Chapter VII
CONCLUSION: HISTORICITY OF THE MUGHAL PAINTERS WORK

Being fully aware of the fact, universally acknowledged, that all creations of the Almighty whether animate or inanimate are mortal man still tries to challenge the fact and vanity ventures to immortalise himself. To immortalise himself man has used literature, drawing and painting, architecture, sculpture etc. as mediums. Mughal emperors were also afflicted with this common weakness and they utilized some of the above mediums to perpetuate themselves.

From the inception of Mughal rule in India, only the art of painting was accorded royal patronage, and portrait painting did not appeal to the painters and their patrons. It was during the reign of Akbar and Jahangir that portrait painting was encouraged by the crown itself. A portrait painters having special characteristics and individual styles were distinctly marked and were entrusted with the work in which they were highly specialised. All this was done under royal
orders. 'The most prominent is portrait painters of Jahangirs regime are Abul Hasan, Daulat, Bichtr, Manohar, Bishandas, Gowardhan, Parag and Balchand'.

All these painters were endowed with the gift of portrait painting and each one of them had a peculiar style and his work could be easily distinguished from that of others.

The work of Bichtr, Gowardhan shows distinctive qualities, but far all the material prepared by them could not be put together for making a proper critical appreciation of their individual styles. The name of Daulat and Manohar, the two renowned painters of Jahangir's days are missing from the Tuzuk. The grave omission of their names is very surprising, because both were very trusted portrait painters. About Abul Hasan and Bishandas the remarks of emperor Jahangir are very specific. As for Manohar, Gowardhan and Daulat the emperor wished to see them on the margin of the royal muraqqa (plates 26-27). All these painters were so close to emperor Jahangir that they were
bestowed high positions and evidence produced by Roe is sufficient to support this fact. All the above portrait painters have so many portraits to their credit, that they can not be detailed enmass and require separate and elaborate description. So in the interest of the readers it is necessary to deal with them individually and list their portraits separately.

**ABUL HASAN**

Abul Hasan was one of the greatest painters of Jahangir's time. He was second to none in portrait painting also. He was the son of a noted Persian artist Aqa Riza. In Jahangir's time portrait painting was very popular. All the leading painters of the Jahangir era switched over to portrait painting and it was supposed to be a fine device of pleasing the royalty and a good return for their patronage. Abul Hasan by virtue of his extraordinary skill both in painting as well as portrait painting was very close to the emperor and was rewarded with the title of *Nadir-uz-Zaman* or wonder of the time. Jahangir was very fond of portrait
painting. His trusted painters portraited him in different moods and positions. Both single pictures of Jahangir and with his courtiers are available. He devoted a lot of his time in portrait painting, but there are only few pictures carrying his name. Percy has reproduced a charming picture by Abul Hasan purely in Mughal style in his book on Indian painting under the Mughals (Plate 1) (Fig. 1) may be by Abul Hasan.

Another authentic portrait by Abul Hasan is of Jam Jassa of Jamnagar reproduced in plate no. 37 in the recent publication 'Indian Book Painting" by Kuhnel and Goetz. Jam was one of the greatest princes of Gujarat and one of the famous Rajas of India, having his own army and more than five thousand horse men. Jahangir presented a robe of state to him. Jam Ranjeet Singh Ji of Jamnagar is the direct descendant of Jam Jassa. The portrait is signed by Nadir-uz-Zaman and it is a piece of rare aesthetic value. Among the portrait of Jahangir's period in the museum is a fine miniature showing the emperor watching the fight between two
elephants. The most notable peculiarity in the portraits of Jahangir is that they were painted with utmost care and the unique and matured display of the art of portrait painting during the Mughal period.

Apart from the above portraits Abul Hasan painted the picture of Jahangir's it is there in Jahangir accession to the throne and it is the front piece of the Jahangir name (Tuzuk) seems natural enough. In the words Jahangir "The picture was worthy of all praise". Its painter received endless favours from the emperor undoubtedly Abul Hasan's main field was portraiture and court scenes and large number of Abul Hasan's miniature, are portraits but his themes on which he worked during his entire career are fairly varied. His miniatures have direct Persian influence but the European influence infused a more lively and sensitive effect in his portraiture e.g. giving figures depth by shading.

holding his father Akbar's portrait Mughal art c. 1949 Musee Guimet Paris. In large port the miniature is the work of Abul Hassan (who signed himself Nadir al Zaman). It was retouched in about 1605. In the portrait within the portrait Akbar is offering his son the world meaning his world according to a European symbolism which has here been exploited in order to established in a link of cordial continuity between the two emperors'.

2. Description of the Portrait of Jam Jassa of Jamnagar: 'This exquisite portrait is signed by the greatest painter of Jahangir's time, Abul Hasan, son of the celebrated persian artist Aqa Riza of Herat. Though Jahangir does not think much of the father he was the pupil of the famous calligraphist Mulla Mir Ali of Herat and executed some very fine work; although he (Aqa) was renowned more for his copies of old masters than for any original work.

Very few pictures by this wonder of the age have survived a charming portrait in purely Mughal style is
reproduced by Percy Brown in his book on Indian Painting under the Mughals, Plate No. 17 (Figure 1) which may be by Abul Hasan. A more authentic picture is the portrait of Jam Jassa of Jamnagar or Nawanagar reproduced in plate no. 37 in the recent publication Indian Book-Painting by Kuhnel and Goetz on the words of Jahangir the Jam was one of the greatest princes of Gujarat and one of the most important Rajas of India. His land border on the sea He has standing army of 5,000 to 6,000 horsemen and in the time of war can put into the field about 12,000. There are many horses in country. I presented him with a robe of state. This Jam Jassa or Jaswant was one of the ancestors of H.H. the Jam Ranjit Singhji of Jamnagar. The portrait is signed 'Nadir-uz-Zaman' and is certainly of considerable aesthetic merit'.

MANOHAR

Manohar was the son of Basawan, a leading painter during Akbar's reign. He 'Manohar' was one of
the top ranking portrait painters of Jahangir era. 'Many illustrations of Jahangir nama, portraits of the emperor and his close courtiers and pictures of royal assemblies have rolled out from Manohar's brush'. Manohar's name is seen in three different ways, Manohar, Manohar Das and Manohar Bandeh (Bunda). 'The name Manohar is there on two folios of Gulshan Album Depicting Scenes from Laila and Majnun and a picture illustrating the same story in the Chester Beautty Library'. His style of painting is much influenced by his father. His paintings displayed well controlled modelling and accurate perspective and figures well planned. He avoided using shadows and drawing type characters. He had mastery over the science of perspective and was highly proficient in drawing accurate and lively portraits.

Manohar was also had a sense of balance and harmony expressed in mellow and subdued colours. Manohar's name does not find place in the Tuzuk, still a portrait by Manohar 'on the hashiya of Gulshan Murraqa (Plate 27) painted by Daulat goes to
support his presence in the Tuzuk'. As Manohar was so close to Jahangir that the former 'accompanied the latter on his journey to Ajmer Mandu and Ahmedabad in 1613-1618' and 'this fact has its basis in the portrait of Jahangir to Sir Thomas Roe there Jahangir wrote his autograph note along with date and place of its painting'. As a skilled portrait painter Manohar is known to have portraited persons and delightful river and wood landscape drawn in right perspective. In *Jahangir nama* miniatures, A state procession and Jahangir's visit to *Akbar's Tomb* (Plate 47) are attributed to Manohar.

As time rolled on 'Manohar specialised in portrait and animal studies. The young prince standing on a pavilion with a book in his hand as shown in the *Gulshan Album* may be an early work of Manohar'. Manohar drew so many portraits of young princes and it is evident that Manohar started painting portraits from the last days of Akbar's reign. It was in the early years of Jahangir's reign that Manohar devoted
himself exclusively to portrait painting. Manohar also devoted himself to historical group portrait e.g. Akbar receiving *Mirza Aziz Koka* (Fig. 9) Jahangir attributed four portraits to Manohar and the portrait of Jahangir traced in dollar 18 b Berlin Album was by all means prepared by him. His mastery in modelling is apparent in the ground expression of emperors face. Manohar's two other portraits of unknown nobles are also there in the same folio, but Khunel and Goetz read his name as Manoshahr. 'A note-signed by Jahangir stated that the portrait of Khan-i-Khana by painted by Manohar in the 13th fulus'.

The later *Murraqa* is known to have been collected by Shah Jahan in his princely days also have large number of Manohar's works. 'Portrait of Shah Jahan and Dara Shikoh (Plate 53) riding in hilly landscape and a picture of Jahangir's private assembly (Plate 46)' which are safe in Minto Album in victoria and Albert Museum are also the works of Manohar. His other important portraits in wantage
Album are also safe in the above museum. The portrait of *Danyal* in the Kevorkean Album (CAD 1595) is perhaps Manohar's best single figure portrait. Two of them portray Mirza Ghazi Beg and Murtaza Khan and the *'third Jahangirs reception of Qutb of a tame black Duck led by its keeper'*\(^{12}\) and have inscription Shah Jahangir at the top and signed by Manohar Bandeh-

Manohar's animal portraiture is found in the collection of Geoffrey C.N. Sturt, Painswick, showing a small *falcon* on a perch. In the end it would be sufficient to say that Manohar has a long list of portraits to his credit and all his portraits can not be numbered and noted down in this single and restricted attempt.

**BICHTR**

Bichtr was an outstanding artist of both Jahangir and Shah Jahan's time. Portraiture was his main subject and he devoted all his skill to this side of art, and surpassed all his contemporaries. *'He prepared royal portraits as well as of commoners (Mins 7-9-20-23-4)'*.\(^{13}\) Bichtr used western techniques of picture making
such as deep shading, cast shadows and a distant hazy
landscape mainly the depiction of distant perspective.
According to Gray (6), Bichtr specialised in the
kind of 'apotheosis' portrait which the Mughal painter
adopted from European painters. Most of Bichtr's
painting are not available, so his distinctive qualities
and individual style are lying in oblivion or are off the
record. However, 'which attributes miniatures (mins
39-9) to him on stylistic ground'.

Shah Jahan appreciated his skill at portraiture which
can be seen on min 11). His miniatures 2-5-7-12-13) are
signed in Persian in a firm hand. 'By designating
himself banda-i-dargah, banda-i-ikhlas and Ghulam
ba ikhlas he has confirmed that he was the servant of
the Imperial court'.

The works of Bichtr's early career as painter not
being available, it is not possible to trace the early
development of his style, and if it is even ventured, it
would prove a vain effort. Bichtr's special dealing of
ordinary people such as musicians and peasants is
sufficient to show influence of European painting upon him.

Bichtr's self portrait can be seen in min no. 6. 'Beach (3) 10,2 has certified that Bichtr continued painting till 1640s',\textsuperscript{16} but the inscription on Min 27 with the artists signatures suggests that Bichtr actively worked 'till 1650's as the miniatures in the Padshanama (RLWC No. 773)'\textsuperscript{17} belong to that period. Another important portrait by Bichtr is of a young princes drinking in a garden attended by some learned men and two singers, one of whom is playing the rubab. In the back ground on a white marble platform under a canopy is the prince's couch. Another portrait is of Mohd. Riza Kashmiri, a jonial looking person with a bushy beard doning a large white turban and holding a book and rosary, against a very dark back ground and his name is inscribed on the turban-inscription work of Bichtr CBLA (A) no. 9. Bichtr's another important portrait is of Shaikh Daulat with a hallow around his head CBLA (A) No. 14. Bichtr has
a long list of portraits to his credit and they include portraits of Jahangir Shah Jahan and their kins and nobbles and courtiers and also of saints and sufis and of different memorable occasions.

GOVARDHAN

Govardhan was the son of Bhawanidas. He joined the Mughal atelier towards the close of Akbar's reign. His father had also been in Imperial Service. It was all due to his father's position in the royal family that Govardhan was treated warmly and obviously allotted good jobs. In Akbar nama one can find 'his earliest miniatures - the most talented exercise. Akbar nama (C-1606-5). His self portrait is in min 10 dated 1609-10 shows him a quite young" and alert youth. His miniature of Akbar's time are certainly pieces of exquisite beauty displaying the talent and skill of the master artist. The fine shading, distant perspectives and vital capacity for portraiture are the main distinguishing qualities of his miniatures. A plus point in his career as an artist and portrait painter is that he always
worked singly on the miniatures ascribed to him avoided collaboration with any other artists of the atelier.

Govardhan was very close to Jahangir and he commanded considerable respect from the Imperial court. "His miniature No. (12 & 24) and also carry Jahangir's autograph"\textsuperscript{19} Jahangir's writing on Mius 24 is an open testimony to the fact that Govardhan accompanied Jahangir when he proceeded to Ahmadabad. In Ahmadabad he drew the portrait of Bhara, the chief of kutch, who had waited for the Emperor on 3 July 1680. Jahangir highly commanded the occasion and also praised 'the portrait (cf Jahangir (1), ed, text 234-5: tr 11-19-20 commissariat (1), 11,76)'\textsuperscript{20}

Govardhan surpassed all his contemporary portrait painters and his style of painting entirely differed from others. It was only by virtue of his style that his surviving portraits (Plates XXX and XXXIV) are enough to guard his high status as a portrait painter,
he still holds the field. Human figures and animals appealed him very much and that is why he devoted and restricted himself to the portraiture of human figures and animals. In all his portraits, deep shading with the suggestion of shadows and treatment of space with a scientific perspective, go to show the stamp of western influence upon the portraitor. The originality of his subjects give his portraits sufficient realism in depiction and support his intimacy with subject, character and feeling.

Govardhan's style though unique and peculiar did not offend the trend of painting in his time. In his later illustrations he worked at extreme refinement. His painting responded to his zeal and sensibilities and this attribute makes him superior to other artists like 'Manohar and Mansur among others (Beach (3), 119). Beach also added "No other Mughal artist of the period touched with such sympathy and depth, the variety of humanity found in India (Beach (3), 118) Mins 8-9-11-13-14-18-19-21-3-25-29-32)"21 are the
glaring specimen of Govardhan's work. Govardhan's inclination towards women is witnessed in his the study of a woman.

**Study of a Woman:** 'The portrait is inscribed on the reverse. Amal-Govardhan Musawwir-Painted by Govardhan painter. It may well be the creation by the artist named, who was one of the celebrated painters of the court of Jahangir for the brush work is extremely fine the colour schemes sumptuous and the treatment of hands sensitive. The face is remarkably beautiful and full of character. The lady reclining against a gold brocade cubion belongs probably to the class of danseuses and courtesans-expert alike in dance, music and all the artifices of love. The neglige robe is painted champagne red, while the scarf thrown over the head and forming a sort of cap golden on the forehead is fastened a beautiful plate of leaves held in position by Jewelled brooches. The picture is altogether a dainty specimen of the Mughal art at its Zenith. A gorgeous Darbar
seeve by Goverdhan is reproduced in the coloured prontispiece to Mr. Percy Brown's Indian Painting under the Mughals. Several pictures by this artist are reproduced by Goetz and Kuhnel in their sumptuous publication - The Indian Book Painting'.

BISHANDAS

Bishandas was a shining artist in the galaxy of Jahangiri painters. "He was unequalled in his age for taking likenesses, to take portraits of the Shah of Persia and the chief men of his state, and bring them here are the exact words which Jahangir uttered in praise of Bishandas. Jahangir was so much impressed with the performance of Bishandas that he was honoured by the emperor with the gift of an elephant. Abul Hasan and Manohar were his rivals in this field.

Bishandas was also on rolls in the Akbari ateliers. The 'Nafahat-al-uns miniature, showing a future married bliss for Abu Bakr Duqqi as foreseen by Abul Hasan Karafi was attributed to Bishandas by Coomara Swamy'. S.C. Welch also attributes to
Bishandas, the miniature of *Sadi's visit to the temple* of Somnath in Bustan MS (Plate 19). Apart from many other portraits by 'Bishandas a portrait of Raja Suraj Mall Singh Rathore of Jodhpur (Plate 35, painted in 1608) when the Raja came to the court' is irrefutably attributed to Bishandas. Another important picture by Bishandas is of the occasion when the Shah of Persian examines a crystal or *jade cup* presented by the Mughal emperor, while an attendant brings a small *huqqa* to Khan-i-Alam. 'The best picture of Shah painted by Bishandas is to be found in a fine miniature in the Lenningrad Album (Plate 54)'.

Bishandas stayed for a long time in Iranian court and drew so many portraits, but little is known about them. Another important picture by Bishandas and bearing signature of Shah Jahan and the folio showing on an imaginary assembly of Timur, Babur and Humayun is safe in Nasiruddin Album.

After his return from Persia Bishandas draw 'portraits of Bahadur Khan Uzbek and Khizr Khan
Khandeshi-now-in Berlin Album\textsuperscript{185} and the double portrait of Rao Bharo and Jassa Jam in the wantage Bequest Victoria and Albert Museum.\textsuperscript{26} These portraits prove that Bishandas had command over the Brush work and his brush always added grace and honour to him. The colouring in his pictures is extremely attractive and speaks volumes about Bishandas knowledge and use of colours. In all his pictures are altogether a rare specimen of Mughal art at its Zenith. The art of portraiture fully blossomed during the reign of Jahangir and after that it begun to lose its charm. As is not possible to reduce into writing, all about the stupendous work i.e. portraits drawn by Bishandas, so I leave it to other scholars to add something more to the artistic qualities of Bishandas as a portrait painter for reference some of his best portraits have been noted here, so his to do justice to the renowned painter and perpetuate his services to the portrait painting.

1. Portrait of Timur, Babur and Humayun.

2. Portrait of Raja Suraj Singh Rathore.

160
3. Portrait of Bahadur Khan.
4. Portrait of Shah Abbas.
5. Portrait of Rai Bahrah and Jassa Ram.

**Portrait of Akbar's successor Jahangir:** 'Akbar's successor, Jahangir (1605-1628) seen to have been even more found of portraiture than his father not only did he have himself and his noble frequently painted. But he even sent a painter named Bishandas, who was said to be unrivalled as a portrait painter to accompany the Indian ambassador to the court of Persia and there take the portraits of the shah and chief personages of his court.

Jahangir was the only one of the ruler of the Mughal dynasty who struck coins engraved with his own portrait; some time even holding a wine-cup in his hand.

*Further notice of this vast picture gallery of portraits is unnecessary here, as so many recent*
publications have provided abundant materials for the study of it. 27

REFERENCES:


4. Ashok Kumar Das, op.cit., p. 188.

5. Ibid, p. 188.


22. N.C. Mehta, op.cit., p. 78.