criticizes this author's attributions to Muḥammadī and maintains an earlier position that "no fully painted miniatures are to be found among the best authenticated works of the artist" (see also Robinson (1992), p. 18) despite the fact that he himself attributes three such paintings to him (*ibid.*, paintings designated as M1, M18-19, M20). Such position defies logic and is tantamount to saying that Picasso only painted in the cubism mode. The bread and butter mode of painting for every Safavid painter was manuscript painting. This was the medium in which they were trained by previous masters and this is where they earned a living. The idiosyncratic tinted drawing style of Muḥammadī could not gain approval unless he had first established his credentials in the domain of conventional painting. It is our hope that our forthcoming article on Muḥammadī will further show the close affinity between his tinted drawings and his manuscript paintings.

<sup>118</sup> For the attribution and color reproduction see Soudavar (1992), p. 233.

<sup>119</sup> Contrary to Farrukh Beyg, Muḥammadī depicts plain animals such as deer and boar, as mountain goats.

## ***The Patron of the Haft Aurang paintings***

As suggested elsewhere, the *ʿifāt al-`āshiqīn* manuscript was made by the order of the vizier Mīrzā Salmān as a present for Ḥamza Mīrzā (1566-86), the elder brother of the future Shāh `Abbās, son of Shāh Muḥammad Khūdābanda.<sup>120</sup> Since the latter was almost blind, nominal power revolved around the heir apparent, Ḥamza Mīrzā. But effective power resided with Mīrzā Salmān who, not only controlled the administration, but had gained the upper hand over the Qizilbāsh *amirs* after leading them in two successful campaigns. To strengthen his position, Mīrzā Salmān arranged the marriage of his daughter, ʿafiyya Khānum, to Ḥamza Mīrzā in April 1582.<sup>121</sup> She was ten, he was sixteen. The frontispiece of the TKS *Haft Aurang* manuscript (**Pls. 11a-b**) may thus illustrate the marriage ceremony that Mīrzā Salmān had lavishly organized in his home.<sup>122</sup> As in the *ʿifāt al-`āshiqīn* frontispiece where the vizier is depicted with a long staff in his hand (**PI. 15d**),<sup>123</sup> Mīrzā Salmān appears here on the bottom right of the presumed marriage scene with the exact same clothes. The dignitary with a staff on the opposite corner may be the vizier's son, Mīrzā `Abdallāh, whom Mīrzā Salmān had appointed vizier to Ḥamza Mīrzā.<sup>124</sup>

In full circle, we are back to Ḥamza Mīrzā and Iskandar Beyg's remark that Farrukh Beyg was in his retinue. The illustrations added to the unfinished TKS *Haft Aurang* were probably all painted for the young crown-prince, whose early carrier heralded a valiant and refined ruler for the future of the Safavid state.

## The Third Wave

### ***Farrukh Beyg's Departure***

Mīrzā Salmān was killed by the Qizilbāsh *amirs* on June 13, 1583.<sup>125</sup> Ḥamza Mīrzā was in turn killed on December 10, 1586 by a disgruntled lover.<sup>126</sup> The exact date

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., pp.227-35.

<sup>121</sup> Qomī (1980), vol. 2, p. 724.

<sup>122</sup> Stchoukine had suggested that this scene represented the marriage of Ibrāhīm Mīrzā to Tahmāsb's daughter.

<sup>123</sup> For color reproduction see Soudavar (1992), pp. 230-31.

<sup>124</sup> Qomī (1980), vol. 2, p. 724.

<sup>125</sup> Qomī (1980), vol. 2, p. 746.

of Farrukh Beyg's departure is not known, but according to the *Akbarnāma*, after the death of Akbar's half-brother, Muḥammad-Ḥakīm, Farrukh Beyg left Kabul for India in December 1585. An inscription on a portrait of Mīrzā-Ḥakīm accompanied by one Ḥājji Yāqūt bears the signature of Farrukh-Ḥusayn, alias Farrukh Beyg (see appendix), and situates him in Kabul in the year 992/1584. He must have left Safavid territory earlier, perhaps in late 1583.

What caused Farrukh Beyg's departure is not the premature death of Ḥamza Mīrzā but probably the death of the vizier. By dominating the military and the administration, marrying his daughter to the prince and appointing his son as Ḥamza Mīrzā's vizier, Mīrzā Salmān gained control over the prince's activities and, probably over the royal library-atelier and its artists. Farrukh Beyg was thus inevitably linked to the vizier.

The Qizilbāsh amirs' reaction to Mīrzā Salmān's dominance was violent and vengeful. They killed him, confiscated his entire family's wealth and even forced Ḥamza Mīrzā to divorce Mīrzā Salmān's daughter. In such circumstance, and because of his links to Mīrzā Salmān, Farrukh Beyg must have felt threatened. He thus migrated to the Mughal court where artists were in high demand. He was not the only one to go. Another painter, Āghā Riḡā Heravī, seems to have departed at the same time and perhaps for the same reasons. Both gained fame and fortune in India as their works were prized by successive Indian rulers, especially Jahāngīr who collected a number of their paintings for his *Gulshan* album.

## Conclusion

Like the previous migratory waves, the third wave came as a result of the loss of effective patronage on one side, and active patronage on the other. But unlike the first wave which included artists such as Mīr Sayyīd `Alī who remained entrenched in his Persian mode of painting, the third wave artists had been trained by the second wave painters who better prepared them for the Mughal taste and modes of painting. The

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<sup>126</sup> Iskandar Beyg reports that death occurred on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of Zīḥajja 994/4<sup>th</sup> of Dec. 1586 (Iskandar Beyg (1971), vol. 1, p. 347). But his dates are at times inaccurate. This period is well documented by Qomī who cites frequent dates, usually in concordance with one another. He situates the death of Ḥamza Mīrzā, six days later; Qomī (1980), vol. 2, p. 842.

flourishing of Farrukh Beyg's style in India may ultimately be traced to the style he inherited from the two returning artists, namely Mīrzā `Alī and Shaykh Muḥammad, and to the atelier of prince Ḥamza Mīrzā who emerges in this study as a worthy successor to his more famous cousin, Sultan Ibrāhīm Mīrzā.

Abolala Soudavar – Houston, TX

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**Abbreviations for museum and art institution names**

AHT = Art and History Trust Collection, courtesy of Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

AMSG = Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

BL = British Library, London

FGA = Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

GPL = Gulistān Palace Library, Tehran

MG = Musée Guimet

TKS = Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul

VAM = Victoria Albert Museum, London

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## Appendix

### Farrukh-Ḥusayn vs. Farrukh Beyg

John Seyller has read the inscription on the St. Petersburg painting of *Ibrāhīm `Ādil Shāh II Hawking* as “`amal-i Farrukh Beyg ast” (it is the work of Farrukh Beyg).<sup>127</sup> The inscription though, has neither `amal nor ast (see right figure). The reading of ast was probably suggested by the existence of two dots over the ending “gāf” of Beyg. In reality the three letters of ast are non-existent and the two dots belong to the “fā” and “khā” of Farrukh. As for what was read as `amal, it looks like the two end letters “yā” and “nun” of words such as *kamtarin* (the lowliest), or Ḥusayn. However, *kamtarin* is an epithet used by artists in their signature, and its presence in the same legend with the epithet Beyg creates a contradiction in terms: the first is a sign of humility and the second is an honorific epithet equivalent to *Monsieur*. A painting that seems to bear Farrukh Beyg's signature is the previously mentioned *Youth with a Wine-cup and a Falcon* (GPL,



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<sup>127</sup> Seyller (1997), p. 320.

no.1663, fol. 47).<sup>128</sup> The visible portion of the signature reads “`amal-i kamtarin Farrukh” (the work of the lowliest servant, Farrukh). One additional letter, an “m,” appears before the margin cut off. It is probably the beginning letter of “Mušavvir” (the painter), an epithet that many painters included in their signature. Thus Beyg was not included in what appears to be a genuine signature of the artist.

A second possibility is that the two letters in the St. Petersburg inscription are the end letters of Ḥusayn, in a formula such as `amal-i ibn-i Ḥusayn, Farrukh Beyg (the work of Farrukh Beyg son of Ḥusayn. Based on the writings of the Deccani poet ḷohūri, who had eulogized an artist by the name of Farrukh-Ḥusayn in his writings, Robert Skelton had boldly suggested in a controversial article that Farrukh Beyg had worked in the Deccan and was none other than Farrukh-Ḥusayn, since both were first class artists and both were trained in Safavid Iran.<sup>129</sup> Skelton had further speculated that the Mowlānā Darvish Ḥusayn - at whose house ḷohūri briefly stayed while visiting Shirāz – was perhaps Farrukh Beyg’s father. Darvish Ḥusayn was a learned man who had taught calligraphy and painting to many Shirāzī artists, and ḷohūri’s stay at Darvish Ḥusayn’s house was not fortuitous but perhaps the result of a prior relationship between the poet and Farrukh Beyg when both were in Khurasan.<sup>130</sup>

Skelton’s imaginative speculations may find support in the following considerations. First, Farrukh Beyg’s Shirāzī connection is not far fetched. In an entry on the Georgian Siyāvosh who was Farrukh Beyg’s brother, `Qāḷī Aḥmad wrote that he joined “his kinsmen in Shirāz.”<sup>131</sup> Their presumed father was thus likely to have resided in that city. But how a Georgian who was initially Tahmāsb’s slave could become a learned man named Darvish Ḥusayn and father to Farrukh Beyg is still unresolved, unless one assumes that the two brothers were captured in a Georgian campaign, were orphans, and Darvish Ḥusayn became Farrukh Beyg’s teacher and perhaps adoptive father. Second, two pages from the Gulshan album (GPL, no.1663, fols. 199 and 234)

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<sup>128</sup> Ātābāy (1974), p. 357 and 362; Skelton (1957), fig. 13.

<sup>129</sup> Skelton (1957), pp. 4101-402.

<sup>130</sup> Idem.

<sup>131</sup> Qomī (1974), p. 148.

bear a signature of Farrukh-Ḥusayn.<sup>132</sup> Since neither have been reproduced, stylistic comparison with works by Farrukh Beyg is not possible. However, a signature-legend on folio 199 reportedly reads “has drawn it, the sinful Farrukh-Ḥusayn the painter” and an inscription on the top says: “the portraits of the prince of the world and its inhabitants, Muḥammad-Ḥakīm Mīrzā, and his close confidant the one who has performed the *ḥajj* at the Double Holy Places, Ḥājī Yāqūt; was drawn at the Shahrārā Garden of Kabul, the year 992/1584.”<sup>133</sup> These two legends in conjunction with the *Akbarnāma* information that Farrukh Beyg left Kabul for Akbar’s court in December 1585, upon the death of Mīrzā Muḥammad-Ḥakīm, make Farrukh Beyg and Farrukh-Ḥusayn the same and only person. Finally, Farrukh-Ḥusayn is an odd name that only appears in certain sufi related milieus in which the names of the Prophet Muḥammad and the Imams were used with epithets such as Sultan, Shāh, etc... and especially when Ḥusayn appeared in the name of the father. Such is the case of Sultan-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā’s sons who were named Farrukh-Ḥusayn, Muḥaffar-Ḥusayn, Ibrāhīm-Ḥusayn and even, Ibn-i Ḥusayn. Skelton’s speculation that Farrukh-Beyg/Farrukh-Ḥusayn’s real or adoptive father was named Darvish Husayn was not only possible but perhaps insightful.

### Addendum

The belated arrival of Gulshan Album slides from Tehran<sup>134</sup> has brought added confirmation to some of the arguments advanced in our main text and provides information about inscribed attributions:

- 1- The tinted drawing with the lengthy inscription by Farrukh-Ḥusayn (**PI. 16**) that we had referred to in our appendix without the benefit of seeing an illustration of it, confirms many of our assumptions. First, it clearly

<sup>132</sup> Ātābāy (1974), p. 357. Ātābāy includes “Muṣavvir” in her reading of the signature; the actual painting may show more of the signature than the reproduction does.

<sup>133</sup> Idem:

حرره المذنب فرخ حسين مصور  
تصوير شاهزاده عالم و عالميان، ميرزا محمدحکيم بهادر، و مقرب الحضرت حاجي الحرمین الشريفين  
حاجي ياقوت، في مقام باغ شهرآزاي کابل، سنه اثنین و تسعين و تسعمائه ۹۹۲

<sup>134</sup> I am indebted to Messrs. Anīsi and `Alā`īnī of the Gulistan Palace Library for their kind cooperation in the procurement of these slides.

incorporates many of Farrukh Beyg's characteristics: elaborate portraiture, refined draftsmanship as in *Horse and a Groom*, geometric patterns on the sashes and turbans, and the hanging willow branches featured in the *ʔafarnāma* and *Akbarnāma* pages. Second, this tinted drawing, which is in a style usually associated with Muḥammadī, further emphasizes the parallel stylistic development of the two artists.

- 2- As with Muḥammadī, Farrukh Beyg (alias Farrukh-Ḥusayn) has an elegant *nastaʔliq* handwriting that shall serve us in future studies to differentiate between his authentic signatures and mere attributions.
- 3- Some paintings by Farrukh Beyg bear an attribution written in a dot-less and awkward handwriting that is very similar to Jahāngīr's (a specimen of his handwriting is visible on the right side of the colophon on **PI. 1a**). Without relying on a thorough analysis of calligraphic similarities, one can see that the location of the attributing sentences - usually prominently written on the painting itself - designates Jahāngīr as a possible candidate. For only an owner, librarian or artist with access to the library, and with pretense of connoisseurship - very much professed by Jahāngīr - would dare to add such graffiti to masterpieces of the royal treasury. However, without a correct assessment of their date and time, one should not discard other possibilities such as inscriptions added by later princes (for instance Shāh Jahān) imitating Jahāngīr's attribution formula. Fortunately, the location of the attribution that appears at the bottom of **PI. 7b** provides a better clue of authorship since it is located outside the painting frame and is set within the illuminated margins. It was certainly on the painting page prior to its incorporation into the album. The fact that such poor calligraphy was not trimmed away but laboriously fitted into the marginal decoration, leads to the conclusion that it was penned by Jahāngīr himself.

