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Paralogism of Romantic Expression and War, Iskander or Alexander

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Abstract

Mongol art of the Muslim miniature painting is appreciated for its originality, though emerged out of the native and the foreign influences, the former of Baghdad school and the latter of China, brought to the land by Mongols. But eventually it developed a novel character that can be rightly labelled as Ilkhanid Mongol Art. The paper reflects their stylistic originality through analysing a miniature of the last phase of the era, illustrating an anecdote of Shāhnāma. The miniature is unique of its kind, though represents a war scene of Alexander and Puras but adopts unusual stance for its delineation that made even intangible elements perceptible. In order to understand it thoroughly, it is scrutinised besides history through science as well, to explore both; its physical and metaphysical phenomena. Because the artist seems to have knocked at all the doors possible to be consulted; taking help from symbols, exploring natural phenomenon through the spectacles of a scientist. Thus, besides history, it is viewed and analysed by scrutinising medical, engineering and space-science' point of views. Contradiction between Alexander and Iskander, for being Macedonian or Persian prince is also sorted out through the annals of history. Thus, finding paralogism in the use of phenomenon and noumenon, myth and reality, here conception is turned into perception.

Horror and war are interlinked whether one turns back to the ancient times or views it in the modern atomic age. It is embodied with abhorrence and repugnance, keeping no element of attraction or beauty, for its association with massacres, especially of human, though keeps an element of thrill as well. But an artist may perceive the heinous act through the spectacles of aesthetics, delineating it with comely expressions. The research focuses on a painting of the last phase of Ilkhanid¹ Mongol dynasty, titled *Indian*

¹ Mongols were basically Shamanists by religion but Il khan was the first Muslim convert, and was named Il Khan Ahmad (ruled 1282-1284) after accepting Islam, and the dynasty that sprang from him was named Ilkhanid Mongol dynasty (1335).

Army fleeing before the iron warriors of Iskander (1330-1335), fig.1, from Demotte's Shāhnāma², a novel expression of a chronicle.



Fig.1: *Indian Army Fleeing before the Iron Warriors of Iskander*, from Demotte's *Shāhnāma*, Tabrīz, 1335, Harvard University Art Museum. Opaque water colours, ink, gold and silver on paper. Folio: 50.2 x 39.5 cm

Demotte's Shāhnāma illustrates either heroic subjects or lamentable and pathetic, those tug at the heartstrings. The narrative represented here is linked with the former, celebrating heroism of Alexander, a conqueror of the world, and his army. Even their sight pushes Indian army away, to run from the battlefield, for they were being chased at the speed of light. The painting is unique of its kind, though a military confrontation but sets forth with romantic expression of an epic drama, where even the intangible element of speed is portrayed along with the scientific phenomenon of

² This is the large Mongol *Shāhnāma* that is named Demotte's *Shāhnāma* after its former owner.

friction. Hence, the painting needs extrinsic and intrinsic analysis for an amalgamated interpretation of history, metaphysics, physics and the truth behind Iskander or Alexander.

The Macedonian prince Alexander or Iskander and the Indian monarch Rāja Purus encountered in the early summer of 326 BC, at the bank of the river Hydaspes³. Arrian⁴ defines its location, as he says that a rock at the bank of Hydaspes “where a channel makes a mighty sweep”. It is said that the rock was covered with trees, and at a small distance was an island, full of woods but without denizens, ideal to conceal the cavalry and infantry of Alexander. The island was only at a distance of twenty seven kilometers from the encampment of Raja Purus’ army (McCarty 112). Thus, the encounter occurred in the rugged terrain of Puṭhūhār⁵.

The painting under discussion is portrayal of the first attack when Iskander tactically hiding his army in the natural ditches brought them to the river bank for crossing. It was a huge number with five thousand cavalry and ten-thousand infantry in thirty oared galleys and boats that safely managed to move in the night of thunder storm. But instead of reaching the eastern shore of the Hydaspes that they were aiming for, they landed on another island, about which they were unaware. It was apart from the farther bank with a very deep- wide channel replete with flood water. Afraid to get exposed to Purus, they managed in groups, to land at the farthest shore. Alexander regrouped all, and they swiftly moved to ten kilometers to meet the enemy. It was a sudden rush and Purus could not make a quick rightful decision, and sent one of his sons with three thousand cavalry along with hundred and twenty chariots to halt the attack

³Hydaspes was 724 Km long river in the North-Western India, flowing from Kashmir into the Chenab. It is the ancient name of the present day river Jhelum.

⁴ A Greek historian

⁵ The nomenclature Puṭhūhār, according to Azīz Malik is a combination of two words of the native language: *puṭh* and *ār*. The former means *back* and the latter stands for *like*, so it connotes *back like*. It defines the undulating surface of earth of this region, which is neither plain nor fully mountainous; rather there are plains and ridges or rugged terrains combined (Malik 11). Some associate it with *Bhattiwār* or *Pupe hār* twisted to Puṭhūhār. The perimeters of Puṭhūhār are also variously given. Some people limit it to the taluq Gujar *Khān*, while others restrict it to the region between the river Sawān and Nāla Kānsi. But Minhās in *Tārīkh-i Puṭhūhār* allocates a vast land to the region: from Mardān to Jhelum River, and on the other side, from mountains of Kutli Pūnchh in Āzād Kashmīr district, including Murree to the Indus Kaisar Mountains in Sargudha district⁵ (Minhās *Tārīkh* 40).

(McCarty 113). While, Lamb describes the number of halts as two thousand infantry, apart from chariots (Mahar 341). But the son of Purus was slain to death and army devastated. This attack seems to be the moment of artist's choice because Purus encountered Alexander afterwards with elephants forming a front line, followed by their infantry before Alexander's cavalry, but the elephants smashed their own people in a stampede. The confrontation delineated in the miniature has no elephants but mounted horsemen on both sides. It defines time as well as place, both of war of Hydaspes, but at its initial phase, which appears decisive as well.

It is an incident of ancient past but all the nuances of the narrative are fulfilled, mounted warriors of Alexander are chasing down, from a rounded hillock of uneven ground of Puṭhūhār with natural vegetation of shrubs. It is indicative of the bank of river Jhelum or Hydaspes as it was called so in the ancient times. History defines that Alexander was mounted on Bucephalus, a magnificent horse, bought for him by Philip of Macedonia for a considerable amount of gold that is thirteen talents⁶ when Alexander was only fourteen years old. Since then, Bucephalus⁷ remained a dearest companion of Alexander, through battle fields or in pleasure pursuits, for it never allowed any other to mount on it except Alexander. They lived together for seventeen years but Bucephalus, Lamb describes, died in the battle field (Mahar 342) or just after the battle of Hydaspes (McCarty 115), where it is still remembered for the monument erected in its memory along with a city in the vicinity, named Bucephala.

⁶ Value of thirteen talents of gold was defined by Philip of Macedonia as an amount through which one thousand soldiers could be bought for one year.

⁷ Bucephalus means Ox-head, named after the mark of the brand burned on its shoulders by the Thessalian breeders.



Fig.2: Bucephalus from fig.1

Historians describe Bucephalus as strong and beautiful in body, black in colour with a white mark on its forehead, arched neck, pricked ears, and eyes that looked everywhere (McCarty 17). Looking at the painting one can recognise Bucephalus in the middle of the second row of hastened mounted warriors of Alexander. Its black colour with a white patch on the forehead, *fig.2*, and all traits described above, discriminate it from all the rest. The fully clad armoured commander, having entire head and neck concealed is Alexander, while others have their heads and necks under armour with bare faces. His central position with two warriors on each side, also distinguishes him from others. The terrified Indians, timidly looking backwards at the attackers, chasing them at the speed of lightening are rendered dark in complexion while the Macedonians are markedly fair with refined features, *fig.3*. It is not a generalised representation of some particular moments but particular representation of a specific instance of history. Artist has made use of the narrative details, taking into consideration geography, history, ethnography, utilising them as backbone to represent crux of the matter in most truthful manner, even concentrating the undercurrents of reality.



Fig.3: Indians and Macedonians from fig.1

The style is restricted not only to representational elements but taken auxiliary help from symbols too. The frontline of Alexander's forces serve as guards of the monarch, having no particular colour, specific shape or individual features. They look like steel warriors, holding large spheres with golden plumed hats and sashes around their waists, mounted on horse backs, and aiming at the fleeing Indians. Another amazing symbolism is of wheels that are golden too, are symbolic of speed. Wheels, the icon of motion are attached with frontline horses in place of their legs. They are enigmatic in their representation; though do not appear strange at first glance, because they are part of the thrilling drama, *fig.4*.



Fig.4: Wheeled Horses of Alexander, Symbolic of Speed

Colour of the enigmatic horses and their riders is all over grey, with no features of their faces defined. But horses have their reigns marked with black outlines and minor indication of their features. Objects in motion are less marked because speed conceals details, for, human perception has certain limitations. It can view particular limits of speed, neither less nor more, and beyond that things get imperceptible. So, the symbols of speed at the frontline of cavalry of Alexander are almost featureless.

A contradictory account given by Bloom and Blair is associated with the grey frontline warriors of Alexander. They hold that in order to threaten elephant cavalry of Rāja Purus, Macedonians devised iron cavalry with wheeled horses and their riders, filled with naphtha. When pushed,

their nostrils and mouths emitted fire; he used them as weapons to frighten the elephants of Puras (Bloom and Blair 403). The account appears debateable while consulting history. Alexander won the battle with his astute war tactics, bravery and intelligent decisions. Various accounts of battles in which Alexander entangled his enemies, do not define any such device invented by his people. Moreover, it is 326 BC, long way back when gunpowder was invented or naphtha brought into use. So the strange iron coloured warriors of the frontline of Macedonian army need to be investigated.

Furthermore, if one assumes that naphtha filled toys were pushed forward as a threat for the elephants of Puras, how could they continue their motion in rugged terrain of Puṭhūhār. It is easy to come downwards with a push but hard to move upwards because a body, then, has to move against gravitational force that requires excessive energy to move forward. Its momentum cannot be continued with a single push. In this context, representation of wheeled grey horses are nothing but symbols of speed, with which Alexander attacked, without letting Puras think to evolve some defensive tactics. History also records that after encampment at the western shores of Hydaspes before attack, Alexander engaged his army to move rapidly from one side to another, as if they were searching for an appropriate path to cross the river. This act was repeated several times a day in different directions by various groups of his army. It was continuously followed by the elephants of Puras, who made similar moves in the farther banks of Hydaspes, to remain alert to halt attack from any side of Alexander's army. In this way Alexander made them tired, and falsely exposed his weakness as unacquainted with geography of the region. He also deceived Puras by collecting huge amounts of corns, indicating that the siege could be prolonged up till finding some rightful time to attack that might be after the monsoon, when river would be less ferocious (McCarty 113). If naphtha or gun powdered weapons were in use by his army, he would not have adopted such strategies, because horror of fire would be enough to create stampede of elephants, horses and men. Thus, the grey warriors with wheeled horses were not invented by Alexander or his men as naphtha filled engines of war, rather used as icons of speed in the representational painting by the artist, where, the intangible realities too are delineated as credibly tangible.

Speed and friction are two realities but to imagine them without their link with a subject or to depict them in an immobile frame, needs some astute vocabulary on the side of the artists. Otherwise motion will be frozen and its speed will get incomprehensible. The vocabulary to represent indiscernible, led the creators to knock at the doors of the unusual domains, through which the intangible reality could be made perceptible. Thus, auxiliary help of symbols were sorted out, and horses of the mounted warriors acquired wheels instead of legs. Because wheels in the corporeal world, best symbolise speed, for their link with vehicles or chariots, etc. Furthermore, shape of a wheel, which is round, also plays a significant role.

Circular motion is lasting, as it has no beginning and no end defined. So, velocity of the galloping steeds of Alexander, especially placed in the frontline attackers, is rendered so fast that their legs look like wheels. In other words, fastening pace of the steeds could not be physically defined in the diminutive space of a miniature, the very cause of using symbol of wheels in place of legs. Wars of pre-modern times required physical strength, energy and swift action, may be defensive or assaultive because, it used to be direct encounter of two hostile groups. So here, circular motion of wheels proved to be the best symbol of the expression of excessive speed. The title of *The Great* is attached with the name of Alexander because of his bravery, untiring and quickening pace based on wise decisions, very successfully delineated here, by the artists.

Thunder of the two forceful armies can be felt in the rendering of the battle-field, though a few numbers of men are visible on both sides. An effective device used by the artists is of window-setting, a compositional stratagem introduced in the Muslim miniature painting during Ilkhanid Mongol dynasty and continued for long. Here, a few individuals of Alexander's army and yet very few of the mounted Indians are successful representatives of the two mighty forces. The whole scene seems to be viewed from a crevice or a window that reveals a bit and conceals the rest, to be assumed by observers, as away from sight for being beyond the frame of a window. Only four half-cut mounted Indian warriors and four full-length, while five half-cut Macedonians are enough, but successful representatives of powerful opponent forces. They do not appear four or nine but two fully-forceful adversaries; one group leaving the battle-field with excessive speed, because of the fiercely approaching menace about to

engulf the panic-stricken. Not even a minor deficiency about the number of warriors on both sides can be felt because the figures represented are very powerful and their arrangement in the composition is strongly successful. It is because of the device of window-setting that the battle of Puras and Alexander are portrayed with all possible nuances within the frame of a miniature painting. Horror enhanced with excessive speed of Macedonians galloping down from the uphill, chasing horrified defectors, who timidly look back at the swiftly approaching peril. It is further amplified with swirling flames.

Mouths and nostrils of the horses along with spear-heads are emitting fire and aiming ghastly towards fleeing Indians. It too, enhances speed along with ferocity of war, and imposes another question about the advent of flames when the battle is being fought with swords and spears. The phenomenon of flames can be sorted out on medical, engineering, and space-scientists' point of view. Medical science says that a person when comes in aggression, he encounters a state known as *fight and flight*. In the flight state he retreats from the situation either by weeping or by going in depression. But as soon as a person gets ready to fight his skin behaviour changes', feeling of pain lessens, breathing gets heavier, pupils dilate, and one becomes focused on a goal one wants to achieve (Jain 108-109).

The behaviour is based on change in the inner mechanism of human body which is known as *Adrenal Rush*. Adrenal fluid is released in the body in this state that accelerates pumping of heart and rapidly increasing pulse rate. In the process, blood circulation in muscles increases and breathing gets heavier (Tiwari 200-203). The horses and their riders, in the miniature painting are delineated as passing through analogous state. Their emotionality is so extensive that heavy breathing has caused to emit fire from their nostrils and mouths, which is symbolic delineation of aggressive behaviour. In other words, it is an expressive representation of the state of fight and flight. But flames along spear-heads have nothing to do with adrenal rush, and can be searched out on the bases of some other phenomenon, may be a scientific one.

On engineering grounds, occurrence of flames can be related to frictional forces. When a body rushes forward, frictional or drag forces put their impact, and resist its motion. Resistance of relative motion between two bodies produces energy that further generates heat. For instance, knife sharpener releases sparks when knife is rubbed in between two moving

bodies. Feet of speedily running horses too emit fire because their metal shoes are rubbed against the rough surface of a road. Furthermore, breaks at once put up on speedily running vehicles produce flames and noise along their tyres, due to resistance of relative motion between two bodies (Hassan 63-67, 135). Thus, speedy rush of the Alexander's cavalry is encountering frictional resistance of the substance around them, causing huge flames at spear-heads as well as all around. Because the bodies of men and animals are swiftly rubbed against the sphere of air and gasses along with dust particles within them.

On the other hand, space scientists' view it in the phenomenon of terminal velocity that occurs in free falling bodies in their maximum speed. It is commonly known that the planet earth is encapsulated with the sphere of gasses, and if a rushing object makes a gash in the enclosed sphere, it catches fire. Flames enclosing the battle field, too, point out the same fact, but while taking auxiliary help from physics, it interprets supernatural speed of Alexander and his cavalry in implied manner. Spear-heads along with horses and their riders are heated up due to terminal velocity, and are generating flames, because coefficient of friction on rough surface is higher than its reaction on smooth bodies (Hassan 67-68). To understand the entire issue, one should have a proper understanding of its reality.

Friction is a contact interaction between solids, caused by rubbing of one body against another. When surface of a body slides over another, both exert a frictional force on each other, in a direction opposite to its motion, and relative to the other body. Thus, frictional force always creates resistance to motion never aids it. Even when there is no relative motion, frictional force may exist between two surfaces. But function is not always negative; it also gives stability to motion. We cannot walk, hold a pencil, or move it on paper for writing or drawing, and even wheeled transport can be impossible without frictional force. On the other hand, in an automobile about 20% of the engine power is spent to reduce friction because it is hazardous in speedy motion (Hassan 58, 90-91).

Though friction occurs between two solid bodies but an object gets resistance in motion even while active in liquids or gasses, both are called fluid friction. It does not function like the friction of sliding bodies; rather works like colliding surfaces, as if a body pushes its way through crowded spaces. It is air resistance that works like colliding not sliding. When a body moves in the air, it compresses air, and is heated up, because it has

collided with air molecules along with dust particles present in it. Frictional resistance in air or gasses is almost proportionate to velocity of the moving body. Intensity of air drag is equivalent to speed of its motion along with mass of the body. For larger and high-speed bodies, air drag is square of their velocity. Thus, air resistance gets higher with increase in speed and mass of the moving body. With increase in temperature of fluids their viscosity decreases and frictional resistance decreases too, but air friction increases with rising of its temperature⁸.

Flames licking the nostrils and mouths of the horses of Alexander, along with their spear-heads are symbols of extreme speed, conveyed through the phenomenon of fluid friction or by defining rush of the adrenal fluid. The massive mounted warriors, moving at super-sonic level are successfully portrayed through the scientific realities. Otherwise effective rendering of such a speed in an immobile frame of a small space of a miniature painting was impossible. But the entire drama of war does not appear repulsive to spectators rather eye catching and involving their cerebral powers, because the chronicle is aesthetically perceived and romantically represented.

The painting is romantic expressions of the epic-drama, and massacre of war is neither focused by the artists, nor its ferocity. Though everything is dramatically conceived but romantically rendered, making the war enticing. It is full of action and movement which is exuberant but does not appear exaggerated anywhere. Though, enhanced with auxiliary resources of scientific phenomena but rendered so feelingly that makes it expressionist to its core. Despite abstracted from visual truth, it is neither distorted nor beautified rather adoringly expressive in its perception and representation. The arresting cornucopian composition brings to mind Delacroix's painting *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827); the dying monarch desires to accompany his loved ones in the next world, *fig.5*. As a result, the executioners are stabbing his concubines, horses, elephants, along with collection of precious materials like gems and jewels. It is not rendered like a cold blooded massacre but an eager desire on the part of both; those being executed and the one desirous to have so. There is excitement not morbidity, along with richness, spontaneity and fantasy but the action is held together with immobile and detached figure of the desirous one.

⁸ <http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/frict.html> (3-40 pm. 6.9.14)



Fig.5: *Death of Sardanapalus* by Eugene Delacroix, 1827. Louvre, Paris. Oil on canvas, 392cm x 496cm.

On the other hand, in the war scene, desire of the leader is to conquer, a fierce attack is stimulated with all possible nuances to arouse emotions, having war-steeds, weapons, armour, spears' fire and flames etc. But the leader mounted on Bucephalus is anonymous, only his armoured back towards spectators. Furthermore, over exuberant speed is halted by the Indians, departing swiftly from the picture frame but looking backward timidly towards the chasing menace; it turns eye inward and suspends its jumping out. The pursuit is captured with horror, speed, and excitement but no carnage. One does not find dismantled parts of body, just a romantic game of chase and escape.

War can be extremely ferocious and analogous can be a scene where living beings are slaughtered at the desire of a being stationed on his death pyre. Although, favourite women are being butchered by horrifying executioners, but no resistance on any side is visible, all willing to lay down their lives at the will of the potentate. Both the artefacts are romantic expressions of exciting dramas. Baudelaire commenting the

painting declared that "Delacroix was passionately in love with passion, but coldly determined to express passion as clearly as possible" (Lynton 766). Synthesis between passion and control determines great compositions, and both the paintings are truthful specimens of the statement. The one represents passion to win and the other renders passion to possess, and both keep some affinity with massacre. Phenomenon of death brings morbidity. In the war scene it can be felt in the throbbing heart beat of the fleeing Indians about to be engulfed by the claws of Macedonians and macabre in Delacroix's painting can be seen in the action of the executioners. But morbid or gruesome is not focal point of both the paintings, it is enwrapped within their romantic expressions. The latter, though obviously delineating death is more placid, while the former more forceful but not macabre, a balance is achieved, although both are releasing exciting energy.



Fig.6: Rain, Steam and Speed by Turner, 1844, National Gallery, London. Oil on canvas, 91 cm × 121.8 cm

When one concentrates on the force exciting two opponents into action, it further brings to mind exuberant energy in J. M. W. Turner's focus on the vigour of natural forces. Whether he viewed it in the *Rain, Steam and Speed*, fig.6, (1844), *The Storm*, fig.7, (1842) or *The Slave Ship* (1840), Turner penetrated into its very soul. Force being intangible is delineated by him as formless but expressed through colours and strokes. To experience sensation of nature's power he thrust his head out from the window of Exeter Express, for nine minutes, during a rain storm (Janson 679), and at another time flung with the mast of a boat in a storm (Lynton 786). Energy is not something just visually perceived but intangibly felt that he did by keeping himself aloof from forms or shapes. He perfectly comprehended it through experiencing from nature, realizing its intangible physical appearance. So, inner force of colours and strokes were found enough to represent its power. Rothenstein calls Turner a genius, ahead of his time, who broke away with the traditional that his followers did many a century later (Rothenstein 3). Though, The Muslim artists were far ahead from the westerners in their comprehension and delineation of phenomenon and noumenon but never rendered them formless.



Fig. 7: Snow Storm by M.W. Turner, 1842. National Gallery, London. Oil on canvas, 91.5 x 122 cm

Similarly, in the *Shāhnāma* painting, force consumed for the energetic attack is portrayed through symbols, such as, flames, licking at nostrils, mouths and spearheads, along with wheels at place of legs, etc., vibrating heat all around. The whole scene is pulsating with energy. Thunder of running steeds is transformed into flames that are stylised into convolutes but pushing eye forward. Energy of natural forces in Turner's paintings and man-made energy generated by human actions in the war or wishful desire for massacre of the potent, though independent in their representations but equivalent in their romantic expressions. Turner did not try to create a visual equivalent of his experiences of storms rather through technical freedom; he enriched his canvases with power of natural energy. Similar force is throbbing in the other two but linked with physical human actions of the executioners of Sardanapalus and of Alexander's or Iskander's warriors, *figs. 8-9*.

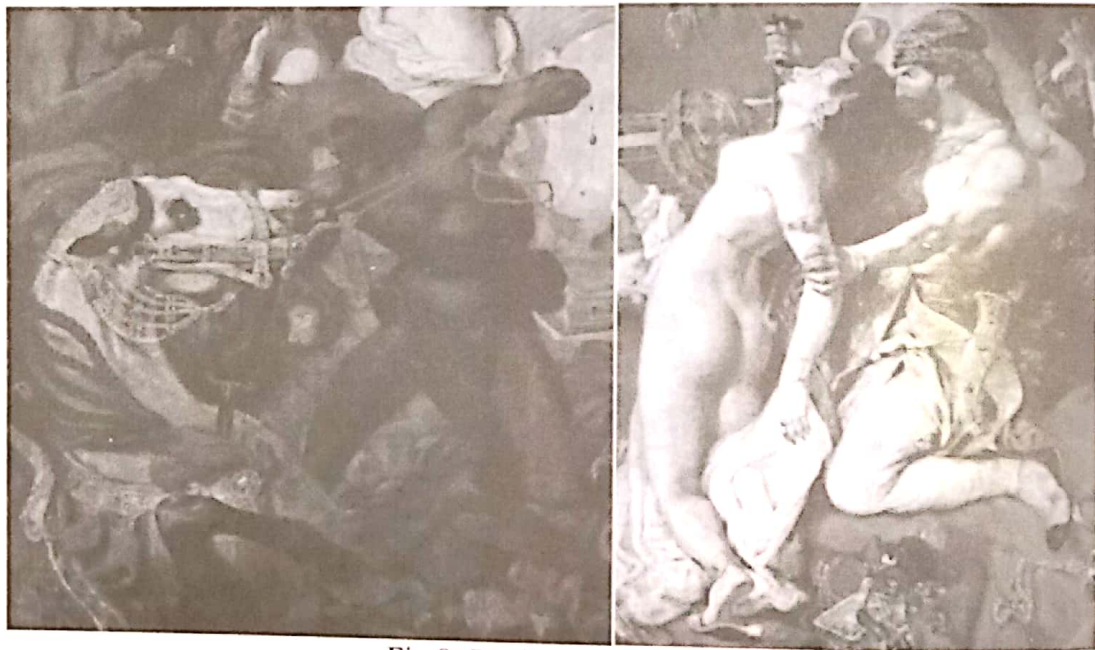


Fig.8: Details from fig.5

Another paradox is related to Alexander or Iskander, since proper nouns are not translated, so what is linked between Alexander and Iskander. Many invaders entered the subcontinent, especially from the northern-mountain passes, invaded, ruled and many became part of the soil but no one acquired such a kinship with the natives as happened with Alexander. The Persian poet Firdausi calls him Persian prince not Macedonian. Dāni,

while concentrating on motives of Alexander's invasion of Asia, quotes a letter that Alexander wrote to Darius threateningly that he would take revenge of devastation his ancestors had made in their invasion of Macedonia and Greece. In return Darius proposed terms, to which Alexander answered "he would receive neither money nor provinces in lieu of the whole empire of Darius, for all the lands and possessions of Darius were his" (Dāni 91). The statement of Alexander is thought provoking that makes a link with the account of Firdausi.

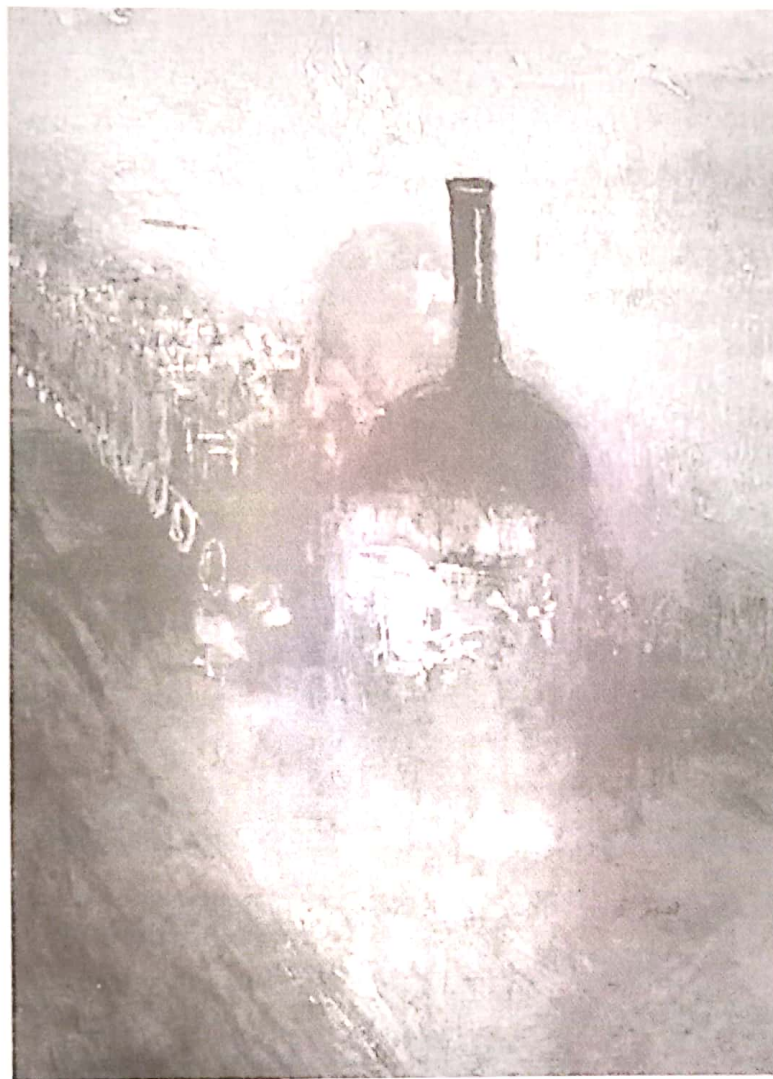


Fig.9: Details from fig.6

In the great Persian epic *Shāhnāma*, Firdausi traces Alexander's descent from Achaemenians and calls him Iskandar. He holds that Dārāb, the

Persian king married the daughter of Philip of Macedonia but then broke away matrimonial ties with her, sending her back to her father. Philip took it as insult and concealed the birth of his daughter's child Alexander, announcing this as birth of his own son, and Alexander became famous as the son of Philip, not his grandson. Alexander, in this context, by defeating Dāra: that is Darius-III in 331 BC, the son of Dārāb, defeated his step brother and regained the inheritance of his own Achaemenian ancestors through capturing Persian Empire (Godard 133). This is the very reason of large scale Persio-Greek marriages, also celebrated elaborately, Alexander married two Persian ladies, and one among them was the daughter of Dariud-III (Grousset 70).

Alexander, if Achaemenid prince, the painting unfolds his passionate love for the land of his ancestors, if Macedonian prince, still an intelligent and brave man. The painting unfolds many facts, actually related to history but in its representational devices the crux of the anecdote is represented with all possible nuances. Within a static frame of miniature space the highly emotional drama is represented most effectively, so much so that fleeting effects of motion are astutely conveyed. Keen observation and penetration let spectators hear thunder of the running steeds on both sides but nowhere allowed encounter of the two mighty forces look gruesome. The whole lovingly represented, that appears decorative at a glance but factual after keen observation. Thus Muslim artists of Demotte's Shāhnāma celebrated maturity of the Ilkhanid Mongol style with astute vocabulary of artistic devices combined with facts of science but delineated through romantic eye, making the macabre gleeful.

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