





Into the Indian Mind

An Insight through Portraits, Battles and Epics
in Indian Painting

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Foreword

Acknowledgments

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The immediacy of Indian painting, more than any other medium, allows us to see into the kaleidoscope of Indian life. We witness the drama of battle, the honour of self-sacrifice, the inner narrative of portraiture and the ecstasy of love. In this catalogue one gets a glimpse into the Indian mind.

We here present several recent and exciting discoveries. One highlight is an early 17th century Imperial Mughal battle-scene from the Sevadjian collection. This painting, depicting a vibrant battle in a mountainous arid landscape, is of an unusual composition and of great quality. It has thrown up many questions and will undoubtedly require further study.

We have a surprising discovery in the form of an Ethiopian votive panel – a product of the cross cultural trade between India and Ethiopia. This is an exchange which is difficult to imagine today since very few pieces like ours have survived.

A number of paintings are from the collection of Otto Sohn-Rethel, a German artist who lived in the first half of the 20th century. Sohn-Rethel came from a family of artists and collectors. He had an eclectic eye and bought in a number of areas. Around 1931 Sohn-Rethel visited India, where he acquired close to a hundred paintings. Some were of great quality and importance, while others have not weathered the test of time. On his return he consulted Ernst Kühnel, the then foremost German art historian for Islamic art, who published a selection of these paintings in *Pantheon* 1931. This group was to remain Sohn-Rethel's only venture into the field of Indian miniatures.

Other collections represented in this catalogue reflect a very different approach to acquiring Indian miniatures. These collectors formed and refined their collections sometimes over a fifty year period. The four important Deccani folios come from one such collection and depict the gory slaying of a demon in a rare frame by frame sequence. Another notable painting is *Maharana Shambhu Singh of Mewar playing Holi*, which comes from Kasmin's collection. He has collected Indian paintings since the 1960s and was part of a group of artists and art dealers which included Peter Cochran and Sir Howard Hodgkin. They were drawn to the bold colours and shapes in Rajput paintings which reflected their own contemporary aesthetic.

We would like to warmly thank J.P. Losty for his enthusiasm and commitment in researching and cataloguing the Indian paintings, and Misha Anikst has once more designed a beautiful catalogue.

An emaciated Deer heads for Water

Imperial Mughal artist, c. 1585–90
 Opaque pigments with gold on paper
 Painting 13,5 × 19,5 cm, mounted within a salmon inner
 border and a buff outer border
 Folio 37,5 × 26,5 cm

An emaciated deer is lowering its head in search of the water that is gushing from a rocky outcrop and flowing across the bottom of the picture. A jackal and a hare look off to the left alerted by something that is outside the picture. From the rocky outcrop a screen of rocks runs across the painting, behind which the landscape recedes to a hillside on top of which is what appears to be a tomb with a minaret beside it. Trees cling to the rocks while brilliantly coloured birds wheel in the sky.

Akbar's artists had inherited the Indian artist's innate sympathy for the depiction of animals and they became adept at painting them whether as subjects in fable books such as the *Anwar-i Suhayli* or *Iyar-i Danish* or as individual studies or as illustrations for the animal and bird descriptions in Babur's memoirs (see Verma 1999 for an overview

into the subject). The subject, especially the alert jackal and hare, would seem to illustrate a fable book although no comparable subject appears in the various Akbari-period manuscripts of these works (see Qaisar 1999 for some of these illustrations). On the other hand, paintings and drawings of emaciated animals, especially horses, were quite frequent in Mughal India, a trope derived from Persian painting. Basavan himself probably in the 1580s produced a drawing of a starving horse followed by an equally emaciated man and his dog now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Welch 1976, no. 8), while a starving ram attributed to the rare artist Sharif around 1590 is in the Khalili Collection, London (Leach 1998, no. 8).

The dating of this fine study is slightly tricky. Some of the technique seems early, such as the

Provenance

Private Swiss Collection
 Soustiel, Paris, 1967

Literature

Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court*, revised and expanded edition, Freer/Sackler, Washington, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2012

Leach, L.Y., *Paintings from India: the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art*, vol. VIII, Nour Foundation, London, 1998

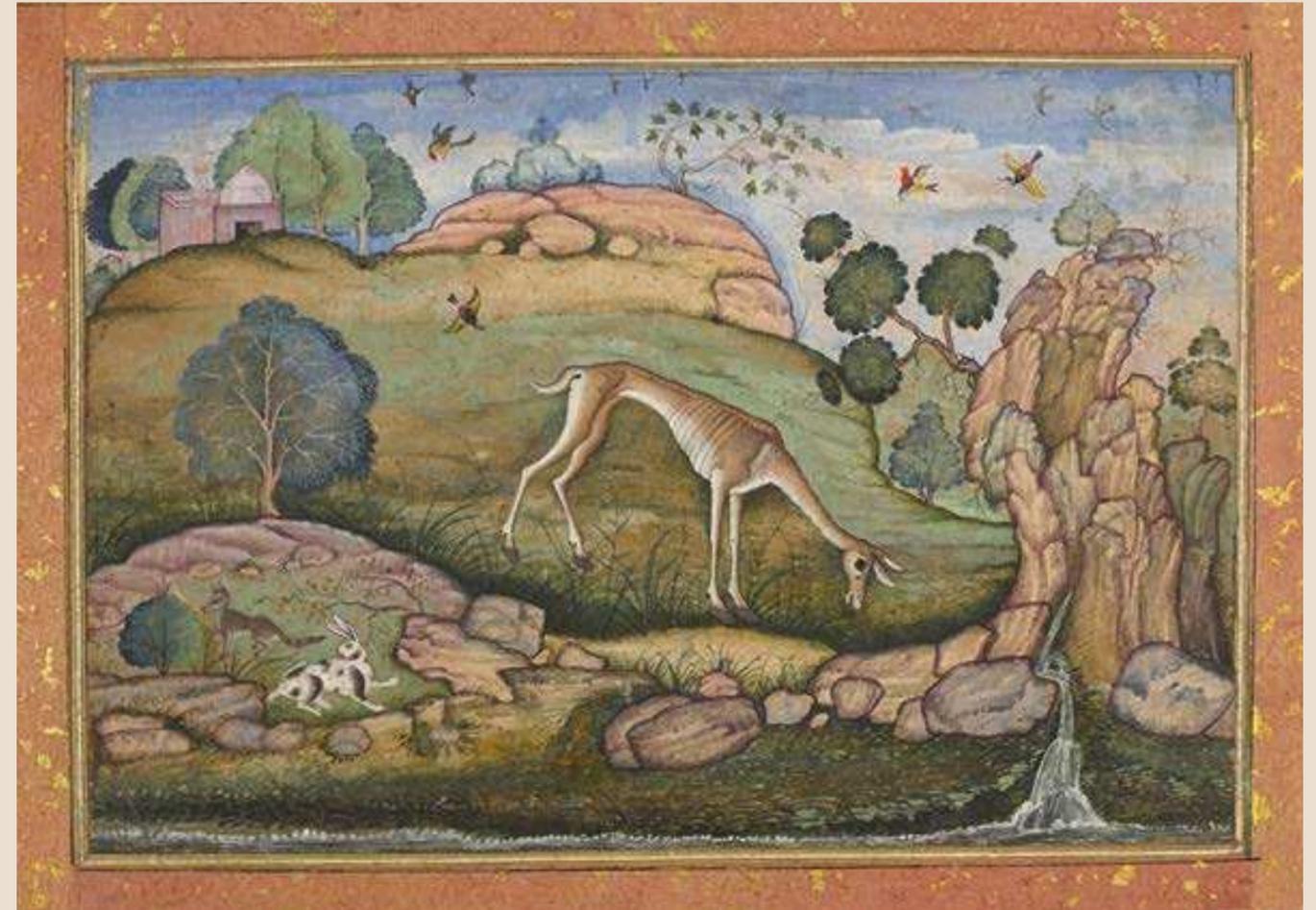
Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, British Library, London, 2012

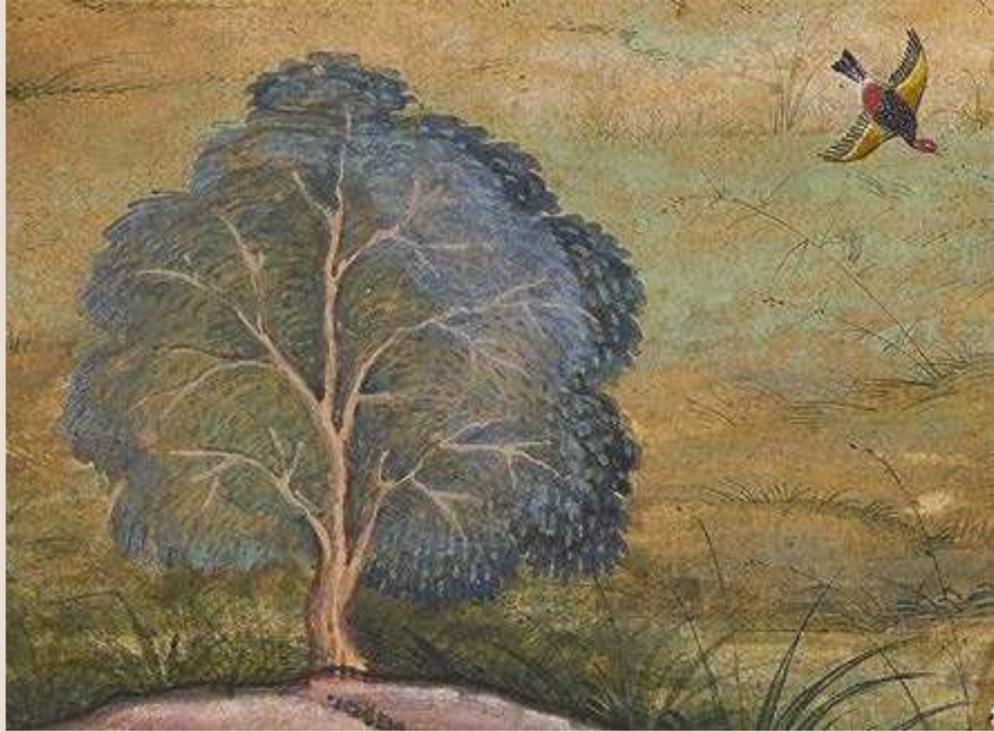
Qaisar, A.J., 'Visualizations of Fables in the *Anwar-i Suhayli*', in Verma, S.P., *Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art*, Marg, Bombay, 1999, pp. 122–32

Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book 1560–1660*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2002

Verma, S.P., *Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art*, Marg, Bombay, 1999

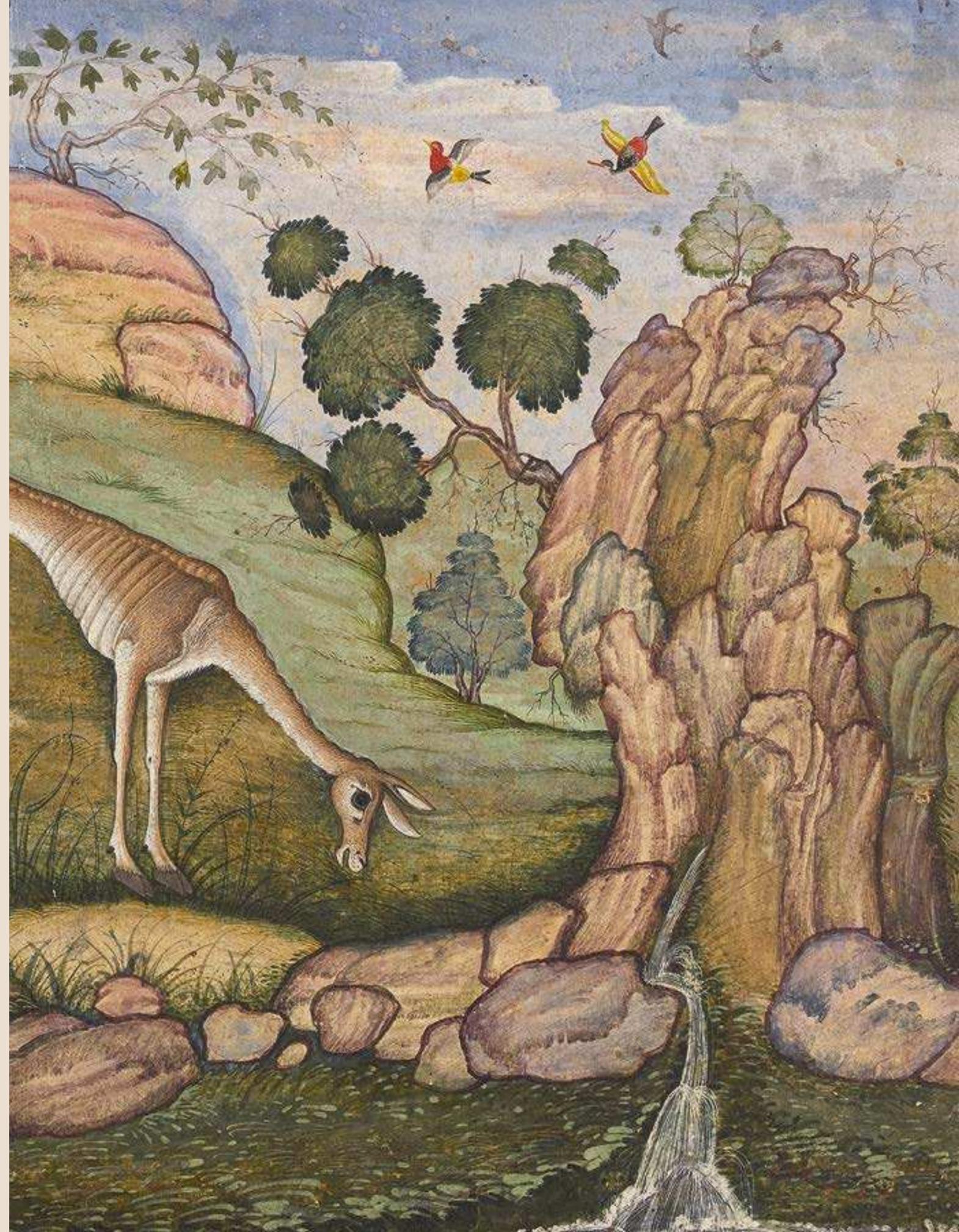
Welch, S.C., *Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches*, The Asia Society, New York, 1976





scumbling of the paint and impressionistic brush strokes in the grasses at the water's edge that recall the early work of Basavan. But early Mughal artists used only a very shallow space for their compositions and Akbar's artists only became happy with a more open landscape as here in the 1580s. It became particularly useful in the depiction of animals in the natural history section of the 1589 *Baburnama*, where the artist needed a good clear ground in which to place his subject (e.g. the paintings of deer and buffalo now in the Freer Gallery, Beach 2012, no. 8D). Although piled up rocks with irregular outlines and twisted multi-coloured shapes with vertical striations are found throughout early Mughal painting, this particular form of the piled up rocks on the right

with their narrow vertical striations and ever more irregular outlines are found in manuscripts of the 1590s such as in the work of Lal (e.g. Stronge 2002, pl. 32, Losty and Roy 2012, fig. 13). Not all Akbari artists developed at the same rate and many made cautious use of new features while clinging still to older forms elsewhere. The alertness of the jackal and hare presages one of the finest of Akbari animal paintings, Sanvala's *Majnun in the Desert* in the 1595 *Khamsa* of Nizami (*ibid.*, fig. 15).



Two Hindu Brothers conversing

Ahmadnagar, c. 1590–95
 Opaque pigments with gold on paper
 Painting 12 × 8.5 cm
 Folio 17.9 × 12.8 cm
 Inscribed on the verso in *nasta'liq*: *Siva Vabasanha? va Gahami? har do baradar* (possibly 'Siva Basavanna? and Gahami? two brothers')

Two men presumably courtiers are standing together conversing. It is strikingly apparent how engaged they are with each other. One depicted slightly behind the other is gesticulating with his left hand while fiddling with the knot of his cummerbund with the other. He stands with his weight resting on his left foot, the other leg being crossed behind it. His companion stands easily beside him, his face in profile as he listens to what the other man is saying. An unusual feature is that both wear Hindu Vaishnava sectarian marks, the yellow *tripundra* mark on the forehead and yellow streaks also on the neck of one of the men. Earrings of large gold hoops strung with pearls and stones adorn their ears, while ropes of beads or stones carved as quatrefoils hang round their necks. There is no landscape, just a green ground.

The two are dressed in the long white robes of the Deccan. The man on the left is wearing a white muslin *jama* so fine that where the two sides cross the chest both hems are visible and his upper body and his terracotta *paijama* are visible through it. The shawl draped over his shoulders and upper arms falls down in fine folds to his knees. The man on the right is wearing a thicker and less transparent muslin *jama*. Both are wearing long geometrically-patterned *patkas* tied with loops round the waist, as well as the tall conical turbans of the Deccan secured with strips of patterned cloth tied with a bow at the top – one has a flower sprig thrust in as a turban ornament, the other has tied the strip into a bow forming a kind of cockade. The man on the left has a *katar* thrust through his cummerbund, while the one on the right has a long curved dagger with what appears to be a cruciform handle peculiar to the Deccan. A young prince standing with a hawk now in the Mittal

Museum in Hyderabad has a similar kind of dagger thrust through his cummerbund (Welch 1976, no. 32). The man on the right is carrying an at present unexplained object that terminates like a scabbard, but has no obvious place for the hilt. Nor, despite what appear to be frets on the lower part, is there any sign of strings for it to be a musical instrument. It must be some kind of standard and have some reference to court ceremonial. The courtier to the right has loops of beads suspended from his cummerbund. These would appear to be for attaching things (cf. Zebrowski 1983, figs. 16–17. The prince with the hawk just referred to has his beads looped round his dagger scabbard to secure it more firmly to his cummerbund).

That the painting is an early Deccani one is self-evident – the easy springing stance, the transparent clothes, the conical turbans, the ends of the very long *patkas* swaying in the breeze are all typical of the early Deccani manner. What marks this painting out as being from Ahmadnagar in the 1590s are the details of the faces: large open eyes, the eyelids above and below clearly modelled over the eyeball beneath, eyelashes clearly depicted above and below, as well as large irises filling the gap, and eyebrows subtly twisted in interrogatory mode, all giving a remarkably lively expression to the faces. Mark Zebrowski gathered together all the early Ahmadnagar paintings in his earlier publication in 1983 *Deccani Painting* (figs. 1–20) and a pitifully small number it is from this once flourishing Deccani kingdom. Civil wars engulfed it from 1595 onwards and it fell easy prey to Akbar in 1600, although the Abyssinian general Malik Ambar continued resisting for many years. For his later thoughts on the Ahmadnagar style, see Michell and Zebrowski 1999, pp. 145–53. Closest to our portraits in

Provenance

Otto Sohn-Rethel Collection, formed before 1931

Published

Kühnel, E., 'Die Indischen Miniaturen der Sammlung Otto Sohn-Rethel', in *Pantheon*, 1931, no. 9, pp. 385–89, fig. 7

Literature

Michell, G., and Zebrowski, M., *The Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999

Welch, S.C., *Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches*, The Asia Society, New York, 1976

Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, Sotheby Publications, University of California Press, London and Los Angeles, 1983



Zebrowski's 1983 publication are his figs. 10, 16–18. His *Young Prince Riding*, fig. 10, cannot from the handling of the eyes be contemporary with the Paris portrait of Murtaza Nizam Shah, c. 1575, his fig. 4. Indeed the quirky eyebrows of the *Young Prince Riding* (reproduced in colour in his 1999 book, pl. 3) show an affinity with the raised eyebrows of our talking courtiers. Earlier depictions of eyes from Ahmadnagar show considerable indebtedness to Persia still in their oval shapes with small centrally placed irises and eyelids marked by simple lines with stylised curving eyebrows above, as in for instance all the four figures in the Paris portrait of Murtaza Nizam Shah. Our two courtiers in their stance remind us of the two courtiers in that great portrait on either side of the enthroned monarch. The stylised Persian eyes and three-quarter profile in those figures prevent that painting from being a real conversation piece, whereas our artist has returned for one of his men to the tradition of profile portraiture found in earlier Ahmadnagar painting (*ibid.*, figs. 1–3) and thereby created a real interlocutory session. This tangible engagement between two figures through having one in profile portraiture facing the other in three-quarter portraiture is found throughout the scene of the royal Ahmadnagar picnic in the British Library from the same period as our painting (*ibid.*, fig. 17).

Conspicuous jewellery of any sort is rarely found on Deccani portraits of this period, even those of the ruling princes. The large gold earrings worn by these men along with their Vaishnava *tilaks* marks them out as Hindus, making this double portrait an even more precious survival from the age. While the contemporary historian Firishta makes a few references to Hindu chiefs assisting one or another

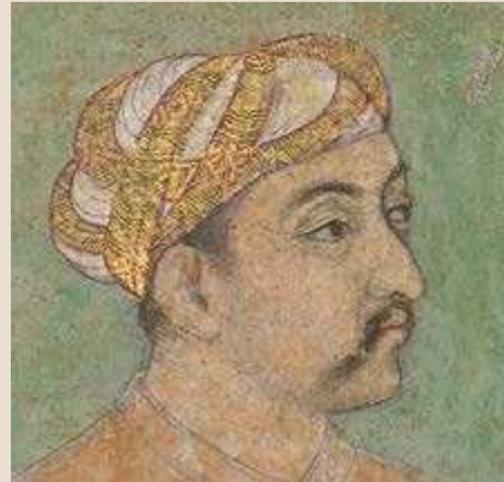
of the beleaguered Nizam Shahis at this period in their history, there is no specific reference to which these portraits can be tied. The readings of the names in the inscription are very tentative; the former name if correct seems to suggest the man came to Ahmadnagar from the Kannada-speaking areas further south.



Portrait of Jahangir Quli Khan

Imperial Mughal artist, c. 1610
Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper laid down on a plain beige album page
Painting 10.7 × 6.8 cm
Folio 37.5 × 25 cm

Inscribed in *nasta'liq* on painting (in Jahangir's handwriting?): *shabeh-i Jahangir Quli Khan*, and in *nagari* on the bottom of the album page: *Jahangir Kuli Khan*
On the verso is a calligraphic specimen of a Persian quatrain in a 17th century hand, along with *nagari* inventory numbers, mostly erased, from the Mewar royal collection



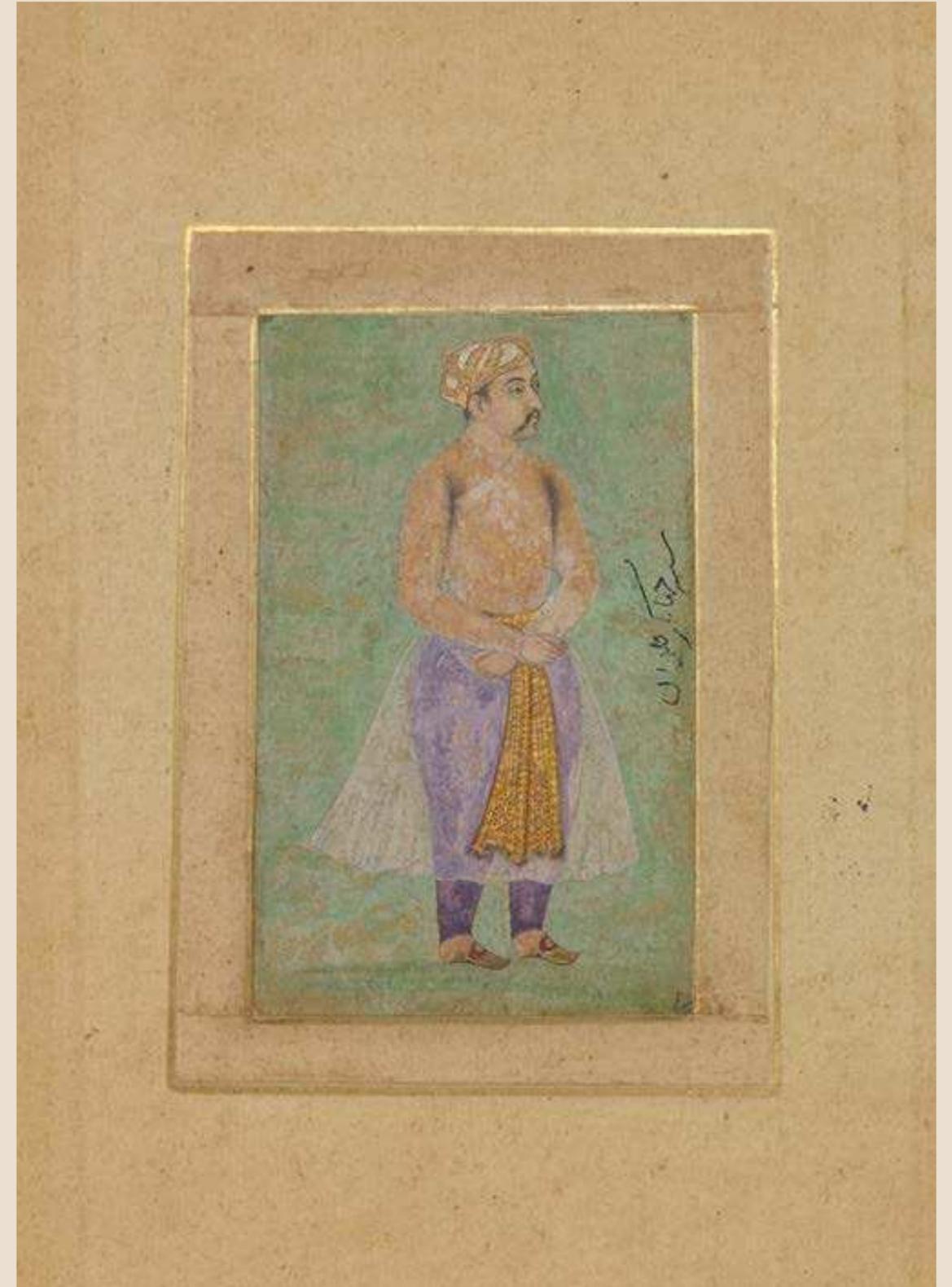
Against a plain green ground Jahangir Quli Khan (d. 1631) stands respectfully in the traditional Mughal courtier pose, his hands crossed at the wrist in front of him, but unusually for the period his face is shown in three-quarter profile and looking slightly upwards giving him an engaging air of amusement. He wears a plain muslin *jama* over mauve *paijama* and a small turban with a gold turban cloth wound round it. His armpit shadow is particularly marked. Small full length portraits are a feature of the album pages of Jahangir who often had four such studies mounted together and inscribed them – compare the various pages in Jahangir's album in Berlin (Kuehnel and Goetz 1926, pls. 35–36) and also some of the portraits in the Kevorkian Album in New York (Welch et al. 1987, no. 26). This is a very sensitive study that may possibly be attributed to the hand of Govardhan (cf. *ibid.*, no. 26). Jahangir Quli Khan never achieved the higher ranks in the *mansabdar* system, but as we shall see was thought of as an honest and capable servant, which is why possibly he is depicted in three-quarter profile, a viewpoint reserved for those of lesser rank according to Ebba Koch (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, p. 136). This seems to be the only known portrait of him.

According to the *Ma'athir al-Umara* (vol. 1, pp. 729–30), he was the eldest son of Khan 'Azam, Mirza 'Aziz Koka, Akbar's foster brother. Akbar was fond of him as he was "distinguished from his brothers by wisdom and prudence and other excellent qualities, he was always in favour from the time of Akbar to that of Shah Jahan and lived a good life with a good name." In the third year of Jahangir's reign the Emperor decided to make Khan 'Azam *Subahdar* or Governor of Gujarat. Unwilling to part with him, as he wanted to keep a close eye on him, he had him

remain in the royal entourage and sent instead his son Shamsuddin to whom Jahangir gave this new title of Jahangir Quli Khan and whom he considered "an honest house-born servant and one of good discretion in whom he had full confidence." From Gujarat according to Jahangir's memoirs, Quli Khan showered the Emperor with gifts of jewels, a silver throne and so on. He was moved around the empire, ending Jahangir's reign as *Subahdar* of Allahabad but was moved by Shah Jahan to Sorath and Junagadh in Gujarat where he died in 1631. He seems to have been something of a wit. Again according to the *Ma'athir al-Umara*, "It is notorious that Mirza Koka could not control his tongue and was wont to use extravagant language. Especially he could not restrain himself when he was angry, so that he would not respect even the presence of the King. One day it so happened that Jahangir said to Jahangir Quli Khan 'Will you stand surety for your father?' Jahangir Quli replied, 'I will be surety for his life and property, but I cannot control his tongue.'" Perhaps we can read his somewhat upturned gaze in his portrait as slightly cheeky.

Provenance
Private Japanese Collection
Royal Collection, Mewar

Literature
Beach, M. C., Koch, E., and Thackston, W., *King of the World, the Padshahnama*, Azimuth, London, 1997
Jahangir, Emperor of Hindustan, *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, translated, edited and annotated by Wheeler M. Thackston, Oxford University Press, New York, London, 1999
Kühnel, E., and Goetz, H., *Indian Book Painting from Jahangir's Album in the State Library in Berlin*, Kegan Paul, London, 1926
Shahnawaz Khan and 'Abd al-Hayy, *The Maathir-ul-Umara*, trans. H. Beveridge, rev. Bains Prashad, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1911–52
Welch, S.C., Schimmel A., Swietochowski, M.L. & Thackston, W.M., *The Emperor's Album: Images of Mughal India*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1987



जिहांगीरकुलीखी

The Death of the False Prophet Musaylima

An illustrated leaf from a manuscript of Bal'ami's *Tarikh al-Tabari*
Imperial Mughal artist, c. 1590
Opaque pigments with gold on paper
Painting 31 × 17.5 cm
Folio 45.4 × 34.6 cm, laid down on an album page
with blue inner borders

This large illustration depicts armed and mounted soldiers within a walled garden, while outside the walls a soldier is captured and is violently pinned to the ground by his captor, while another group of mounted soldiers look on. The scene is from a Mughal historical manuscript of the last decade of the sixteenth century. The text in the two panels has been erased, making it difficult to identify the exact scene depicted and therefore the specific manuscript from which it originates. However, close inspection under ultraviolet light by the previous owner revealed a fragment of Bal'ami's version of Tabari's account of the Battle of Yamama, which occurred during the Wars of Ridda in late 632 AD between the Muslim armies under Khalid Ibn al-Walid and rebellious forces under the false prophet Musaylima. The final phase of the battle occurred in and around a walled garden (*haditqa al-mawt*), where the rebels had taken shelter. Musaylima was finally killed and his rebel forces defeated. The walled garden is clearly represented here in the miniature, with the Muslim armies of Khalid Ibn al-Walid entering at the left to the astonishment of the gardeners. Outside the garden the false prophet Musaylima has been captured and violently thrown to the ground by an armed soldier who presses one hand down on his neck and a foot on his back. Clearly in this vigorous episode his death is imminent.

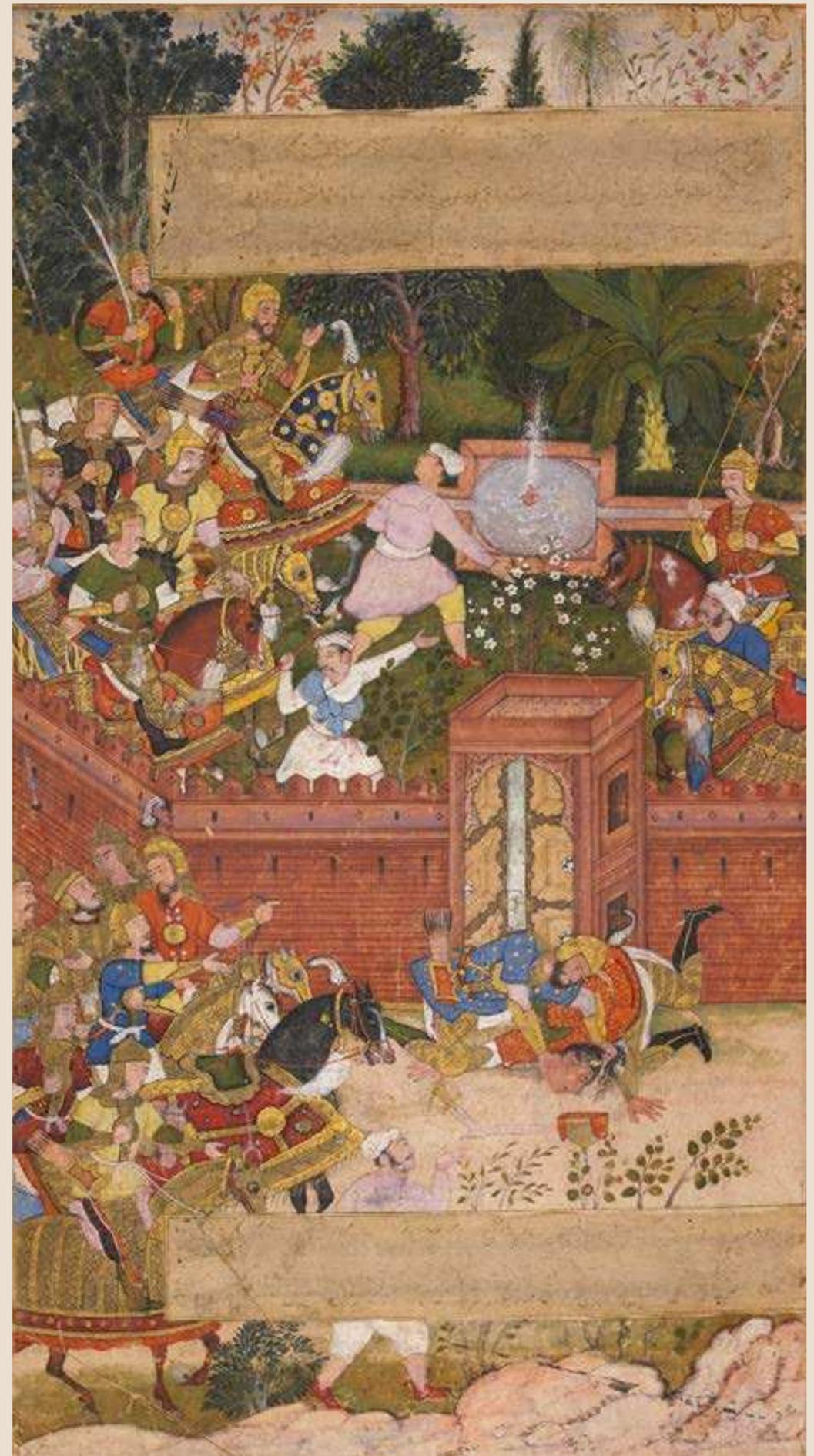
One other Mughal illustration is known from Bal'ami's *History of Tabari*, depicting the scene of Bahram Gur killing the lion to claim the throne of Iran, and also featuring erased text in the text panel, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (14.648, see Coomaraswamy 1930, pp. 18–19, pl. VII, where it is mistakenly described as a scene from the *Shahnamah*). The present page and the Boston

illustration would seem to have been part of a specific royal illustrated copy of Bal'ami's *Tarikh al-Tabari* in the same vein as other imperial illustrated Mughal manuscripts of Islamic history, such as the *Akhbar-i Barmakiyan*, the *Tarikh-i Alfi* of the early 1590s and the *Jami' al-Tawarikh* of 1596. For the latest information and references on some of these historical works see Beach 2012, nos.11A–11D, pp.77–80. The vigorous style of our page seems more akin to that of the V&A *Akbarnama* or first *Baburnama* so that a date closer to 1590 and earlier than those other historical manuscripts seems more appropriate.

Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (839–923 AD) was a great scholar of the Abbasid period, most famous for his *History*, a monumental chronicle covering history from the Creation to the year 302 Hijri (915 AD), written in Arabic. Abu 'Ali Muhammad ibn Muhammad (Amirak) Bal'ami (d.974 or 992 AD) was a vizier under successive rulers of the Samanid dynasty. In 963 AD he was commissioned to produce a translation of Tabari's *History*, and Bal'ami's resulting version was highly important both in terms of historiography, adding significant new information to Tabari's original, and for being the first major prose work in New Persian. It became a central source text for many later histories written in Persian.

Provenance
Private Scandinavian Collection

Literature
Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court, revised and expanded edition*, Freer/Sackler, Washington, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2012
Coomaraswamy, A. K., *Catalogue of the Indian Collections in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Vol. VI: Mughal Painting*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1930



A tethered favourite Elephant

With an Inscription naming Kanak Singh
Imperial Mughal artist, 1590s
Opaque pigments and gold on paper in a late 18th century
Persian pink album page decorated with gold floral
arabesques
Painting 23.8 × 16.5 cm
Folio 47.9 × 32 cm

A one-tusked elephant tethered by its hind legs to a boulder stands under an awning to shelter it from the sun. Its front fetters lie unused in front of it. A rope of twisted white cord fits tightly round its neck with golden bells attached, while a gold chain with attached bells is tied round its body. Four slender poles support the red awning, which has a fringe with a simple diaper pattern in blue, red and white. The elephant is clearly happy enjoying splashing water onto its front legs from its trunk. The background has been mostly painted in an ochre colour leaving a clear unpainted space around the elephant's body.

Elephants were of course among the most prized possessions of kings and emperors throughout Indian history and the Mughals were no exception. According to Abu'l Fazl, Akbar had 101 elephants for his personal use alone. Portraits of elephants are among the most delightful of all Mughal paintings and the artists who drew them clearly relished their task. Paintings of an elephant under a tree with keepers and mahouts trying to control it are a common feature of several early paintings. Farrukh Chela did several versions including one in the Freer Gallery Washington D.C., c. 1590 (Beach 2012, no. 20E), and two in the Gulshan Album in Tehran (Beach 1981, fig. 12, and Wilkinson and Gray 1935, pl. 111d). The last of these, showing an elephant lying down under a tree, is among the most naturalistic of all Mughal animal studies. Beach in 1981 drew attention to the close connection between Farrukh Chela and Kanak Singh and certainly Kanak Singh here imbues his elephant with as much naturalism as he can. We note the grinning face and cheerful eye, the pulled back ears, the beautifully modelled trunk, face and body, and the darker grey spots on

trunk, ears, belly and rump. But whereas Farrukh Chela's technique includes smooth, highly finished modelling, Kanak Singh here models his elephant with short dabbing strokes of the brush admirably suggestive of the wrinkled skin of his subject. Other Akbari paintings of elephants being sheltered from the sun under canopies include a painting on cloth in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and another example of a white elephant in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, both with normal Akbari landscapes (Das 1999, figs. 11 and 14).

This drawing of the one-tusked elephant is perhaps based on the actual likeness of an elephant, called Nainsukh, in Akbar's imperial elephant stables. An account of one such elephant that was responsible for killing the rebel 'Ali Quli Khan in battle in 1567 is given in Abu' Fazl's *Akbarnama* (vol.2, p. 433).

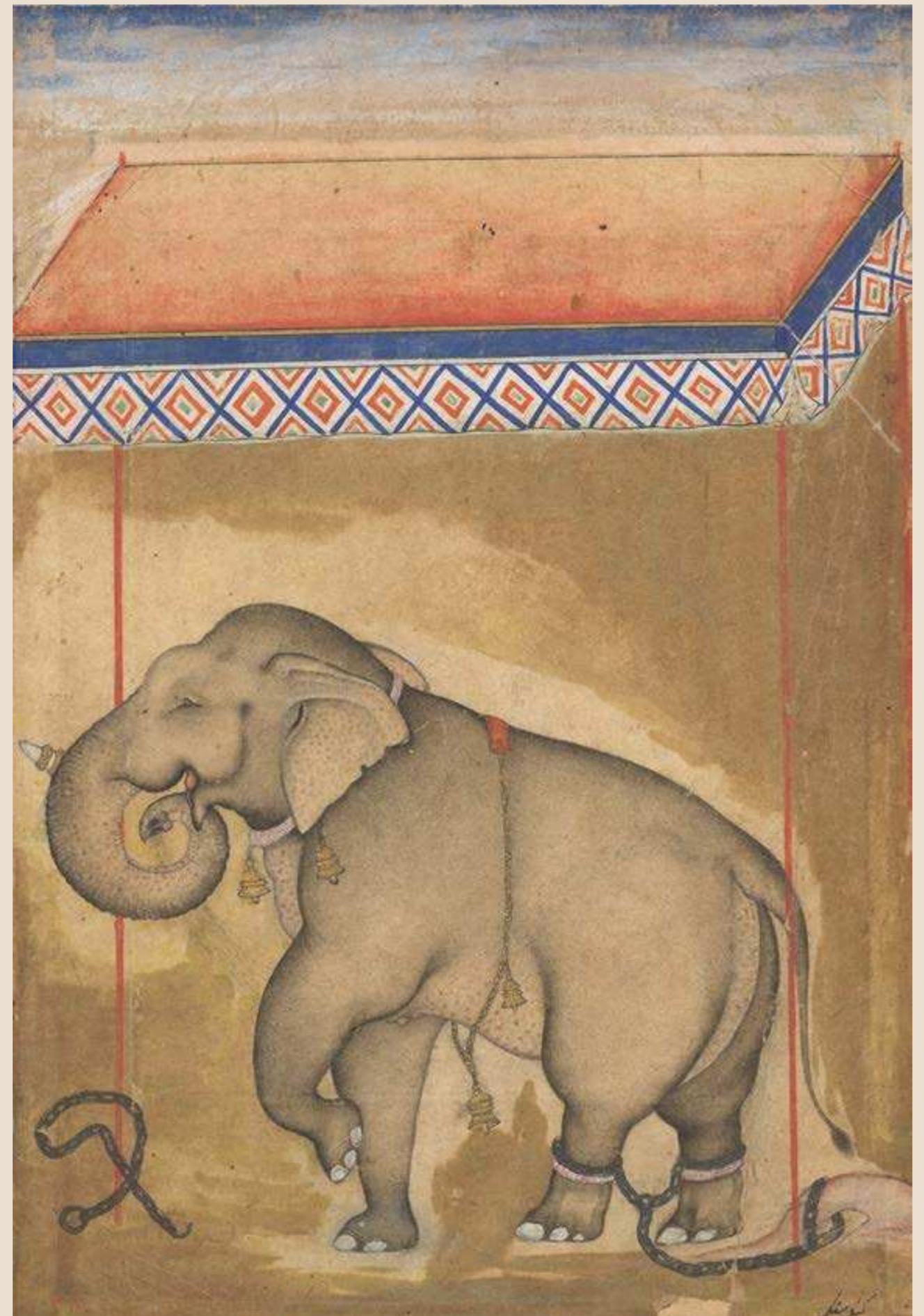
The form of the artistic attribution is slightly unusual in that it just includes the artist's name without an *'amal-i* ('work of'). Kanak Singh is a rare artist about whose work we have little knowledge. He is obviously an artist of considerable accomplishments, but his work is seldom seen. His earliest known work is one painting in the *Timurnama* in Patna from the early 1580s. His work does not appear again until the mid-1590s when he contributed a scene of great originality to the 1595 *Khamsa* of Nizami, showing Khizr washing Iskandar's horse in the water of life (Brend 1995, fig. 37). He may be the same as another rare artist whose name is normally transcribed Ganga Sen, who again contributed one painting to the 1602–03 *Akbarnama* (Losty and Roy 2012, fig.27). Verma in his study of Mughal artists and their works conflates the two (1994, p. 199).

Provenance

Private French Collection

Literature

- Abu'l Fazl ibn Allami, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl*, trans. by H. Beveridge, *Bibliotheca Indica*, vol. 138, Calcutta, 1897–1939
- Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court, revised and expanded edition*, Freer/Sackler, Washington, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2012
- Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image*, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, 1981
- Brend, B., *The Emperor Akbar's Khamsa of Nizami*, The British Library, London, 1995
- Das, A.K., 'The Elephant in Mughal Painting' in Verma, S.P., *Flora and Fauna in Mughal Art*, Marg, Bombay, 1999, pp. 36–54
- Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, British Library, London, 2012
- Verma, S.P., *Mughal Painters and their Work: a Biographical Survey and Comprehensive Catalogue*, Oxford University Press, Delhi etc., 1994
- Wilkinson, J.V.S., and Gray, B., 'Indian Paintings in a Persian Museum' in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 66, 1935, pp. 168–71



**A Page related to the Windsor Castle
Padshahnama: The Victory of Bikramajit and
his Bundelas over the Rebel Darya Khan and his
Afghans, 1631**

Imperial Mughal, attributed to Balchand or a close associate, 1631–35
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
Painting 36 × 24.2 cm, laid down in a later surround of marbled
paper
Folio 47.5 × 32.5 cm

The Subject

This painting is one of the most magnificent battle scenes in Mughal art. The very open landscape below the hills is scattered with figures in wonderful action sequences. A commander on horseback on the right is directing operations: the assault has clearly caught the horsemen on the left by surprise as they emerge from the defile and the soldiers are fleeing. Wonderful vignettes abound: the commander directing his eager officers; the braying of the trumpets and the thunder of the drums that accompany senior Indian generals; the consternation of the force emerging from the defile as they realise what is happening; the terror of the fleeing troops on the left hotly pursued by only three vigorous horsemen and a few energetic musketeers and bowmen; the triumph of the lone figure holding out a severed head to another group of horsemen; the single figures of soldiers in action at the bottom of the page – two musketeers (one shooting a falling horse, the other reloading his musket), an archer, and a swordsman who has already had one hand severed but still fights on; and above all the compelling central vision of a terrified enemy leader pulled from his horse and spread-eagled on the ground about to be decapitated.

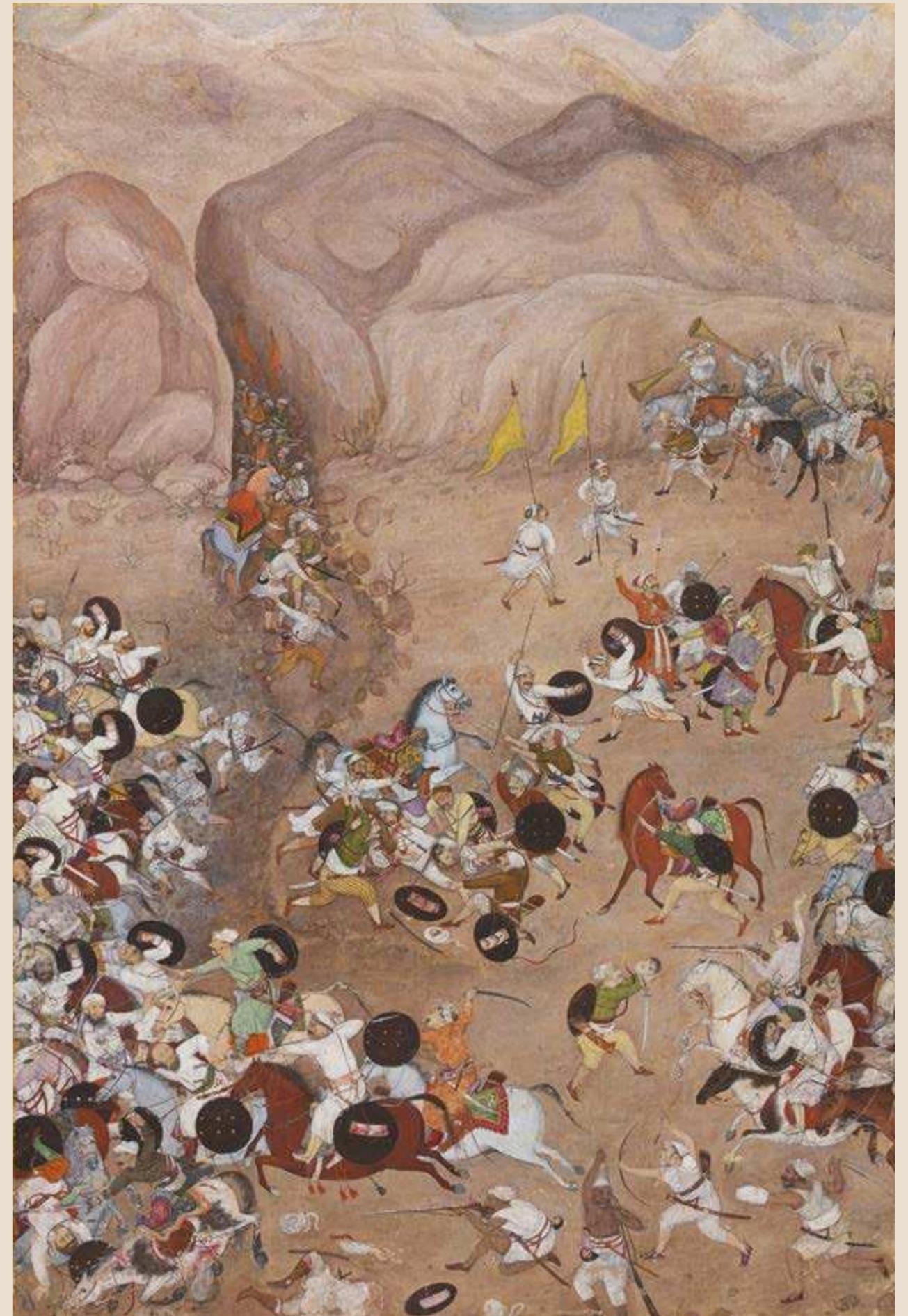
The scene is set just outside a narrow defile through arid hills. Although the hills rise into peaks, they do not appear to be very high and certainly have no snow on them and hence cannot represent the great mountain ranges of the north of India. What vegetation there is takes the form of totally bare dead trees and bushes both on the ridges and at the base of the rocks. The men emerging from the defile are in a dried-up watercourse edged with rocks and similar dead trees. Even for the dry season the landscape seems unusually arid, but this in fact

may be an accurate record of what scientists have identified as frequent failures of the Indian monsoon in the 17th century.

Although the painting seems to be a bridge between naturalistic Jahangiri painting and more formal Shahjahani painting, the absence of a text would make precise identification of the scene difficult were it not for a later version of our painting that is in the Czartoryski Museum in Cracow (inv. no. xv 2338, see Komornicki 1934; Zygulski 1989, pl. 171; and Welch 1995, fig. 14). The Cracow version has a long Persian inscription pasted around it on all four sides identifying the scene. Robert Skelton reports the inscription overlaps the chapter in the *Padshahnama* of 'Abd al-Hamid Lahori (pp. 338–39 in the Persian text) on the killing of Darya Khan the Afghan and the promotion of Bikramajit to the rank of 2,000 *Zat* and 2,000 *Sawar* with the new title of Jagraj, i.e. 'Raja of the World' referring to events at the beginning of the fourth regnal year (AH 1040, AD 1631). Bikramajit was the son of Raja Jhujhar Singh Bundela of Orchha (r. 1627–35) and is first referred to unfavourably in the chronicle as having with the connivance of his absent father allowed the rebel Afghan commanders Khan Jahan Lodi and his ally Darya Khan Rohilla to pass freely through Orchha along with their Afghans on their way south to the Deccan in 1629 (Elliot 1867–77, p. 10). There they remained until Shah Jahan sent more armies chasing after them. It should be noted in support of this identification that the victorious forces attacking from the right are wearing just moustaches and no beards, have their *jamas* tied on the left, and are hence Rajput Hindus. The fleeing figures on the left are all bearded, have their *jamas* tied on the right where visible and hence are

Provenance
Sevadjian Collection

Literature
Beach, M. C., Koch, E., and Thackston, W., *King of the World, the Padshahnama*, Azimuth, London, 1997
Elliot, Sir H.M., *The History of India, as told by its own historians*, edited by J. Dowson, London, Hertford [printed], 1867–77
Inayat Khan, *The Shah Jahan Nama of 'Inayat Khan*, trans. A.R. Fuller, ed. W.E. Begley and Z.A. Desai, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1990
Jahangir, Emperor of Hindustan, *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, translated, edited and annotated by Wheeler M. Thackston, Oxford University Press, New York, London, 1999
Komornicki, S., 'Les principaux manuscrits à peintures orientaux du Musée des Princes Czartoryski à Cracovie,' *Bulletin de la Société française de reproduction des manuscrits à peinture*, Paris, 1934, pp. 165–84
Schmitz, B., and Desai, Z.A., *Mughal and Persian Paintings and Illustrated Manuscripts in the Raza Library, Rampur*, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, 2006
Seyller, J., 'Balchand' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011, pp. 337–56
Seyller, J., 'Payag' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011, pp. 321–36
Shahnawaz Khan and 'Abd al-Hayy,



Muslim, but are not wearing Mughal type turbans, and are presumably Afghans.

According to Lahori: "Khan-Jahan and Darya Khan now found the roads closed on all sides against them. Every day that came they looked upon as their last, so in their despair they proceeded on the right from Sironj, and entered the country of the Bundela, intending to push on to Kalpi. Jajhar Singh Bundela had incurred the royal censure because his son Bikramajit had allowed Khan-Jahan on his flight from Agra to pass through his territory and so reach the Dakhin. Bikramajit, to atone for his fault, and to remove the disgrace of his father, went in pursuit of the fugitives, and on the 17th came up with the rear-guard under Darya Khan, and attacked it with great vigour. That doomed one, under the intoxication of temerity or of wine, disdained to fly, and in his turn attacked. A musket-ball pierced his brainless skull, and his son was also killed. The Bundelas attacked him under the impression that he was Khan-Jahan, but that crafty one hastened from the field in another direction. Bikramajit cut off the head of Darya Khan, and also of his son, and sent them to Court, thus atoning for his former fault. Nearly four hundred Afghans and two hundred Bundelas were slain in the fight. For this service Bikramajit received the title of Jag-raj, and was advanced to the dignity of 2,000 personal and 2,000 horse" (Elliot 1866–77, vol. 7, p. 21). This account is corroborated by the version in Inayat Khan's *Shahjahannama* (1990, pp. 51–2). Our central scene depicts a very alive and terrified man surely meant to be Darya Khan about to be decapitated; the artist has conflated the accounts to make the victory more graphic. The precise date is not stated in either text but the event took place in January 1631. Khan Jahan Lodi the Afghan was killed

later in 1631: a gruesome illustration of his death was painted by 'Abid for the *Padshahnama* (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, pl. 16).

Although Lahori's description seems to fit the event depicted in the painting, there are certain difficulties. First of all the Cracow version is not all of imperial quality. The colouring was applied crudely, probably in the 18th century over what might have been a good 17th century drawing, although the quality of the latter is not the equal of this newly discovered version. Likewise the text pasted around the Cracow version appears to have been written in the 18th century and could simply represent an attempt to make sense of an uninscribed battle scene. Other difficulties are less significant. The actual place where this encounter happened is not mentioned in the texts other than in the Bundela country, but our artist has depicted a very specific spot, namely just below a defile coming down from high and arid hills. This seems a very vivid topographical representation based on presumably a first-hand account from other sources, perhaps oral. In January 1631 the Afghans left Sironj in Malwa on their way to Kalpi on the Yamuna and presumably followed more or less the course of the River Betwa as it left the Malwa plateau through the Vindhyan hills down into Bundelkhand. The *Imperial Gazetteer* remarks under Jhansi, which of course was in the early 17th century part of the Bundela territories: "A striking feature ... of the Betwa, especially on the left bank, is the labyrinth of wild deep ravines, sometimes stretching 2 or 3 miles away from the river" and goes on the comment that "the climate of the District is hot and very dry, as there is little shade and the radiation from bare rocks and arid wastes is excessive" (vol. xiv, p. 136).

The Maathir-ul-Umara, trans. H. Beveridge, rev. Bains Prasad, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1911–52
Welch, S.C., *Imperial Mughal Painting*, George Braziller, New York, 1978
Welch, S.C., 'The Two Worlds of Payag – further evidence on a Mughal artist' in Guy, J., ed., *Indian Art & Connoisseurship: Essay in Honour of Douglas Barrett*, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts/Mapin Publishing, New Delhi and Ahmedabad, 1995, pp. 320–341
Zygulski, Zdzislaw, Jun., *Setuka Islamu w Zbiorach Polskich*, Warsaw, 1989



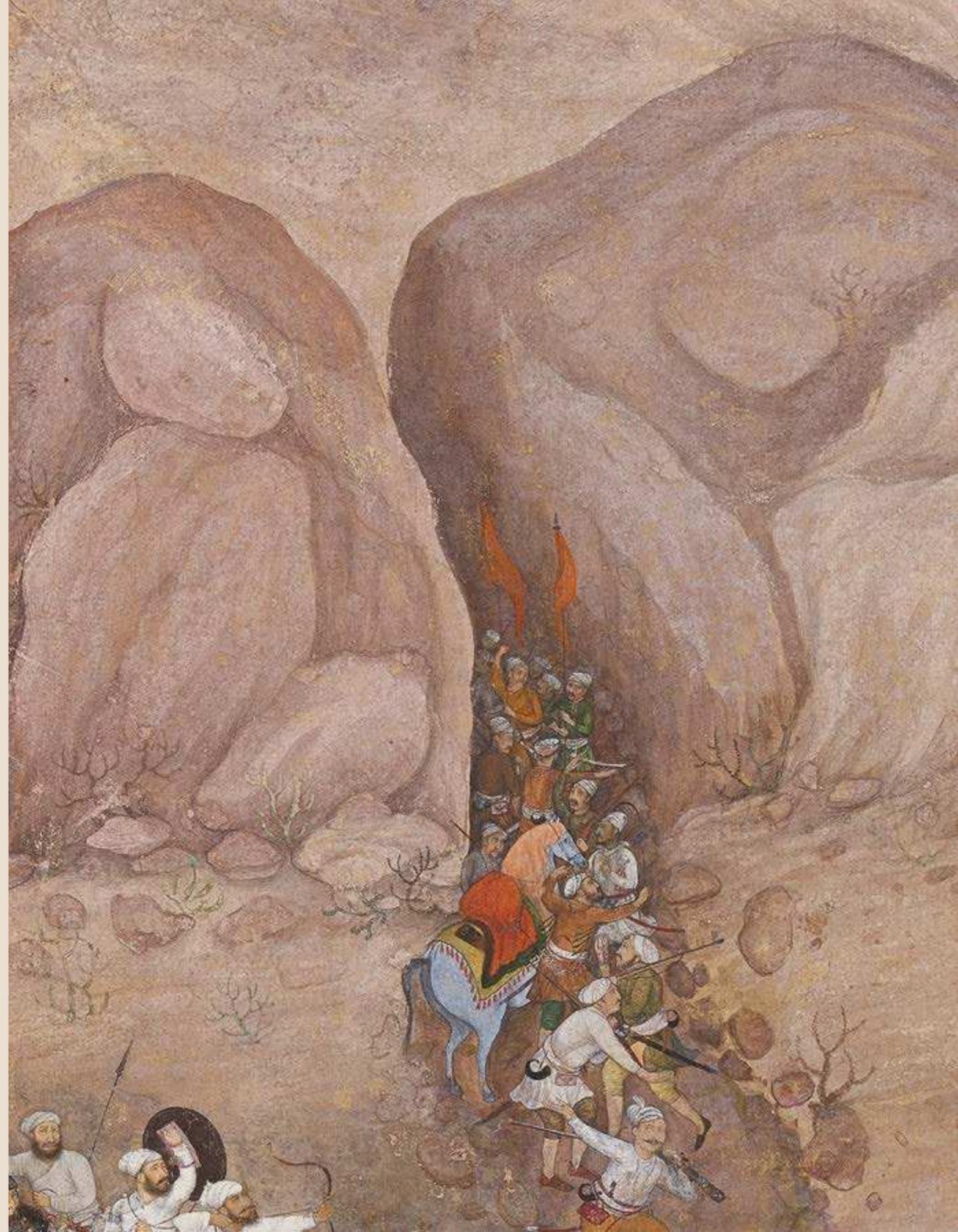


Such descriptions suit our topography very well. We note also that the Hindu leader looks rather older than Bikramajit does in his only appearance in the *Padshahnama* manuscript, in the form of his severed head (see below). Nonetheless despite these minor difficulties, it must be acknowledged that the central premise of the evidence from the Cracow version, that a group of Hindu soldiers is defeating a group of terrified Afghans, is not the type of incident that is reported very often in the imperial chronicles so for the moment the death of Darya Khan at the hands of Raja Bikramajit Bundela can be accepted as the subject of our painting.

The *Padshahnama* Manuscript

So if the painting was intended to be placed in the imperial copy of Lahori's *Padshahnama* covering the first ten years of the reign, it needs to be explained why it is not in fact there. Milo Beach has written (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, pp. 15–19) about the historical process in the reign of Shah Jahan and the preparation of the manuscript of Lahori's *Padshahnama*. The manuscript text now in the Royal Library in Windsor Castle of the first ten years of Shah Jahan's reign was not completed until 1067/1656–57, and forms an intact manuscript with no folios missing or spaces left empty for the receipt of paintings. While Shah Jahan was trying to find the right historian for his chronicle, in the meantime paintings of historical events were made in the imperial studio. Some of these were placed in other manuscripts, perhaps in the earlier versions of the histories of Shah Jahan by other authors and re-used in the 1656–57 volume, since fragmentary marginal lines appear round some of the paintings. Others were either not used at all or else placed in

imperial albums when Shah Jahan's interests shifted towards these later in the reign. Since the manuscript was not assembled until later, any painting depicting the triumph of one who became a rebel would naturally be omitted. Jagraj Bikramajit subsequently joined his father in rebellion in 1635 and shared his father's fate, their bodies being decapitated in a gruesome painting in the Windsor Castle *Padshahnama* attributed to Payag (*ibid.*, pl. 36). Another reason for its omission might be the free handling of the composition, which does not conform to the hierarchical conceptions governing the paintings in that manuscript as analysed by Ebba Koch (*ibid.*, pp. 137–44). In the *Padshahnama* there is in fact very little action in so-called action scenes and almost none in the foreground which was reserved for formal portraits of the principal participants in the scene supervising the action at the back or receiving surrenders or indeed watching heads being severed. Even in sieges such as Payag's apparently dramatic siege of Qandahar (*ibid.*, pl. 18), the action (the explosion of a mine under the walls) is in the background and attention is focussed on the watching commanders in the foreground. Almost the sole exception is the painting of the young prince Aurangzeb attacking an enraged elephant on the banks of the Jumna at Agra (*ibid.*, pl. 29), which although not conforming to the correct format had to be included perhaps since it concerned one of the princes; the relevance of this scene will be discussed below. Other paintings illustrating events from the first ten years of the reign and not placed in the manuscript include several where Shah Jahan is depicted enthroned but on a level with his courtiers (*ibid.*, figs. 142–44), a compositional format that does not accord at all with the *darbar* scenes actually



selected for the manuscript where the emperor appears only in the *jharokha* and high above his assembled courtiers.

Many aspects of this painting are almost unprecedented in Mughal 17th century painting. This type of open battle scene is found only once before in 17th century Mughal painting in a painting published as intended for the *Jahangirnama* (Jahangir 1999, p. 54, there dated 1610–20) which has as in our painting the victors coming from the right and the defeated fleeing to the left with an isolated commander on horseback and above him the drummers and trumpeters, this time on elephants. It is in many ways a return to the complexity of Akbari paintings of battle scenes after the quieter and more measured rhythms of Jahangiri painting, and perhaps only an artist trained in Akbar's studio originally could have done it. The stark realisation of the hills in our painting is found again in an earlier page from the *Jahangirnama* showing a fight between a spider and a snake when Jahangir was near the Khyber Pass (Schmitz and Desai 2006, pl. 1). In the *Padshahnama* their closest comparison is perhaps the range of hills behind the fortress of Daulatabad in Murar's painting of the siege in the Windsor Castle *Padshahnama* (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, pl. 31).

The style of the painting with its muted tonalities has little of the chromatic richness of paintings actually in the *Padshahnama* manuscript. This is perhaps because it served as a preliminary rendition of the scene advanced for possible inclusion in the manuscript but not intended to be finished to the highest possible degree unless it was actually chosen. We know that artists had to experiment with their designs before they were worked up into

finished paintings for this manuscript. Jahangir's reception of Prince Khurram on his return from the Deccan is the subject of two worked-up drawings by different artists treating the subject differently, as well of course as the finished painting now in the manuscript (*ibid.*, pl. 9 and figs. 82–83). The version in Cracow is close to ours but treats some subjects slightly differently. There is an extra width on the right with more figures and at the top with more sky (ours of course might have been trimmed). The figures at the bottom, while the same, are placed slightly differently: the headless corpse to the right of the collapsing horse is there placed below it. The men emerging from the defile have no banners. The Cracow artist also thought muskets should be seen to have been fired with clouds of smoke emerging from the barrel, while this effect is absent from our painting and indeed from all the battle paintings actually in the manuscript.

The Artist

The lack of chromatic richness allows the wonderful detail of the draughtsmanship to come to the fore. The work is that of one of the great masters of the early Shah Jahan period, who gives individual attention to every man and horse in his wonderfully composed action sequences, expressive of their joy or terror or simple blood-lust. Noticeable also are the interactions between the figures in the various groupings – these men are shouting or gesticulating to one another in ways that are found in the works of few artists of the period. While our artist is the equal of such masters as 'Abid and Payag in rendering the most horrific scenes of slaughter and decapitation (*ibid.*, pls. 16, 36), he avoids their somewhat stilted groupings of courtiers into rows and horsemen into

static masses, each viewed in separate perspective, as well as the schematic rendering of landscape through interlocking segments. Payag's battle scene formerly in the Cary Welch collection is perhaps the most extreme example of this stylistic trait (*ibid.*, fig. 151; Welch 1978, p. 33). Noticeably absent too is Payag's habitual darkness of tonality (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, pls. 18, 36, 39) and his stock rendering of faces expressing shock or horror with grinning mouths and rolled back eyes when the face in question is dead (*ibid.*, pls. 18, 36). For other ascribed paintings by Payag displaying his favourite darkness of tonality, see Seyller 2011 'Payag' fig. 5, and for attributions, figs. 8, 10 and 11. There are of course other open battle scenes in Shahjahani painting intended for later volumes of the imperial chronicle but they are either much more stilted (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, fig. 148) or lack any sense of drama at all (*ibid.*, fig. 153).

Perusing the paintings of the *Padshahnama* the artist who comes closest to ours is Balchand (*ibid.*, pls. 5, 14, 15, 30), both in his predilection for more open landscapes (pls. 15 and 30) and his ability to make his minor characters interact (pls. 5, 14 and 15). No Mughal artist surpassed Balchand in the expression of individuality or of emotion – see for instance Seyller 2011 'Balchand', figs. 9 and 11. Milo Beach remarks when comparing two paintings in the *Padshahnama* (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, p. 186): "The artist Balchand meticulously described each individual, even those at a distance or in a group; his brother Payag, however, presented groups as masses, their communal identity more important than their individuality." This quality of Balchand is seen in our painting in the individual attention paid to every soldier's facial expression, gesture and

stance. As an additional point of comparison, we may compare the individual soldiers advancing in crouching runs in Balchand's painting of the capture of Dharur (*ibid.*, pl. 15) with the similarly crouched individual soldiers in the foreground of our painting and note that Payag's advancing individual soldiers have a decidedly more upright stance (pl. 36). Perhaps, however, closest of all in respect to character interaction is the so far anonymous artist of pl. 29, Prince Aurangzeb attacking a maddened elephant, where the more transparent painting lets through the superb draughtsmanship of the subsidiary figures advancing to the prince's aid, showing their determination or terror as appropriate.

A Bear

Mughal, c. 1640
Brush drawing in ink on paper
5.7 × 7.2 cm

A bear pads softly across the page, its composition swiftly but most sensitively executed, particularly with regard to the bear's head and its expression. The drawing has some similarities to Govardhan's 1630–40 painting of a bear being led by a dervish in the Kevorkian Album in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (Welch et al. 1987, no. 77). John Seyller has suggested our bear may be a preliminary study for this painting (email 5.10.2011). There are differences between the two animals, in particular the more rounded back of the Kevorkian bear which gives the animal a more energetic gait. Several drawings by Imperial Mughal artists of the late 16th and early 17th century include sketches of animals executed in a manner similar to our bear (Welch & Masteller 2004, cat. 19 & cats. 21 & 25).

FG

Provenance

John Hewitt Collection
Sotheby's 11.7.73 (lot 116)

Literature

Welch, S.C., Schimmel, A., Swietochowski, M.L. & Thackston, W.M., *The Emperor's Album: Images of Mughal India*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1987
Welch, S.C. and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart and Hand: Persian, Turkish and Indian Drawings from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection*, Yale University Press and Harvard University Art Museums, New Haven, 2004



Bust portrait of a Mughal Grandee

Imperial Mughal artist, c. 1670
 Opaque pigments with gold on paper
 Painting 22 × 14.4 cm
 Folio 31.6 × 23.5 cm
 Laid down in an album page with calligraphy on the reverse

On the reverse is a specimen of Persian calligraphy, unsigned:
 "It's good that I should quote from the men of religion,
 Whether on a Friday or Saturday,
 For the *awliya'* are the deputies of God,
 They are always aware of [His] work."

Awliya' is frequently translated as "saints," but this has rather Christian connotations. "Friends of God" and "supporters" are also often used.

This fine bust portrait is of a Mughal nobleman wearing a plain orange *jama* and a green brocade turban secured with a gold brocade band. He appears to be around 40 years old and wears a severe, determined expression as he gazes fixedly off to the right out of the viewer's sight. The features of his face are finely modelled with smooth brush strokes overlaid with a network of fine darker strokes to produce the necessary modelled contours, but his hair, beard and moustache are composed of individual brush strokes for each hair. The relative sparseness of hair along his jawline therefore is obviously intended and confirms that this is a portrait taken from life rather than a previously existing sketch or *charba*. Noteworthy are the fine creases emanating from the corner of his eye, the way that his eyebrows join across his brow, the deep fold in the skin below his cheek which hides the end of his moustache and the way the drooping hairs of his moustache cover his lips when seen from the side. All this suggests a perfectionist approach to portraiture.

For a bust portrait, a format that in Mughal painting is based ultimately on the portrait miniature type introduced to the Mughal court by Sir Thomas Roe in 1614, this is an unusually large size and indeed foreshadows much larger bust portraits that were done later in the 17th century and 18th century (e.g. Falk and Archer 1982, no. 126; Hurel 2012, no. 127). There were many fine portraitists around early in the reign of Aurangzeb including Chitarman, Anup Chattar, Hashim, Hunhar and 'Muhammad Nadir al-Samaraqandi' (the ascriptions to his portraits in an album in the British Museum are thought spurious but the portraits are undeniably fine), but their technique is

different to ours. A feature that marks it as possibly later than these is the blue background, green or eau-de-nil being the favoured ground colour of almost all earlier portraits. Blue creeps in as a background colour at the beginning of the reign of Aurangzeb (e.g. Hurel 2012, nos. 86, 91.9). The simplicity of the unadorned orange *jama* contrasts with the refinement of the facial features creating a most memorable and interesting portrait. Simplicity was a virtue that was cultivated at the court of Aurangzeb throughout his reign and certainly in painting before he ceased to patronise it. In the painting in the Freer Gallery attributed to Hunhar of the emperor Aurangzeb caught in a shaft of light (Beach 2012, no. 22G), the emperor is completely unadorned with the jewels that were so conspicuous a feature of Shah Jahan's portraiture.

Our portrait bears a sufficient resemblance to Aurangzeb as well as an undeniably princely air to be considered to be one of his sons, of whom the only possibly candidate is the eldest, Mirza Muhammad Sultan (1639–76). The prince supported his father-in-law Shah Shuja' in the 1657–59 war of succession and was imprisoned by his father 1660–72. Briefly released, he was able to marry again in Delhi before being imprisoned again in Salimgarh where he died in 1676. This may be the only surviving portrait of this unfortunate prince.

Provenance

Otto Sohn-Rethel Collection, formed before 1931

Published

Kühnel, E., 'Die Indischen Miniaturen der Sammlung Otto Sohn-Rethel', in *Pantheon*, 1931, no. 9, pp. 385–89, fig. 6

Literature

Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court, revised and expanded edition*, Freer/Sackler, Washington, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2012
 Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Editions BnF, Paris, Vol. 1, 2010, Vol. II, 2011
 Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981



Portrait of Chuk the Wrestler

Mughal, c. 1660–75
 Brush drawing with some colour
 Drawing 20 × 7.7 cm, laid down on an album page with marbled borders
 Album page 29 × 20 cm
 Inscribed in Urdu in *nasta'liq* lower left: *tasvir-i Chuk hathi* (=jathi?) *mal*, 'Portrait of Chuk the champion wrestler'

Wearing only his loin-cloth (*langota*) and holding his turban in his hand, the wrestler stands tall and dignified, proudly displaying his immensely overweight body. He has the traditional bull-neck and massive shoulders, arms and legs, but his belly would surely be a hindrance in wrestling unless he used his weight to flatten his opponents. Wrestling has a long history in south Asia: some of the heroes of the *Mahabharata* such as Bhima were great wrestlers. Anciently known as *malla-yuddha*, under the Mughals elements of Persian and Central Asian wrestling were incorporated into the ancient sport to create the modern South Asian sport known as *kusti* or *pahlvan*.

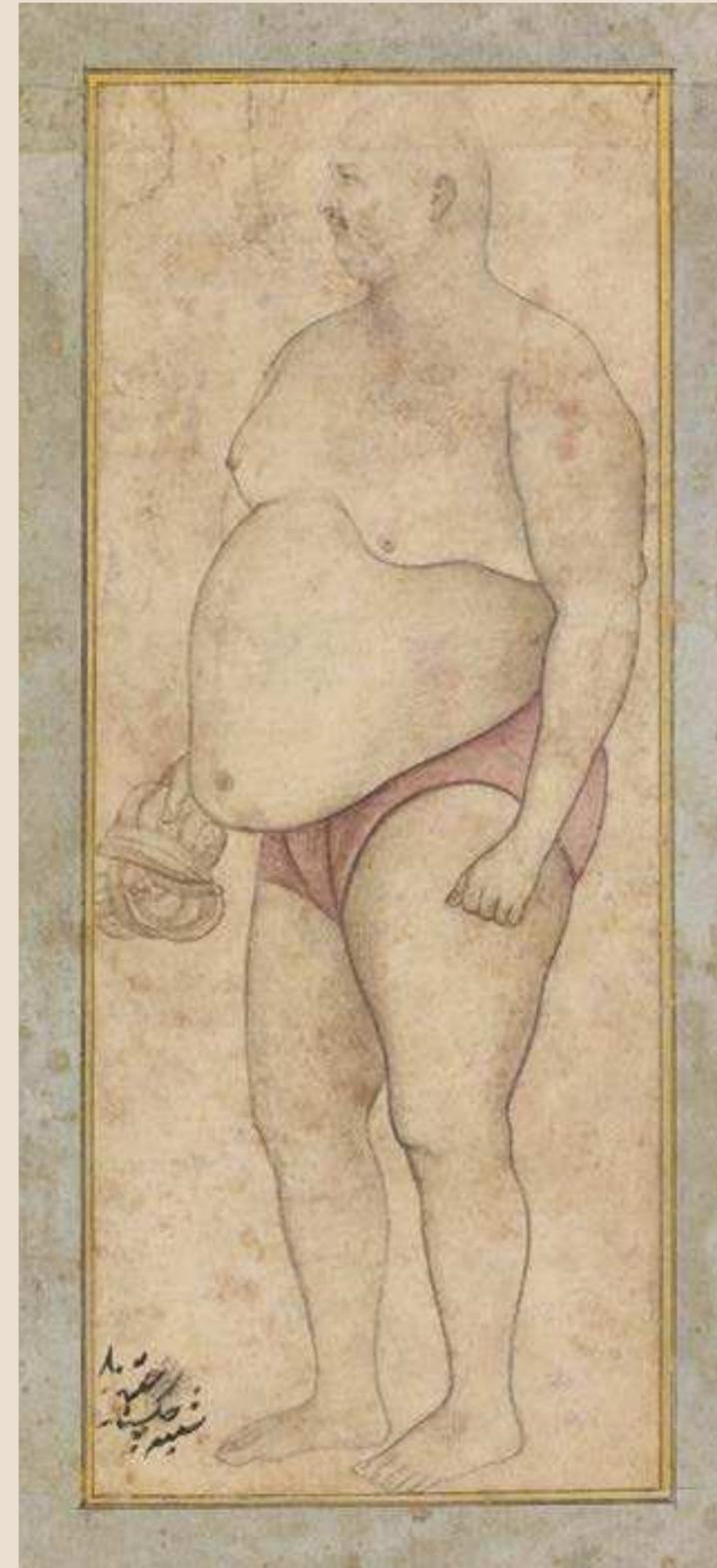
In Mughal portrait drawings of the 17th century, artists use their finest skills in rendering the details of the face and head and then draw in the body and clothes quickly and more tentatively. The degree of finishing varies. For examples in the Johnson Collection in the British Library see Falk and Archer 1981, nos. 74, 86, 107 and 109. A similar group in the British Museum all from one 17th century album also has attributions to Chitarman and Muhammad Nadir al-Samarqandi, but regardless of some scholars' doubts about the attributions they are all extremely fine portrait drawings (see Martin 1912, pls. 184–97). A fine drawing of the young Sulaiman Shikoh and his tutor in Bristol has the same characteristics of beautifully finished heads and outlined bodies (Welch 1976, no. 20).

In our drawing the artist has changed the normal technique a little. His sensitive rendering of the massive head is done with an extremely fine brush and the lightest touches of modelling. The wrestler's shaved head and the stubble on his chin make him seem quite remarkably modern. The artist has

however used a much broader brush to draw unhesitatingly the outlines of his subject's body and especially of his round belly and modelled it with nearly parallel strokes of the brush, perhaps trying to emphasise the massiveness of the wrestler's physique. Looking through collections of 17th century Mughal drawings in Harvard (Welch and Massteller 2004, nos. 22–32) or in Dublin (Leach 1995, throughout pp. 451–97), our artist's purposeful broad brush line is found rarely, and when it is, it is used rapidly and with repeated strokes as a first sketch (e.g. Welch and Masteller, no. 28, two holy men attributed to Payag).

Literature

- Beach, M. C., Koch, E., and Thackston, W., *King of the World, the Padshahnama*, Azimuth, London, 1997
 Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981
 Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, Scorpion Cavendish, London, 1995
 Martin, F.R., *The Miniature Paintings of Persia, India and Turkey*, London, 1912
 Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book 1560–1660*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2002
 Welch, S.C., *Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches*, The Asia Society, New York, 1976
 Welch, S.C., and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart and Hand: Persian, Turkish and Indian Drawings from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection*, Yale University Press and Harvard University Art Museums, New Haven, etc., 2004



Dara Shikoh with Holy Men

Mughal, c. 1680–1700
 Opaque watercolour and gold mounted in an album page
 decorated with floral trellis designs in gold, with on the
 reverse *nasta'liq* calligraphy
 Painting 22.8 × 18.5 cm
 Album page 55.5 × 34 cm

The scene is set in a courtyard surrounded by simple houses under the shade of a large neem tree. A brilliantly coloured sky suggests it is evening. A prince whose appearance conforms to that of Dara Shikoh (1615–59) is visiting an old mulla with a long white beard sitting on a tiger skin, while two other holy men sit by. The building on the left and the landscape beyond seem unfinished.

Dara Shikoh is often depicted in the company of mullas and ascetics, beginning when he was about fifteen years old with a group of unidentified sages about 1630 (Beach 1978, no. 63). A still young-looking and beardless Dara Shikoh is depicted about 1640–45 with Mulla Shah (d. 1661), whose disciple he became in 1640, in a Persian manuscript which reached the royal library in Paris in 1667 (Bibliothèque Nationale 1986, no. 32). He is depicted with Mulla Shah and the latter's teacher Mian Mir (d. 1635) in paintings in Tehran (Godard 1937, t. 2, fasc. II, p. 202, fig. 72), in the former Vever Collection now in the Sackler Gallery, Washington D.C. (Beach 2012, no. 36), another version of which was in the Ardeshir Album (Sotheby's 26 March 1973, no. 12) and also in the Johnson Collection in the British Library c. 1650–60 (Losty and Roy 2012, fig. 94). This latter group of paintings is anachronistic since Mian Mir died in 1635 and Dara Shikoh is depicted with a beard which he grew in 1639–40. The grouping of sages with the prince is meant to indicate his spiritual lineage. Few of the ubiquitous ascetics and mullas abounding in mid-17th century pictures have been identified with certainty, and this is certainly true of the group here. Pictures of Dara Shikoh with miscellaneous sages if still living must have enhanced their prestige through association with the prince.

This album page comes from the Ardeshir collection. A.C. Ardeshir, a Parsi from Bombay, came from the eminent Ardeshir family who were pioneers in the printing and printing ink industry in India and owned one of the finest tea estates in the country. He was an architect by profession and amongst various buildings he also designed the landmark residence of his sister Lady Frainy Dhunjibhoy Bomanji, called Bomanji Hall. Today he is remembered mostly for the race named after him at the Bombay Turf Club.

A.C. Ardeshir put together his magnificent collection in India in the 1920s and 1930s and also gave his name to a splendid album put together in the 18th century that was once the property of the Maratha Peshwa, Nana Phadnavis. It was sold and dispersed in 1973 (Sotheby's London, 26 March 1973, lots 1–38), while other individual paintings and manuscripts from his collection were also sold at this period.

Provenance

Ardeshir Album, Sotheby's London,
 26 March 1973, Lot 29

Literature

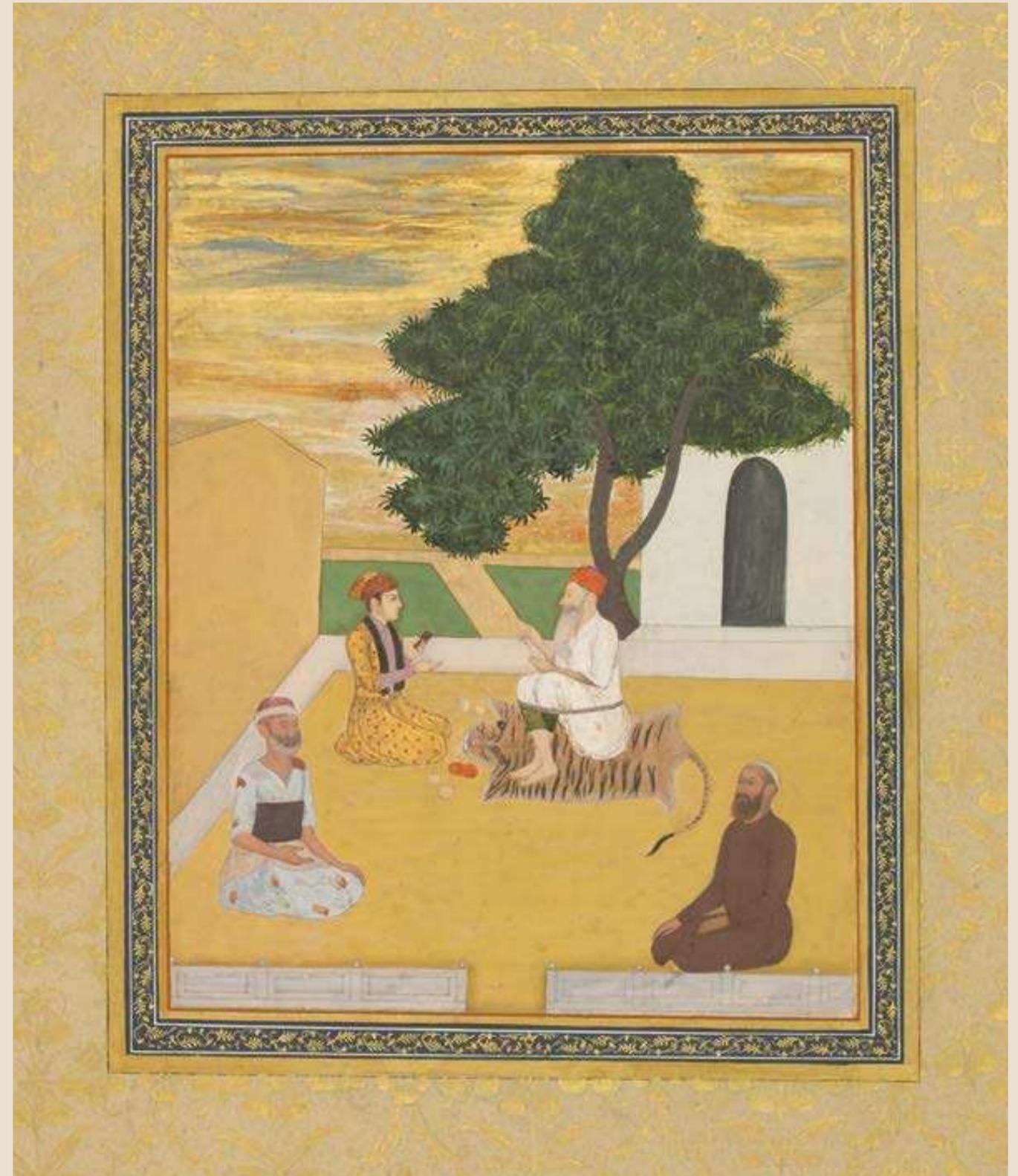
Beach, M.C., *The Grand Mogol*, Clark
 Art Institute, Williamstown, 1978

Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image:
 Paintings for the Mughal Court,
 revised and expanded edition*, Freer/
 Sackler, Washington, Mapin
 Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2012
 Bibliothèque Nationale, *A la cour du
 Grand Mogol*, Bibliothèque
 Nationale, Paris, 1986

Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian
 Miniatures in the India Office
 Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet,
 London, 1981

Godard, Y., 'Un album de portraits
 des princes timourides de l'Inde'
 in *Athar-é Iran*, Paris, 1937

Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India:
 Art, Culture and Empire –
 Manuscripts and Paintings in the
 British Library*, British Library,
 London, 2012



Two Pages from a *Shahnama*

Opaque pigments and gold with ink on paper
Folio 33.4 × 20.8 cm

These two folios come from an unfinished illustrated manuscript of the *Shahnama* from the mid-17th century with twelve original paintings in an extremely interesting style done outside the court, together with another seven folios containing earlier Persian and Indian paintings laid down into gaps in the text left for painting. The text is arranged in four columns with 25 lines of black *nasta'liq* script, intercolumniations and headings are in red, and each text panel is surrounded by two red and one blue ruled lines. Our two paintings are original to the *Shahnama*, being painted in gaps left for paintings. They are vibrant and inventive and indeed extremely accomplished. Like much of the work done outside the imperial court in north India in the 17th century, where the imperial Mughal court style scarcely penetrated, there is a considerable debt both to Sultanate painting of the 16th century and to contemporary work from Persia. Manuscripts from commercial studios in Iran were readily available for patrons who wanted the texts but lacked the means to pay for their own copies to be produced in India. Those patrons who could afford to commission their own copies had to employ artists who might have known something of the imperial style but had reverted to their innate pre-Mughal Sultanate style overlaid with details from contemporary Persian manuscripts. There are few manuscripts with dates and colophons from this period, and few have been properly studied, but they include a *Khavarnama* from Multan dated 1686 in the British Library (Losty 1982, no. 105; Titley 1983, pl. 42); a *Shahnama* dated 1695 in the Chester Beatty Library commissioned by a Mirza Rustam in Kangra (Leach 1995, pp. 1034–42); and although slightly later a *Shahnama* from Rajauri in Kashmir dated 1719 in

the British Library (Losty 1982, no. 125; Titley 1983, pl. 43). A set of paintings of the story of Yusuf and Zulaykha by Muhammad Nadir al-Samarqandi in the Chester Beatty Library (Leach 1995, pp. 927–35) and dispersed, with one painting annotated as having been painted in Kashmir, is not sufficient reason to imagine a whole school of Kashmiri painting beginning at this date, any more than Bishndas's paintings for the *Mathnavi* of Zafar Khan now in the Royal Asiatic Society done while his patron was *Subahdar* of Kashmir led to the establishment of such a school (often published, see Losty 1982, no. 83; Pal 2008, figs. 168a,b).

Firdausi's *Shahnama* has always been one of the most popular works of Persian poetry for patrons to have illustrated manuscripts prepared for them, and no doubt Akbar had one or more done for him in his studio, but none survives intact. Likewise a *Shahnama* prepared for Jahangir around 1610 is nowadays known only from a few folios (Colnaghi 1976, nos. 88i and ii; Leach 1986, no. 21; Pal 1993, no. 68). Other manuscripts of this key text were produced for non-imperial patrons such as the great bibliophile 'Abd al-Rahim the Khan-i Khanan, who actually had an earlier manuscript overpainted in his studio (now in the British Library, see Losty 1982, no. 86; Seyller 1999, pp. 263–73). There are several other manuscripts done outside the court in the early 17th century with no known patron, all of which pay considerable attention to the Persian origins of the story, so that Persian costume details are very much to the fore, especially contemporary turbans, suggesting a widespread market in India for up-to-date Persian *Shahnamas*.

Provenance
Private Swiss Collection

Literature
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Leach, L.Y., *Indian Miniature Paintings and Drawings: the Cleveland Museum of Art Catalogue of Oriental Art, Part One*, The Cleveland Museum of Art., Cleveland, 1986

Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, Scorpion Cavendish, London, 1995

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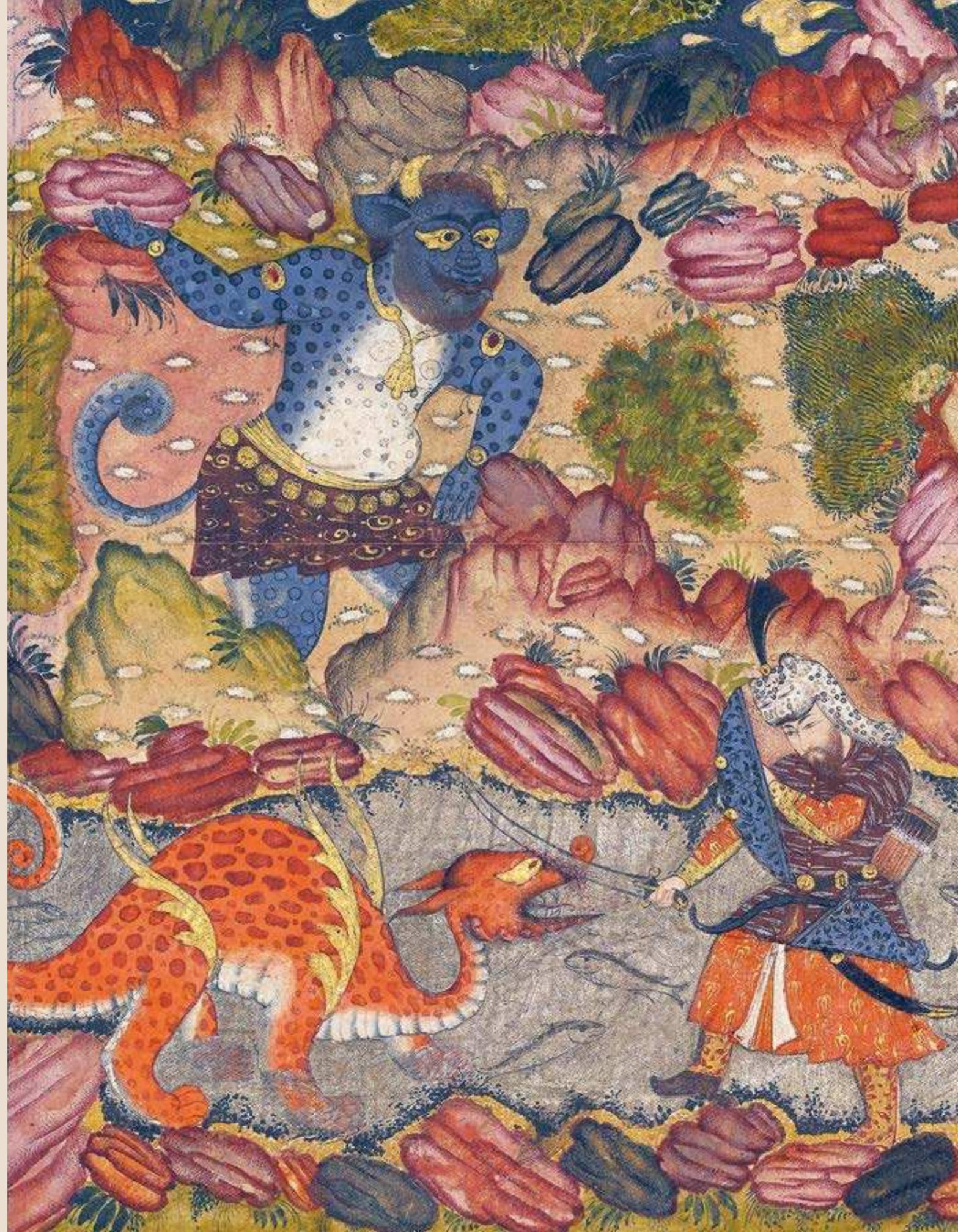
Pal, P., *Indian Painting: A Catalogue of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Collections, Volume 1, 1000–1700*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 1993

Pal, P., *The Arts of Kashmir*, Asia Society, New York, 2008

Seyller, J., *Workshop and Patron in Mughal India: the Freer Ramayana and other Illustrated Manuscripts of 'Abd al-Rahim*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich., 1999

Titley, Norah M., *Persian Miniature Painting and its Influence on the Art of Turkey and India*, British Library, London, 1983

Topsfield, A., *Visions of Mughal India: the Collection of Howard Hodgkin*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 2012



Rustam Fights a Sea Monster in the Presence of Akvan Div

Mughal India, c. 1650–75
 Painting 27,5 × 18 cm

This is one of the more rarely illustrated episodes of the *Shahnama* for which artists tended to follow their own imagination rather than stick to a preconceived iconographic pattern. King Khusrau had sent Rustam out to stop the *div* (demon) Akvan's ravaging of the herds and Rustam pursued Akvan in the wilderness for several days, until overcome by weariness he fell asleep. The vengeful demon picked up Rustam and the bed of earth he lay on and hurled him into the sea. Rustam managed to return to land but had to fight a sea monster before finally confronting and defeating Akvan. Our artist has depicted the battle on the sea shore between Rustam and the sea monster as Rustam brings his sword crashing down on the sea monster's nose as Akvan looks on preparing to hurl a rock at the hero.

The vividly coloured rocks derive from earlier 16th century Persian examples, but the artist has arranged them into three bands between which the action takes place, reminiscent of earlier Sultanate compositions in registers. The rocks spill over into the margin and curl up the side of the page, just as the monster's and the demon's tail curl up together. Dead tree stumps and trees springing from the rocks follow the Herat-Safavid model but done in an Indian way with outlined leaves and vibrant flowers. Chinese clouds scud across the top, again here borrowed from Persian painting, but are almost like angels in their outlines.



The Fire Ordeal of Siyavush

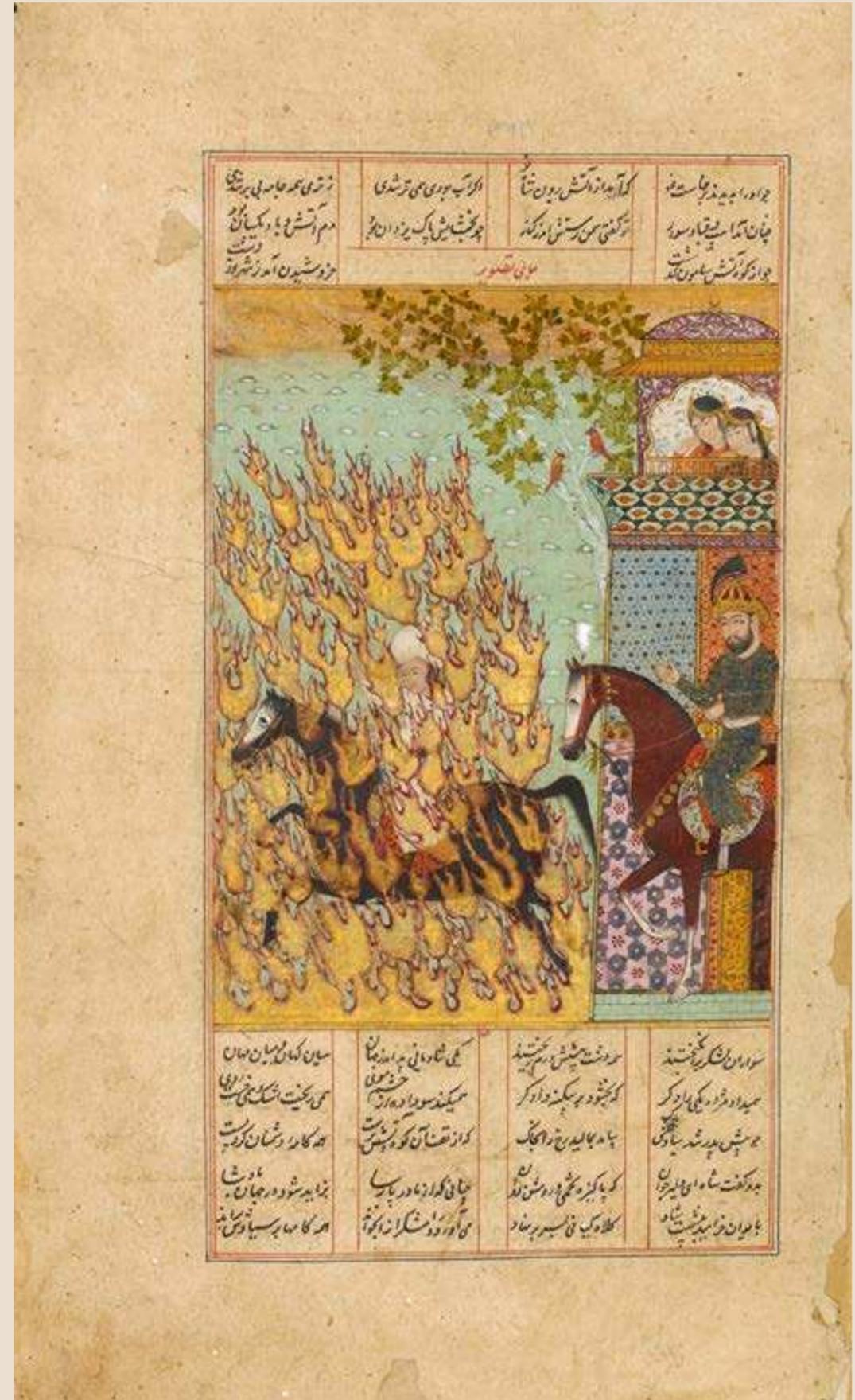
Mughal India, c. 1650–75
 Painting 17 × 13.2 cm

Siyavush was the son of the Iranian king, Kay Kavus. The king's new wife, Sudaba, fell in love with Siyavush and tried to seduce him. When Siyavush rejected Sudaba, she accused him of abusing her. Kay Kavus heard about this and arranged a day of public judgement, on which Siyavush had to prove his innocence by riding his horse through a fire without being harmed. With Kay Kavus and Sudaba looking on, the prince rode through the flames and emerged unhurt, proving his innocence.



This is one of the most famous episodes in the whole *Shahnama* and one that is often illustrated, with a fairly rigidly defined iconography: the young prince riding through the flames, the palace tower alongside with Sudaba looking on from above and the king either beside her or on a horse outside. Here the latter composition is followed. The artist is more controlled and disciplined than the one who painted Rostam and the sea-monster, with a different way of doing eyes. There are some exquisite details here, including the way the jagged flames leap up engulfing horse and rider against a pale jade ground, and the tile decorations on the tower. Sudaba and her attendant watch in wonder, finger to mouth, their golden headbands rising into peaks above their foreheads. Kay Kavus wears a traditional type of crown but his son, who is also often crowned in this scene, wears the latest turban style from Isfahan.

The palace tower is rendered flatly as was traditional and covered with exquisite tiles, and is reminiscent of a page from the dispersed non-imperial *Ramayana* probably done for Bir Singh Deo of Orchha in Bundelkhand 1605–10 (Topsfield 2012, no. 8). Nonetheless, the artist has paid some attention to contemporary architecture, since its top is crowned by a *chattri* with a lobed Shahjahani arch, while an acanthus-leaved moulding (as seen on Shahjahani column capitals and bases) decorates the corner of the parapet beneath it. Despite these contemporary details, the composition as a whole reflects the way this scene is depicted in 15th century manuscripts – see for example a page in the Los Angeles County Museum thought to be late-15th century Sultanate (Pal 1993, no. 43a).



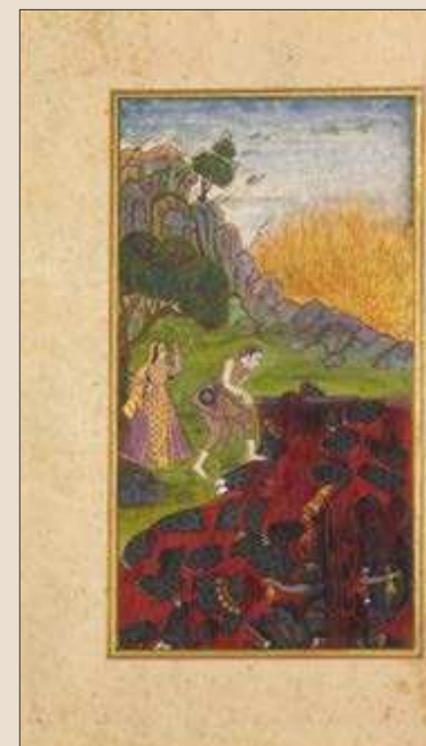
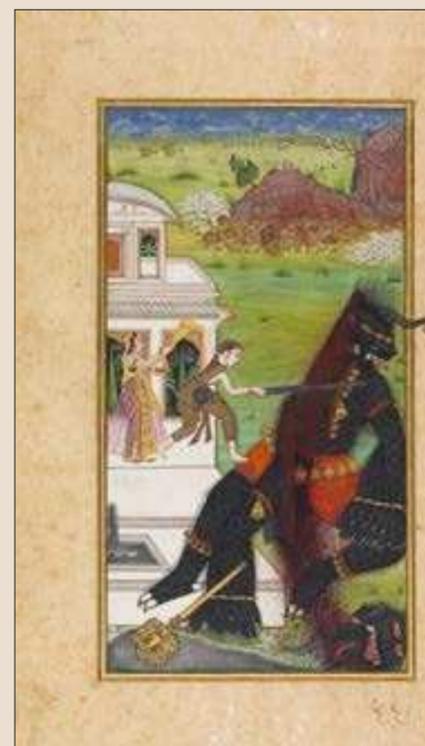
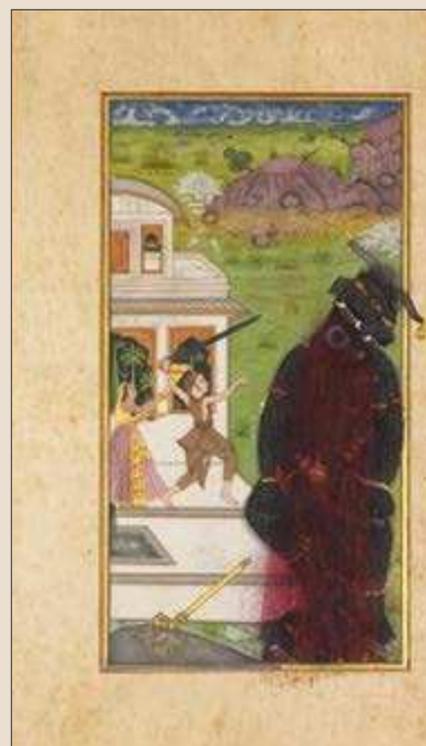
Four Pages from a Deccani Urdu poem, the *Gulshan-i 'Ishq* by Nusrati

Deccan, c. 1700
Opaque watercolour and gold on paper

These four pages are from what is unquestionably the finest Deccani manuscript of the period, outstanding for its calligraphy, its superb technical accomplishment and its poetical fantasy. All four are closely related images from the same sequence in which the hero prince disguised as a yogi is vigorously attacking with his long Deccani sword a monstrous demon whose habitual diet is suggested by the piles of bones in the distance attended by vultures.

The folios are from a romance written in Deccani Urdu, the *Gulshan-i 'Ishq* ('the Rose-garden of Love') by the Bijapuri court poet Nusrati, written for 'Ali 'Adil Shah II of Bijapur and completed in 1657. The unpublished colophon of our manuscript notes (Christie's 1979, 11 October, lots 183–89) that the work was written by an unnamed author who "lived during the reign of 'Ali 'Adil Shahi, under whom I grew prosperous." This copy of the poem is fragmentary and its folios dispersed. The text of our manuscript on other folios which have not been pasted down is written in an elegant *naskhi*, on fine polished paper, in two columns without any dividing rules or margins, the number of lines varying between five and twelve. On the recto a gold margin surrounds the text and painting panels.

Seven folios were sold at Christie's in London in 1979, of which two were published by Mark Zebrowski in 1983 as Deccani, c. 1700. Two further leaves were formerly in the Ehrenfeld collection, the identification of which was suggested by Dan Ehn bom (1985, nos. 37–38) to be Nusrati's poem. This identification of the text was confirmed by Peter Gaeffke in his 1987 paper based on a complete manuscript of the same text now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, which is closely related in the style of its miniatures to our folios, but which was



apparently completed in Hyderabad 1741–43.

The Philadelphia manuscript raises questions about the dating of our dispersed folios, but it is more likely on stylistic grounds that it is a close copy of our manuscript rather than that they should both be from around 1740. This is impossible on grounds of style. Discussing these folios in 1983, Zebrowski (p. 222) argues that the miniatures are painted in a transitional style, predominantly Bijapuri but with certain Golconda and emerging Hyderabad features, suggesting circa 1700 as a date for their production.

Provenance
Private Swiss Collection
Girard, Paris, 1962

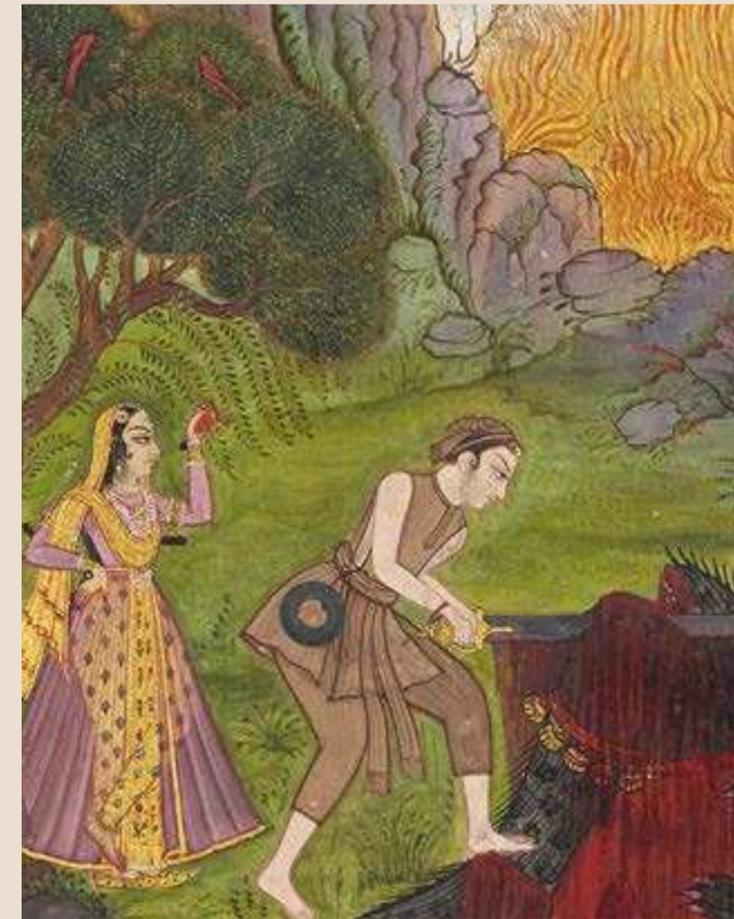
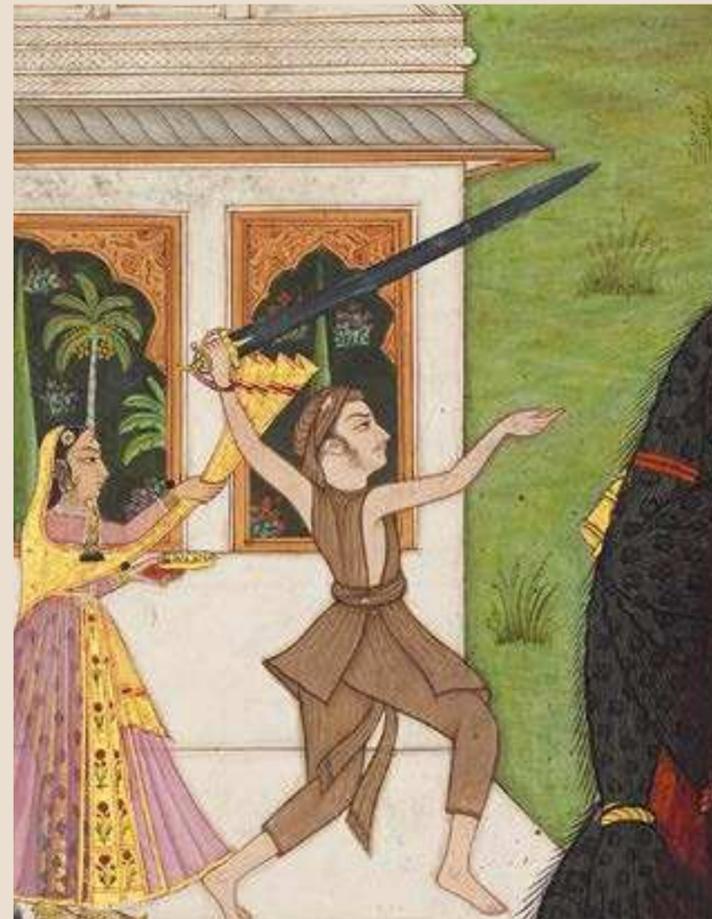
Literature
Blohm, P., 'Led up the Garden Path: The Rose Garden hidden by History', *Marg*, vol. 62, no. 3, Mumbai, 2011, pp. 44–57
Ehn bom, D., *Indian Miniatures: the Ehrenfeld Collection*, American Federation of Arts, New York, 1985
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian*

The seven folios sold at Christie's generally display layered compositions that are typical of earlier Bijapuri and Golconda work. The two further folios which have emerged since confirm this: one (Ehn bom 1985 no. 38) for instance has an architectural background that leads on seamlessly to that typical of mid-18th century Hyderabad such as the *ragamala* in the Richard Johnson collection (Falk & Archer 1981, no. 426). The style of brilliant colouring against white went on to have a lasting influence on later manuscript and album paintings

from Hyderabad. Other features such as the landscape of our folios with rocky outcrops emerging from a grassy plain have counterparts in other Deccani paintings from the early 18th century (for instance Zebrowski 1983, pl. xx1) as opposed to the much stiffer and more schematic landscapes of the mid-century.

Nusrati's romantic poem contains a fantastic love story involving the hero Manhar and two princesses: the magical Madmalati and the more earthbound Champavati, the embodiments

Miniatures in the India Office Library, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981
Gaeffke, P., 'Identification of Four Miniatures from the Deccan,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 107, no. 2, 1987
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, Sotheby's Parke Bernet, London, 1983



respectively of erotic and spiritual love. It is based on the earlier Awadhi Hindi romance, the *Madhumalativarta*, commenced in 1545 by Manjhan, a Sufi of the Shattari order from Bihar who was also a court poet to Islam Shah Sur in Delhi, in which the hero is Manohar and the two princesses Madhumalati and Pema. This is one of the four major mystical poems of Indian Sufism (*prema kahani*) written in Awadhi Hindi, beginning with Maulana Da'ud's *Chandayan* of 1379, the others being Qutban's *Mrigavati* of 1503 and Jayasi's *Padmavat* begun 1540, which all follow the same kind of romance in which the hero prince gets involved with a magical princess, loses her, wanders the earth as a yogi looking for her, and finds another princess who eventually reunites them. All four Muslim authors take the same kind of

Hindu romance and transform it into a story that although imbued throughout with Hindu imagery is one of spiritual progression according to Sufi thought. None of these works seems to have attracted Akbar's attention but they did that of his heir Salim: a heavily illustrated Persian version of the *Mrigavati* was prepared for prince Salim at Allahabad 1603–04, and is now in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (illustrated in Leach 1995, pp. 189–232).

Two further illustrated Deccani versions of this text are known. Zebrowski in 1983 published two images of a romance (figs. 197–98) of which many other pages are known, dating them to slightly later than the first manuscript. They lack any text but have been annotated with fanciful descriptions relating to the earlier Qutb Shah dynasty. Blohm

(2011) anchored the miniatures firmly to the romance of the *Gulshan-i 'Ishq*. The somewhat later complete manuscript of the same text in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, from which four miniatures were published in a brief note by Peter Gaeffke (1987), has already been referred to. This second manuscript is dated 1741–43 from Hyderabad and was in the library of Tipu Sultan. Gaeffke's fig. 4 shows the same moment when the demon first is poised to strike the hero prince, while the artist of his fig. 1 was obviously aware of the painting of the *peris* and the sleeping princess now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

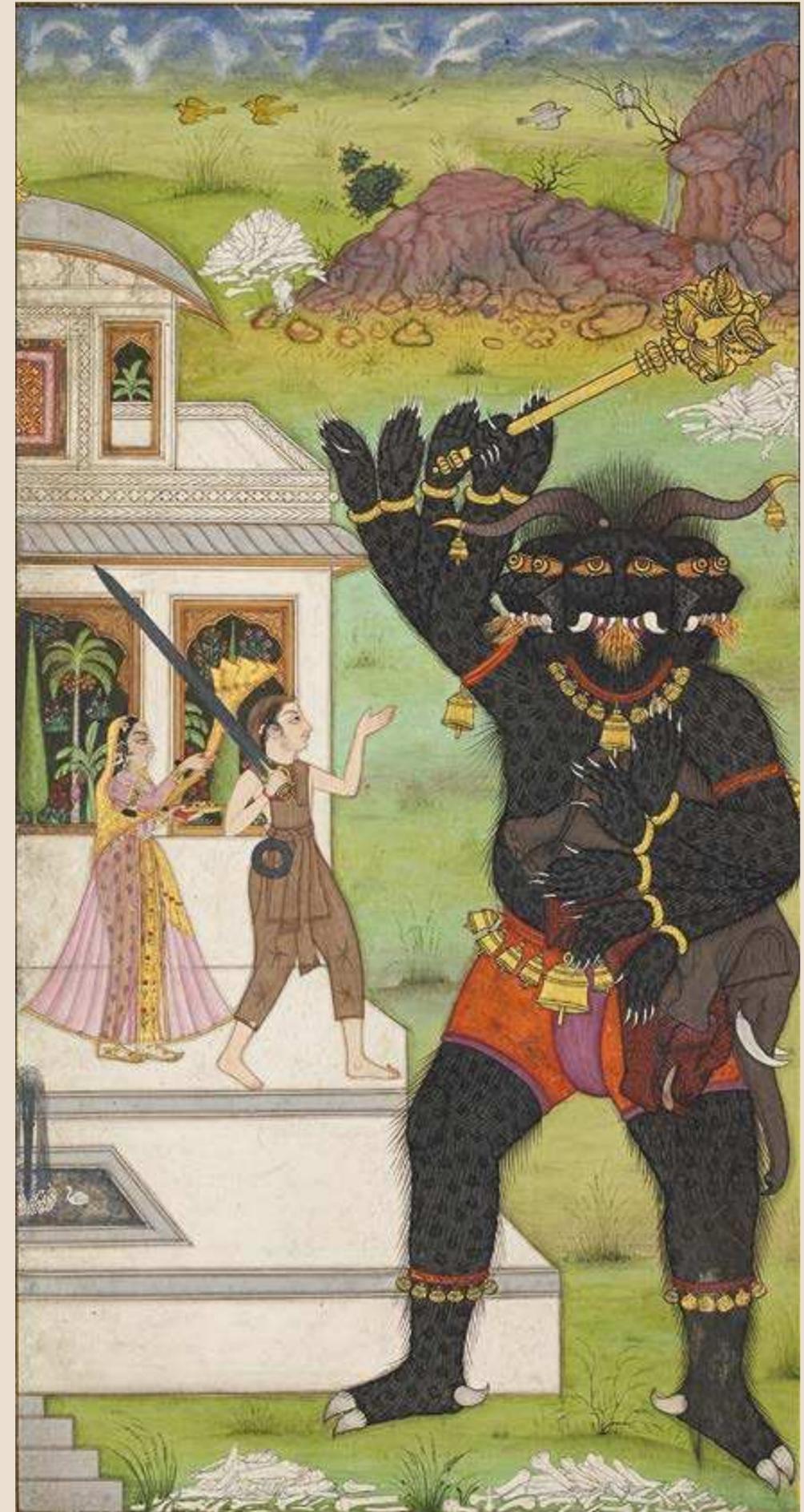
The descriptions of the paintings that follow have been greatly helped by Aditya Behl's translation of Manjhan's *Madhumalati* (OUP, 2000).

Prince Manhar protects the Princess Champavati and confronts the Demon

Painting 26.9 × 14.4 cm
Folio 37 × 21.2 cm

Our prince Manhar has found his first beloved Madmalati who is possessed of magical powers, but she has tested him by leaving him. Distraught he wanders the world disguised as a yogi looking for her. He has come across the princess Champavati who was previously abducted from her home by a demon, who has kept her imprisoned for a year. Despite her beseeching him to fly to Madmalati, whose whereabouts she has told the prince, and leave her to her fate, he stays to fight the demon. The demon appears stretching from the earth to the sky, dark as the monsoon clouds, with five heads and ten arms, his ten eyes shining like stars. Our artist has had no trouble in depicting such a monster and has added horns and tusks for good measure. He brandishes a mace with a lion mask head in one of his right hands and clasps an elephant under his left armpit. His dark skin is covered in hairy pustules. They exchange angry words in the usual manner of such encounters in Indian stories.

The prince has his great sword slung over his shoulder as he exchanges insults with the demon, while Champavati waves the end of her *dupatta* over him in his honour, as she does throughout this sequence.



Prince Manhar cuts off some of the Demon's Heads

Painting 26.9 × 14.4 cm
Folio 37 × 21.2 cm

The prince Manhar strikes the demon with his sword and he reels back, blood pouring from his body; the prince has cut off some of his heads. The prince is stationed on the terrace of a white palace as he fights the demon, and the princess behind waves a scarf over him to cool him down as he fights. The structure of the palace in three of our paintings – a terrace with a pavilion behind topped by a Bengali-roofed kiosk – is seen also in one of the most beautiful paintings in the manuscript, now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, showing *peris* swooping down from the sky to the prince sleeping on a terrace (Zebrowski 1983, fig. 195), while our lower terrace with its fountain is echoed in another page from the manuscript (*ibid.*, fig. 196).

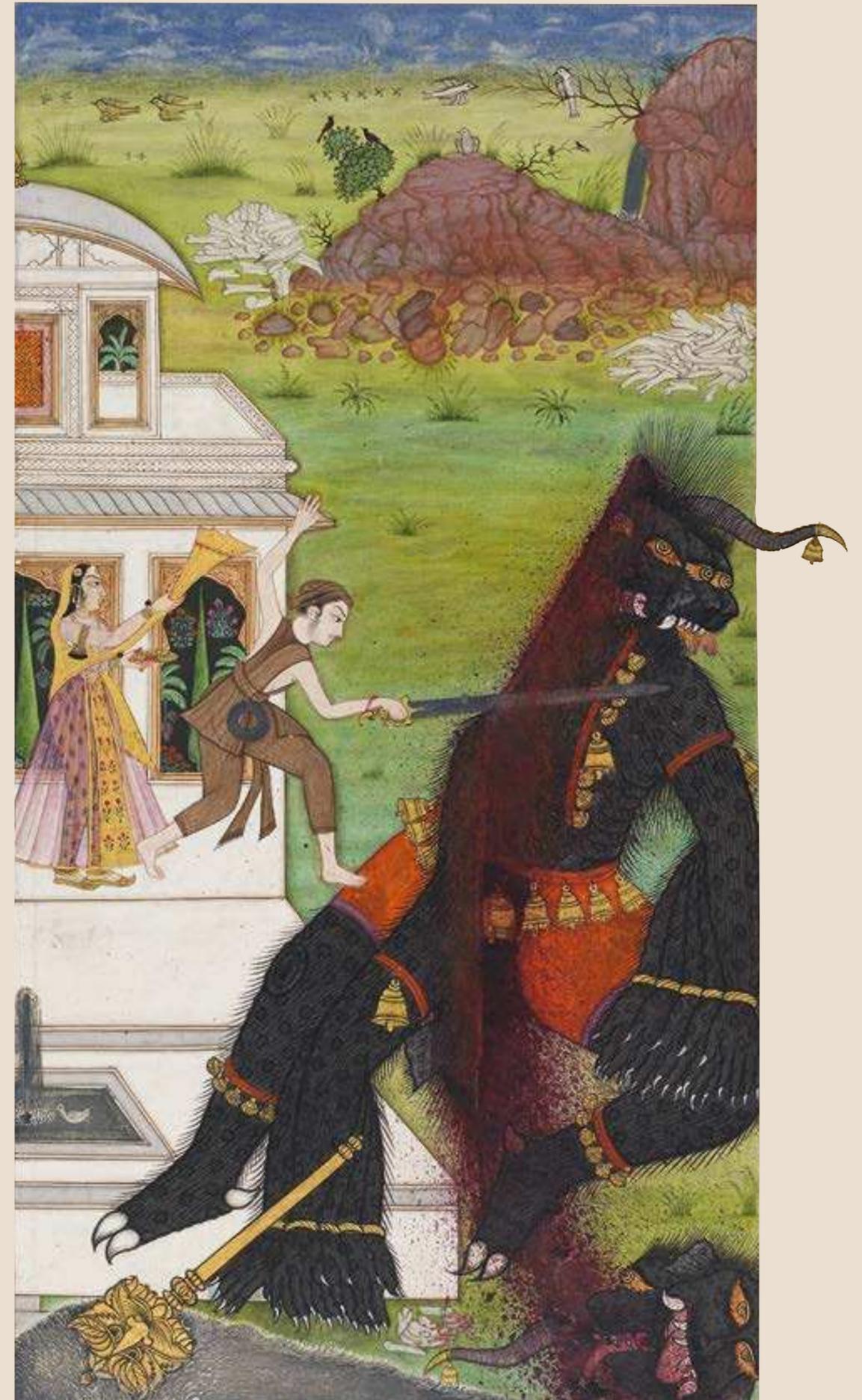


**Prince Manhar cuts off some
of the Demon's Arms**

Painting 26.9 × 14.4 cm
Folio 37 × 21.2 cm

This seems the next stage in the battle as Manhar has now cut off half the demon's arms. The loss of some of his heads and arms does no good, as the demon roars with laughter, then picks up his severed heads and limbs, soars into the sky and replaces them on his body, before returning to earth to resume the fight. The next stage, unrepresented in this sequence, is when the prince shoots his arrows into the demon's body only for him to become invisible.

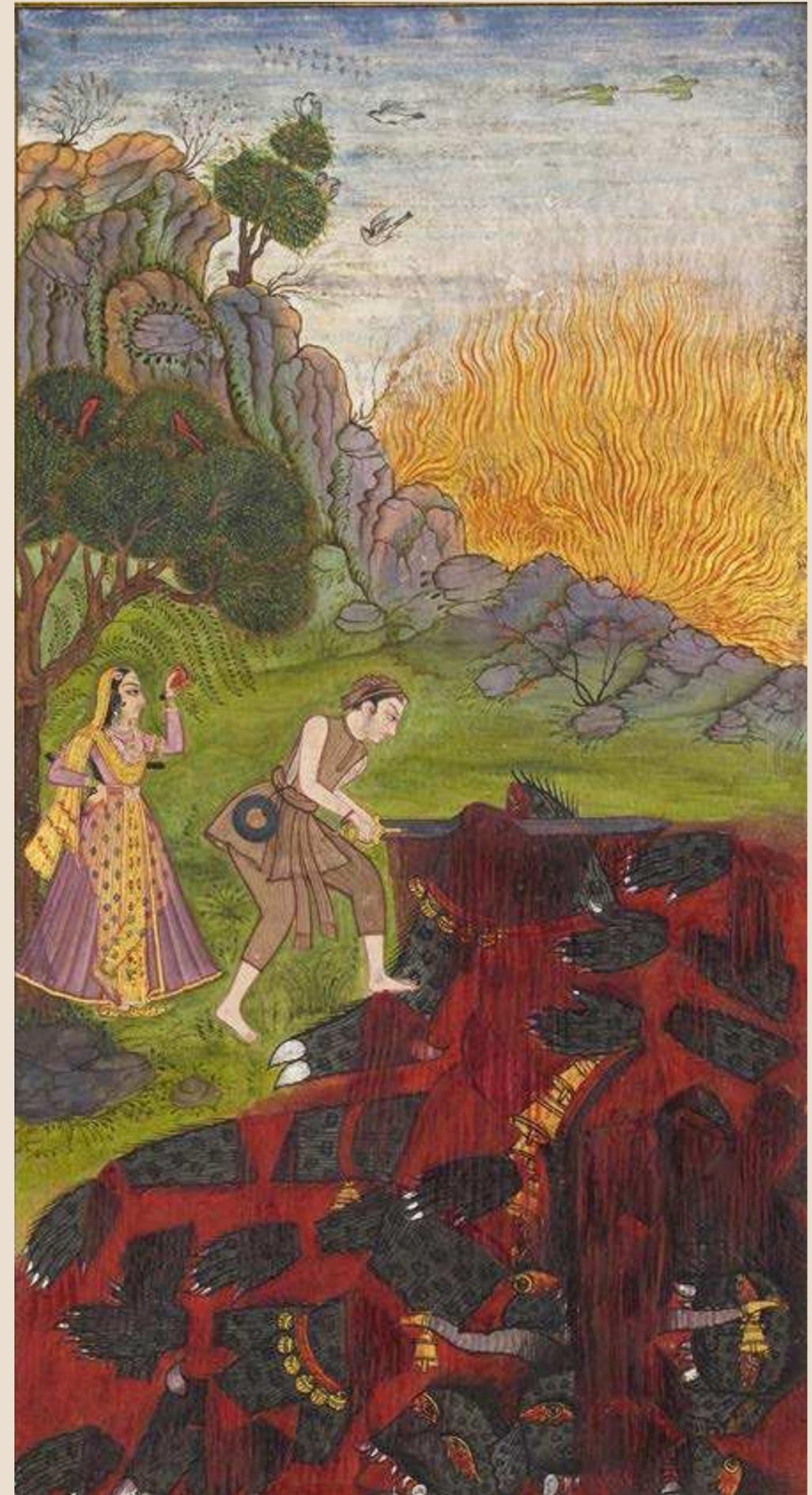
Niches on the walls of the palace in three of our examples are adorned with paintings of trees against a dark ground. There are many references in Manjhan's text to 'picture pavilions,' pavilions adorned with wall-paintings of Hindu stories. The landscape recedes to piles of mauve rocks in the distance with a few stunted trees, the piles of white bones contrasting with the pairs of birds.



**Prince Manhar burns the tree of
Immortality and destroys the Demon**

Painting 26.9 × 14.4 cm
Folio 37 × 21.2 cm

After night fell, the princess Champavati remembered the secret of the demon's apparent invincibility. A tree with fruit that bestowed immortality was the secret, that if cut down would allow the demon to be killed. Manhar and Champavati have found the tree, cut it down and burnt it. In the last of the four paintings the scene has shifted to the rocks seen in the background earlier, which now dominate the landscape, and behind the rocks the artist represents the burning tree of immortality. Manhar is now able to cut the demon to pieces, as the demon has not been able to take his severed limbs to the tree for them to be renewed. The princess looks on from under a tree, standing elegantly with her legs crossed and one raised hand holding one of the branches, posed in what became one of the classic female positions in Deccani paintings in the 18th century.



A Scene in the Temple

Deccan late 17th century, after a Mughal original c.1640
Brush drawing with wash and some colour and gold
46 × 24.5 cm
Inscribed in the sky in Persian: *tasvir-e mani kar-e siyah qalam*
(‘Painting by Mani, black-pen (*siyah qalam*) technique’)

Mounted in an album page surrounded by panels of calligraphic exercises.
On the reverse is a lightly tinted drawing of Layla embracing Majnun in the desert surrounded by animals, Lucknow late 18th century, but with some colour applied later, as well as two lines of calligraphy above and below. The top line is part of a line from the Arabic poem of al-Busayri in praise of the

An elderly man sits in a high backed chair with a book in one hand and a rosary in the other while a group of women stand before him. One presents him with another book, a second has a child in her arms while the other two talk to each other. Behind the elderly man’s chair rises a square building with a tall arched portal between engaged columns divided into different registers. A wall behind the women separates the scene from trees and open countryside rising to a small hill. In front of the scene stands a young soldier dressed in Portuguese costume



Verso

Prophet, the *Qasidat al-Burda* (“Ode of the Mantle”): *yawm tafarrasa fihi al-furs innahum qad...* (“The day on which the Persians realised that they ...”). The bottom line is a saying of Imam ‘Ali: *a‘zam al-jahl jahl al-insan bi-nafsihi* (“The greatest ignorance is a person’s ignorance of himself”).

suitable for India, while a monkey sits right in front examining a flower.

The scene is obviously based on a print of a Biblical scene, of which the Presentation in the Temple is the most likely. This was a favourite in the Mughal studio and various versions are known which combine the various elements found in our drawing of building, seated old man and a group of women. A fully coloured version attributed to Keshav Das c. 1580–85 is in the Musée Guimet (Okada 2011, fig. 12), where the seated old man has become part of a Last Supper sequence to which a group of women are approaching, one holding the Christ Child. Another drawing c. 1600 in technique similar to ours is in the British Library (Losty and Roy 2012, fig. 71). This latter is perhaps the work of Kesu Khurd, Kesu the Younger, an artist who based his work on his senior colleague and who was certainly his pupil and perhaps his son. Another version is in Dublin ascribed simply to Kesu, certainly as Leach suggests meant for Kesu Khurd (Leach 1995, 1.234), where the Virgin is seated. Slightly more removed is a drawing in Los Angeles of an enthroned Virgin and Child approached by a startled Simeon again attributed to this artist (Pal 1993, no. 61).

Our version contains many of the traits associated with these various earlier works associated with Keshav Das and Kesu Khurd. The Simeon figure for instance differs from the thin ascetic looking Simeon in the London and Dublin versions but seems based on the stout bald old man seated at the table with Jesus in the Paris version. As also found in some of the drawings cited above as well as other Mughal versions of European prints, the veil normally associated with representations of Biblical women has been abandoned and they have been

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- Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, Scorpion Cavendish, London, 1995
- Losty, J.P., *Indian Miniatures from the James Ivory Collection*, Francesca Galloway, London, 2010
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- Pal, P., *Indian Painting: A Catalogue of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Collections, Volume 1, 1000–1700*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, 1993
- Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, Sotheby Publications, University of California Press, London and Los Angeles, 1983





given gold fillets or crowns for their hair and even a *sarpech* with a feather in the case of the woman presenting the book, who also sports a ruff round her neck. Necklaces and other items of jewellery have now become common. The somewhat incongruous young soldier corresponds in position with a young man playing a zither in the London and Dublin versions and the monkey to a cat in the Dublin version and to a dog in the Los Angeles drawing. The arched portal between regularly divided pilasters is found in several of these versions as well as in another painting by Keshav Das assisted by Kesu Khurd formerly in the James Ivory collection (Losty 2010, no. 3).

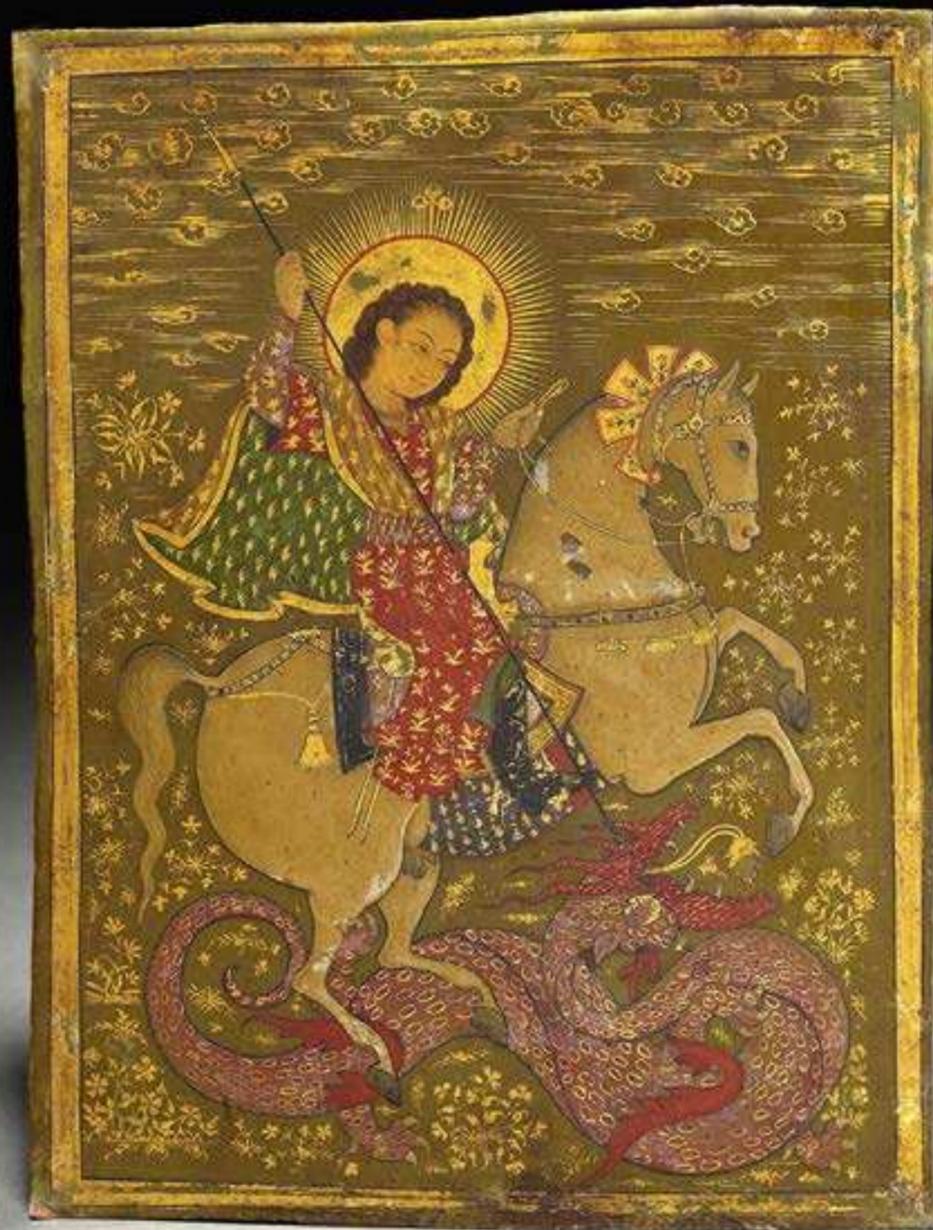
Despite the obvious Mughal associations of the composition and the way it is handled, our artist would seem to be from the Deccan, as indicated in particular by the treatment of the trees with crowns of leaves arranged like diminishing ballerinas' tutus around the trunk. For comparable trees see

Zebrowski 1983, figs. 198–203. The various versions of the scene suggest it was a popular one in the first half of the 17th century and our Deccani artist seems to have worked from an earlier Mughal original. In the Deccani version simple brushed lines enclose forms with the lightest of shading to indicate volume. Folds of drapery are simply rendered as parallel lines in a darker wash while the women's hair is arranged in regularly repeating coils. For other Deccani Christian subjects which are probably based on Mughal originals, see Falk and Archer 1981, nos. 445 and 448.



St George and the Dragon

By an Indian artist for the Ethiopian Market, c. 1680–1700
Painted with oil-based paints and liquid gold on a copper panel. The panel is enclosed in a wooden triptych decorated with lacquer paints 19.5 × 15.5 cm
16.5 × 12.5 cm



This extraordinary image of St George and the Dragon was painted by an Indian trained artist working for the Imperial Court in Ethiopia. St George with a radiant halo, seated on a white horse and richly dressed is spearing a contorted red dragon. The putty-coloured background, the costume and the dragon are all profusely decorated with liquid gold. The background and sky depict gold clusters of flowering plants and tight curling clouds amongst horizontal lines.

This remarkable painting is one of two known which can be securely attributed to an Indian artist working for an Ethiopian patron. The artist also painted a panel, also copper, now in the University of Florida's Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art (ref. S. Chojnacki 'New Aspects of India's Influence on the Art and Culture of Ethiopia,' 2003, pp. 5–21). This painting in Florida is a triptych, the centre panel showing Christ standing frontally with two tormentors hammering nails into his head. This is known in Ethiopia as *kwer'ata re'esu* ('They hammered him with nails') and there is a version of the Royal Palladium, or banner, carried into battle at the front of the Emperor's army (see Pankhurst, R., 1979 pp. 169–87). The Palladium itself is a Flemish painting of Christ of around 1500. The radiating light of Christ's halo was misunderstood by the Ethiopian artists and interpreted as nails hammered into his head. The wings of the triptych are painted on olive wood by an Ethiopian artist in a style associated with the late 17th century.

It is not only that the same artist connects these works. Both use a vocabulary of forms and iconography that is unique to Christian painting in Ethiopia at this date. Like Moghul paintings of Christian subjects, there is much dependence on European images but the sources are different,

relying largely on icons from Crete and printed books brought by Jesuits to the Court.

The style and technique of both paintings however is purely Indian and possibly Deccan. The extremely refined drawing, the palette, and the use of gold are completely alien to anything known from Africa. The costumes, horse trappings, textile patterns, flower and cloud forms are also consistent with Indian painting. Both paintings are set into painted and lacquered wooden frames which are Indian in style, technique and material.

Trade between India and the remote Ethiopian Empire is well recorded. There are late 12th century painted shields from Southern India in the churches of Medhane Alem in Lalibela and a mother of pearl throne from Gujarat reached the court in Ethiopia before 1540 (Simon Digby, 'The Mother of Pearl Overlaid Furniture of Gujarat' in *Facets of Indian Art*, V&A, (1986) p. 214). However, this St George and the triptych in the Harn Museum still present a mystery. The technique of painting in copper is not known either in Ethiopia or in India. The artist was certainly trained to a very high level in India but whether he worked in India specialising in works for export to the Christians or if he was a resident in Ethiopia itself is difficult to judge. Perhaps he was located in one of the Persian-speaking cities on the Red Sea – like Asmara or Adulis.

On the island convent of Kebran on Lake Tana in Ethiopia there is a manuscript of about 1700 of the Life of St George given by the Emperor. It has been suggested that the paintings in the manuscript are copied from the present icon which would locate it in the Royal Court in Gondar by this date.

Sam Fogg

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Pankhurst, R., 'The Kwer'ata Rer'esu: The History of an Ethiopian Icon,' *Abba Salama* 10, 1979



Five *Yoginis* in Meditation

Deccan, c. 1700
 Opaque watercolour on paper laid down on card
 Painting: 16.8 × 13.8 cm
 Folio 40.5 × 26.8 cm, laid down on a plain grey album leaf with a panel of calligraphy on the reverse

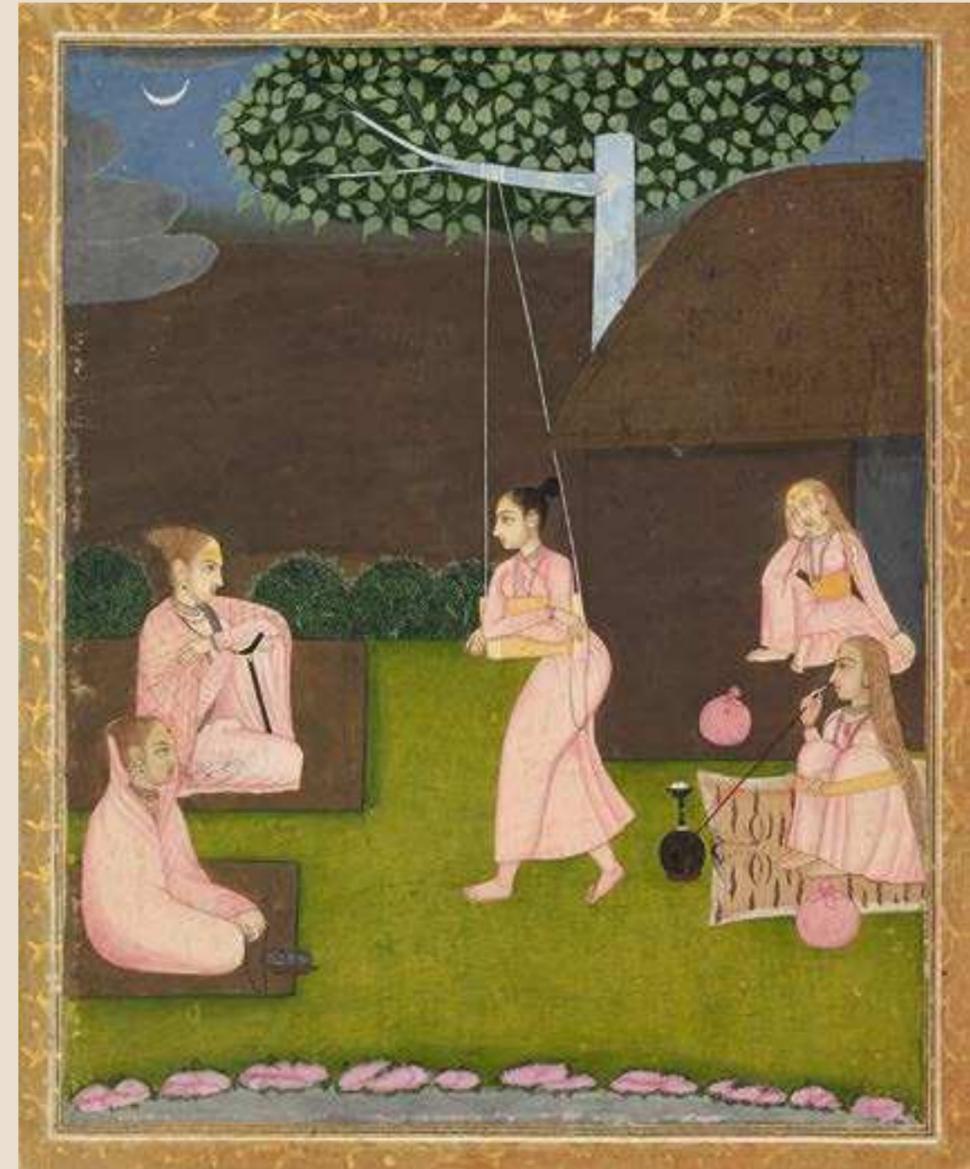
A group of *yoginis* is here depicted meditating. All are dressed in loose pink robes. Four are seated on mats centred round another standing *yogini* who leans on a swing to support her. Of the seated ones, one sits quietly playing with her rosary beads, another leans on a fakir's crutch, a third is depicted in three-quarter profile with her right elbow leaning on her upraised right knee (the traditional *maharaja lilasana*, or posture of royal ease), while the fourth is seated on a tiger skin rug with a meditation band round her knees and smoking from a hookah. The hair of these four seated *yoginis* whether coiled up or loose down their back is smeared with ash, while that of the standing *yogini* is still black, suggesting she is a neophyte awaiting initiation. All five have the Saiva sectarian ash marks smeared on their forehead round a red dot which here must represent Siva's third eye. All wear ropes of black beads, the traditional *rudraks* or rosary of Saiva sectarians, but here transformed for more decorative purposes. The scene is set on a green sward by a pool bordered with rocks outside a hut under a tree from the branch of which the swing is suspended. A crescent moon sends a pale light over the scene, allowing the artist to use a minimum amount of colouring – pinks, puce, blue and green – to achieve a ghostly effect. The depiction of the leaves of the tree glimmering silver in the moonlight is particularly effective.

The *yogini* genre had become something of a trope in Deccani painting by the end of the 17th century. Depicted originally with their hair piled up in a chignon as here but wearing the male costume of a *chakdar jama* or coat with four hanging points, as in the famous Bijapuri *yogini* from c. 1610 in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Zebrowski 1983, pl. x11), they later became part of Deccani artists' and patrons'

fascination with all things feminine, but the opposite of the usual Deccani paintings of women at their toilette or lounging around waiting their lover's pleasure. Here they form a self-sufficient group of women free of male influence and lost in their own internal wonderings. Such paintings had considerable influence on later Mughal painting in the north, in as in Mir Kalan Khan's followers' studies of *yoginis* visiting shrines at night (Ahuja 2013, no. 348; Falk and Archer 1983, nos. 245i–ii) and also in Murshidabad (Losty and Roy 2012, fig. 121; Leach 1995, no. 6.370; Diamond 2013, nos. 18f–h). Many of these paintings feature the standing *yogini* leaning on a swing as in our painting. With their hard and stiff figures, they are a world away from the refined and gracious female central figure of our painting, whose curvaceous form is yet another manifestation of Deccani artists' love affair with the full feminine figure (e.g. Zebrowski 1983, fig. 166, 168, 177, etc). For a discussion of the meaning and importance of the *yogini* genre, see Diamond 2013, pp. 118–27.

Provenance
 Private French Collection

Literature
 Ahuja, Naman P., *The Body in Indian Art and Thought*, Ludion, Europalia, Brussels, 2013
 Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981
 Diamond, D., *Yoga: the Art of Transformation*, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Washington, DC, 2013
 Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, Sothebys, London, 1983



A Nawab and his Son watching Dancers and Musicians

Murshidabad, Bengal, c. 1770
Watercolour, gouache and gold on paper
19.1 × 24.3 cm (excluding red border); 21.6 × 27.1 cm (including border)
Inscribed on verso *The Nabob Soulut Jung and in nasta'liq script Nawab Saulat Jang*

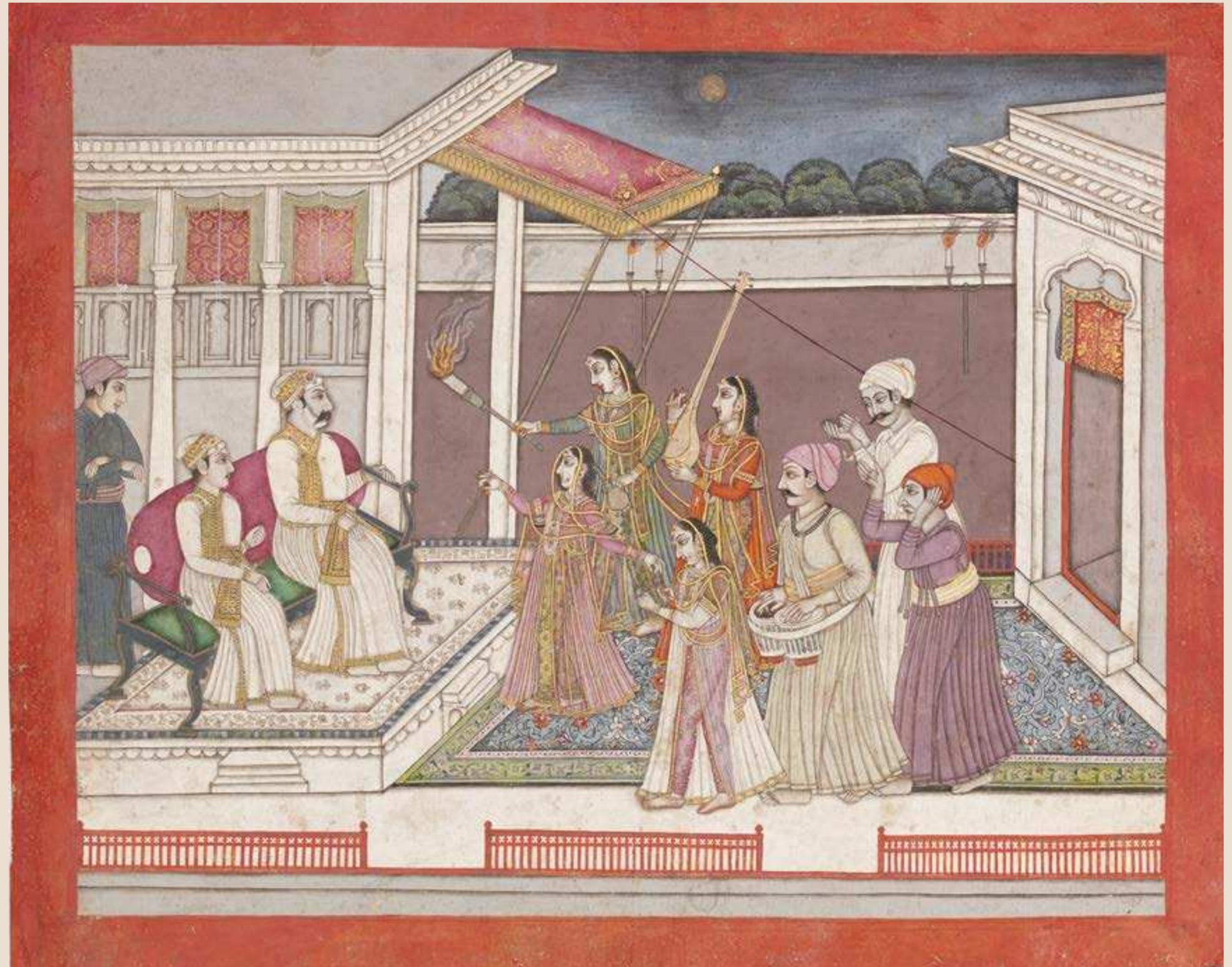
A nawab is seated on a European type of sofa along with a boy presumably his son. They are on a terrace within the palace complex watching a girl give a dance performance accompanied by five musicians – one girl plays the *tambura* while another claps and sings, and a man plays the drums while two more clap and presumably sing. The scene is at night and an attendant holds a flaming torch the better to illuminate the performance. The inscription on the reverse informs us that this is the Nawab Saulat Jang (d. 1756), who was the nephew and son-in-law of the last independent ruler of Bengal, Nawab Alivirdi Khan (r. 1739–56).

Saulat Jang and his two brothers, the sons of the Nawab's brother Haji Mirza Ahmad, married their cousins, the three daughters of Alivardi Khan. Saulat Jang, the middle brother, married Munira Begum Sahiba and their eldest son was Shaukat Jang, apparently depicted here with his father. Saulat Jang and his brothers were by all accounts far less upright or efficient than their father-in-law, but were favoured with the most important official positions as deputies (*naib nazim*) to the Nawab in the great provincial cities of the *subah*, as well as with lesser posts when their incompetence became too excessive. Despite their official posts, they remained mostly in the capital and formed the nucleus of the Nawab's private society. The youngest brother, husband to the Nawab's youngest and favourite daughter Amina Begum, was murdered in Patna in 1748, and the Nawab adopted their elder son, Siraj al-Daula (b. 1728), as his heir. There followed the events of 1756–57, the attack on Calcutta and Clive's retaking of the town and the Battle of Plassey.

Saulat Jang was *Faujdar* of Rangpur 1740–41, *Naib Nazim* of Murshidabad 1741–42, *Faujdar* of Hugli

Provenance
Private Scottish Collection

Literature
Bayly, C.A., ed., *The Raj: India and the British 1600–1947*, National Portrait Gallery, London, 1991
Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, Scorpion Cavendish, London, 1995
Losty, J.P., 'Painting at Murshidabad 1750–1820' in *Murshidabad: Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, ed. Neeta Das and Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, Marg Foundation, Mumbai, 2013, pp. 82–105



A Sati Scene

Bengal, c. 1770–80
 Gouache and gold on paper, blue border
 Maximum 31 × 36.5 cm
 Inscribed on verso: *An Indian Widow voluntarily burning herself with the body of her deceased Husband*

1743–49 and *Faujdar* of Purnea (north Bihar) 1749–56. His son Shaukat Jang succeeded his father in 1756 in Purnea and was apparently noted for his profligate habits. He was briefly a candidate for the throne of Bengal in 1756, being the son of an elder daughter of Alivardi Khan, and was able to obtain a *firman* from Delhi confirming his right to succession, but he was killed in battle with the new Nawab's forces near Purnea in October 1756.

Two important pictures in the V&A from the early 1750s show Saulat Jang and his surviving brother Shahamat Jang in terrace scenes with their father-in-law and his designated heir their nephew, when the two brothers are already elderly with grey beards (Losty 2013, fig. 1, and Bayly 1991, no. 83). A painting rather similar in spirit to ours also in the V&A but painted in the court Murshidabad style from the mid-1750s (I.S. 39–1957, unpublished) shows a young nawab identified possibly as Shaukat Jang enjoying a dance and musical performance at night, with a similarly composed group of musicians.

Our painting bears many similarities of style to the profusely illustrated *'Dastur-i-Himmat'* in the Chester Beatty Library (Leach 1995, 6.24, colour pl. 89).

FG



A widow sits amidst the flames of her dead husband's funeral pyre. Rather than the somewhat diaphanous figure that is usual in other *sati* scenes (e.g. Losty 1982, no. 81; Falk and Archer 1981, no. 252), the artist makes her a triumphant representative of the whole class of such women as she sits full face to the viewer in pious ecstasy holding out her hands, containing in one a gold dish with some objects and possibly the same objects in her other. She is watched by a large crowd including, unusually in such scenes, a large number of women. To the right a

band of musicians blow trumpets and beat drums. Three Bengal Army sepoy in their characteristic short drawers but with turbans rather than their usual sundial hats stand watching and to keep order against potential disturbance of the ritual. Smoke from the pyre billows up and off to the left obscuring some of the figures standing on that side of the pyre. The scene is set on the bank of a river, no doubt the Bhagirathi near Murshidabad, and the pyre and smoke are tellingly reflected in its placid waters. The sparse landscape includes what appear to be

Bengal-type temples and a tomb enclosed by a walled garden (Falk and Archer 1981, no. 252).

The meticulous attention to detail marks this beautifully painted picture as fairly early in the transition between the court Murshidabad style and that influenced by British patrons at both Murshidabad itself and later in Calcutta – see Losty 2013 for a discussion of this process. The long faces of the female onlookers, particularly those in three-quarter profile, are early versions of those seen in Calcutta painting around 1800 as in one of the sets in the Wellesley Album of views and rituals in the British Library (Archer 1972, no. 47; Pal 1990, fig. 16).

Provenance
Private Scottish Collection

Literature
Archer, M., *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, HMSO, London, 1972
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981
Losty, J.P., *The Art of the Book in India*, British Library, London, 1982
Losty, J.P., 'Painting at Murshidabad 1750–1820' in *Murshidabad: Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, ed. Neeta Das and Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, Marg Foundation, Mumbai, 2013
Pal, P., 'Indian Artists and British Patrons in Calcutta' in Pal, P., ed., *Changing Visions, Lasting Images: Calcutta through 300 Years*, Bombay, 1990



Prince Kamrup attacks a Demon with his Troop of Cavalry

Bengal, c. 1780
 Opaque pigments on paper
 17.5 × 25 cm
 Inscribed on verso *Camroop* and in *nasta'liq* script: *tasvir-i Kamrup* ('picture of Kamrup')

Prince Kamrup and Princess Kamalata simultaneously see each other in their dreams and fall passionately in love. The prince sets out to find his beloved and after many adventures involving fighting demons and shipwrecks (the princess is from Serendip or Ceylon) they are united after the princess chooses him in a *svayamvara* ceremony. Such romances were popular in later Indian literature as Persian and Urdu Muslim poets explored the vast repertory of Indian stories. A Persian version called *Dastur-i Himmat* ('The Model of Resolution') by Muhammad Murad written in 1685 was popular in Bengal, where a copiously illustrated version now in the Chester Beatty Library was prepared about 1760, self-evidently from its 209 lavish and beautiful miniatures in a court studio (Leach 1995, pp. 623–54).

Something of the rigid formality of that court version has filtered down to this energetic page in the rows of troopers either advancing on or retreating from the demon who lays about him just with his hands and fists as he hurls one trooper into the air and pulls the tail of another's horse (Leach 1995 6.210). The Prince Kamrup himself sits calmly on his horse in the middle of the mayhem, his sword over his shoulder and waiting for his moment to strike. The more popular type of Bengal paintings at the end of the 18th century took some of the elements of the court style such as squat figures and rigid profiles (e.g. Losty 2013, figs. 7, 10) and placed them against a solid unvarying ground as here.

Provenance
 Private Scottish Collection

Literature:
 Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, Scorpion Cavendish, London, 1995
 Losty, J.P., 'Painting at Murshidabad 1750–1820' in *Murshidabad: Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, ed. Neeta Das and Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, Marg Foundation, Mumbai, 2013, pp. 82–105



A Prince Chances upon a Riotous Party

Farrukhabad, 1760–70
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
Painting 40.5 × 30 cm
Folio 54.5 × 41 cm

A prince while out hawking chances upon a riotous party scene. He is greeted by an acrobatic girl at the top of a pole who is accompanied by drummers, with a man distilling liquor behind. Above are scenes of preparation of *bhang* (cannabis) which is being strained into a vessel, while women offer flasks of liquor and men smoke other narcotics from *nargilas*. Within the palace noblemen are seen disporting themselves with their mistresses, while other women look longingly down from their windows at the scene below. The prince in the topmost pavilion seems to be modelled on a Faizabad/Lucknow type invented by Nidhamal – see Losty and Roy 2012, fig. 129 and references. For a

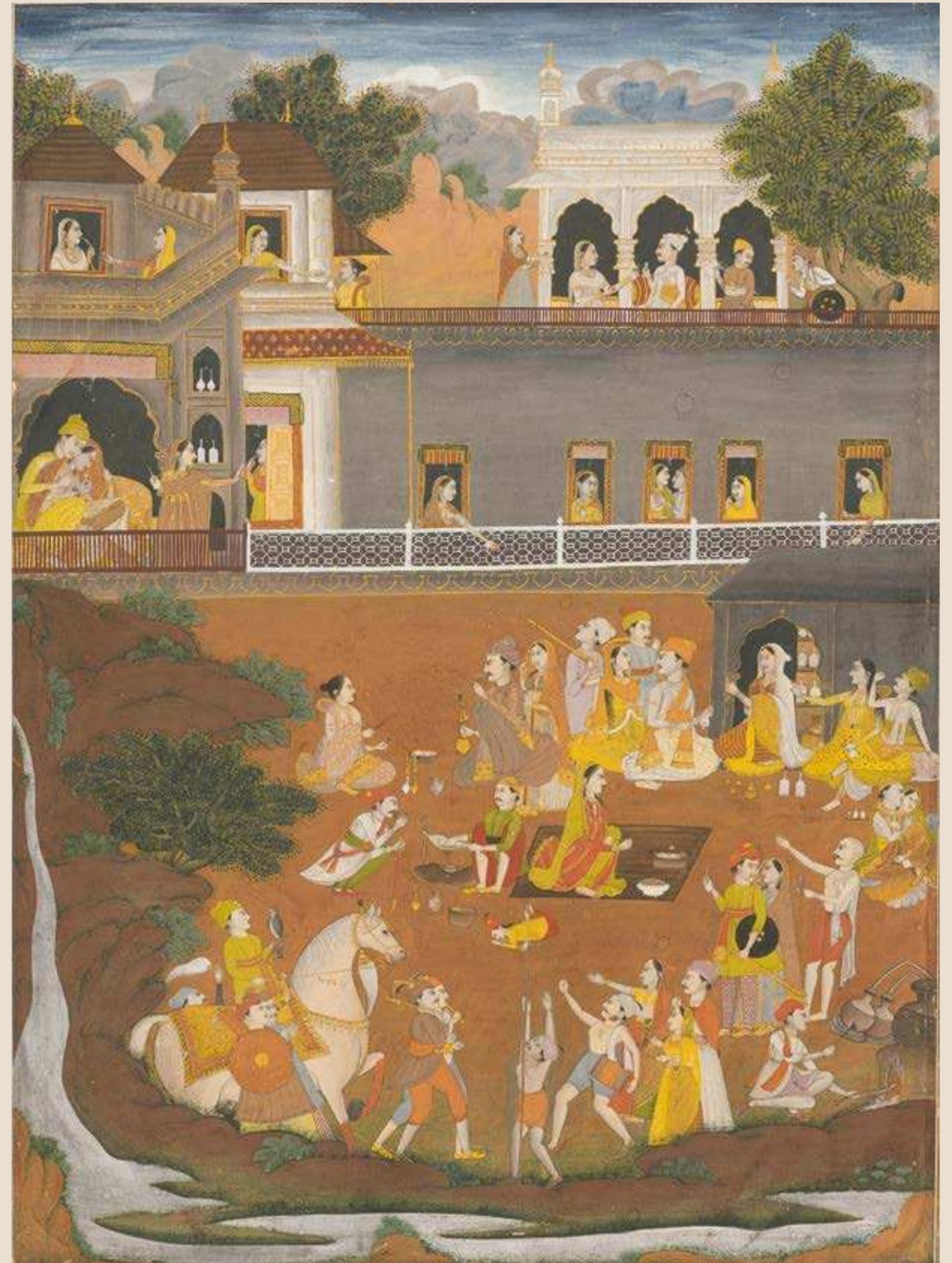


discussion of narcotics in Indian miniatures, see Habighorst et al. 2007.

There were several Rohilla principalities in western Avadh in the later 18th century – Rampur, Bareilly, etc., but Farrukhabad is the only one which has a school of painting. This is based on portrait of Navab Ahmad Khan Bangash (r. 1750–71) in a private British collection. The Farrukhabad style is basically that of Faizabad and Lucknow but with characteristic elongation of figures and of ladies' faces and often in its early phases with a harsh palette involving orange, yellow and brown. The artist Muhammad Faqirallah Khan, one of the artists who left Delhi around 1760 for the more peaceful climate of Avadh, seems to have influenced the Farrukhabad style, since his own figural drawing while in Avadh shows the same type of female with elongated figure and long narrow faces with receding foreheads and pointed noses (documented in Binney 1973, nos. 103–105; Falk and Archer 1981, nos. 362i–vi; and Leach 1995 nos. 6.364, 365). While it is possible that Faqirallah actually worked in Farrukhabad and initiated this style there, no paintings signed by him in this characteristic Farrukhabad colouring have yet been forthcoming. A painting formerly in the Archer collection of characteristic Farrukhabad ladies on a terrace (Galloway 2005, no. 11, now in the Los Angeles County Museum, Markel and Gude 2010, no. 25, p. 73), of which another version is in the Richard Johnson Collection in the British Library (Falk and Archer 1981, no. 362iii), has been attributed to Faqirallah Khan at Farrukhabad, but neither unfortunately is signed.

Provenance
Private American Collection

Literature
Binney, E., 3rd, *Indian Miniature Painting from the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd: the Mughal and Deccani Schools*, Portland, 1973
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981
Galloway, F., *Indian Miniatures from the Archer and Other Private Collections*, Francesca Galloway, London, 2005
Habighorst, L., Reichart, P.A., Sharma, V., *Love for Pleasure: Betel, Tobacco, Wine and Drugs in Indian Miniatures*, Ragaputra Edition, Koblenz, 2007
Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, London, 1995
Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, British Library, London, 2012
Markel, S., and Gude, T.B., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow*, Prestel Publishing, New York, 2010



Zenana Women at Play

Mandi, attributed to one of the Early Masters at the Court of Mandi, c. 1650
 Opaque pigments with gold and silver on paper
 Painting 26.5 × 16 cm
 Page including border 31 × 21 cm
 Inscription on flyleaf reads in *Nagari*: *patshahzadi ji* ('a [Mughal] princess')

The Early Master of the Court of Mandi, active between c.1635–1660, was the first artist from the Punjab Hill Courts fully to assimilate Imperial Mughal painting. He and his atelier produced a substantial body of work over a 30 year period, creating some extremely beautiful and refined paintings at Mandi, in an elegant Mughalized style. This early master would have been patronised by Raja Hari Sen of Mandi (d.1637) and his son, Raja Suraj Sen (r. 1637–1644). Catherine Glynn has written several articles identifying this unusual and refined Mughal influenced style. It was comparatively short lived before being abandoned for the more traditional Pahari/Mandi style by around 1660. This later style reached its apogee with the work of the 18th century Master of the Court of Mandi (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 189–209).

The subject of our painting is the most intimate of the known Early Mandi Master's works. These three women of the zenana are at leisure, engaged in a game of cross-dressing and smoking. The game is so intensely observed that the gender of the central figure is confusing – Glynn (2011, p. 418) thinks *she* is actually a *he*. The central figure, leaning on her companion's shoulder with her legs crossed, is wearing a male brocade turban with a black eagle feather and pyjama pants in delicious green and mauve stripes with a transparent muslin *peshvaj* over all, set off by an elegantly draped thin mauve *dupatta*. 'He' turns to smoke from a glass bottle-shaped *nargila* held by a more diminutive woman attendant wearing a Mughal style hat in silver brocade and a thin *peshvaj* over *paijama* striped in red and green with a red *dupatta*. The companion in front holds a small bird cage in her right hand and flowers in her left. Her costume is startlingly

different to these cool colour combinations, consisting of a yellow *peshvaj* with ruffles over red *paijama*, the colours combining to produce a hot orange where the one is seen behind the other. A thin transparent veil with gold edging falls from the back of her head. All three figures are placed against a stark brown ground. All three women have larger heads than one would expect and an intense, staring gaze.

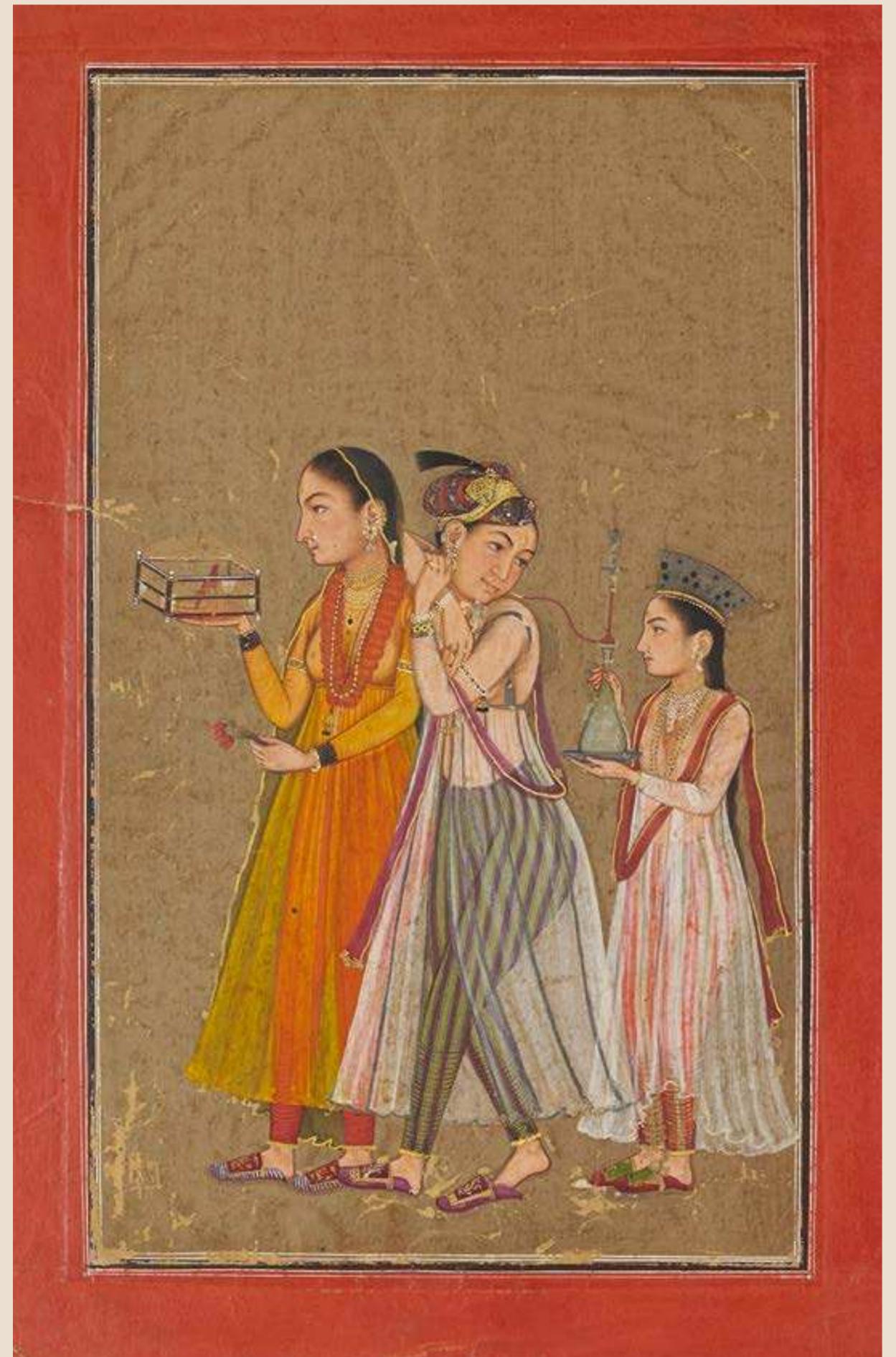
According to Glynn (2011, p.418), the larger figures and faces and the more restricted colour palette including the warmer tones of orange and brown differ from the Early Mandi Master's earlier palette of brighter colours such as his favourite lime green backgrounds and his smaller figures. We observe, nonetheless, that the facial features of the two women in our painting resemble Glynn 1983, fig. 26 (*A Princess and her Companion*, Mandi c.1630–45) whilst the unusual moon-shaped face of the central figure, the turban wearer, relates to the Siva figure in *Bhairav Raga* from Mandi c. 1630–45 (*ibid.*, fig.21) and the *Exchange of Attributes*, Mandi c. 1645–55 (*ibid.*, fig.31). Our painting, entitled a daughter of a *padshah*, i.e. the Mughal Emperor's daughter on the flyleaf, is undoubtedly by a master artist. John Seyller (2014, pp. 70–85) has recently discerned at least four hands in the work currently ascribed to the Early Master at the Court of Mandi and our painting would seem to be by a fifth.

Published

Glynn, C., 'The Early Master at the Court of Mandi' in Beach, M., Fischer, E. & Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Vol 1 (1100–1650), *Artibus Asiae Suppl* 48 1/11, 2011, pp. 407–424, no 21, fig. 14

Literature

Glynn, C., 'Early Painting in Mandi', *Artibus Asiae* 44/1 (1983), pp. 21–64
 Glynn, C., 'Further Evidence for Early Painting in Mandi', *Artibus Asiae* 55/1-2 (1995), pp. 183–190
 Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 1992
 Seyller, John, and Mittal, Jagdish, *Pahari Paintings in the Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art*, Hyderabad, 2014



**A Nobleman smoking a Hookah, perhaps
Raja Tedhi Singh of Mankot as a young man**

Mankot, c.1700–1730
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
18.6 × 27 cm

A nobleman with a Vaishnava sectarian mark, dressed all in white save for his red turban and gold accessories is seated on a carpet holding the pipe of a hookah. In front of him kneels a young attendant holding the hookah while another young attendant holding the raja's wrapped up sword and waving a *morchha* stands behind. The carpet is blue with an overall floral pattern of swirling leaves and flowers with a mauve edge against a yellow background meeting a strip of blue sky above.

All these features conform to royal portraits from Mankot as first defined by the artist dubbed the Master at the court of Mankot in the late 17th century (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, no. 36) and subsequently imitated. The raja's portrait with a heavy moustache and upper beard curving across his cheek but leaving his chin and jaw just with stubble is common to several portraits of rajas of Mankot around 1730 including Raja Tedhi Singh (r. c. 1710–30) which Archer dates to c. 1700; the resemblance is by no means exact but this picture shows the wide open fish eye with white surrounding the pupil as here rather than the more usual rendering of a pupil filling the space between the eyelids. Two important features of our portrait are worth pointing out: the long torso with narrow waist and the distinctive floral carpet both indicate influence from late 17th century Basholi painting (Archer 1973).

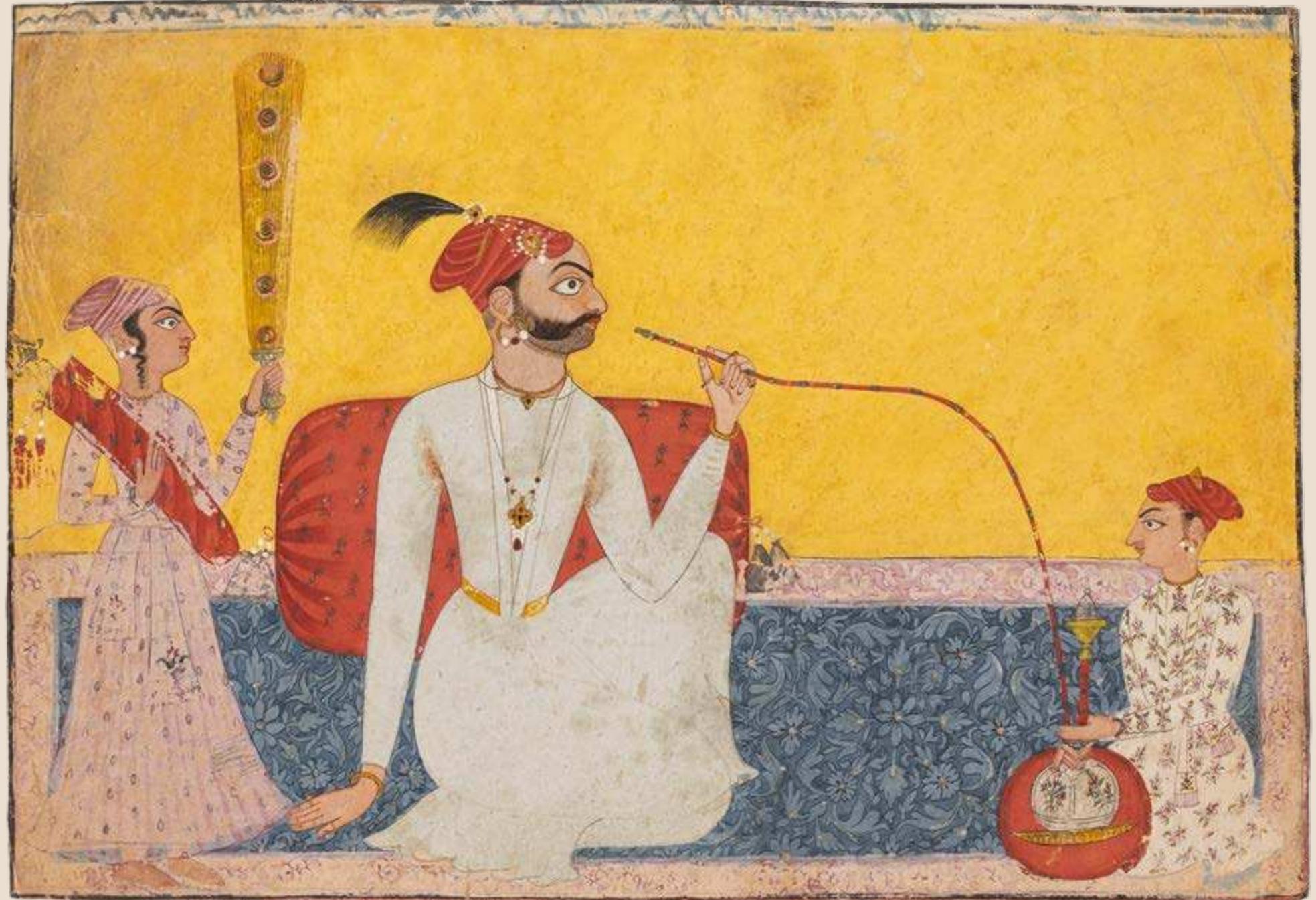
Provenance

Otto Sohn-Rethel Collection, formed before 1931

Literature

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London and New York, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1973

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 1992, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 38, reprint Niyogi Books, Delhi, 2009



Dasaratha, King of Ayodhya, with his Son Rama
A Folio from the *Shangri Ramayana* (Style II)

Bahu (Jammu), c.1690–1710

Opaque pigments on paper

22.3 × 31.9 cm

Inscribed above in *takri*: Dasaratha with number 14.

On reverse in *nagari* is written Ayodhya

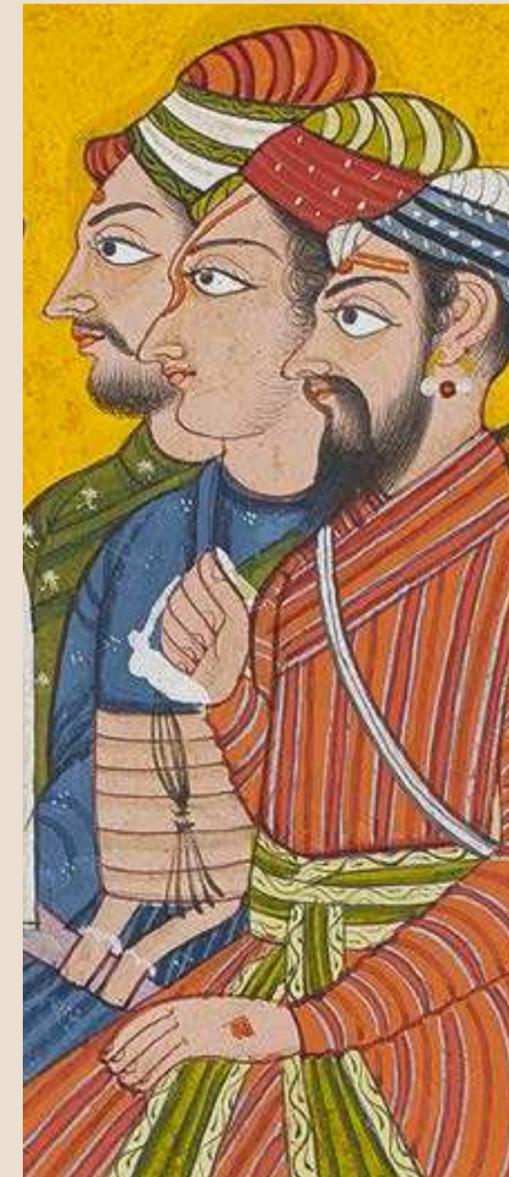
This illustration from the Ayodhya kanda of the epic *Ramayana* depicts an enthroned King Dasaratha telling Rama that he is going to install him as king, while two family priests and three ministers look on in approval. An attendant on the left holds a parasol and a chauri. The scene is set on a palace terrace or tower with access provided by a ladder, although as typical in this series the artist has not followed through with his architecture and instead has the background supplied only by a ground of an intensely vibrant yellow. The chariot awaiting outside the walls of the palace terrace is the one in which Sumantra had brought Rama to his father's palace. There is no text to the series of paintings and the sequence has to be pieced together from the numbering. This page seems to follow folio 13 of the series, which is illustrated in Goswamy and Fischer 1992, no.33, showing the chariot taking Rama to his coronation.

The *Shangri Ramayana*, which derives its name from its provenance of the ancestral collection of Raja Raghbir Singh of Shangri, in the Kulu Valley, is considered by many to be one of the most outstanding of all illustrated Pahari manuscripts. W.G. Archer thought that it was prepared at Shangri in the eastern Punjab Hills state of Kulu (Archer 1973, pp. 317–30). Archer discerned four major painting styles in the manuscript, of which this is the second, contemporary with the first style but by a slightly different hand. The present page, like many other pages of the *Shangri Ramayana* by this artist, is not completely finished, lacking its red border, gold highlights and surface polish. The artists of styles I and II both have a wild sense of spatial organisation in their compositions, sometimes creating believable settings for their characters and



sometimes not bothering, and showing both traits on the same page as here. Their work displays vivid characterisation and an intensely expressive use of colour. As in mediaeval Indian painting there are no horizons and the characters float in front of solid blocks of colour whose juxtaposition creates a harmonious backdrop for the vibrant characterisation of the story-telling. Goswamy and Fischer (1992, pp. 76–79) questioned this attribution to Kulu and assigned paintings in Archer's first two styles to Bahu near Jammu in the western group of hill states on the basis of stylistic affinities with a portrait of Raja Kripal Dev of Bahu (one that Archer thought was done by a Kulu artist linked to the Shangri series).

Pages from the *Shangri Ramayana* are in important public and private collections worldwide, including the National Museum, New Delhi, the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum, London, and the Metropolitan Museum, New York. The present painting was formerly in the Roerich collection.



Provenance
 Spink & Son, 1982

Published
 Spink & Son, 1982, cat. 110
 Fogg, 1999, cat 53

Literature
 Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London and New York, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1973
 Fogg, S., *Indian Paintings and Manuscripts*, Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts, London, 1999
 Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1992
 Kossak, Steven., 'The First Bahu Master' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011
 Spink & Son, *Two Thousand Years of Indian Art*, London 1982

Handwritten text in a script, likely Persian or Urdu, located at the top of the page.



Handwritten text in the bottom left corner, possibly a signature or date.

Balarama and Krishna defeat the Army of King Jarasandha

Page from the 'Large' Guler-Basohli *Bhagavata Purana* series, c. 1760–65

Attributed to Fattu, son of Manaku

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper within a red border
Painting 30.3 × 40.5 cm

Inscribed on the reverse with the text in alternating red and black *nagari* script of the *Bhagavata Purana*, canto x, ch. 50, when King Jarasandha and his army confront Krishna and Balarama and are soundly defeated. Also *citra 168 adhyaya 50* ('picture 168, chapter 50'). Above is a brief description in Takri characters and a folio number 137

Jarasandha, the King of Magadha, had launched an all-out attack on Krishna's city of Mathura fielding innumerable armies. He was defeated and all his troops were slain by the two divine princes Krishna and Balarama. Here Balarama carrying his ploughshare and a club strides triumphantly back to where his brother Krishna is waiting in his chariot, beside his own empty one. Jarasandha and a few of his advisers stride away in the opposite direction amidst the heaps of slain warriors, elephants and horses. There is no landscape, just a solid red ground yielding at the top into a gentle curve where the sky is indicated, against which this stark vision of an epic battle has taken place.

According to W.G. Archer (1973, vol. 1, pp. 49–51) this large series (variously called the 'Large' Guler-Basohli *Bhagavata Purana* or the 'Fifth' Basohli *Bhagavata Purana*, Archer having identified four earlier ones from Basohli) shows the early vigorous Basohli style succumbing to the charms of a softer, Mughal-influenced type of painting style from Guler. He points out the obvious dependence of some of the pages in the *Bhagavata Purana* on the earlier *Gitagovinda* from 1730 by Manaku. Archer considered Manaku to be a Basohli artist and hence he considered Basohli was the place of origin of the *Gitagovinda*. Archer speculates that the basic idiom of the *Bhagavata Purana* is that of a pupil of Manaku, perhaps his son Fattu, who had come under the influence of Manaku's younger brother Nainsukh. After the death of his great patron Balwant Singh in 1763, Nainsukh took service with Amrit Pal of Basohli and seems to have remained there for the rest of his life.

Goswamy and Fischer (1992, p. 314), however, believe Manaku to have been purely a Guler artist and see his *Gitagovinda* of 1730 as done there. They

likewise acknowledge his influence on the *Bhagavata Purana* and also that of Manaku's brother Nainsukh. Like Archer they agree that this is possibly in part the work of Fattu, Manaku's son, who had come under his uncle Nainsukh's influence at Basohli. Fattu was charged with taking Nainsukh's ashes to the Ganga at Kuruksetra in 1778 presumably because he lived at Basohli also and worked with his uncle. Nothing however is at present definitely known of Nainsukh's work for Amrit Pal.

Clearly several different hands were involved in this extensive series. Some of the paintings are bordered in red, others in blue. This splendid painting, one of the most dramatic in the series, harks back in its treatment of landscape, the way the scene is set on an absolutely bare red ground, to the work of an early generation, such as that of Manaku. Nevertheless, the naturalistic modelling of the figures is impossible to conceive without the influence of Nainsukh. Nainsukh was influenced directly by the Mughal style of the Muhammad Shah period and softened the jagged outlines and harsh colours of the earlier Pahari styles towards a softer and more naturalistic style reflective of this Mughal influence.

This dispersed series of the *Bhagavata Purana* is one of the most important achievements of Pahari artists and the most influential in determining the development of Pahari painting at Guler and Kangra in the illustration of poetical Vaishnava texts. It is also among the most controversial. Khandalavala and Ohri took different views to those of Archer and of Goswamy and Fischer. The series is discussed in every major book on the subject. It is widely dispersed among many public and private collections.

Provenance

Mrs F.C. Smith
Sotheby's, London, 1 February 1960,
lot 39 (among 63 lots, each lot
between 2–4 paintings of this
series)

Literature

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from
the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke
Bernet, London and New York,
Oxford University Press, Delhi,
1973, vol. 1, pp. 49–51, vol. II,
pp. 36–39

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E.,
*Pahari Masters: Court Painters of
Northern India*, Museum Rietberg,
Zurich, 1992, *Artibus Asiae*
Supplementum 38, reprint Niyogi
Books, Delhi, 2009

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., 'The
First Generation after Manaku and
Nainsukh of Guler' in Beach, M.C.,
Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N.,
Masters of Indian Painting, Artibus
Asiae, Zurich, 2011, pp. 687–718,
figs. 1–3





A Prince smoking a Hookah with his Consort

Bhoti, c. 1780
Opaque pigments with gold on paper
Painting 17 × 25.5 cm
Folio 22.4 × 30.8 cm

A young prince with Saiva sectarian mark on his forehead, dressed all in white, is seated on a terrace smoking a hookah in the company of his consort who is seated facing him likewise dressed all in white save for her brown bodice. Touches of gold add life to the subject – the edge and borders of a *patka* and *orhni* and various jewels. The prince's turban is decorated with a *sarpech* in front and a dark cockade on top. The terrace is completely covered with a durrie striped vertically in pink and blue. An attendant stands to the side again dressed all in white save for his yellow and brown turban. The edge of the terrace is marked by a white panelled parapet with roses peeping over the top, one of which the lady has picked and holds in her hand. Behind is the blue sky.

The prince and his consort are depicted to complement each other, each with one hand out holding something and the other placed flat on their gowns spread out on the rug with the fingers pointing backwards. Her red painted fingernails stand out. The lady is possibly pregnant, given her rather fat belly. Her somewhat unusual position with one knee raised, while the folds of her gown are fanned out in a regular wave pattern and her *orhni* is folded over the back of her head, is seen again in a Jammu painting of Raja Brijraj Dev of Jammu (r. 1781–87) with his consort and baby son (Archer 1973, Jammu no. 67), where again the durrie striped in mauve and pink and the panelled parapet are also deployed. This double fold of the *orhni* over the head is found in other Jammu paintings of the 1780–90 period (*ibid.*, Jammu 69, 71). Unusually in our painting, the attendant on the left stands right up against the picture plane while the prince and his consort are further back floating in the Pahari manner against the durrie.



Professor B.N. Goswamy has suggested Bhoti as a possible source for the painting on stylistic grounds, but there are few published portraits from this small state that was stylistically as well as in other ways largely dependent on Jammu. Archer's portraits of Raja Bahadur Singh of Bhoti (r. c.1770–c.1810) and his small sons again show no sectarian affiliation (1973, Bhoti 1–5). Two possibilities of the identity of our portrait have been suggested, but since neither of the princes is known to have worn Saiva sectarian marks, they are only put forward here as suggestions. One possibility is Mian Dalil Singh, the younger son and favourite of Raja Ranjit Dev of Jammu (r. 1735–81) and younger brother of Brijraj Dev who murdered him in 1782. A particularly fine equestrian portrait in Cincinnati (Smart and Walker 1985, no. 51) shows the same somewhat sharp features of the prince in his late teens as is our prince, as can be judged from his slight moustache and beardless state. Other portraits of him at this age show him with his father and brother receiving Raja Amrit Pal of Basohli (Archer 1973, Jammu no. 57), where he is wearing the same kind of dark cockade on top of his turban. Dalil Singh's other portraits show no *tilak* marks. A portrait of Dalil Singh with his father and two sons shows him with a beard by c. 1775 (*ibid.*, Jammu no. 64), so if this is in fact him then it is based on an earlier portrait.

The other possibility is provided by a painting in the Lahore Museum of Raja Chattar Singh of Mankot (r. c.1780–1809) done at Bhoti c. 1780 (Aijazuddin 1977, Bhoti 1) looking slightly older than the subject of our painting. The raja is shown seated on a rug with musicians and an attendant waving a fly whisk. Similarities to our painting include what appears to be the same attendant also standing right up against

the picture plane, the striped durrie beneath the rug, the white parapet across the whole painting, the regularly spaced small plants peeking over it, and a very similar turban with a *sarpech* fastened to the front of it.

Jammu and Mankot were both neighbouring states to Bhoti, where Raja Bahadur Singh was a patron of artists and possibly wanted portraits of his neighbours. The Bhoti school was dependent on that of its much larger neighbour Jammu and the latter style's rather 'stiff geometry' as Archer calls it, is here in our painting alleviated a little by the obvious Guler influence on the lady and the substitution of a blue sky for the normal coloured ground in Jammu painting. Mughal naturalism from the court style of Muhammad Shah was brought to the hills by Pandit Seu and his sons Manaku and especially Nainsukh. Hallmarks of this style include a cool, pale palette, an emphasis on careful linework rather than bold patches of colour seen in earlier Pahari works; simple compositions of court life, some of them quite intimate in nature and finally, a new interest in naturalism.

Provenance
Private Swiss Collection
Paul Asper, Lausanne, 1968

Literature
Aijazuddin, F. S., *Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1977
Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London and New York, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1973
Smart, E., and Walker, D., *Pride of the Princes: Indian Art of the Mughal Era in the Cincinnati Art Museum*, Cincinnati, 1985



**The Sage Medhas begins to relate the
Devi Mahatmya to Suratha and Samadhi**

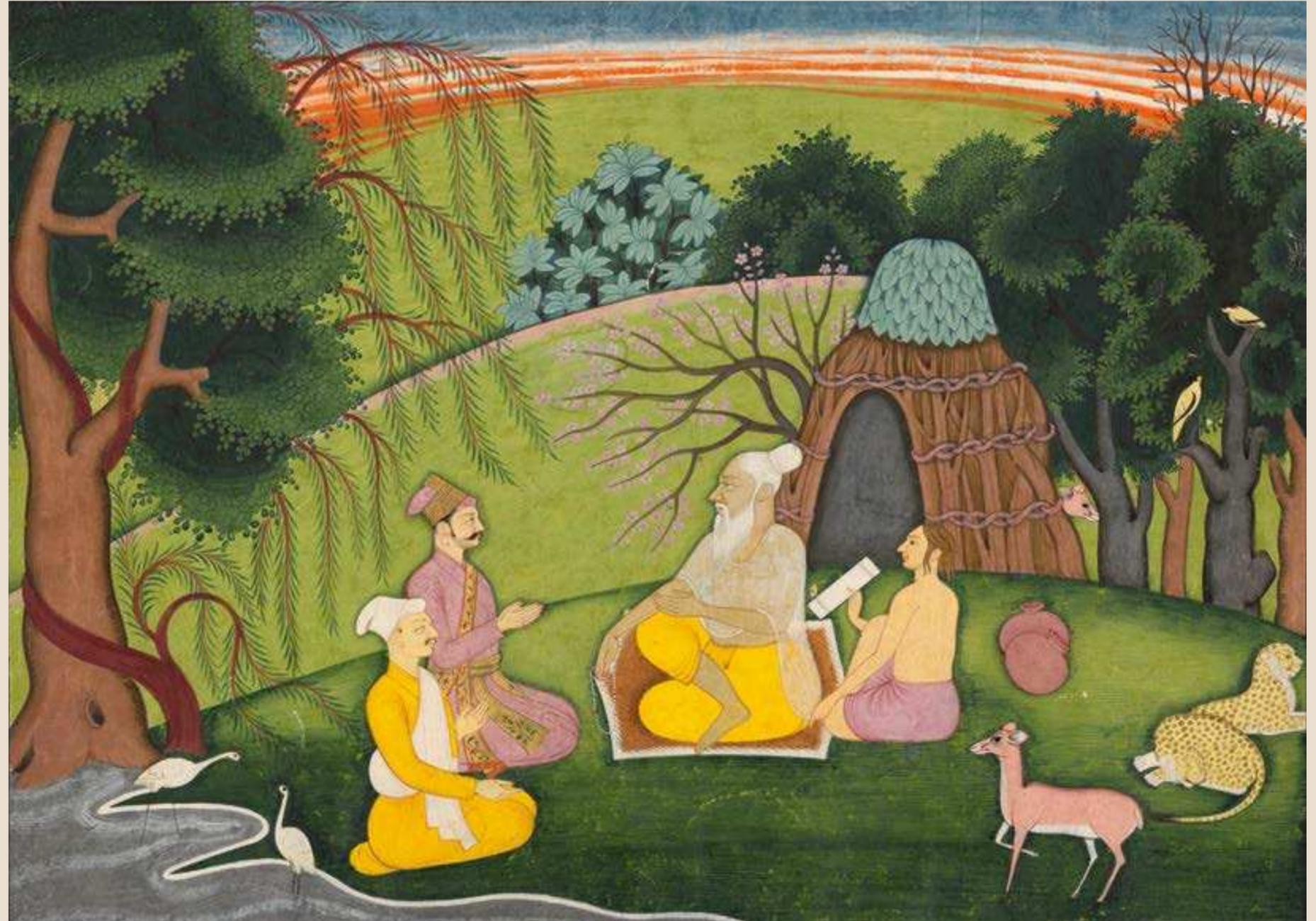
Guler or Kangra, c. 1780–1800
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
Painting 18.7 × 26 cm
Folio 21 × 28.6 cm
Inscribed on the recto with the number 4 and on the verso
with the Sanskrit text in *nagari* script in 21 lines of the *Devi
Mahatmya*, canto 1, vv. 27–48.

The Sanskrit hymn *Devi Mahatmya*, the great text summing up the creation and worship of the Goddess, is one of the most frequently illustrated puranic texts particularly in the Punjab Hills. Like all Puranic texts, a sage, in this instance Medhas, tells the story of the Goddess and her triumph over different demons to interested hearers, in this case two distressed travellers: Suratha the king exiled from his own country and the merchant Samadhi who was betrayed by his family. Here the two are seated listening reverently to Medhas as he begins to tell them the triumphs of the Goddess. The sage is seated outside his hut with a disciple beside him in a hermitage where deer and big cats co-exist peaceably.

Various series of this key text were prepared in Guler including a series divided between the Lahore Museum and Chandigarh Museum and dated 1781 (Aijazuddin 1977, pp. 29–33, illustrated Guler 41i–xxxiv). For an analysis of this key text illustrated with the 1781 series from Guler of the *Devi Mahatmya* (in the Lahore Museum) by Thomas B. Coburn, see Dehejia 1999, pp. 37–57. Other series were also made between 1780 and 1800 (Goswamy and Fischer 2011, p. 691). Each follows the same iconography, with a numbering on the recto so that the scenes are much the same in the different sets. Bautze in 1991 listed the various paintings then published against each of the 57 numbers and subjects. The dimensions of our painting are identical to a set with blue borders which was dispersed in 1970. Four pages from this set, now in the Rietberg Museum, were in the Metzger Collection (*ibid.*, nos. 15–18, with others listed in his fn. 3), while others are in the Seitz Collection (see Goswamy and Fischer 2011, no. 16) and elsewhere. This painting is of superior quality to others in the set and is based on an earlier version in the British Museum (Ahluwalia 2008, fig. 103).

Provenance
Private American Collection

Literature
Ahluwalia, R., *Rajput Painting: Romantic, Divine and Courtly Love from India*, British Museum Press, London, 2008
Aijazuddin, F. S., *Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1977
Bautze, J., *Lotosmond and Löwenritt: Indische Miniaturmalerei*, Linden Museum, Stuttgart, 1991
Dehejia, V., *Devi the Great Goddess: Female Divinity in South Asian Art*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 1999
Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., 'The First Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh of Guler' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011, pp. 687–718



**Rama and Lakshmana watch the monkeys
apprehend three demon spies**

Guler, c. 1770–75
Brush drawing in black with under-drawing in sanguine,
heightened with white
17.4 × 25.8 cm

This episode from the beginning of the sixth book of the *Ramayana* shows Rama and Lakshmana seated beneath a tree watching monkeys from their victorious army return with three captured demon spies. The two princes had gathered an army of monkeys and bears to assist in the rescuing of Sita from the clutches of the demon king of Lanka, Ravana. Apart from the two princes, the only human in the drawing is Vibhishana, who sits lower left throwing out his arm in his excitement. Vibhishana was the good brother of Ravana, who came over to Rama's side in the belief that his brother needed to be destroyed. Hanuman, recognisable through his pointed cap, stands with the other crowned chief monkeys to one side beneath the tree behind Rama and Lakshmana.

This drawing comes from a series of *Ramayana* drawings originally in the collection of Ananda Coomaraswamy. In Coomaraswamy 1976 (2nd edition), pl. 25 (xxv) is another drawing from this series depicting the Siege of Lanka.

The attribution to Guler is based on some similarities of style to a group of drawings for a *Devi Mahatmya* series in the Jadish and Kamala Mittal Museum of Indian Art.

Provenance

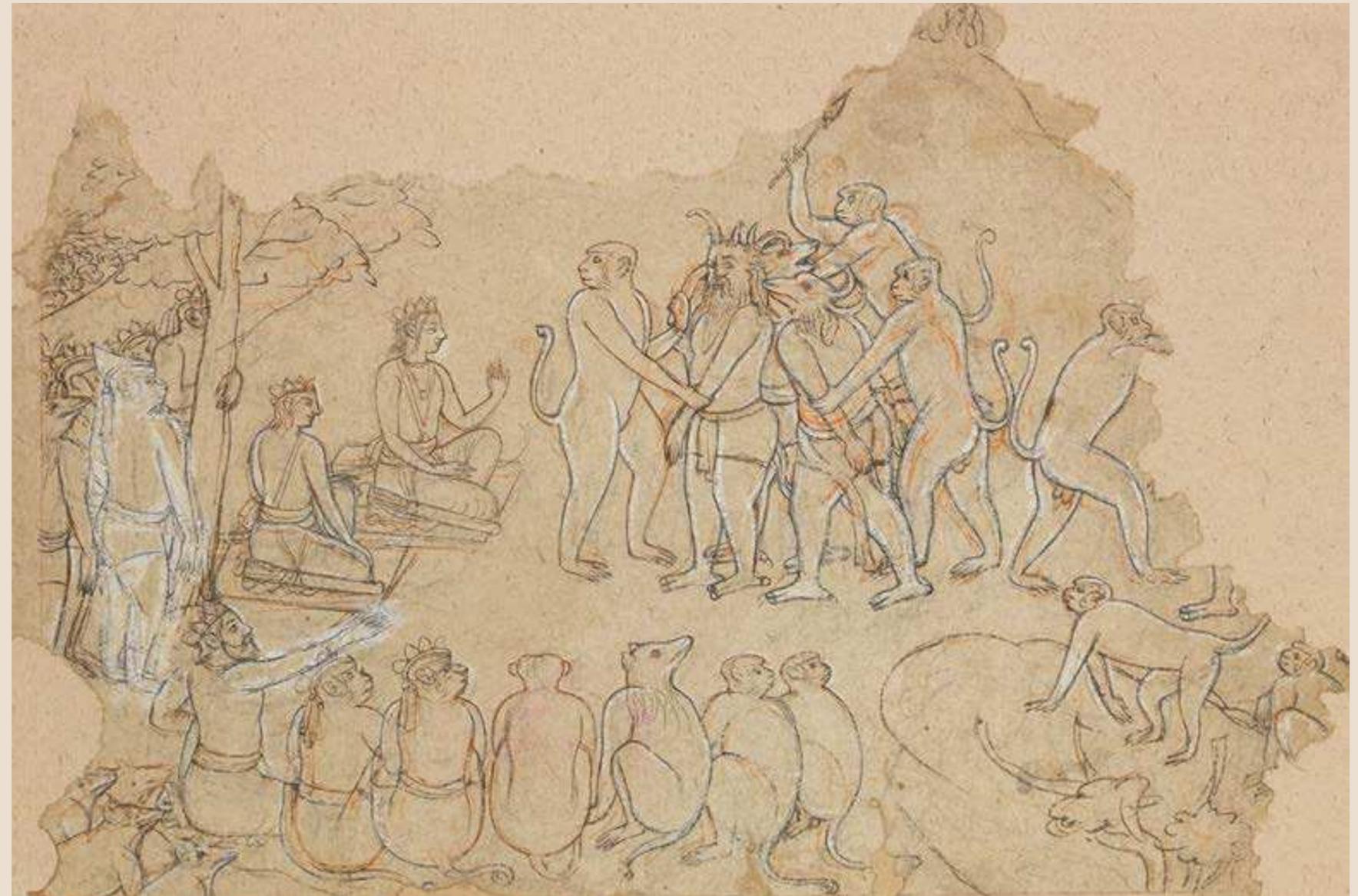
Ananda Coomaraswamy, Boston

Literature:

Seyller, J. and Mittal, J., *Pahari drawings*

in the Jadish and Kamala Mittal

Museum of Indian Art, Hyderabad, 2013



Radha confesses her Fears to her Friends while Krishna waits expectantly

Page from a *Gitagovinda* Series

Artist of the first generation after Nainsukh, Pahari, c.1775–80

Under-drawing in sanguine and over-drawing in brown ink on paper

Drawing 19.4 × 28 cm

Numbered on the verso "45" at the top and "41" at the bottom, also on the verso two and a half lines of Sanskrit text in *nagari* script from the *Gita Govinda*, canto 2, vv. numbered 7 and 8 (these are 8 and 9 in Miller's critical edition), together with a paraphrase in the Kangra dialect of Punjabi also in *Nagari*.

This drawing is from a well-known series of drawings of Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda*, a large section of which is in the National Museum of Delhi, and from which many dispersed leaves are also known. In sarga 2 of the poem, the *gopis* have become enamoured of Krishna and his careless ways, especially Radha, who sings of her growing love for the handsome libertine. Here she is confiding her love and her fears to one of her *gopi* friends while Krishna waits expectantly leaning carelessly against a tree trunk. The creeper encircling the trunk is a well-known symbol of erotic love.

The sanguine under-drawing represents the artist's first ideas for the composition. The size of each painting in the series was then determined, represented by the rectangular outline, which necessitated moving the figures of Krishna and his tree and the *gopi* on the left closer in, thereby tightening up the composition. These second thoughts are drawn in firmer outline with ink. A slightly pinkish wash priming has been used to fill in the outlines of the figures.

The series is generally thought of as constituting the preparatory drawings for what Goswamy and Fischer now call the 'Second' Guler *Gita Govinda* series of c. 1775 (see Goswamy and Fischer 2011, p. 689). This series is also known as the 'First Kangra' *Gita Govinda* or the 'Tehri-Garhwal' *Gita Govinda* from its provenance and find spot (Archer 1973, vol. 1, p. 293). Archer thought the series done by the sons of Nainsukh and Manaku for the nuptials of Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra in 1781 (ibid., p. 292).

Goswamy and Fischer now suggest that the sanguine under-drawing for the preparatory series is attributable to Nainsukh himself around 1770, and that the over-drawing in ink was added after the painted series was finished, since the paintings often follow the sanguine under-drawing rather than the

ink 'tidying-up' (Goswamy and Fischer 2011, pp. 681–82). Only the most minute examination of the whole series of drawings and related paintings can demonstrate the truth or otherwise of this assertion, but it must be pointed out that the sanguine under-drawing seen in our drawing and other examples is very much thinner and less masterful than the rare drawings only in sanguine that the same authors attribute to Nainsukh himself (e.g. ibid., fig. 15). The finished paintings of the *Gita Govinda*, however, they still attribute to the 'First Generation after Nainsukh', i.e. the sons of Nainsukh and his brother Manaku.

On the verso, two and a half lines of Sanskrit in *nagari* script quote canto 2, vv. 8 and 9 of the *Gita Govinda*:

"Meeting me under a flowering tree, he calms my fear of dark time,
Delighting me deeply by quickly glancing looks at my heart.

My heart recalls Hari here in his love dance,
Playing seductively, laughing, mocking me.
Jayadeva's song evokes an image of Madhu's beautiful foe

Fit for worthy men who keep the memory of Hari's feet.

My hear recalls Hari here in his love dance,
Playing seductively, laughing, mocking me."
(trans. Barbara Stoler Miller 1977, p. 79)

For other drawings from this series, see Goswamy and Fischer. For the final painted version of the manuscript, one of the great masterpieces of early Kangra painting, see Randhawa 1963; Archer 1973 vol. 11., pp. 205–08; Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 320–29; and Goswamy and Fischer, 2011, pp. 699–701.

Literature

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London and New York, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1973

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1992

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., 'The First Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh of Guler' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., 'Nainsukh of Guler' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011

Randhawa, M.S., *Kangra Paintings of the Gita Govinda*, National Museum, New Delhi, 1963



Krishna and his Relations wait anxiously for News of Aniruddha

Page from an *Usha-Aniruddha* series
Chamba, 1780–90
Line drawing in red and black ink over red sanguine outlines on a white primed ground
Drawing 20.4 × 30.5 cm
Folio 27 × 37.2 cm
Numbered above in *nagari* and in Arabic numerals: 36
Stamp on reverse, partially erased: *S Bahadur Shah, Dealer in Curiosities, Mochee Gate, Lahore*, also a sticker with a number 2?, and a price Rs 3/8, initialled *GBEG*.

This superlative drawing depicts a night scene in a palace as indicated by the flaming torches and the crescent moon hanging in the sky. In a pavilion on the left three princes sit mournfully, their heads bowed in contemplation, while their ministers both in the pavilion and outside it urgently discuss what to do. A large group of men, some carrying unsheathed swords, heads towards the gate of the palace in the background. In the foreground on the right a boy has his hand held by an elderly retainer. We can see over the walls of the palace into the zenana where a group of women, their heads partly veiled, sit similarly in mourning. The group of animated ministers and attendants in the foreground is particularly noteworthy.

The drawing comes from an *Usha-Aniruddha* series, which relates without text and purely by illustrative power an episode concerning the sons and grandsons of Krishna as told briefly in the *Bhagavata Purana* Book x but more extensively in the *Harivamsa*, the supplement to the *Mahabharata* (*Visnuparvan*, cantos 116–127). Aniruddha is the son of Pradyumna and grandson of Krishna and he has been spirited away by the sorceress Chitrlekha to the bedroom of the princess Usha, who has had a dream involving her marriage to the superlatively beautiful prince. Aniruddha remained hidden in Usha's bedchamber until discovered by her father, the powerful *asura* Bana, who after a fierce battle imprisoned the prince. In the meantime his relatives in Dwarka passed the four months of the rainy season waiting anxiously for news of him, which is what this drawing illustrates, namely the first verse of BhP x, 63. The three apparently young princes in the pavilion deep in contemplation are Krishna, his brother Balarama and his son Pradyumna, the boy



on the right presumably another of Pradyumna's sons, while search parties would seem to have been organised to look for the missing prince. It is the sage Narada who brings news of the imprisonment of Aniruddha and spurs the princes into action to go to his rescue. Krishna, his brother and his son fly off on Garuda to Aniruddha's rescue. Banasura is defeated but not killed, since he is protected by Siva, and Aniruddha and Usha return to wedded bliss in Dwarka.

An incomplete *Usha-Aniruddha* series is in the Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba (Archer 1973, Chamba 36; Goswamy and Fischer 1992, p. 313, no. 146). This series is published in full by Dehejia and Sharma (2011) and shows only Krishna and one prince waiting anxiously for news of Aniruddha; they are not joined by the second one until they fly off to Aniruddha's rescue (plates on pp. 86 and 94). The measurements for the Chamba series show they are of a smaller size than our drawing, so this drawing must be a preliminary study not for that series but for a different larger one, of which a few painted folios and other studies are known. Folios from this second series are in the former Bickford Collection (Czuma 1975, no. 118), in Cincinnati (Smart and Walker 1985, no. 54), and in Hyderabad (Seyller and Mittal 2014, no. 79, qv for further references). Four drawings for this series are in Boston from the Ross-Coomaraswamy collection (17.2438–17.2441, Coomaraswamy 1926, pp. 166–67), two of which are numbered like ours at the top 34 and 35, being the episodes immediately preceding ours. The Boston no. 35 shows our three princes in deep depression conferring with their ministers in a pavilion with a closer view of the zenana and is obviously by the same artist because he treats the

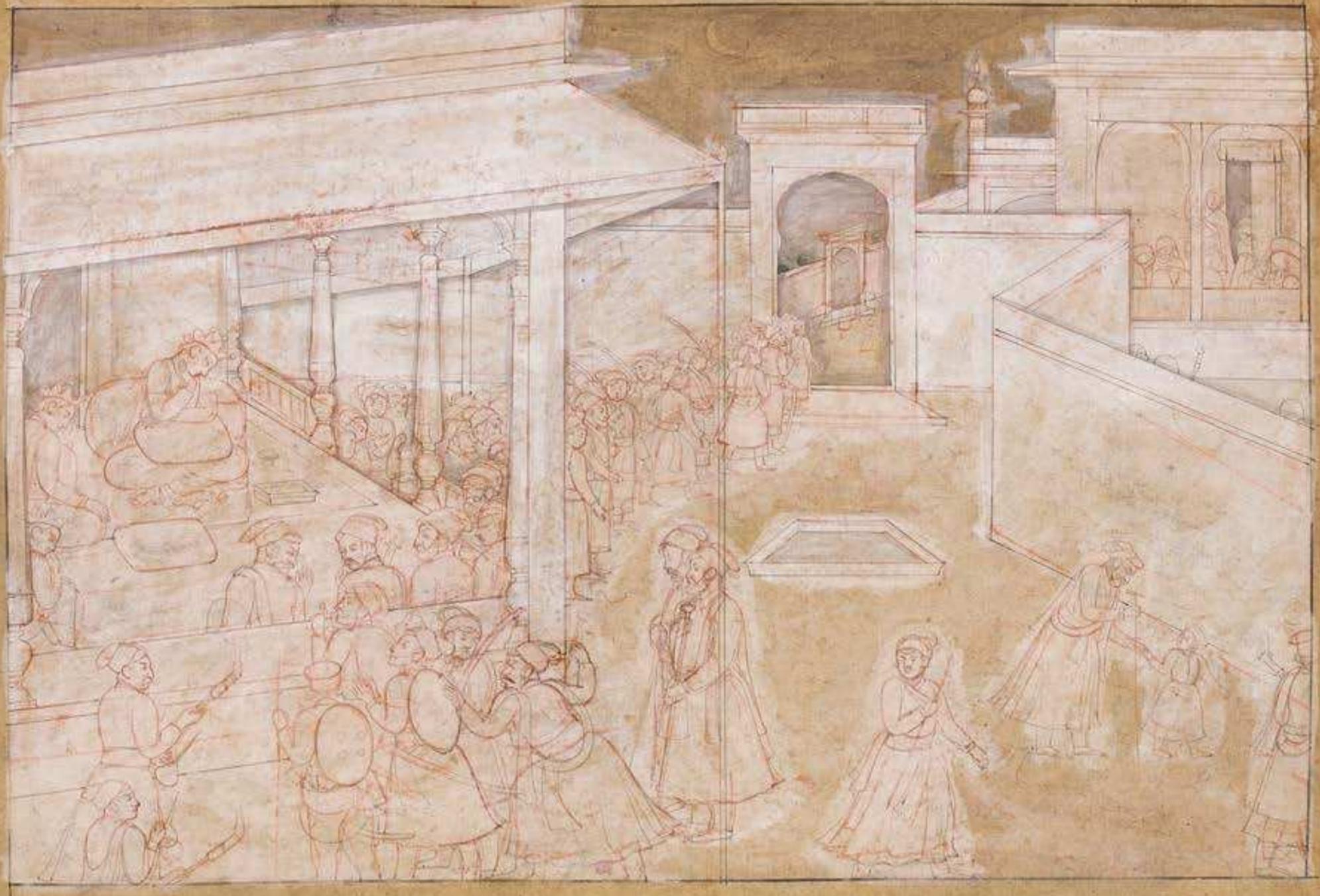
princes, the ministers and the night sky similarly. No. 34 in Boston shows the capture of Aniruddha by Banasura, being the last episode in the preceding chapter., so that Boston no. 35 and our drawing both illustrate the first verse of chapter 63 in the version of the story in the *Bhagavata Purana*. No. 34 in Boston also has the same dealer's stamp from Lahore as ours, so it would seem likely that at least three of these drawings were acquired together by Coomaraswamy. It would also seem that Coomaraswamy was persuaded to part with one of the drawings from this series to the well-known scholar of Chinese art and Belgian citizen Raphael Petrucci, before Coomaraswamy left London with his collection for Boston in 1916.

Pahari drawings of the late 18th century are some of the most finished and complex in Rajput art. Here a preliminary outline on the paper has been covered with primer and the composition sketched over it in red sanguine. A master artist has then reinforced or reinterpreted the red lines with his own confident lines in black ink. Drawings of similar detail and quality from Pahari masters exist for some other series such as the *Nala-Damayanti* series, while other drawings are known from the *Ramayana* and *Bhagavata Purana* series.

Provenance
Private collection in Belgium
Raphael Petrucci
Ananda K. Coomaraswamy
S Bahadur Shah, Lahore

Literature
Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London and New York, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1973
Coomaraswamy, A. K., *Catalogue of the Indian Collections in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Vol. v: Rajput Painting*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1926
Czuma, S., *Indian Art from the George P. Bickford Collection*, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, 1975
Dehejia, Harsha V. and Sharma, Vijay, *Pahari Paintings of an Ancient Romance: the Love Story of Usha and Aniruddha*, DK Printworld, New Delhi, 2011
Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 1992, *Artibus Asiae Supplementum* 38, reprint Niyogi Books, Delhi, 2009
Seyller, John, and Mittal, Jagdish, *Pahari Paintings in the Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art*, Hyderabad, 2014
Smart, E., and Walker, D., *Pride of the Princes: Indian Art of the Mughal Era in the Cincinnati Art Museum*, Cincinnati, 1985

राम
लाल



A Lady musing on her absent Lover

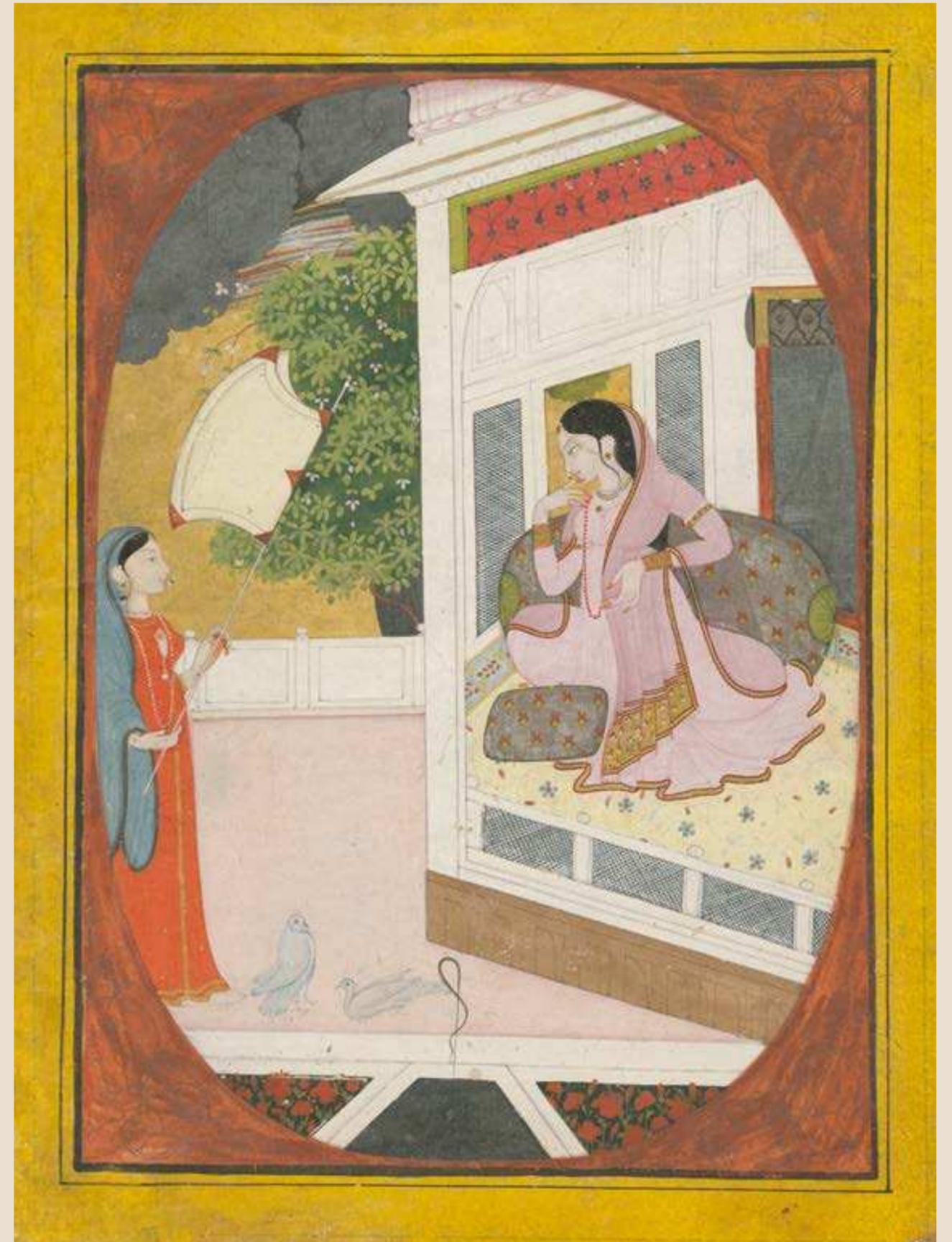
Garhwal, c. 1780–90
 Painting 20 × 14.5 cm
 Folio 23 × 17.5 cm
 Inscribed on the reverse in Persian

A lady sits pensively within a pavilion, her chin resting on one hand while the other arm is propped up against her bolster, musing on her absent lover. An attendant waves a fan at her but the massed dark clouds above indicate that this is the rainy season when her lover should be at home. A pair of courting pigeons on the terrace reinforces the point. The sky is particularly noteworthy: above the clouds the sky is black, and below are vividly coloured streaks above a golden ground, the whole suggesting perhaps an evening in the rainy season when lovers should be returning to their mistresses.

The scene is in an oval compositional format with unfinished spandrels while other areas of plain colour suggest that the painting is slightly unfinished. The composition is tightly contained within the oval frame and is indeed rather daring with the rapidly receding orthogonals of the architecture. For paintings related in style, which seem to be that of the enigmatic artist Mola Ram in his first phase, see Archer 1973, Garhwal 25–29.

Provenance
 Private American Collection

Literature
 Archer, W.G., *Indian Painting from the Punjab Hills*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1973



Prince Salim being carried in a Chariot

Mughal artist in Amber, c. 1620–30
Brush drawing with some wash, colours and gold
11.5 × 21.3 cm
Inscribed above the prince in Persian: *...ram-singh pesar-e mirza raja jaisingh* ('Ram Singh, son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh')

A young prince doubtless intended as a somewhat idealised Sultan Salim, eldest son and heir to Akbar and afterwards the emperor Jahangir 1605–27, is sitting back at his ease in a chariot holding a bow and arrow and presumably on his way to a hunt. The driver crouching in front of him is urging on the two galloping horses. Two young attendants run in front. One holds an axe over his shoulder with which to clear any obstacles. The other rather strangely is holding polo sticks and he is looking back and extending his hand to show that he holds a polo ball. A third young attendant runs behind the chariot holding on to the back of it, while also carrying a quiver full of arrows. The ground is suggested only by little tufts of grass at regular intervals.

A similarly small horizontal format painting, fully coloured but for the unfinished drawing of Salim, showing Salim being driven in a chariot but without any of the attendants is in the Freer Gallery, Washington DC (Beach 2012, no. 28), which appears to date from Salim's years of rebellion in Allahabad 1600–04. Further related drawings in a similar format are in the British Library showing a blindfolded cheetah being driven at speed in a bullock cart or in a cart pulled by tame deer (Falk and Archer 1981, nos. 19 and 30). A later version of the second of these c. 1630 (*ibid.*, no. 63) is a tinted drawing very similar in spirit to our drawing.

This delicate drawing technique with modelling through line is found in Mughal drawings of the Akbari and Jahangiri period, as for instance in a late 16th century drawing of a master and his pupil formerly in the Welch collection (Welch and Masteller 2004, no. 17). The faces of our attendants too, especially the one turning back so that his eyebrow and eye extend round beyond the profile of

his face and his eyelashes extend into space, find an earlier example in the face of the youth in the Welch drawing. Our drawing, however, seems to be somewhat later and can be dated to around 1620–30. Despite the refined drawing technique, the regularly scattered tufts of grass derived from Shirazi sources via a Sultanate style suggest the artist has left the imperial studio for a noble patron perhaps in Rajasthan. This is borne out by the inscription which identifies the prince as Ram Singh, son of the Mirza Raja Jai Singh, of Amber and would seem to have been added later than the drawing presumably when it was in a royal Rajput collection. Ram Singh was born around 1630, was given the title of Kunwar or Prince in 1642 by Shah Jahan, and that of Raja by Aurangzeb when he succeeded his father in 1677. He spent almost all of his brief reign (he died in 1688) fighting Aurangzeb's wars in Assam and then in Afghanistan. Glynn has published (2000, figs. 4–6) three portraits of Ram Singh from the Amber Album which all show him in profile with a small but well developed moustache. Her fig. 4 in particular showing the prince aged around 20 in 1650 is close to our portrait, but it is difficult to reconcile an energetic young Rajput prince with the somewhat indolent occupant of our carriage. The writer would seem to have added the inscription to a drawing of Salim done by an Amber artist based on an earlier drawing such as the one in the Freer Gallery.

- Literature*
Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court, revised and expanded edition*, Freer/Sackler, Washington, Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 2012
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1981
Glynn, C., 'A Rajasthani Princely Album: Rajput Patronage of Mughal-Style Painting' in *Artibus Asia*, vol. LX, no. 2, 2000, pp. 222–64
Welch, S.C., and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart and Hand: Persian, Turkish and Indian Drawings from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection*, Yale University Press and Harvard University Art Museums, New Haven, etc., 2004



Raja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur with Nobles

Mughal style at Jodhpur, c. 1642
Brush drawing with colour
23.5 × 18.5 cm

Raja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur (b. 1626, r. 1638–78) is depicted nimbate seated in durbar with Rathor nobles seated on either side. This rare picture is unfinished. The seated raja is just a brush drawing while the nobles are washed in with colour. The carpet beneath them is more strongly painted but lacks its finishing details. The most finished part of the picture is the white marble *jali* screen across the back of the terrace depicted against a dark ground. Above is a solid green ground that shades into a pink sky at the top.

Crill published (2000, figs. 21–24) four Mughal-influenced pictures of similar durbar scenes at Jodhpur with Jaswant Singh. Only one is fully finished (her fig. 21, former Moti Chandra collection) showing the raja with two noblemen on each side and others cut off, while above two rather strange *putti* hold a canopy over the raja's head. Crill dates this to c. 1640 on the basis of the raja's youthful appearance. The composition is quite close to our painting showing the white *jali* with a dark ground behind it as if the artist was unsure how to treat it, as well as what appear to be wrapped up documents on the mat in front of the raja. The same noblemen also seem to be present but with a different arrangement of shields. Two drawings in the British Museum (her figs. 22–23) show a row of six seated courtiers and another durbar scene much like ours but with a petitioner in front, half-finished, while a brush drawing in the V&A (fig. 24) of the raja with seven nobles shows the raja slightly older with a moustache c. 1645. The same courtiers appear again. The V&A picture shows the raja with a nimbus which is what also distinguishes our drawing from the others.

Close observation reveals many subtleties, especially in the positions of the hands of raja and

courtiers which are differently placed than in any of the comparable drawings published by Crill. The raja's hands are extended towards the nobles on his left and their hands are raised together as if petitioning. Where the clothes are painted, the colour effects are ravishing. The drawing of the raja is most skilfully done with a sure and steady line outlining his body with a final flourish in the rippling folds of his *jama* behind him.

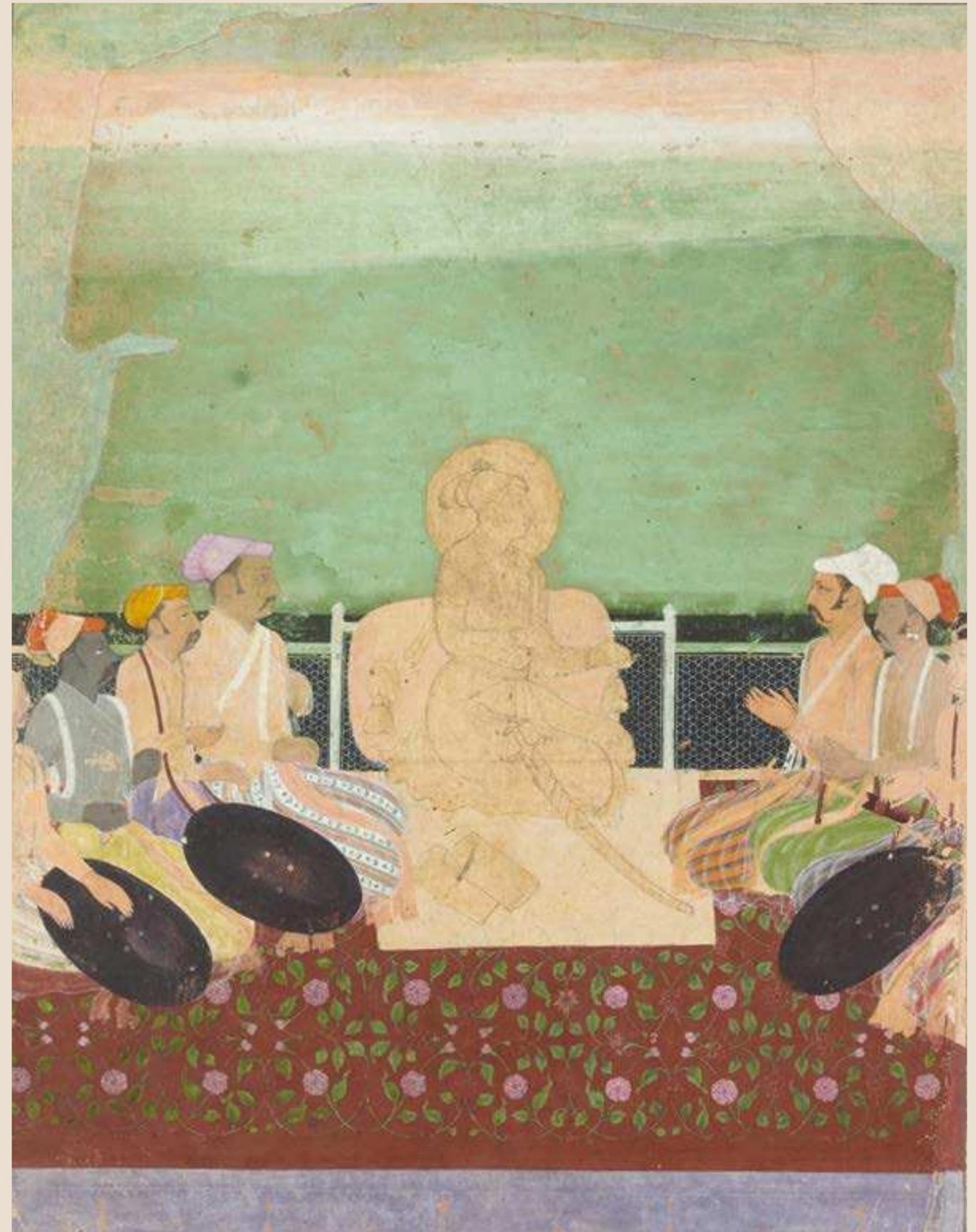
Jaswant Singh was Shah Jahan's cousin so it is hardly surprising to find Mughal-influenced works from the Jodhpur court studio during the early part of his reign. The drawings mentioned above seem to be by a Mughal artist working in Jodhpur while the one that is fully coloured (Crill 2000, fig. 21) is perhaps by a Jodhpur artist under his influence. Jaswant Singh appears in the Windsor Castle *Padshahnama* when the Emperor was at Lahore in 1640, where he looks even younger than in our painting (Beach, Koch and Thackston 1997, pl. 44). Jaswant Singh was a soldier and an author in both Sanskrit and Hindi – for a summary of his career, see Crill 2000, pp. 43–44.

Provenance

Otto Sohn-Rethel Collection,
formed before 1931

Literature

Beach, M. C., Koch, E., and
Thackston, W., *King of the World,
the Padshahnama*, Azimuth,
London, 1997
Crill, R., *Marwar Painting: a History
of the Jodhpur Style*, India Book
House Ltd., Bombay, 2000



Kakubh Ragini

From a *Ragamala* Series, Mewar, c. 1675
Opaque pigments on paper
25.7 × 21.5 cm

Inscribed above in Hindi: *Ragani Kakubh* and two lines of a descriptive verse, numbered 41

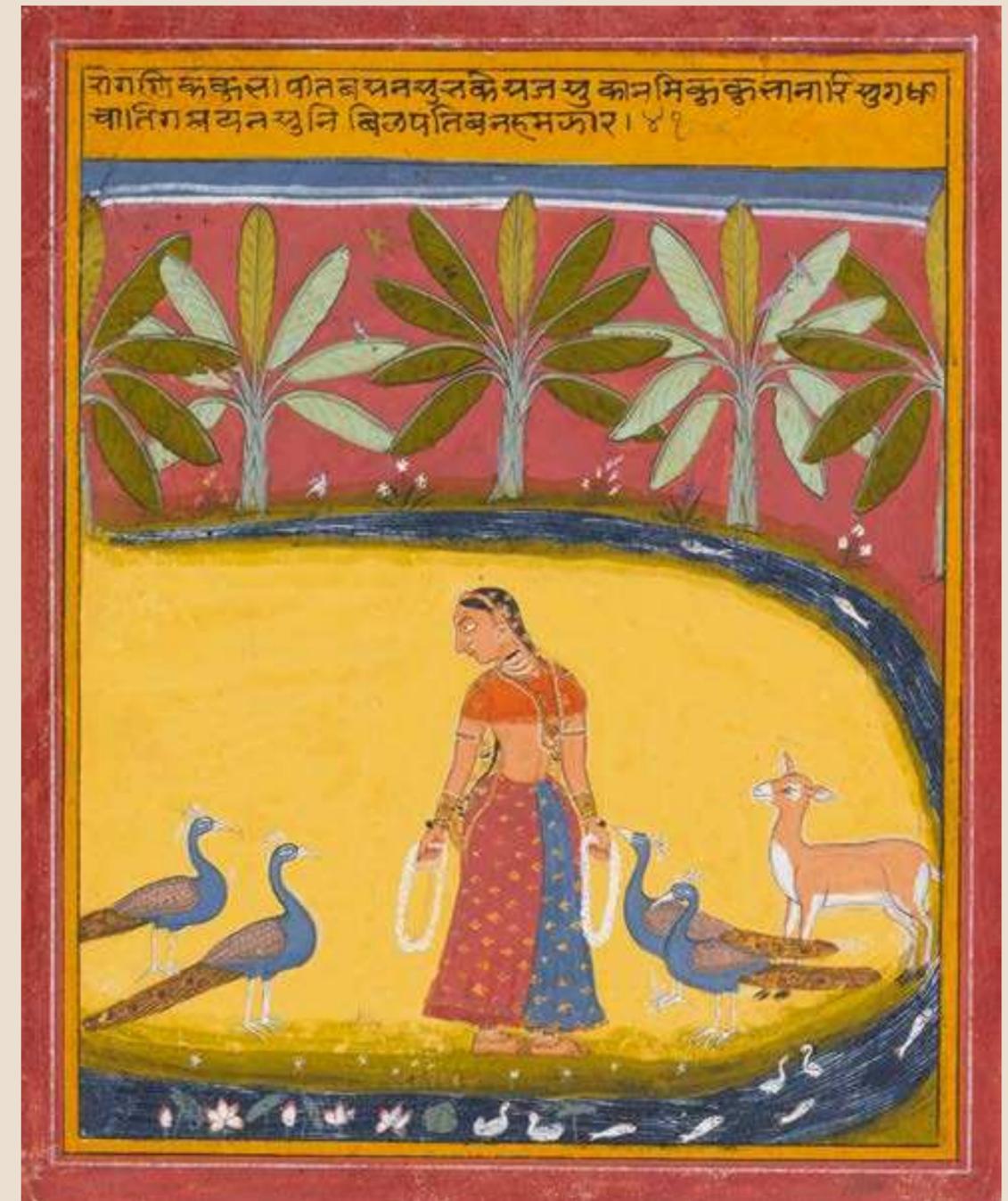
This page exhibits all the characteristics associated with this dispersed *Ragamala* series from Mewar: a simplicity of composition, a firm line and strong colours. Kakubh *ragini* is supposed to be a lonely young woman frightened by the cries of the cuckoo, yet painters always ignore the verse in favour of their own idea of a young woman walking among peacocks and bearing flowers or garlands (cf. Ebeling 1973, pls. 39 and 39). Our artist has added a deer to the mix. Dressed in a pink *ghaghra*, blue *patka*, orange *choli* and transparent *orhni* over her head and shoulders, the *ragini* in characteristic Rajput fashion has her body facing one way and her head facing in the opposite direction. She stands on a bold yellow peninsula formed by a stream filled with lotuses and ducks, while plantains march in a row across the page against a deep pink background. Topsfield dates the series to c. 1675 and cites the whereabouts of several of the folios (2002, p. 93 and fn. 52).

Provenance

Private French Collection (exhibited
Saint Louis Art Museum, 1981)
Doris Wiener, 1973
Kumar Sangram Singh Collection

Literature

Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Ravi
Kumar, Basel, 1973
Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at
Udaipur: Art under the Patronage of
the Maharanas of Mewar*, Artibus
Asiae, Zurich, 2002



The Distaught Heroine – An Illustration from a *Rasikapriya* (The Cultivated Lover)

India, Mewar, c. 1660
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
29.2 × 23.6 cm laid down on an album page with a red border and ochre and black marginal rules

Inscribed above with four lines from the *Rasikapriya* of Keshav Das (ch. 7, v. 24) in Braj Bhasha Hindi, and on the reverse with a Bikaner palace collection stamp and an inventory inscription of Samvat 1751/AD1694–5 (am 64 jam 89 sam 1751 asu sanbhaliya).

The *Rasikapriya* of Keshav Dasa, which was completed in AD 1591, deals with the classification of eight heroes (*nayakas*) and heroines (*nayikas*), their mutual fascination, attachments, separations and reunions. This painting illustrates chapter 7, verse 24, which deals with the sorrow of the Vipralabdha *nayika*, the heroine who is distraught that her lover has not come to the rendezvous.

The artist has depicted her sitting under a three-domed white Bengali-roofed pavilion with red and green silk awnings. Her *sakhi* (confidante and go-between) tries to console her friend. Disbelieving, she nervously fingers her gold-trimmed *orhni* and continues to hope for his arrival. The text describes her behaviour: to alleviate the burning in her body, she drew a picture on a cool white *campaka* flower; she broke her flower garlands; she upset the betel container; and got angry with her friends. In the garden in front of the pavilion, formally arranged with little fountains, a lady is shown with her confidante picking the *campaka* flower and also another lady upsetting a container and getting angry. For the verse and translation see Dehejia 2013, p. 230.

Visakha Desai (1995) has traced the development of paintings of the *Rasikapriya* in the Mewar studio, which all tend to follow earlier examples, and how what is perfectly clear in the earlier pictures becomes less so in the later ones. Thus an earlier painting by Sahib Din in the 1630s of the same verse (Dehejia 2013, p. 230) shows the *nayika* and the confidante three times, each time wearing the same garments, while our artist has not followed the verse and instead converts the two incidents in the garden into four different women.

Characteristics of Mewar painting of the mid-17th century are the use of the brilliant colours, such as

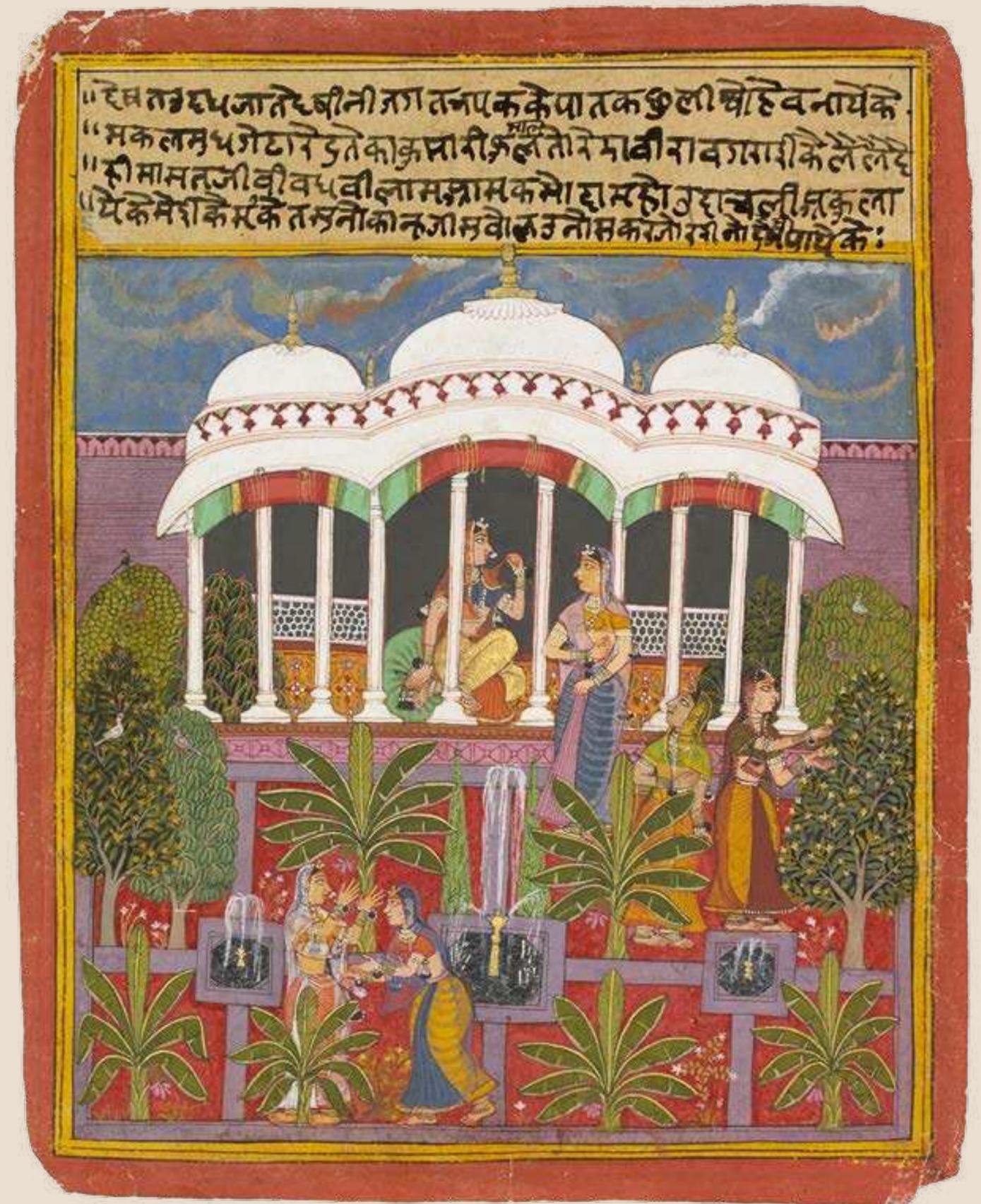
lacquer-red, saffron and ochre, the depiction of women with slightly short but elegant bodies, prominent noses and fish-shaped eyes, and the stylized tree forms with blossom sprays. These features of Mewar painting developed under the intense patronage of Rana Jagat Singh (1628–52), which was continued for a decade under his successor.

The series from which this painting comes was formerly in the Bikaner palace collection (Goetz 1950, p. 99). A large number of paintings in this series are in the National Museum, New Delhi, while others are in private collections in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere (Topsfield 2002, p. 103, fn. 41).

Provenance
Spink & Son
Bikaner Palace Collection

Published
Dehejia, Harsha V., *Rasikapriya: Ritikavya of Keshavdas in Ateliers of Love*, DK Printworld, New Delhi, 2013, p. 231
Fogg, S., *Indian Paintings and Manuscripts*, Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts, London, 1999, no. 41

Literature
Dehejia, Harsha V., *Rasikapriya: Ritikavya of Keshavdas in Ateliers of Love*, DK Printworld, New Delhi, 2013
Desai, V., 'From Illustrations to Icons: the Changing Context of the *Rasikapriya* Paintings in Mewar', in *Indian Painting: Essays in honour of Karl J. Khandalavala*, ed. B.N., Gosvami, New Delhi, 1995, pp. 97–127
Fogg, S., *Indian Paintings and Manuscripts*, Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts, London, 1999
Goetz, H., *The Art and Architecture of Bikaner State*, Bruno Cassirer, Oxford, 1950
Khandalavala, K., Chandra, M., and Chandra, P., *Miniature Painting: a Catalogue of the Exhibition of the Sri Motichand Khajanchi Collection*, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 1960
Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the Patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2002



Malagaudi Ragini

Sirohi, c. 1690
 Opaque watercolour heightened with gold
 21 × 15.6 cm
 Inscribed above: *Malagodo 10*

According to Ebeling (1973, p. 303), the name of this particular *raga* is normally Malava, but is often spelled Malavagaudi, Malagodi, or Maligor, all of them linking to the name Malavas, that of an ancient tribe that gave its name to the Malwa region. In our painting the hero of the *raga*, here Krishna, leads the heroine into his palace while another lady either looks out for interlopers or averts her gaze from what is going on. This is the normal iconography for this *ragini*: a pair of lovers making towards a bedroom (*ibid.*, p. 50).

Sirohi, a small state in southern Rajasthan between Mewar and Gujarat, seems to have produced various *ragamala* sets in the late seventeenth century, all in a brilliant style of its own as well as using highly individual iconographies. The lower parts of the compositions with their small terraces, steps and pots show the style's dependence on that of the school of Sahib Din in Mewar, further suggested by the surviving wall paintings in the Sirohi palace (Topsfield 2002, p. 102, n. 1). Beach (2011, pp. 484–85) traces the dynastic and marital links between Sirohi and its much larger neighbour in the 17th century, suggesting thereby the transference of basic elements of the style and compositional formats of Sahib Din. It is evident that the artist he dubs the Sirohi Master has transformed the style in his own way, particularly as regards his distinctive colour scheme of brilliant yellows and oranges.

Beach further suggests (2011, p. 480) that the Sirohi Master was responsible for three *Ragamala* sets, all of them now dispersed and probably incomplete, all slightly differing in the size of their folios. Our painting comes from what he dubs Set B, which he illustrates with Behag, Gunakali and Khambavati *raginis* (figs. 3–5), in which the

inscription is normally slightly to the right of centre above the painting, and many of which have scuffing in the left border (here retouched).

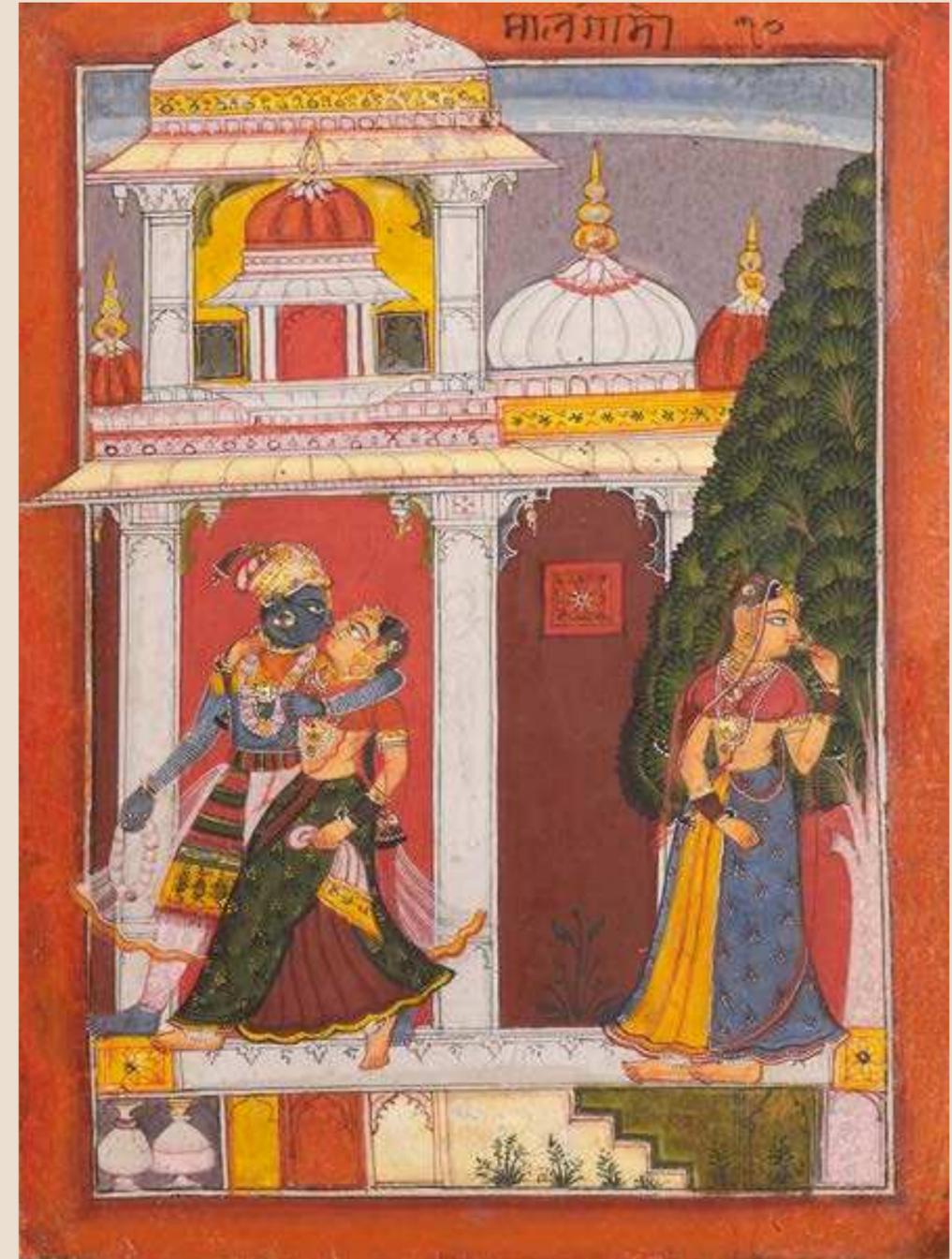
This is one of the most brilliant paintings in the set. Krishna and his *ragini* gaze at each other with rapture as they rush with almost indecent haste into the palace. The architecture is especially complex with multiple *chattris* and domes soaring up into the top margin. And the colour scheme with its vibrant reds, pinks, blues and greens and brilliant oranges and yellows is particularly gorgeous.

Provenance

Private Collection, Connecticut
 Kumar Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh

Literature

Beach, M.C., 'The Sirohi Master' in
 Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and
 Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian
 Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich,
 2011, pp. 479–90
 Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Ravi
 Kumar, Basel, 1973
 Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at
 Udaipur: Art under the Patronage of
 the Maharanas of Mewar*, Artibus
 Asiae, Zurich, 2002



Sketch of two Fools

Mewar, c.1760
Brush drawing in black over red outline heightened with white
32.3 × 29.2 cm

Mewar artists were exposed to European subjects from the time of the visit of Johan Ketelaar, the representative of the VOC, the Dutch East India Company, to Udaipur in 1711 on his way to the north to negotiate trade privileges with the Mughal emperor. From that time on the exotic Dutchman or 'farangi' became a minor but long-lived theme in Mewar painting up to the 19th century. This whole genre has been explored by Andrew Topsfield (1984). Somewhat fanciful but elegant representations of Dutchmen in the early part of the century gave way to versions of other European prints transmitted from the port of Surat and increasingly caricatured by Mewar artists.

Two men are in a convoluted embrace. The figure on the left wears a robe and a pointed hood and holds a long stemmed pipe to his lips with his left hand while holding the bowl with his right. The figure on the right is wrapped in a robe and wears a fillet with a feather round his bald head. His left index finger is held up to his remarkably hooked nose while his right hand is wrapped round the other man's left arm. They seem to be behind a balcony which runs across the bottom of the drawing.

The drawing is a reasonably close version of the subject of a Flemish painting attributed to Pieter Balten (1529–84), some of whose work involves similarly grotesque and humorous figures. The painting depicts a rebus on the Dutch proverb 'the world feeds many fools' (reproduced Sotheby's catalogue 2012, p. 198), obviously transmitted to India via a print. There are a few major differences, such as the shortening of the pointed hood on the left and the substitution of bald head and a headdress for the grizzled hair of the man on the right. Also in the Flemish original the man on the

left holds not the bowl of his pipe but a jug right up against his the jerkin of his companion, who wears that and a shirt rather than the robe of our drawing. The end of the pipe is completely invisible in the Balten original whereas our Mewar artist has drawn a real long-handled Dutch pipe suggesting he had seen such a thing, although why he should have added a star is not clear.

Technically the under drawing in red sanguine just fixes the composition on the page. This has been overlaid with a firm black line drawn with a brush while lighter brush lines in black filled in some of the intervening spaces. White highlighting has been used to add life to the drawing but its use is somewhat arbitrary and seems mostly to have been used for areas that ought to be in shadow. Nonetheless the laughing eyes and grinning features have a certain captivating charm.

Provenance

Doris Wiener Gallery, New York, mid 1970s

Literature

Mason, D., *Intimate Worlds: Indian Paintings from the Alvin O. Bellak Collection*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, 2001

Topsfield, A., 'Ketelaar's Embassy and the Farangi theme in the art of Udaipur' in *Oriental Art*, vol. xxx, 1984/85, pp. 350–67



Rao Ram Singh I of Kota in Battle

Kota, late 17th/early 18th century
 Brush drawing with touches of white and red
 49.5 × 38 cm
 Inscribed in *nagari* above the principal elephant: *sabi ap sri Ram Singh ji ki sabi hati Ram Takht* ('portrait of Sri Ram Singh, portrait of the elephant [named] Rama's Throne')

This tremendously vigorous drawing is centred on a running elephant with cleared space all around it to highlight its importance. Seated in a howdah on the elephant called Ram Takht are Rao Ram Singh I of Kota (reg. 1696–1707), vigorously drawing his bow to shoot, and a young warrior, perhaps a son. The Rao has already killed a cavalryman who falls back transfixed by an arrow as his horse carries on charging. The elephant has picked up a poor unfortunate man with his trunk and is running vigorously with him, despite the arrows bristling from its head and trunk, at a charging troop of cavalry. At the top of the sheet, elephants and cavalry on both horses and camels are charging to the right against, due to the fragmentary nature of the drawing, only a single horseman. They are aided in this attack by another elephant and its rider immediately behind Ram Singh. At the bottom of the drawing more cavalry and elephants are moving right although here the action seems more confused.

Rao Ram Singh spent much of his life fighting. Joachim Bautze writes (in Welch 1997, pp. 44–5) of his fighting against his elder brother Bishan Singh (disinherited by his father) to gain control of Kota in 1696, and then becoming one of Aurangzeb's principal generals fighting in the Deccan under Zulfiqar Khan where he was based until the war of succession that followed Aurangzeb's death in 1707. In that war Ram Singh backed 'Azam Shah, Aurangzeb's third and favourite son, but was killed in the battle of Jajau in that year.

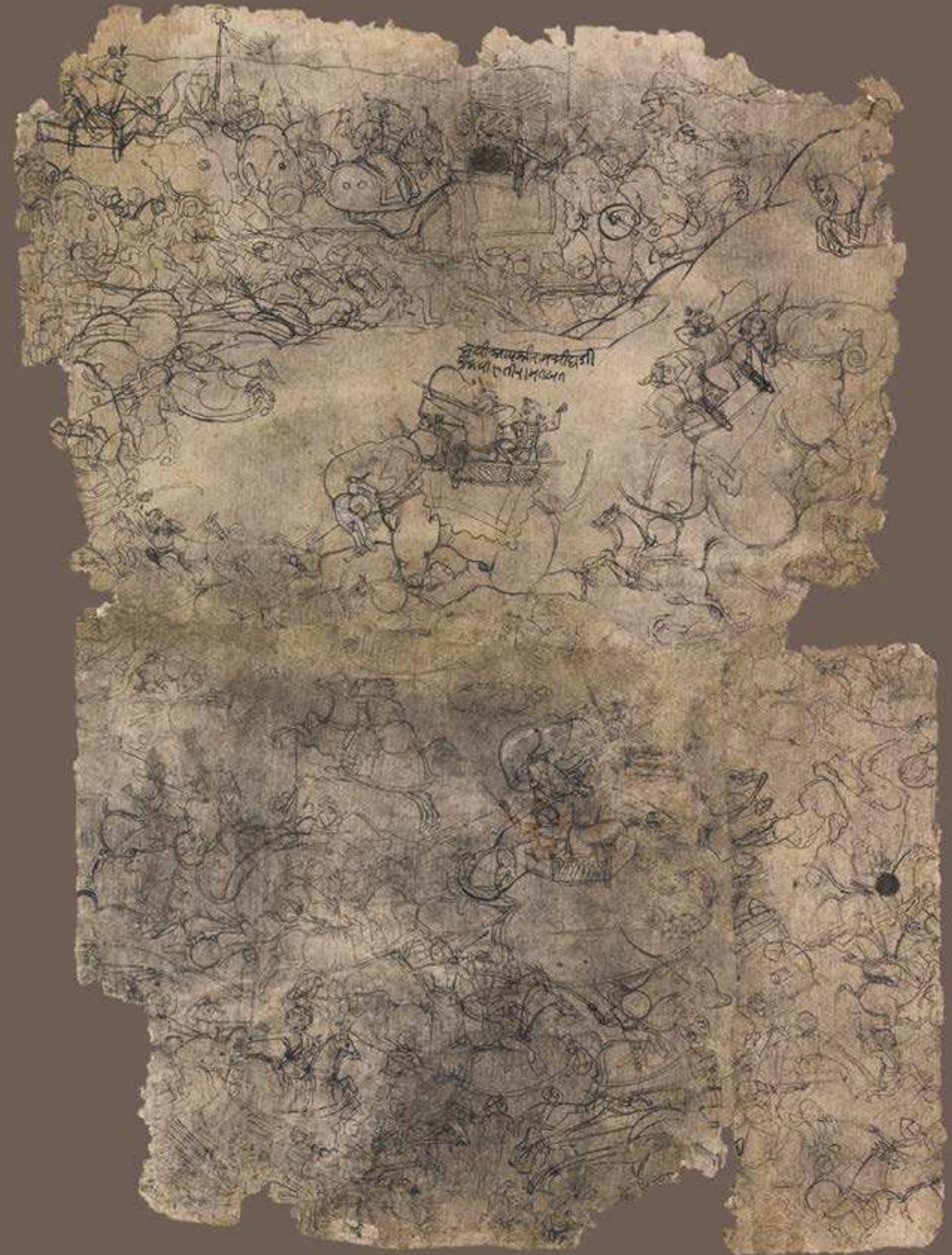
Kota draughtsmen had perfected by the early 18th century a lively drawing technique with a loaded brush, by no means as refined as in Mughal drawings with their thin lines, but compensating for the loss of elegance with immense expressiveness

and energy. Many vignettes in this drawing repay close study.

There are several drawings related to this scene which is obviously only part of a much larger battle scene. Another part would seem to be in a private collection (Beach 2011, fig. 6; Beach 1974, fig. 76, detail). Another battle scene, also fragmentary, formerly in the S.C. Welch collection and now in the Sackler Museum, Harvard, once thought related (Beach 1974, fig. 78; Welch and Masteller 2004, no. 39), has now been redated by Beach to the mid-17th century (Beach 2011, fig. 2). Certainly its line is much thinner and more controlled in the Mughal manner than is the case in our drawing. For other drawing scenes in this manner see Welch 1976, nos. 45–7 and Welch and Masteller 2004, nos. 42 and 42.1.

Literature

- Beach, M.C., *Rajput Painting at Bundi and Kota*, Artibus Asiae, Ascona, 1974
 Beach, M.C., 'Masters of Early Kota Painting' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011, pp. 459–78
 Welch, S.C., *Indian Drawings and Painted Sketches*, The Asia Society, New York, 1976
 Welch, S.C., and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart and Hand: Persian, Turkish and Indian Drawings from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection*, Yale University Press and Harvard University Art Museums, New Haven, etc., 2004



Night Scene depicting Krishna and Radha in embrace – from a Royal Kota-Jaipur Album

Kota, c.1720–30, possibly by master artist C
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
Painting 16.5 × 10.5 cm
Album page 26 × 20.9 cm
Surrounded by a double border in red with gold floral scroll and an outer border of dark green with gold foliate scroll painted in Jaipur at the end of 18th century when the album was put together

Verso
The Worship of Srinathji
Jaipur, late 18th century
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
Painting 18 × 13 cm

This painting is part of a royal album, possibly formed or presented at Jaipur at the end of the 18th century – the so-called Kota-Jaipur album. The illustrations on the reverse of many of the paintings and the decorative borders of the pages are in the late 18th century Jaipur style but the Kota paintings date from the first half of the 18th century and are, for the most part, of outstanding quality. Examples include Sri Brijnathji hunting at Makundgarh (Beach 2011 fig.14), Krishna hunting demons (fig.17), Rama, Lakshmana and the army of monkeys and bears besiege Lanka (fig.15), Krishna in a bower (fig.18) and further pages that can be related to the Bhagavata Purana, Gita Govinda, Ramayana, Story of Rukmini, the Baramasa and other popular texts (Cummins, 2006, pl.60, Topsfield 2004 no 71 & Mason 2001, no 67 and Spink & Son Ltd, 1987, nos. 18–21).

Milo C. Beach discusses this album at length in 'Masters of Early Kota Painting' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E. Y Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian*

Painting, Zurich 2011, p. 472. During the reigns of Rao Ram Singh I (r.1696–1707) and Bhim Singh (r.1707–20) a new manner of painting emerged in Kota showing strong, vibrant colours, human figures portrayed in profile with heavily shaded faces and the use of images within nature to accentuate a devotional and often erotic atmosphere. Beach calls this development a 'master style' and identifies three artists (A, B & C) who are painting within the same studio.

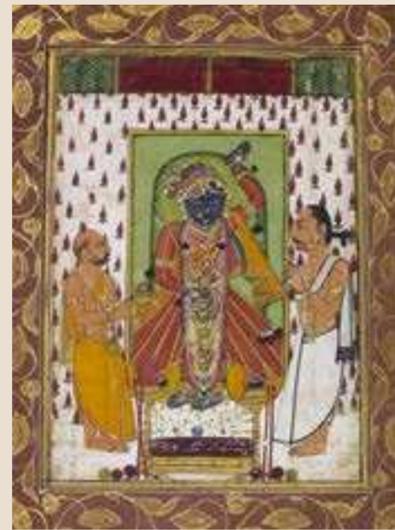
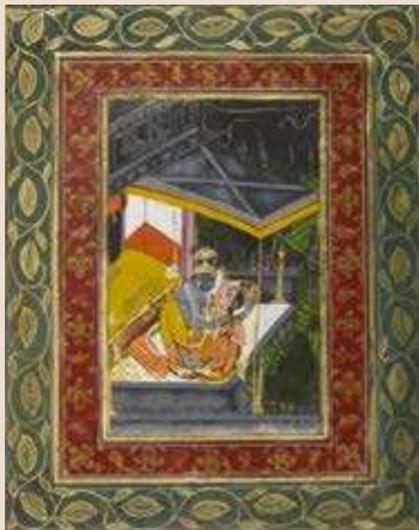
This was also the time (1719) when Brijnathji, a form of the god Krishna, became the official patron deity of Kota. A number of closely related works from the same workshop illustrate this increased interest at Kota in paintings relating to Krishna and Rama.

Our painting, formerly in the Stuart Cary Welch collection, relates closely to Krishna in a Bower (Beach, 2011, fig.18) which Beach dates to c. 1720 and attributes to Painter C, one of the master artists at Kota during this period. FG

Provenance
Stuart Cary Welch

Published
Fogg, 1999, cat. 44

Literature
Bautze, J., *Lotosmond und Lowenritt – Indische Miniaturmalerei*, Stuttgart, 1991
Beach, M.C., *Rajput Painting at Bundi and Kota*, Artibus Asiae, Ascona, 1974
Beach, M.C., 'Masters of Early Kota Painting' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011
Cummins, J., *Indian Painting – From Cave Temples to the Colonial Period*, Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2006
Fogg, S., *Indian Paintings and Manuscripts*, Sam Fogg Catalogue Number 21, London, 1999
Mason, D., ed., *Intimate Worlds – Indian Paintings from the Alvin Bellak Collection*, Philadelphia, 2001
Topsfield, A., *In the Realm of Gods and Kings*, Arts of India, London, 2004
Spink and Son, *Indian Miniature Painting*, London, 1987
Welch, S.C., et al., *Gods, Kings and Tigers: the Art of Kotah*, Prestel, Munich, New York, 1997



Four Gopis Beneath a Plantain Tree

Kotah, c. 1850
Brush drawing in black ink heightened with white and touches of colour
Drawing: 31.8 × 22.7 cm

This is one half of a preparatory study for a large pichhawai or painted hanging. The missing right half would have featured four similar gopis in mirror reverse. Krishna either as himself or as Srinathji would have stood between them, the object of their adoration. The four gopis, the cowherdesses of Vrindavan and devotees of Krishna, each have a fly whisk made of yak tail or peacock feathers (chowrie, morchhal) or a fan (pankah) to wave, signifying the royal or divine status of the central figure. Heavenly beings fly in their chariots in the sky above. For a complete image of this scene, see Ambalal 1987, pp. 112–113.

Behind the gopis in our scene is a stylized representation of Mount Govardhan in Braj, where the original image of Srinathji was discovered by the Vaishnavite saint Vallabhacarya. He installed it in a temple at Govardhan, but the image was moved from there into safety in Rajasthan when threatened with destruction by the Emperor Aurangzeb. It came to rest in 1669 at a village in northern Mewar subsequently called Nathdwara where a great shrine was built to accommodate the cult. The image of Srinathji there is a two-armed black stone image, its left arm raised up as a sign of Krishna's having lifted up Mount Govardhan to protect the people of Braj during a great storm sent by the god Indra.

Many of the Rajput rulers were ardent devotees of the cult of Srinathji. Maharao Kishor Singh of Kotah fled to Nathdwara in 1821 after the Battle of Mangrol (Welch 1997, p. 54) and was entertained there by the Vallabha pontiff Dauji for three months. After his reinstatement he seems to have brought back Kotah painters from Nathdwara, whose paintings in Kotah are almost indistinguishable from Nathdwara work (see for example *ibid.*, figs. 56–62, showing Maharao Kishor Singh worshipping Brijrajji). For the female type, see Welch and Masteller 2004, figs. 56–58.

Literature

- Ambalal A., *Krishna as Srinathji: Rajasthani Paintings from Nathdwara*, Ahmadabad, 1987
Welch, S.C., and Masteller, K., *From Mind, Heart and Hand: Persian, Turkish and Indian Drawings from the Stuart Cary Welch Collection*, New Haven, 2004
Welch, S.C., et al., *Gods, Kings and Tigers: the Art of Kotah*, Prestel, Munich, New York, 1997



Maharana Shambhu Singh of Mewar playing Holi

By Parasuram, Udaipur, 1868–69
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
Painting 30 × 49 cm
With border 34.5 × 50 cm

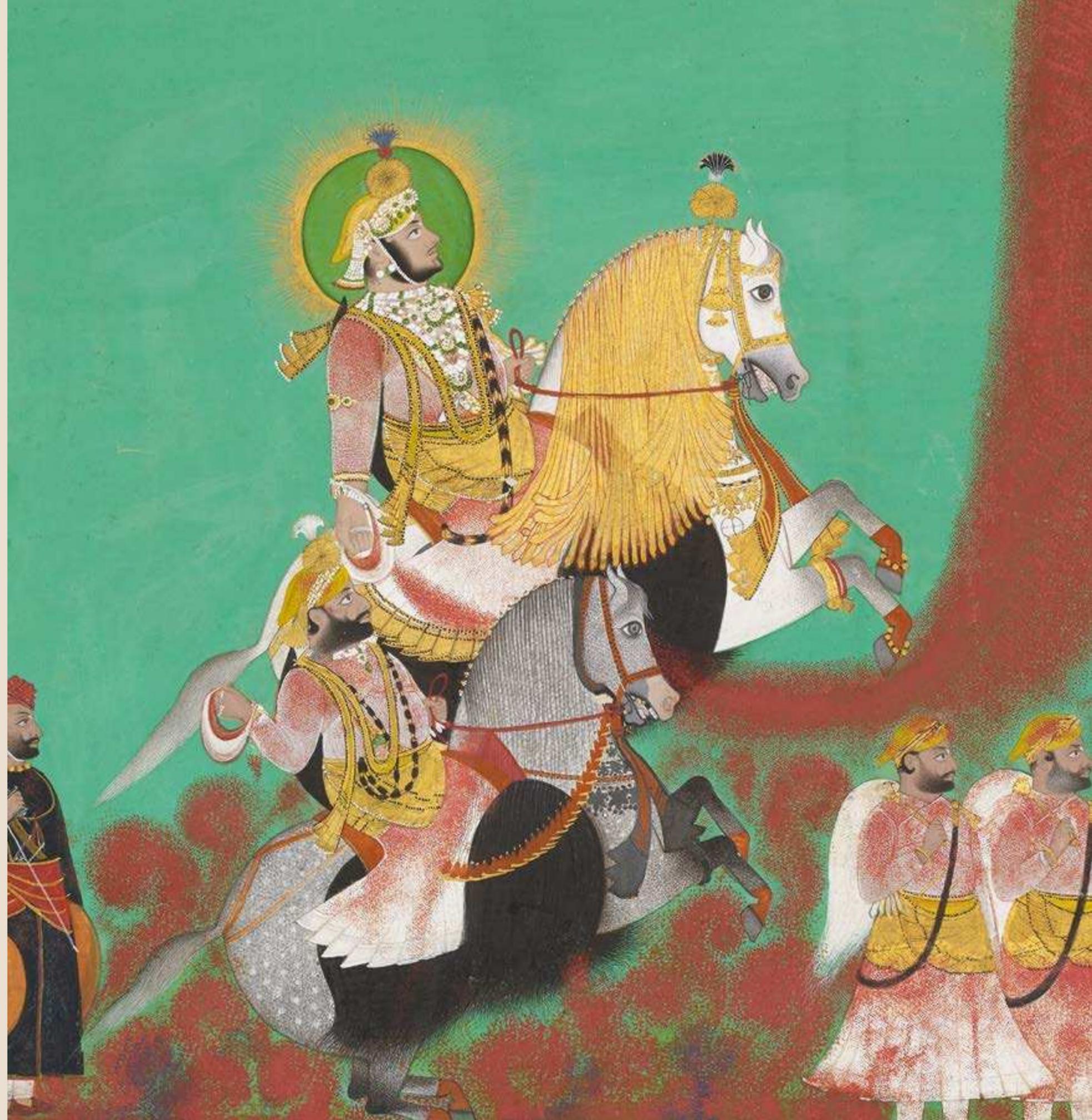
Inscribed above in Hindi: *Maharajadhiraja Maharana ji sri Shambhu Sanghji ri tasvir ... Ravat Jalam Sanghji ... Ravat Prasav Samvat 1925 varse kati sudi 2xx* and below: *kalam citari Parasuram ki*; and on the reverse in Hindi an elaboration of the upper inscriptions with the additional information: *kalami cataro Parasuram Samvat 1925 varse kati sud 2 najar huvo* ('Picture of Maharana Shambhu Singh ... Ravat Jalam Singh .. Ravat Prasav [and the names of their horses]. The work of the artist Parasuram was presented as a nazar in Samvat 1925/1868–69').

In this spirited scene, Maharana Shambhu Singh of Mewar (1861–74) is playing holi on horseback with one of his nobles. He and his companion are hurling the red powder from cloth bags up into the air. The powder rises in a great arc and falls on the attendants standing ready with their trays of more powder to refill the bags. The Maharana and his companion are shown twice and ride off on the right with the Maharana looking back on the chaos they have caused. Soldiers in traditional uniforms observe the scene on either side. A simpler scene by Tara painted in 1850 depicting Maharana Sarup Singh playing holi by himself is in the National Gallery of Victoria (Topsfield 1980, no. 268; Topsfield 2002, fig. 233), with the similar idea of the Maharana throwing powder and then riding off to escape its effects. Parasuram has taken Tara's idea and expanded it considerably to its benefit, as playing holi by oneself cannot have been much fun. A much larger but similar scene also by Tara around 1867 with many other nobles playing as well in the Akhara Mahal just south of the palace is in the royal collection in Udaipur (Topsfield 2002, fig. 252), as is an even larger painting showing similar scenes on elephants done by Tara in 1850.

Parasuram is an artist trained by Tara, the major Udaipur artist in the mid-19th century, and he along with Tara's son Sivalal continued the traditional format of Mewar paintings in the reigns of Shambhu Singh and Sajjan Singh. Parasuram's painting of 1859 of Maharana Sarup Singh riding is somewhat unexpectedly almost in grisaille, but Parasuram generally favoured his mentor's strong colours and also the virulent foreign green background (e.g., Topsfield 2002, fig. 255).

Provenance
Kasmin, London

Literature
Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Rajasthan in the National Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne, 1980
Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the Patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2002



***Pichhvai* of Rasa Lila for Sharad Purnima
(Autumnal Full Moon Dance)**

Nathdwara, mid to second half of 19th century
Cotton, painted with pigments, gold and silver
300 × 300 cm

This lively painting on cloth depicts the Rasa Lila, the ecstatic circular dance of the *gopis* where Krishna appears to be dancing with each one at the same time. Here the setting consists of a flower strewn clearing on an autumnal moonlit night on the banks of the river Yamuna in Vraj. Krishna has multiplied himself eight times and engages eight pairs of *gopis* in a circular dance. In the middle he sports with his favourite *gopi*, Radha while *gopi* musicians accompany the dancers on either side, playing a variety of instruments while peacocks and peahens dance below. Divinities in the heavens on a full moon celebrate the event in their celestial chariots. The border contains scenes from Krishna's life in Vraj.

Sharad Purnima is the festival of the autumn moon and the anniversary of the Rasa Lila. It occurs in Ashwina, which is the first clear month following the stormy monsoon season. Krishna summoned the *gopis* for the promised Rasa Lila on a night when the forest was illuminated with the silvery beams of full autumn moon. At the sound of his flute the *gopis* left their homes in such haste that their husbands went unfed and the bread burned on the griddle. They raced to be with their beloved Krishna and after several, love-induced tribulations, Krishna engaged the *gopis* in the exhilarating dance of the Rasa Mandala.

Pichhvais are painted pictorial textiles made as the backdrop for shrines in temples dedicated to the worship of Krishna as Srinathji. It is in this manifestation that he is worshipped by devotees of the Vallabhacharya sect. They were usually made in Gujarat and Rajasthan (Nathdwara, Jodhpur and Kishangarh in particular) and occasionally in the Deccan. *Pichhvais* are changed daily, seasonally,

Provenance
Private German Collection

Literature
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and for various rituals and festival occasions in the temple.

Few *pichhvais* predating the 19th century have survived due to their fragile nature and their constant use.

This example shows areas of wear and some judicious conservation and is of unusually fine quality. The artist has successfully conveyed the excitement and vigour of the dancing groups of *gopis* with Krishna, each group depicted in a different manner but linked to form a dancing circle, the areas of *pentimenti* probably expressly drawn to convey movement. The individual studies of the *gopi* musicians are akin to Indian miniature painting and many details such as facial features, jewellery, costume, birds and monkeys in the trees are sensitively drawn.

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