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Front Cover

AN ILLUSTRATION FROM THE KRISHNA LEGEND:
BALARAMA COMES TO FETCH THE BRIDE
MANDI OR KANGRA, CIRCA 1820 (*DETAIL, NO. 39*)

Left

AN ILLUSTRATION TO A NALA AND DAMAYANTI SERIES:
THE HAMSA BIRD RETURNS TO NALA FROM DAMAYANTI'S GARDEN
KANGRA OR BASOHLI, CIRCA 1800-10 (*DETAIL, NO. 30*)

Inside Back Cover

A FOLIO FROM THE POLIER ALBUM: VERSO WITH A
QUATRAIN BY MUHAMMAD 'ALI
MUGHAL INDIA, DATED A.H. 1195/1781 A.D. (*NO. 7*)



www.asiaweekny.com

A RARE IMPERIAL MUGHAL CALLIGRAPHIC PAGE BY THE ILLUSTRIOUS CALLIGRAPHER MUHAMMAD HUSAIN AL-KASHMIRI

PAGE

HEIGHT: 30.3 CM, 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN
WIDTH: 20.1 CM, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN

CALLIGRAPHY

HEIGHT: 24.2 CM, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ IN
WIDTH: 13.4 CM, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN

DRAWING

HEIGHT: 17.4 CM, 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN
WIDTH: 13.7 CM, 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ IN

Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper, mounted in a gold-splashed blue album page with a border of gold flowers on an ivory ground; on the verso Rustam searching for his horse Raksh, drawing in black and red on paper, with white ground prepared for painting and border of gold saz leaves on a buff ground, Qazwin or Isfahan, late sixteenth century

INSCRIPTIONS

The calligraphy in Persian, in black *nasta'liq*, consists of a saying attributed to the Sufi master Abu Sa'id Abu'l-Khayr (d. 1049 A.D.), dated the end of Rabi' al-Awwal 989 / April 1581 A.D. and signed: *mashaqabu muhammad husain kashmiri* "Muhammad Husain Kashmiri wrote it"

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Virginia, 2000-2013



ALBUM PAGE WITH CALLIGRAPHY AND A LINE DRAWING ON THE REVERSE MUGHAL INDIA, DATED A.H. 989/1581-82 A.D.

This exquisite page of calligraphy is arranged in eight lines of *nasta'liq* with two contemporary illuminated corner pieces containing the heading and the signature. Muhammad Husain al-Kashmiri was one of the great calligraphers at the court of Akbar, who gave him the title *Zarrin Qalam* ('Golden Pen'). Major manuscripts that he worked on in Akbar's reign include the *Gulistan* of 1582-83 in the Royal Asiatic Society (to the colophon page of which his portrait was later added, see Seyller, pp. 333-42 or Pal, p.169, fig.185) and the British Library/Chester Beatty *Akbarnama* of 1603-04 (Leach, pp. 232-300; Losty & Roy, pp. 58-70). Some of his calligraphy from this period is signed with the title of *Akbar Shahi* (Falk & Archer, no. 68, f. 68v). His fame endured at the court of Jahangir, where he was awarded the title of *Jahangir Shahi*. He wrote the illuminated preface in A.H. 1019/1609-10 A.D. to the collection of album pages known as the Gulistan Album in Tehran (Susan Stronge in Wright, p. 80; Semsar & Ernami, pls. 183-84), while specimens of his calligraphy also appear in the Gulshan Album (Eslami). He died in A.H. 1020/1610-11 A.D. This page is dated the year before his manuscript of the *Gulistan*, which was done in Fatehpur Sikri in 1582-83, and must be one of the earliest of his individual pieces of calligraphy.

In A'in 34 of Abu'l Fazl's *A'in-i Akbari* on the arts of writing and painting, we read: 'His Majesty shows much regard to the art, and takes a great interest in the different systems of writing; hence the large number of skilful calligraphists. *Nasta'liq* has especially received a new impetus. The artist who, in the shadow of the throne of His Majesty, has become a master of calligraphy, is Muhammad Husain of Kashmir. He has been honoured with the title of *Zarrinqalam*, the gold pen. He surpassed his master Maulana 'Abdul-'Aziz; his *maddat* and *dawair* [extension and curvature] show everywhere a proper proportion to each other, and art critics consider him equal to Mulla Mir 'Ali.

Despite the approbation of his father and grandfather, Muhammad Husain's works do not seem to be represented in the royal albums associated with Shah Jahan, who preferred to collect the works of famous earlier calligraphers such as Sultan 'Ali and Mir 'Ali. Shah Jahan's son Dara Shikoh, on the contrary, was keen to assemble this calligrapher's work and thirteen of his pages appear in the 1631-33 Dara Shikoh Album (Falk & Archer, no. 68, *passim*; Losty & Roy, p. 125). Despite his fame, little has been published: these include his preface to the Gulistan Album, noted above, and an undated page in the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore, published in Krishnan, pp. 242-43, and another in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, see Pal, fig. 186.

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اگر دنیا را دوست داری بی تاب
 و اگر دشمن داری بخوار تاب
 پس هر چه در پیش دارد بدست
 بیا و بگذر از هر چه در پیش است
 و اگر دنیا را دوست داری بی تاب
 و اگر دشمن داری بخوار تاب
 پس هر چه در پیش دارد بدست
 بیا و بگذر از هر چه در پیش است

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 20.5 CM, 8 IN
WIDTH: 12.4 CM, 4 7/8 IN

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 28.5 CM, 11 1/4 IN
WIDTH: 17.6 CM, 6 7/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened in
gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed below in black *nasta'liq* with the name of the artist "Fatu" and the subject of the miniature, with the number 196 above and on the verso the relevant text of the *Razmnama* in *naskhi* script:
dar adab-e brahma chari va garahsti / javab-e so'al-e bhrig ba bharadvaj morid-e khud
"Bhurgu answers the questions of his pupil Bharadadvaj concerning the disciplines of Brahmacharya and Grihastha".

PROVENANCE

Gerald Reitlinger (1900-78), the English collector whose collections of Islamic, Chinese and Japanese porcelain were bequeathed to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
Manuscript dispersed, Sotheby's, *Persian, Indo-Persian and Indian Miniatures, Manuscripts and Works of Art*, London, 24-25 October 1921, probably lot 211

BY FATTU

MUGHAL, 1598-1600

Bhrgu and Bharadvaja are two of the great sages of Hinduism and their dialogue in Book 12 of the *Mahabharata* lays down many of the fundamental tenets of Hindu life and thought. Here though they are depicted as if they were kings rather than sages. They meet in a domed pavilion in a palace garden, dressed in contemporary Mughal costume save for their crowns, and are attended by courtiers waiting on their every wish. Only the bound Persian manuscripts lying before them suggest that they are discussing philosophy rather than a royal alliance.

The *Razmnama*, the Persian translation of the Sanskrit epic *Mahabharata*, was commissioned by Akbar in 1582 from Naqib Khan, the historian Bada'uni and others with the help of learned Brahmins. The literal Persian version that resulted was turned into elegant prose by the poet Faizi, the brother of Abu'l Fazl, and was completed in 1586. The imperial presentation copy is now in the Jaipur royal collection. Bada'uni also tells us that it was ordered that copies of the work be made for the amirs, in furtherance of Akbar's policy of increasing understanding between Muslims and Hindus. Of these copies, the earliest is the largely dispersed manuscript from which this page comes. Conventionally dated to A.H. 1007/1598-99 A.D. because of one colophon, at least one dispersed painting bears the date 1600. The manuscript originally seems to have had at least 200 paintings. The largest surviving portion of the text is in the British Library, comprising cantos 14-18 as well as the date of A. H. 1007 at the end of canto 17, but no details of scribe or patron are given (Losty & Roy, pp. 55-58).

Although some scholars disagree, John Seyller (pp. 24-27) argues that since twelve of the named artists had worked on the earlier imperial copy and another twenty were working contemporaneously on the imperial *Baburnama* of 1597-98, this manuscript must be seen likewise as a product of the imperial workshop. Certainly there are some dramatic and indeed moving paintings in it, although much of the work lacks innovation, so it is best seen perhaps as a copy of the text from the court studio meant to be given to one of the amirs or indeed to a female member of the imperial family.

The work of the artist Fattu perfectly illustrates the simplification of the imperial style needed for the rapid production of manuscripts not meant for the eyes of the emperor. A note on one painting also by Fattu indicates that no more than twenty days could be spent on it (Seyller, p. 40). A lot of the foreground clutter and surrounding detail usual in imperial works is cleared away and the eye is allowed to focus on the principal event. This sometimes welcome simplification of the composition is however accompanied by standardised figural representation and architectural and garden backdrops. Here, however, Fattu strikes a charming note with his rendering of a *char bagh* garden with water channels and a fountain. For other of his works in this manuscript, see Seyller, fig. 4 & p. 40, it is his work that is dated equivalent to 1600 and we learn also that he is the son of Iqbal. According to Verma, p. 156, his only known work occurs in this *Razmnama* manuscript and in the *Baburnama* in the National Museum, New Delhi, where he painted two of the natural history illustrations (Randhawa, ff. 280a and b, p. 130).

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جواب سوال برگ با بهر دوام برید

در اداب بر بهر جاری و گزیده فتنه

3 AN IMPORTANT DECCANI COPY OF AL-JAZARI'S 'BOOK OF INGENIOUS DEVICES'

PAGES

VARYING DIMENSIONS:

HEIGHT: 9 - 23 CM, 3 ½ - 9 IN

WIDTH: 9 - 14 CM, 3 ½ - 9 ½ IN

Persian manuscript on thin buff-coloured paper, painted in opaque watercolour heightened with gold, lines of *nasta'liq* in black and sometimes red on recto and verso, trimmed and with termite damage

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England, 1982-2013

COMPRISING SEVENTY-TWO LEAVES NORTHERN DECCAN, CIRCA 1600

From a rare Persian translation of Ibn al-Razzaz al-Jazari's treatise on automata, the Arabic original was completed in 1206 for Nasir al-Din Mahmud, the Artuqid ruler of Diyarbakir. The oldest surviving copy of the work, now in the Topkapi Palace Library, (Ahmet III, 3472), is entitled *al-Jam' bayn al-'ilm wa'l-'amal, al-naft fi sina'at al-biyal*, or 'A Compendium on the Theory and Practice of the Mechanical Arts'. The work is often known, however, by the title on the fifteenth century copy in the Bodleian Library, (ms. Graves 27), *Kitab fi ma'rifat al-biyal al-bandasiyya*. This copy formed the basis of a translation by D.R. Hill, who interpreted the title as "The Book of Ingenious Devices". Of the known copies, only one other is a Persian translation, *Aja'ib al-Sana'i* ('Mechanical Wonders'), which was made by Muhammad ibn Da'ud Shadiyabadi for the Sultan Nasir Shah of Mandu, Madhya Pradesh, 1500-10. The manuscript, now in the British Library, bears a note by the translator dated 4 Shawwal 914 / 26 January 1509 A.D. (Losty, no. 43). A Mamluk copy dated 1315 A.D. is in the al-Sabah Collection at Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, Kuwait.

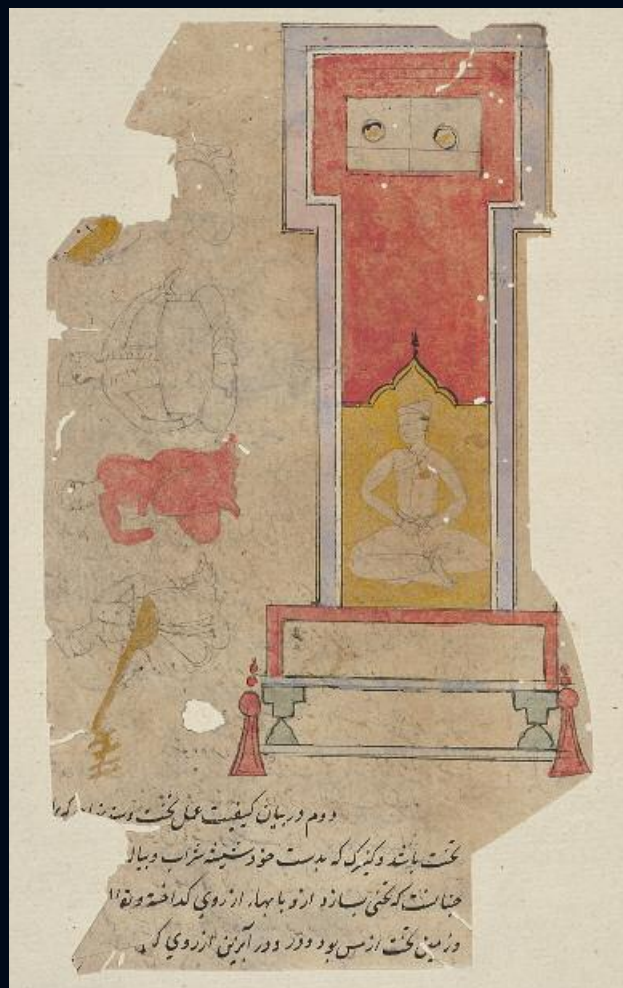
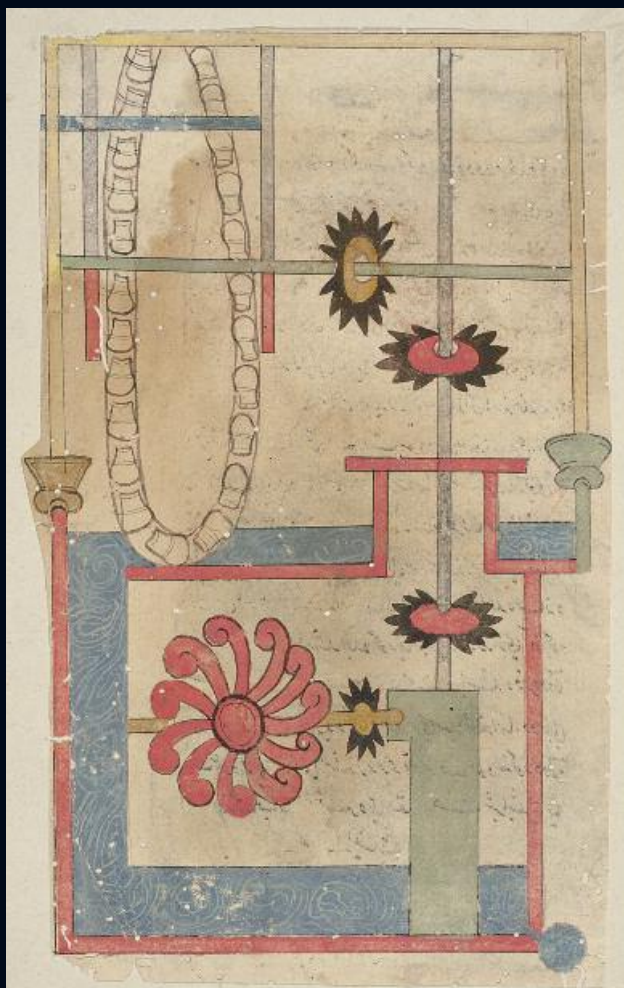
The present manuscript bears no colophon, and though it retains the bright palette of red, yellow, green and blue found in earlier manuscripts, occasional features have a Deccani flavour. The most striking example is the nobleman and four male musicians (in the original Arabic text they are slave girls and dancers), who are shown in three-quarter profile, wearing long front-opening *jamās* and conical turbans somewhat in the fashion of late sixteenth century drawings from the Deccan (Zebrowski, figs. 5, 15, 17 & 19). As against this, others of the figures seem to be wearing Mughal costume of short *jama* and Akbari *pagri*, so perhaps a northern Deccan origin around Ahmadnagar or Burhanpur would be suggested.

The manuscript fits the Deccani tradition of producing Arabic and Persian scientific and cosmological works. Ibrahim 'Adil Shah II of Bijapur commissioned a new Persian translation of al-Qazwini's classic Arabic cosmology, *'Aja'ib al-Makbluqat* ('Wonders of Creation'), in A.H. 954 / 1547 A.D. A Persian work on astronomy and astrology entitled *Nujum al-'Ulum* ('Stars of the Sciences') was probably composed in Bijapur in 1570. The oldest manuscript dates from around the period of composition and further copies were produced during the seventeenth century (Leach, pp. 891-903; Losty, pp. 71-72).

Al-Jazari's work is divided into six chapters that describe and give instructions for the construction of 100 mechanical devices including water and candle clocks, fountains, vessels and figures for drinking sessions, water-raising devices, water dispensers for blood-letting and washing. Islamic civilization built on Hellenic and Iranian learning to develop an advanced tradition of engineering and mechanics. As well as improving on the devices of his forbears, al-Jazari included several devices of his own invention. As well as in the advances it makes, the importance of al-Jazari's treatise lies in its explicitly practical nature. The detailed instructions for the construction of the various devices make it one of the richest works on engineering from any pre-modern society.

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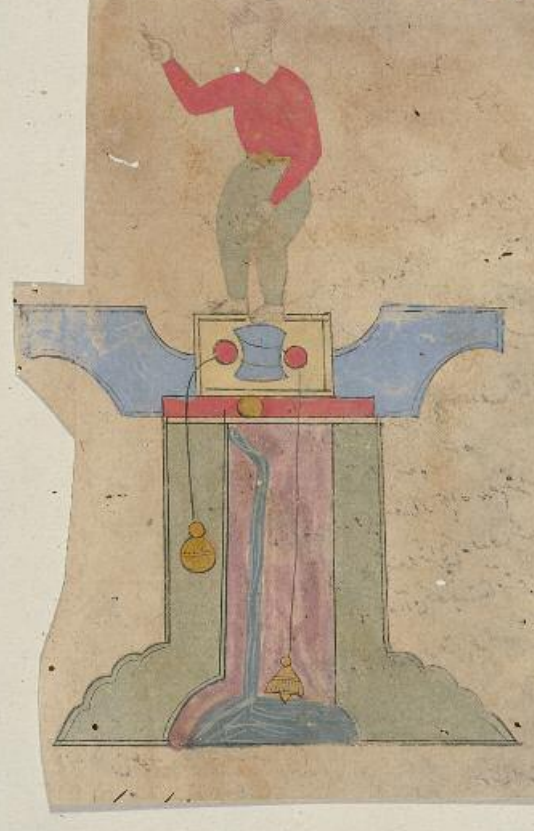
کند و میان دو طرف و بر اندکی سویی زیر خم و بدو طرف و بر
 که کند از جهت آنکه نصب کرده شود و از پس سهلوی غلام بر پا
 آید و میان سبکی فرجی و کردن او باند و بر طرف آن تطبیع
 و وزنه بسیار که بدان بگیرد و میکرداند و فستون بدان کشاده
 و بسته کرد و پس سر غلام بسیار و خفاک در شکل بالا مقدم شد
 است و میان سه خالی و بدو کند از جهت آنکه در و آب
 سویی خواند رخت شود و اسفل کردن وی بر سهلوی فرجی بند
 و کرد و اگر وی آنجست خالی ماند در پس کردن حکم بپند و از جهت
 آنکه طرف تطبیع میان و سبکی فرجی حرکت کند و صورت
 غلام و آنچه در مایل آریقی بود از جهت
 و بر جاده است
 و بر جاده است
 که در جاده است
 و بر جاده است
 که بر جاده است
 شده است او
 بر طرف ماضی
 ارج و بر محور
 و است جیب



اب که در شکل طایفه پس باز در راه مقدار رخت شود و بدو پای طایفه
 بر بام و جهت کرده باشد و حکم بپند باشد و بر طایفه پس سویی
 در و بر طایفه پس سویی در و بر طایفه پس سویی در و بر طایفه پس سویی در



قدم رخت را به سور است یعنی کند که در و طرف محور که از
 مناره خط هر مانه باشد در آید و آن سوراج و طرف محور مربع باشد
 و در حال صورت طشت مال و دیگر است



زنجیر و سوراج بازوی پلکان است و بر وی است و در بازوی پلکان
 سوراج است و در آن سوراج زنجیری و بر وی است و در بازوی پلکان
 و در قیاس قیاس طایفه است بر آن این است و در صورت پلکان و کرک
 و در دست مانه و بر سر این و زنجیر و ملحقه و آنچه درین فصل مذکور است



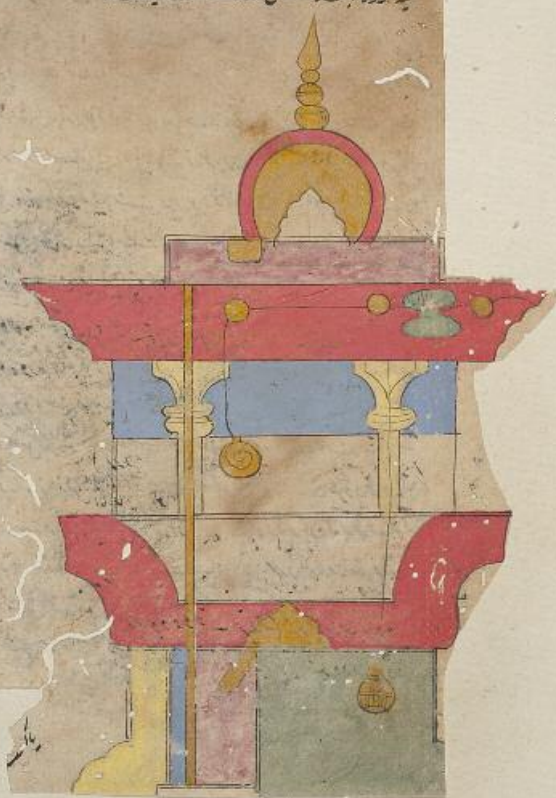


سزدهم در بیان کیفیت عمل این بنوعی
 در آن زمان که در یک محور و در دو طرف آن دو سوراخ و دو وعده بود
 و این بناست که در یک صفحه باریک میانه که طول وی دو سوراخ و دو وعده
 و یکی از دو طرف وی سوراخ و دو وعده و در طرف دیگر چهار گشت



بسی کوی و طاس خالی که آن تراژدگر بود پس کران کرد طرف
 معبره که در طاس بلند شود تا پوشش وی بر بارانی کرد و در
 آن حوض برقی می باشد روان شود و از مهره ای که بر پوشش
 طاس می چکند و این که در طاس جمع شده باشد و این نورش در
 آن حوض می شود و از آن که در آن بسته باشد و آب در این می بلند شود و در
 آن حوض می شود و از آن که در آن بسته باشد و آب در این می بلند شود و در

طشت میسازند و در آن وقت عوام بزرگین جمع میشوند مانند
 و در روزی جمعی از دستهای بنور و حساب اینشاده ریش
 خود دست چپ گرفته باشد و دست راست او سوی اسفل این
 نکته کرده باشد و مثال صورت طشت اینست



و بر طشت بود و بر این که در زمان وی معلق بود و بر کوهی
 و بر عوام که در آن کرسی بود و بر عوام مذکور که در این کوه بود
 و بر کوهی که در آن کرسی بود و بر عوام مذکور که در این کوه بود
 که در این کوه بود و بر عوام مذکور که در این کوه بود
 مال و دست که در این کوه بود و بر عوام مذکور که در این کوه بود

4 A YOGI

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 19 CM, 7 ½ IN
WIDTH: 11.5 CM, 4 ¾ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 22 CM, 8 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 13.6 CM, 5 ⅜ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed in *nasta'liq* at lower right:
'amal-i Kamal Muhammad
'work of Kamal Muhammad'

PROVENANCE

Dr. W. B. Manley (1885-1971),
London, his stamp on the reverse
Sold Sotheby's, London, 1971
Private collection, Virginia

PUBLISHED

Sotheby's, *Oriental Manuscripts and
Miniatures and Printed Books:*
the property of Dr. W. B. Manley,
London, 14 July 1971, lot 129
(monochrome illustration)

BY KAMAL MUHAMMAD

GOLCONDA OR BIJAPUR, 1640-50

A yogi stands in an elegantly mannered pose wearing red drawers supported by a blue loincloth and a richly brocaded gold cloak over his shoulders and arms. A green pouch with a long tassel hangs from his loincloth. His skin is white through being smeared with ash. His hair is mostly gathered into a topknot on top of his head, secured by a gold band, while some hangs loose down his back. He wears large gold earrings and several of what appear to be pearl necklaces. A red spot is placed on his forehead. In one hand he holds out a fan and in the other a bunch of white flowers, so that his exquisite gold cloak, decorated with woven polychrome geometric motifs, falls gracefully over his extended arms. His feet rest on golden sandals (*paduka*) with only a peg between his toes to secure them. He is depicted standing against a totally plain putty-coloured ground that lightens into a gold and blue sky at the top. The borders of the painting are decorated with repeating silver leafless branches on a dark brown ground.

The artist Kamal Muhammad is known otherwise from two collaborative pictures from Bijapur in the reign of Sultan Sikandar (r. 1672-86). He is one of the two artists who with Chand Muhammad painted *Sultans of the House of Bijapur* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Zebrowski, fig. 118a). This is datable to circa 1680 through the appearance in the painting of the young last Sultan of Bijapur, Sikandar 'Adil Shah. The second collaborative picture, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, shows three women presenting a girl to two aged ascetics 1670-80 (Leach, no.9.672, col. pl. 135), where the inscription is damaged, but Kamal Muhammad is clear enough. Chand Muhammad is known from a portrait of Ikhlas Khan, the African minister of Muhammad 'Adil Shah of Bijapur (r. 1627-56), from about 1640 (Falk & Archer, no. 404). This could also give the spread of dates for Kamal Muhammad, who since he is always named first in these collaborative paintings would seem to be the senior artist.

Kamal Muhammad certainly was able to change his style in each of his known paintings. The New York picture is a continuation of known Bijapuri idioms in portraiture and landscape from the previous reigns. His Dublin picture on the other hand is extremely naturalistic and seems under very heavy Mughal influence in its portrayal of the ascetics, with their matted hair and aged skin, and in the modelling of faces and draperies. Our painting combines a very skilful handling of the modelling of the gold cloak with a mannered style of portraiture that seems derived from Safavid painting via Golconda. The elegance of the stance and the slanting non-naturalistic eyes recall Golconda rather than Bijapur painting (the *Courtesan* for example, Zebrowski, fig. 148), and it is possible that Kamal Muhammad trained there before moving to Bijapur. On the other hand his naturalistic handling of the gold brocade cloak over the yogi's shoulders recalls similar virtuoso passages in the portraits of Ibrahim 'Adil Shah (reg. 1579-1627), see Zebrowski, figs. 50, 55-56 & 59.

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Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983



5 PORTRAIT OF AKBAR

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 13.4 CM, 5 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 9.5 CM, 3 ¾ IN

ALBUM PAGE

HEIGHT: 32.7 CM, 12 ¾ IN

WIDTH: 22.6 CM, 8 ¾ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, together with a separate album page with two couplets in Persian in black *nasta'liq* at top and bottom, the dark grey border with gold floral designs of branches and birds, nineteenth century, with a diminutive signature at lower right in Persian

INSCRIPTIONS

A later Persian inscription
in the foreground: *Akbar*

On reverse in a nineteenth century hand:

King Akbar the Great

The album page signed:

Garudadri (?) banba (?) musavvir shorapur
'Garudadri (?) Banba (?) the artist, Shorapur'

PROVENANCE

Nineteenth century collection, England,
both miniature and album page with
the inventory number Ms. 677



GOLCONDA, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

In this striking portrait of Emperor Akbar near the end of his life, he is portrayed on a turquoise ground holding a small jewel in his right hand, his head surrounded by a radiating gold nimbus. He wears a plain orange *jama* over green *pajjama*, red slippers, long ropes of pearls and a gold brocade turban. In the fashion normally associated with Jahangir, he wears two *patkas*, a longer brocade one underneath a shorter plain green protective cloth one, into which a *katar* and a falconry glove are inserted. The emperor stands, with one foot forward as if walking, on a lighter green foreground with diminutive gilt clumps of grass and two delicately painted poppy plants and a single iris, staggered to create distance.

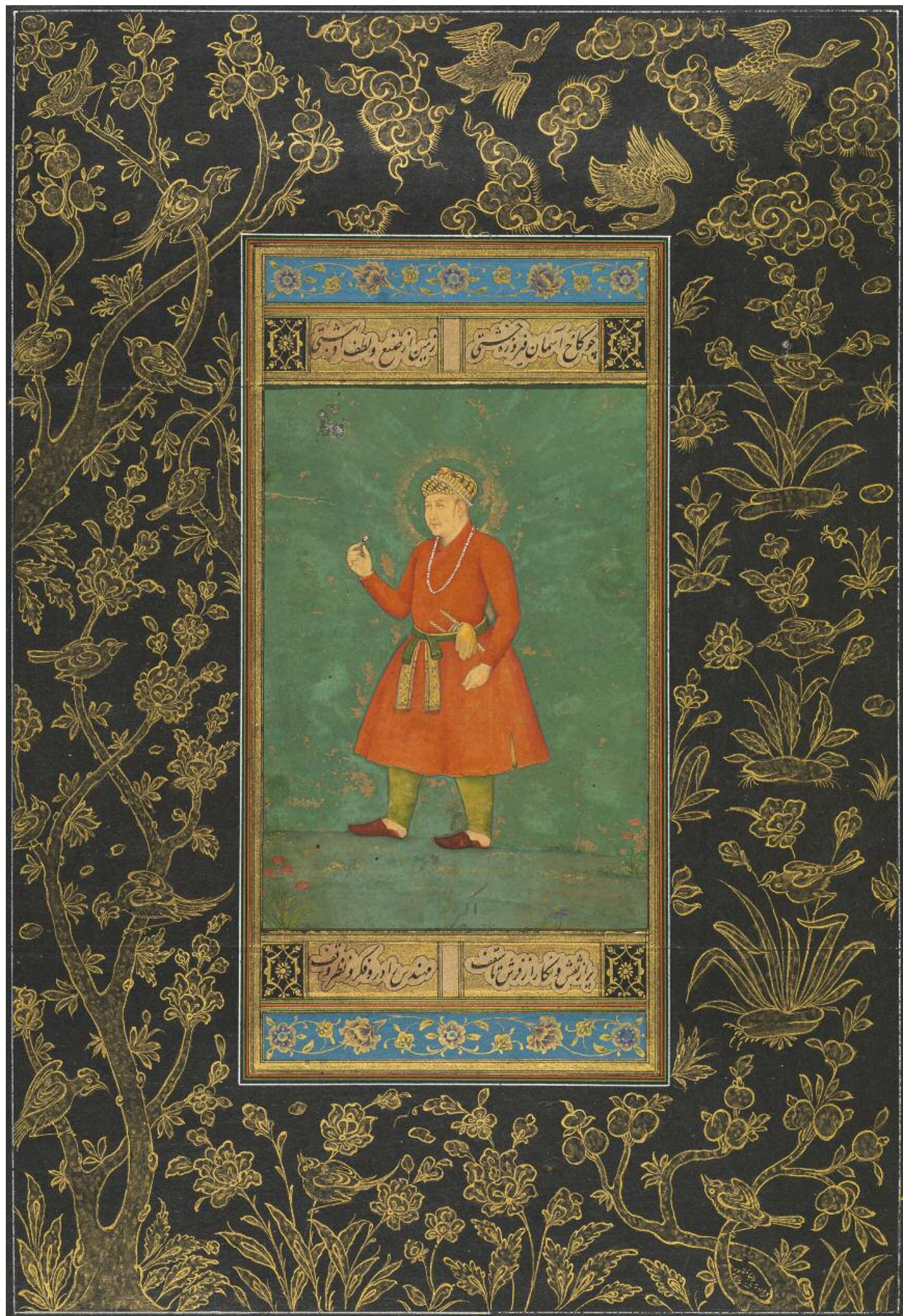
The portrait seems to be based on one dating from the last decade of his life, but somewhat idealized. Few are known after the cessation of the *Akbarnama* manuscripts, which although done towards the end of his reign depict him, with one exception, only up to 1579 when he was still only thirty-seven. Govardhan's painting, at the end of the second volume of the 1602-03 *Akbarnama*, shows the author Abu'l Fazl presenting that volume to Akbar himself in 1596. Considered a contemporary portrait (Leach, 2.135, col. pl. 40), the artist depicts Akbar with dark hair tending towards grey but still relatively slender. Two group portraits attributed to Manohar, circa 1600-05, in Dublin and Cincinnati (Leach, col. pl. 48, and Smart & Walker, no. 6), have the greatest claim to be contemporary with Akbar's last years. In these he has gained weight and his face is longer and livelier, but lacks the lines in the drawing in the British Library from this time (Losty & Roy, fig. 36).

Posthumous portraits in various seventeenth century albums (Topsfield, figs. 25 & 37; Welch et al., nos. 9 & 11; Wright, nos. 54-55) are based on these or similar examples. Nearly all show him slightly stooping and with the weight around his waist of the Dublin and Cincinnati portraits. None of the Mughal ones shows him as upright as here, or with the extra weight or looking squat, but the first of these characteristics is found in various Golconda portraits of the later seventeenth century. This portrait dates from that time as suggested by the treatment of the ground at Akbar's feet, where a hard distinction is drawn between the ground and the background. Although this occurs rarely in seventeenth century Mughal painting, as in Payag's equestrian portrait of Shah Jahan (Welch et al, no. 29), it is much more common in Deccani portraits as is the way Akbar's feet bestride the horizon line (Zebrowski, figs. 151, 155 & 161).

The painting has been laid down in an album page, with a striking design in gold on a black ground which, significantly, is signed by an unknown artist from Shorapur, in northern Karnataka, south-east of Bijapur. This is the first inscription linking any work to this place, where according to Zebrowski (pp. 274-77) there was a school of painting from the eighteenth century. Also see Kramrisch, pp. 183, 237 and Binney, nos. 173-74.

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SHAH 'ABBAS II OF PERSIA MEETING AN INDIAN PRINCE

DRAWING

HEIGHT: 8.9 CM, 3 ½ IN

WIDTH: 17.8 CM, 7 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 19 CM, 7 ½ IN

WIDTH: 29.5 CM, 11 ¾ IN

Drawing in ink heightened in colour and gold on paper, signed and dated in a rectangular panel in the foreground, the margins ruled in blue and gold, the borders of finely illuminated interlacing foliate and floral motifs, pasted down in an album page with blue outer borders

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed by the artist in an unpainted cartouche in Persian:

*baba gereft cho gardid shaikh
'abbasi, sanna 1065*

'It (or he) achieved worth because
he became Shaiykh 'Abbasi,'
i.e., he, or his work, gained value because
his patron Shah 'Abbas II had permitted
him to use the *nisba* 'Abbasi

PROVENANCE

Sold Sotheby's, London, 2000
Private collection, New York, 2000-2013

PUBLISHED

Sotheby's, *Indian Miniatures, the Travel Sale,
India & the Far East, Modern &
Contemporary South Asian Paintings*,
London, 8 June 2000, lot 12

BY SHAIKH 'ABBASI

DATED A.H.1065/1654-55 A.D.

According to Robert Skelton, the Safavid artist Shaikh 'Abbasi's known works include seventeen signed and dated examples executed between the years A.H. 1060/1650 A.D. and A.H. 1095/1683-84 A.D. His first patron Shah 'Abbas II (reg. 1642-66) had permitted him to use the *nisba* 'Abbasi, thus giving his work a considerable cachet in his own lifetime. Despite no evidence that he visited the Deccan, some of his work shows a marked interest in Indian styles, particularly those of the Deccan, and conversely his work and that of his sons influenced Golconda artists (Zebrowski, pp. 195-201). Other works of his can be found in the Walters Art Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Rampur Library, the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin and the Musée Guimet, Paris.

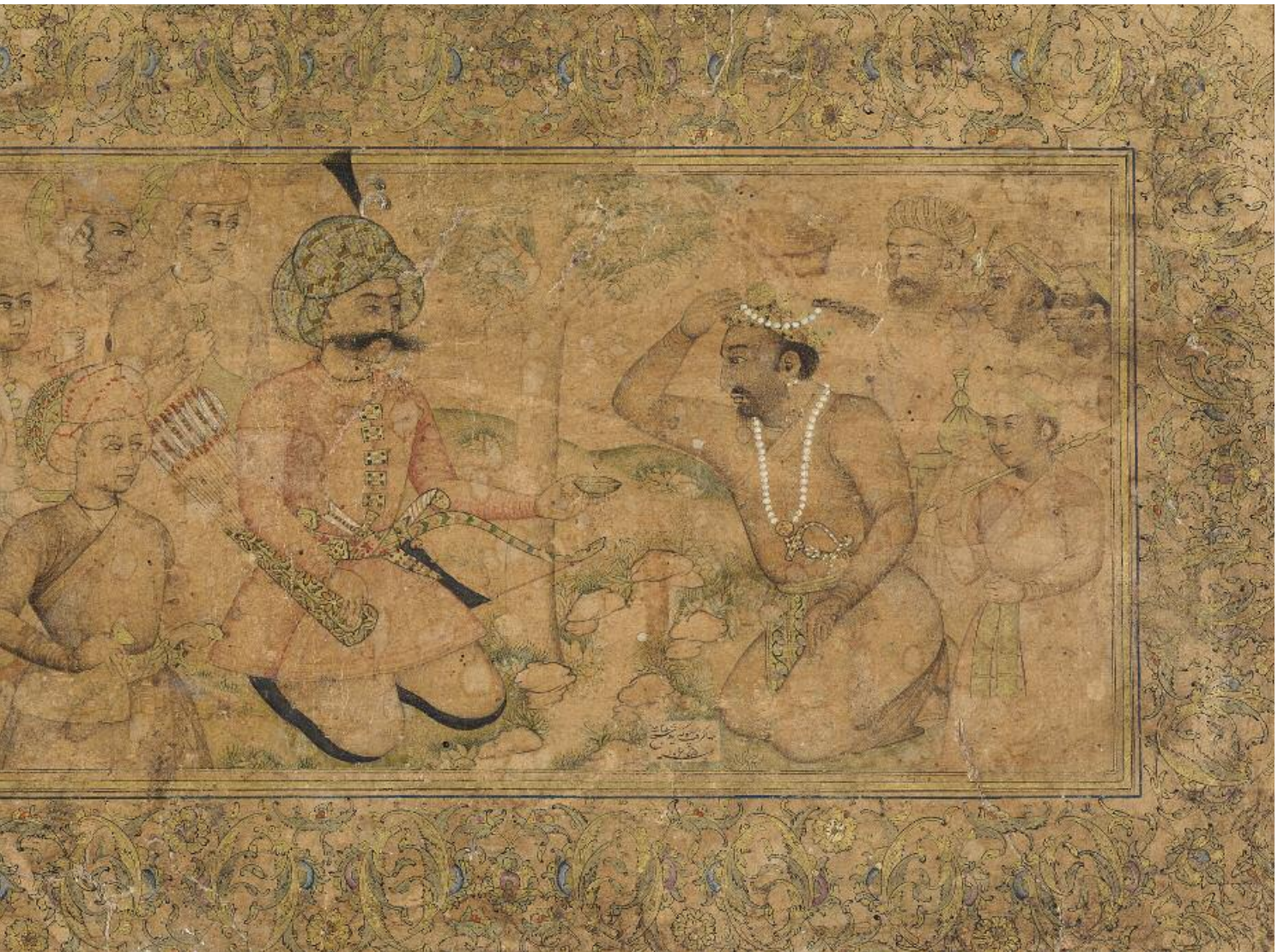
Several versions of this drawing exist, all identically inscribed with the artist's name and the date. One was sold at Boisgirard, Paris, in 2009; a second more highly coloured version was apparently offered at auction in London about ten years ago and a third is in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich. The Rietberg version has only three figures behind the Shah and two behind his visitor, while the other three versions have five figures and four respectively, a difference that might argue for the Rietberg version being the earliest.

In our drawing the figures are arranged symmetrically in a landscape divided by a central tree. To the left Shah 'Abbas II kneels in distinctive Safavid brocade turban and tunic, with quiver and arrows, sword and dagger, attended by five young princes holding a sword, dagger, flask and cup. Three of them wear their hair in fashionable long ringlets in front of their ears. The Shah is offering a cup of wine to the darker-complexioned Indian who raises his hand to his head in salutation. He kneels before the Shah wearing an Indian *jama* and *patka*, into which is tucked his jewelled dagger, with ropes of large pearls round his neck and turban. Four flask- and sword-bearing attendants watch keenly from behind, one bearded. At an early date the drawing seems to have been brought to the Deccan, as it has been mounted in an album page with elaborate inner borders in a distinctly Deccani style.

The identity of the Indian prince remains uncertain, but if the drawing records an actual event, then the visitor would seem from his ropes of pearls to be a prince, as Mughal sumptuary rules confined the wearing of conspicuous jewels to males of the imperial family unless personally given by the Emperor. On the other hand, no Mughal prince seems to have gone to Iran at this time before Sultan Muhammad Akbar fled there after his rebellion against Aurangzeb in 1681. The influence of Shaikh 'Abbasi's style has led to speculation that the prince is from the Deccan, but there is no record of any such visit. A Persian embassy, however, did in fact visit the Deccan in the 1650s and it may be that a Golconda embassy was sent by return to Isfahan. The closest in appearance is Ali 'Adil Shah of Bijapur (reg. 1656-72), who wears a very similar turban in his portraits of the 1650s (see Zebrowski, figs. 108-11), but whose accession is slightly later than the date of these paintings. The hooked nose of the prince in our drawing is, however, found on only one Deccan Sultan, Ibrahim 'Adil Shah of Bijapur (reg. 1579-1627), but as a Mughal prerogative the wearing of earrings (absent in the other three versions) would contradict that.

The Deccan Sultans being Shia had always looked to their co-sectarians in Iran as the source of their legitimacy and indeed the well-known painting in New York, *Sultans of the House of Bijapur* shows Shah Isma'il, the founder of the Safavid dynasty, handing the key of royal power to Yusuf 'Adil Shah,



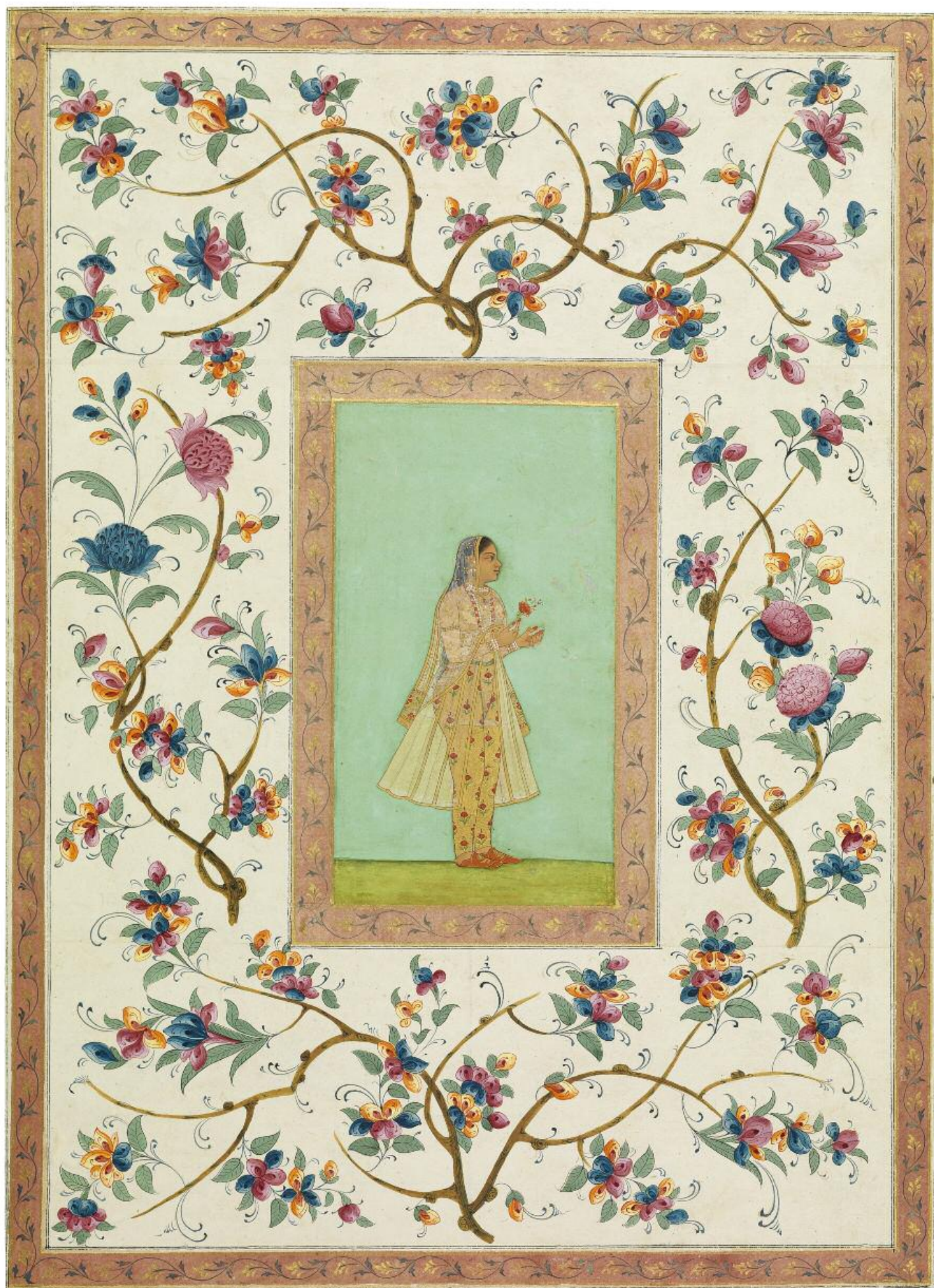


the first of his line in 1519 (Zebrowski, fig. 118a). They acknowledged the Safavid Shahs as their suzerains, but this was ultimately reversed in 1655, the year that this drawing was executed (*Cambridge History of Iran*, 1986, vol.6, p. 300), which can thus be read perhaps as a Safavid reaction to this affront. The drawing in its several versions would then be a Safavid counterblast to its famous Mughal equivalent in the Freer Gallery, showing a robust Jahangir embracing a diminutive Shah 'Abbas I, and pushing him back into the Mediterranean.

Sheila Canby (private communication) has suggested that Shaikh 'Abbasi is basing his work on the earlier ambassadorial encounter depicting the meeting of Shah 'Abbas I with Khan 'Alam, the Mughal ambassador, which took place in 1618 and was painted by Riza-yi 'Abbasi and Bishn Das (see Canby, nos. 19-21).

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 Skelton, R., *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, 1982: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abbasi-sayk>
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A FOLIO FROM THE POLIER ALBUM: PORTRAIT OF A STANDING LADY

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 15 CM, 6 IN

WIDTH: 8 CM, 3 ¼ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 39.3 CM, 15 ½ IN

WIDTH: 29.2 CM, 11 ½ IN

CALLIGRAPHY

HEIGHT: 23 CM, 9 IN

WIDTH: 11.6 CM, 4 ½ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, the background added in Avadh, circa 1780, laid down in an eighteenth century album page, on the reverse four lines of *nasta'liq* calligraphy on a gold and silver floral ground

INSCRIPTIONS

The calligraphy:

A quatrain in Persian in black *nasta'liq*, signed
mubammad 'ali 1195 [1781 A.D.]

PROVENANCE

Colonel Antoine Louis Henri de Polier
(1741-95)

Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872),
acquired from Howell & Stewart, 1834

The Robinson Trust
Sold Sotheby's, London, 1974
Private collection, Virginia,
1974-2013

PUBLISHED

Sotheby's, *Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts,
Indian and Persian Miniatures: Bibliotheca
Phillippica, part IX*, London, 27 November
1974, p.91, lot 745 (unillustrated)

Verso illustrated on inside back cover

MUGHAL, CIRCA 1660

This is very possibly a specific portrait, as the face is clearly not that of the conventional pretty female seen in other contemporary images, her small snub nose set in the middle of a broad face giving her a strong though now anonymous identity. Standing holding an orange poppy, she is dressed in a plain muslin *choli* beneath a transparent *pesbwaj*, with pink ruffles and gold edging tied at the breasts, over gold brocade *salvar* sprigged with orange poppies. Over all is a transparent muslin *odhani* or veil, sprigged with gold flowers, that is draped round her upper body and over her loose hair. Her jewels include a necklace and bracelets of pearls, pearl and emerald earrings and rings on her hennaed fingers.

The present portrait is part of a very select group of seventeenth century Mughal female portraits. The lady is not wearing a *patka* which is unusual for the seventeenth century, although there is another, of 1631-33, in the Dara Shikoh Album (Falk & Archer, no. 68, f. 14). This album (Losty & Roy, pp. 124-37), is the first to include portraits of women, both Muslim and Hindu, as a standard component of a *muraqqa'*. Following this, one of the earliest is a portrait study of Gul Safa, identified as one of Dara Shikoh's paramours (Falk & Archer, no. 73), and others are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Hurel, no. 69), the Khalili Collection (Leach, no. 29), and the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Wright, no. 79). Such portraits never become common in the seventeenth century – only one such study is known from the Late Shah Jahan Album of the 1650s (Dye, no. 79).

The ground here and the dividing straight line suggests that the background has been repainted in Lucknow for Col. Polier, who often had pictures 'finished' by his own artists. Here this is clear from very slight smudging round the ends of the woman's *odhani* and *pesbwaj*. Col. Antoine Louis de Polier (1741-95) was a Swiss adventurer in India, first in the service of the East India Company and subsequently in that of the Nawab of Avadh. He assembled a large number of albums of Mughal paintings, put together and decorated in his own studio in Faizabad and Lucknow, and now mostly in the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin, see Hickmann & Enderlein. The Polier Album acquired by Sir Thomas Phillipps is one of a small number that escaped, and other pages are in the British Museum, British Library and the Achenbach Foundation, San Francisco.

The small portrait has allowed Polier's border artist to create an untypically wide border with four many-branched stems bearing varied flowers of different colours. The calligraphy is by Muhammad 'Ali, who was active at the court of Shah 'Alam II (1728-1806) and was tutor to his son Prince Kam Bakhsh. Two album pages with calligraphy by him, one dated A.H. 1196/1781-2 A.D., are in the Archaeological Museum, New Delhi, see Bayani, vol. 3, no. 1149, p. 788.

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AN EQUESTRIAN PORTRAIT PERHAPS DEPICTING IKHLAS KHAN

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 22.5 CM, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN

WIDTH: 15.8 CM, 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 26 CM, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN

WIDTH: 18.5 CM, 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with
gold on paper, pasted down on card

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed in Nagari at top: *sbri*

PROVENANCE

Acquired in Gwalior in 1931

Private collection, England, 1931-2013

GOLCONDA, 1670-80

Both subject and horse are distinctively Deccani, the costume of the former relating to other seventeenth century royal portraits. The physiognomy of the horse has been captured with great skill - rearing in the haste and excitement of a procession proceeded and followed by flag, fan and banner-waving male attendants - and the splendour of his gold trappings would appear to reinforce a royal identity of the subject. A very closely related horse appears in another equestrian portrait formerly in the Welch collection, *Saint Shah Raju on horseback*, by Rasul Khan, Golconda, circa 1675 (Zebrowski, pp.196-7, fig.161; Sotheby's, 2011, lot 127). The wide glinting eye, flaring nostrils, open mouth with lolling tongue, braided mane, tasseled trappings and powerful presence of the stallion are all stylistically close. An almost unique feature of the horse trappings common to both paintings is the decorative hanging attached to the crouper over its rump.

The rider wears a long white *jama* embroidered with flowering sprigs and a small tight turban of gold brocade. Also of gold brocade are his long *patka* and *dupatta* wound round his upper body in the Deccani manner. A black belt with gold studs holds the *patka* in place. A curved sword or *tulvar* and a shield are hanging on his left side and a bow with a quiver of arrows on his right. He carries another straight sword (*khandan*) slung over his shoulder.

In spite of the royal trappings, the subject bears a considerable resemblance to the powerful minister Ikhlas Khan of Bijapur, and several scholars now conclude that this is in all probability the subject of this portrait. Malik Raihan Habshi, a *Habshi* or African noble of Abyssinian descent in the service of the Bijapur sultans, was given the title Ikhlas Khan after he contrived the murder of the minister Khawas Khan in 1635. He rose to the position of *Wakil al-Sultanat* or *Vakil* and *Amir-i Jumla* or finance minister of Bijapur under Muhammad 'Adil Shah (reg. 1627-56). He is known to us from several paintings, in particular *Sultan Muhammad 'Adil Shah and Ikhlas Khan riding an elephant*, in the Hodgkin Collection, where Ikhlas Khan wears the same belt as here (Topsfield 2011, pp.94-5, no.36), and *The Durbar of Sultan Muhammad 'Adil Shah* in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur, dated 1651 (Zebrowski, no. 95). Two other portraits of Ikhlas Khan are in the British Library (Falk & Archer, nos. 404 & 409) and a third is in the Binney Collection, San Diego (Zebrowski, no. 96). His depiction here with the paraphernalia of a ruler is perhaps a reflection of his real power at court. The faces of the boy attendants show Rajput traits, as influences from north India spread into the Deccan via Mughal military expeditions. For a similar influence, shown in an earlier Golconda royal processional painting of 'Abdallah Qutb Shah of Golconda (reg. 1626-72), circa 1635-40, in the Polsky Collection, New York, see Topsfield 2004, no. 94.

Africans were known at the various Deccan courts and several reached high positions as ministers, see Alderman, J.R., "Paintings of Africans in the Deccan" in Robbins and McLeod. Our painting shows the influence of Bijapur painting on that of Golconda after the last Sultan Abu'l Hasan (reg. 1672-87) came to power, see Zebrowski, pp. 193-95.



REFERENCES

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 Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983



MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 20.5 CM, 8 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 14 CM, 5 ½ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 28.7 CM, 11 ⅝ IN

WIDTH: 20.5 CM, 8 ⅝ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper; on the reverse an eighteenth century drawing of two ladies, one embracing the other

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on reverse in Hindi in a fine and large Nagari script:
masa dedh laumki naukam / likhচিত্রা yah Achyaram Ram // srir astu astuyam
 'a new work done in a month and a half; the artist is Accha Ram – may it be auspicious'

An inscription on a pasted down piece of repair paper beside the eighteenth century drawing identifies the larger of the ladies the Padshah Begum, i.e., Princess Jahanara, and reads:
Patsa Shahjihan ri beti Patsa Vegam
 'the Padshah Begum, daughter of Emperor Shah Jahan'

PROVENANCE

Comtesse Lillan Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (1914-2008) and Serge Lifar (1905-86), the Russian dancer and choreographer, Lausanne, Switzerland

BY ACCHA RAM

BIKANER, 1675-1700

A magnificent crowned red Garuda with red and green wings wearing a blue *dboti*, is flying through the air bearing the god Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi. Vishnu is four-armed and carries his normal attributes of conch, lotus, mace and discus and sits on one of Garuda's wings, looking across at his consort who is seated cross-legged on the other wing in an adoring posture. They fly across a landscape that is mostly bare apart from the stream and trees in the foreground. The hill behind them rises to a crown, behind which are further dark hills bestrewn with trees and flowers, with a distant white fortress enclosed by pink walls.

There are several references in the painting to the links between Bikaner and the Deccan. One of the most distinguished schools of Rajput painting, Bikaner produced remarkable court painters, many of them known by name, in the course of the seventeenth century. From its 'Popular Mughal' beginnings, it had advanced by the middle of the seventeenth century to a school whose artists were some of the most sophisticated working in Rajasthan. This was because the Maharajas of Bikaner, Karan Singh (r. 1631-69) and his son Anup Singh (r. 1669-98), consistently sent back paintings and artists from the Deccan, where both were fighting as military commanders for the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. The art and artists of the Deccan had a profound influence on Bikaner painting. Noticeable here in particular are the large stylised trees on either side of Garuda, which are found in Deccani painting from the last quarter of the seventeenth century (Zebrowski, *passim*), as well as the landscape at the top of the painting, which reflects the style of Bijapur around 1590-1620. Hills crowned by palaces in this format are found in the *Pem-nem* manuscript of 1591 in the British Library (Hutton, figs. 1-5), in the famous painting of a Yogini, circa 1610-20, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Zebrowski, pl. XII), and in the Golconda version of a Bijapur prince hawking, circa 1620, also in the British Library (*ibid.*, fig. 138).

A page from a *Rasikapriya*, once in the Lalbagh Palace in Bikaner, ascribed to the great Bikaner artist Ruknuddin also reflects this Deccani landscape influence of hillsides crowned by palaces (Goetz, fig. 78). Ruknuddin was in the train of Raja Anup Singh when he led the final Mughal assault on Golconda in 1687 (see Desai, no. 29), and perhaps personally brought back this style to Bikaner. Influence from the Deccan is also seen on another contemporary Bikaner version of the same subject in the Goenka Collection, Mumbai (Goswamy & Bhatia, no. 112). In spite of the obvious quality of Accha Ram's work, as illustrated here, other works by him have not yet been recorded, nor is there reference to him in the literature.

REFERENCES

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AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: HINDOLA RAGA KRISHNA AND THE GOPIS

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 17.3 CM, 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN

WIDTH: 14 CM, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 20.1 CM, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN

WIDTH: 17 CM, 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper, with gold-sprinkled
border, laid down on card

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Virginia, 1988-2013

BIKANER, 1680-1700

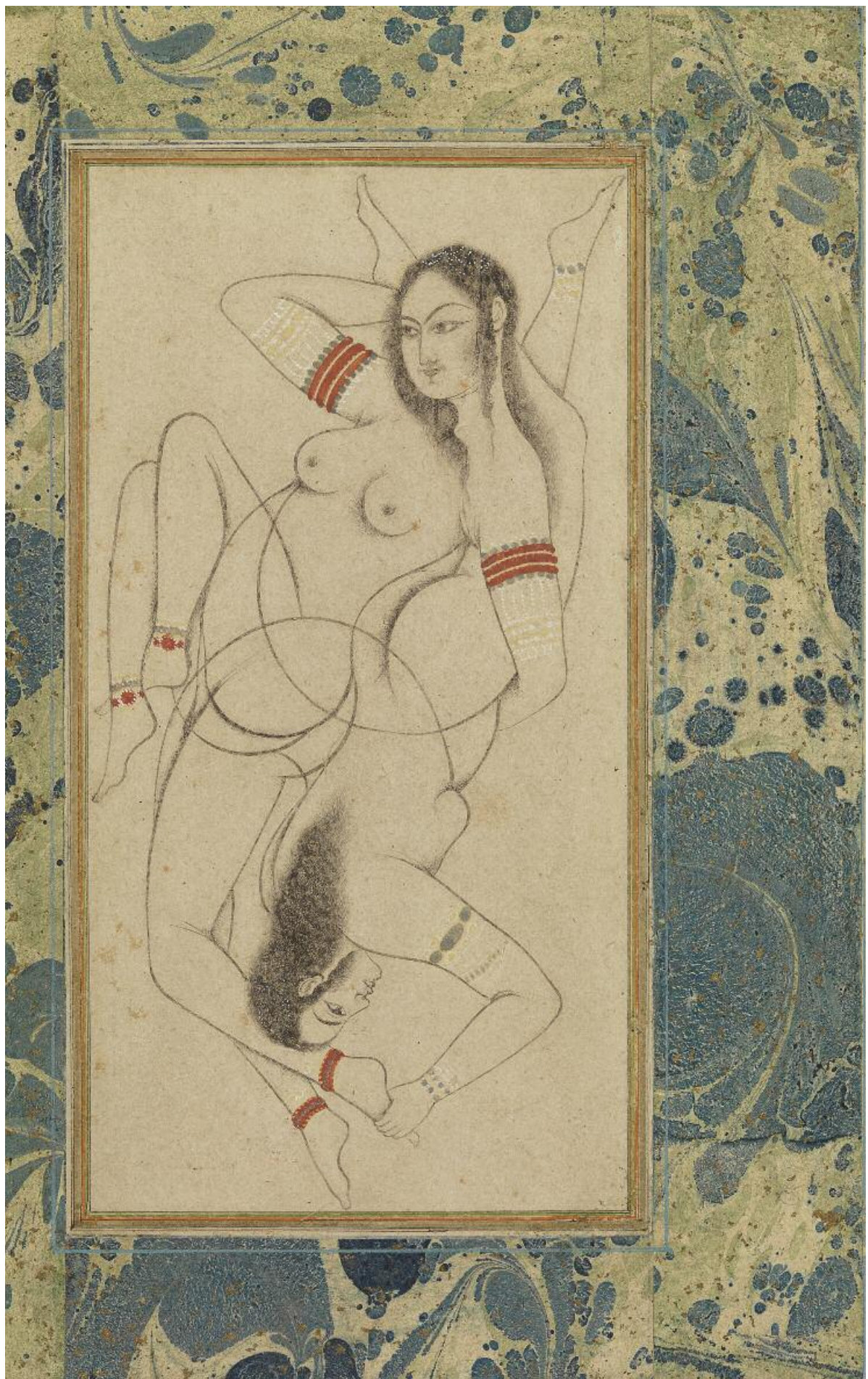
A swing has been erected on a terrace and a crowned Krishna is sitting on it surrounded by *gopis* who either help push the swing or else play musical instruments. Other *gopis* dance and sing in front of the swing. The pentagonal terrace is covered by a dark blue carpet with swirling gold arabesques. Behind the terrace the artist supplies only a yellow ground, here flanked by tall fruiting trees, with a cloudy blue sky above with a brilliant gilt sun breaking through.

From its 'Popular Mughal' beginnings, often with a plain yellow background as here, Bikaner painting had advanced by the middle of the seventeenth century to a school whose artists were some of the most sophisticated working in Rajasthan. This was because the Maharajas of Bikaner, Karan Singh (r. 1631-69) and his son Anup Singh (r. 1669-98), consistently sent back paintings and artists from the Deccan, where both were fighting as military commanders in the armies of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, while artists from the imperial studio in Delhi also played a part in shaping the style in the course of the seventeenth century. Here the shape of the terrace and the overall composition recall *Madhavanala swooning before Kamakandala*, a brilliant Bikaner painting executed by an imperial artist from Delhi, circa 1670, formerly in the Walter and Lloyd Collections (Losty, no. 6; Aitken, fig. 5.72). This sophisticated Bikaneri style flourished briefly but then gave ground to a more traditionally Rajput approach, as in the dispersed *Bhagavata Purana* of 1690-1710 (Goswamy & Bhatia, nos. 120-23; Topsfield, no. 60 and references). Our painting with its brilliantly coloured but diminutive doll-like figures would seem to be contemporary with the early phases of that series. A comparable painting showing Krishna on a swing with Radha, painted by Nuruddin in 1683, formerly in the Khajanchi Collection (Khandalavala, Chandra & Chandra, no. 93, fig. 72), depicts Krishna wearing a crown with tall pointed finials, as here, and this is also found in a painting of Vishnu with Lakshmi dated 1699, see Goetz, fig. 79.

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MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 18.2 CM, 7 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 9.5 CM, 3 ¾ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 28.5 CM, 11 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 16.8 CM, 6 ¾ IN

Brush drawing with colour on paper,
laid down in an album page with
marbled border, pasted on card

PROVENANCE

Private collection, London, 1980s

Private collection, New York, 1987-2012

EXHIBITED

Images of India, Indar Pasricha Fine Arts,
London, 1987

PUBLISHED

Falk, T. and Lynch, B., *Images of India*,
London, 1987, p.16, no.13

GOLCONDA OR HYDERABAD, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A semi-naked woman reclining languorously with her arms over her head was a subject introduced into Safavid Iran by Riza-i 'Abbasi in the late sixteenth century. His painting in the Freer Gallery, Washington (Atil, no. 56), and a related drawing formerly in the Welch Collection (Welch & Masteller, no. 9), were the basis of several later versions (*ibid.*, p. 59, n. 7). Welch in his description of the drawing in 2004 suggested it was based on Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving of a languorous Cleopatra similarly reclining, but on a bed and with snake armlets round her upper arms. Such an image of a semi-naked woman obviously based on a Persian model proved popular as well in seventeenth-century Golconda, this time as a courtesan sitting up with a flask in her hand (Zebrowski, fig. 148). It is these kinds of images that provide the raw material for our present drawing, in which the Persian influence is still very apparent, but it has been interpreted in a novel way.

Although there are only two heads and torsos, there are in fact four women entwined in this enterprising drawing, since each of the women's heads has two possible continuations of the lower part of her body, one of them shared. In contrast to the still half-dressed Golconda courtesan, the women are now completely naked save for the *bazubands* or armlets which have been restored to their upper arms, referring back, unconsciously no doubt, to the Raimondi engraving of Cleopatra. Such trick drawings of various subjects, often animals, are of ancient inspiration and of widespread distribution. The subject of three hares in a triangle sharing their ears is found in the caves at Dunhuang and half a millennium later in various churches in England and northern Europe. Similar subjects are found from Turkey and Persia as early as the sixteenth century (e.g. Atil, no. 28), and obviously had some effect on Mughal and Deccani drawings. A Mughal or Rajasthani drawing in the Cincinnati Museum is of horses in a circle with four heads and six bodies (Smart & Walker, no. 15).

REFERENCES

- Atil, E., *The Brush of the Masters: Drawings from Iran and India*, Washington D.C., 1978
 Smart, E., and Walker, D., *Pride of the Princes: Indian Art of the Mughal Era in the Cincinnati Art Museum*, Cincinnati, 1985
 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
 Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983

PORTRAIT OF NAWAB DARAB KHAN SEATED SMOKING A HUQQA

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 17.8 CM, 7 IN

WIDTH: 12 CM, 4 7/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 20.1 CM, 8 IN

WIDTH: 14.4 CM, 5 5/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper, pink border

INSCRIPTIONS

A line of Nagari on the reverse
reading: *Nawab Darab Khan*

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Virginia, 2002-2013

DECCAN, CIRCA 1700

Darab Khan was the son of Mukhtar Khan of Sabzawar, south of Herat. He was one of the first to throw in his lot with Prince Aurangzeb in the succession war of 1658-59 and was richly rewarded, firstly as governor of the fort of Ahmadnagar, and shortly afterwards with various appointments both at court and in the provinces, including Master of the Horse, Governor of Ajmer and Head of the Artillery. He died in 1697. Although he personally spent little time in the Deccan, Shahnawaz Khan goes on to say (vol. 1, pp. 449-50) that his grandson Muhammad Taqi Khan spent much time in the Deccan at Aurangabad, and it is perhaps to his patronage that we owe this charming portrait of his grandfather, based on an earlier Mughal portrait done probably when he was in his thirties. The Nawab is shown smoking from a beautiful *bidri*-ware hookah and is unusually attended by a girl who stands

behind him with a cloth of honour in her hand. Comparable pictures may be seen in Zebrowski 1983, figs. 181-82 & 196.

REFERENCES

Shahnawaz Khan and 'Abd al-Hayy, *The Maathir-ul-Umara*, trans. H. Beveridge, rev. Baini Prashad, Calcutta, 1911-52
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983



13 A SEATED NOBLEMAN SMOKING A HOOKAH

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 16.8 CM, 6 ⅝ IN

WIDTH: 15.2 CM, 6 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 19.8 CM, 7 ¾ IN

WIDTH: 18.3 CM, 7 ¼ IN

Brush drawing with some colour
on paper, with dark blue border

PROVENANCE

Garner Collection, London

MUGHAL, CIRCA 1700

A Mughal nobleman sits leaning against a red bolster with a meditation band encircling his pulled-up legs. He is dressed in a white *angarkhi* and turban and sports a magnificent black beard. He is smoking from a hookah, apparently of jade with jewelled insets, of which the snake forms a striking curve. One hand is about to put the snake to his mouth, the other rests on his knees. Behind him stands an attendant youth, wearing a similar costume, and holding a cloth of honour in one hand while the other hangs loose. This seems to be a preliminary drawing for a terrace scene of an interview, for the nobleman is in a good humour as he smiles across at his missing interlocutor.

This striking drawing belongs to an increasingly common genre in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century of formal portraits of Mughal officials and ministers done in line drawings with only their heads more or less finished. The degree of finishing of their clothes varies. Comparable examples, in the Johnson Collection in the British

Library, include drawings of Islam Khan Rumi ascribed to Chitarman (Falk & Archer, no. 107), and of Shaista Khan ascribed to Gyan Chand, both circa 1670 (*ibid.*, no. 109), and in the Fondation Custodia, Paris, also ascribed to Chitarman (Gahlin, pl. 37).

A similar group in the British Museum, all from one seventeenth century album, also has attributions to Chitarman, for which see Martin 1912, pls. 187 A & B, and for others in the group, pls. 184-97. Our nobleman is attended by a youth, whose elongated body and comparatively small head are more common in portraits of the early eighteenth century (e.g. Losty & Roy, fig. 104). This drawing seems to stand at the beginning of that trend.

REFERENCES

- Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
Gahlin, S., *The Courts of India: Indian Miniatures from the Collection of the Fondation Custodia, Paris*, Zwolle, 1991
Losty, J. P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012
Martin, F. R., *The Miniature Paintings of Persia, India and Turkey*, London, 1912



MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 21.1 CM, 8 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 16.4 CM, 6 ½ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 31 CM, 12 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 21 CM, 8 ¼ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, laid down in an orange album page mounted with an oval seal

INSCRIPTIONS

Gilt *nasta'liq* at upper right:
tasvir-e muhammad sa'id
"Painting of Muhammad Sa'id"

In black *nasta'liq* above each of
the attendants, left to right:
Murad "Murad" and *darvishi* "Darvishi"

The seal reads:
khwajah muhammad sa'id ibn khwajah
sangin naqshbandi 1127
"Khwajah Muhammad Sa'id ibn
Khwajah Sangin Nasqshbandi
1127 / 1715"

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England,
1968-2013

DECCAN, CIRCA 1720

A prince dressed in a long green *jama* sprigged with gold flowers is out hunting. He holds a falcon with his gloved right hand while a delightful saluki hound bounds along beside him, its nose and tail in the air and its ears flapping. Two attendants dressed in white march alongside, one holding a *bidri* ware hookah, the other a cloth and possibly some tethers. In the landscape above the rider, a cheetah bounds after the fleeing gazelles and hares while another cheetah has already brought down one of the deer. The landscape of green hillocks topped by stone ridges and dotted sparsely with trees recedes under the top frame of the painting. Although the painting has been cut down on the left, this does not appear to be the case at the top and the absence of a horizon is deliberate as in some other hunting pictures.

The style and composition of this painting resembles another early eighteenth century Deccani painting showing 'Ali Ashgar Khan out hunting, now in the Museum Rietberg, Zürich, which likewise is painted mostly in green (Zebrowski, fig. 206). This was the norm for hunting paintings in general, as well as their somewhat closed compositions without horizons suggesting the hunt taking place in the jungle (see Koch).

Unusually in our painting the identifying inscription and the name on the seal match, but it is not known at the moment who exactly Muhammad Sa'id might have been.

REFERENCES

- Koch, E., *Dara Shikoh Shooting Nilgais: Hunt and Landscape in Mughal Painting*, Washington D.C., 1998
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983







MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 23.3 CM, 9 ⅞ IN

WIDTH: 14.9 CM, 5 ⅞ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 31.3 CM, 12 ⅞ IN

WIDTH: 20.6 CM, 8 ⅞ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper, laid down in a plain
album page with gilt rulings

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the verso in Nagari:
Syah Alam Padshah // suta Bahadur
Syahji 'Shah 'Alam Padshah [Emperor];
the son Bahadur Shah'
Inscribed in Persian:
Bahadur shah badshah
'Emperor Bahadur Shah'
Beneath this is a price in *siyaq* numerals

PROVENANCE

Comtesse Lillan Ahlefeldt-Laurvig
(1914-2008) and Serge Lifar (1905-86),
the Russian dancer and choreographer,
Lausanne, Switzerland

RAJASTHAN, PERHAPS KISHANGARH, CIRCA 1720

Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam (1643-1712) was the second son of the Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1656-1707) and was appointed to many senior posts in the latter's reign. He was awarded the title of Shah 'Alam Bahadur on 15 October 1676 for his role in the expedition to Kabul. His birth and titles were of no avail when he was misled by his closest officers during Aurangzeb's final assaults on Bijapur and Golconda in 1686-87, and he was charged with holding secret consultations with the rulers of Golconda. Aurangzeb reluctantly had him imprisoned from 1687 to 1694. After his release he governed the north-west from Lahore and then Kabul, during the period when Aurangzeb remained permanently in the Deccan. After his father's death in 1707, he claimed the throne as the eldest surviving son and defeated and killed his brother 'Azam Shah at Jajuwan in 1707, and another brother Kambakhsh at Hyderabad in 1708. After a brief reign in which rebellions and dissensions among the nobility heralded the oncoming disintegration of the empire, he died in 1712 and was buried beside the beautiful white marble mosque he had built in Mehrauli near the tomb of Qutb Sahib.

The nimbate Emperor is depicted standing holding a jewel in his left hand and the hilt of his straight sword in his right. He is richly bejewelled with several necklaces of gems and pearls wound round his neck and turban and he wears an elaborate brocaded short coat over his *jama*. His feet are firmly planted on a clearly defined ground with clumps of flowering plants, while the ground behind is left blank below before becoming enlivened at the top with streaks of gold, pink and blue. The Emperor's stance is derived from a contemporary Mughal portrait in the National Museum, New Delhi, but in mirror reverse (Schimmel, pl. 19), where his beard is still black.

Portraits of Bahadur Shah are difficult to identify with certainty since in his youth he so resembles his father Aurangzeb (Hurel, no. 84 for example) and one of his sons 'Azim al-Shan (Losty & Roy, fig. 97), while portraits of him as emperor are rare. What is probably the safest identified portrait of the young Bahadur Shah is that in the Gentil collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Hurel, no. 109), painted about 1675, although even now that portrait is sometimes confused with the young Aurangzeb. There the prince appears to be about thirty years old. The standing portrait in Delhi (Schimmel, pl. 19), would seem to be of him just before his accession in 1707 with the background and halo added later. For a representation of him being enthroned as Emperor in the Gahlin Collection, London, see Beach, Koch & Thackston, fig. 21, where his beard is now very grey, as it is here.

On stylistic grounds this portrait seems to have been painted in Rajasthan rather than actually being a Mughal work. Kishangarh is a likely candidate, as Mughal artists such as Bhavani Das and Dalchand are known to have worked there, possibly introduced through one of Bahadur Shah's wives, Amrit Bai Sahiba, the daughter of Maharaja Rup Singh of Kishangarh. For other portraits of Mughal emperors painted or added to at Kishangarh, see Losty, no. 31 (of Aurangzeb) and *ibid.*, no. 13 (of Bahadur Shah), also Ehnbohm 1985, no. 28.

REFERENCES

- Beach, M. C., Koch, E., and Thackston, W., *King of the World, the Padshahnama*, London, 1997
Ehnbohm, D., *Indian Miniatures: the Ehrenfeld Collection*, New York, 1985
Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, Vol. I, 2010, Vol. II, 2011
Losty, J. P., *Paintings from the Royal Courts of India*, Francesca Galloway, London, 2008
Losty, J. P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012
Schimmel, A.-M., *The Empire of the Great Mughals, History, Art and Culture*, New Delhi, 2005

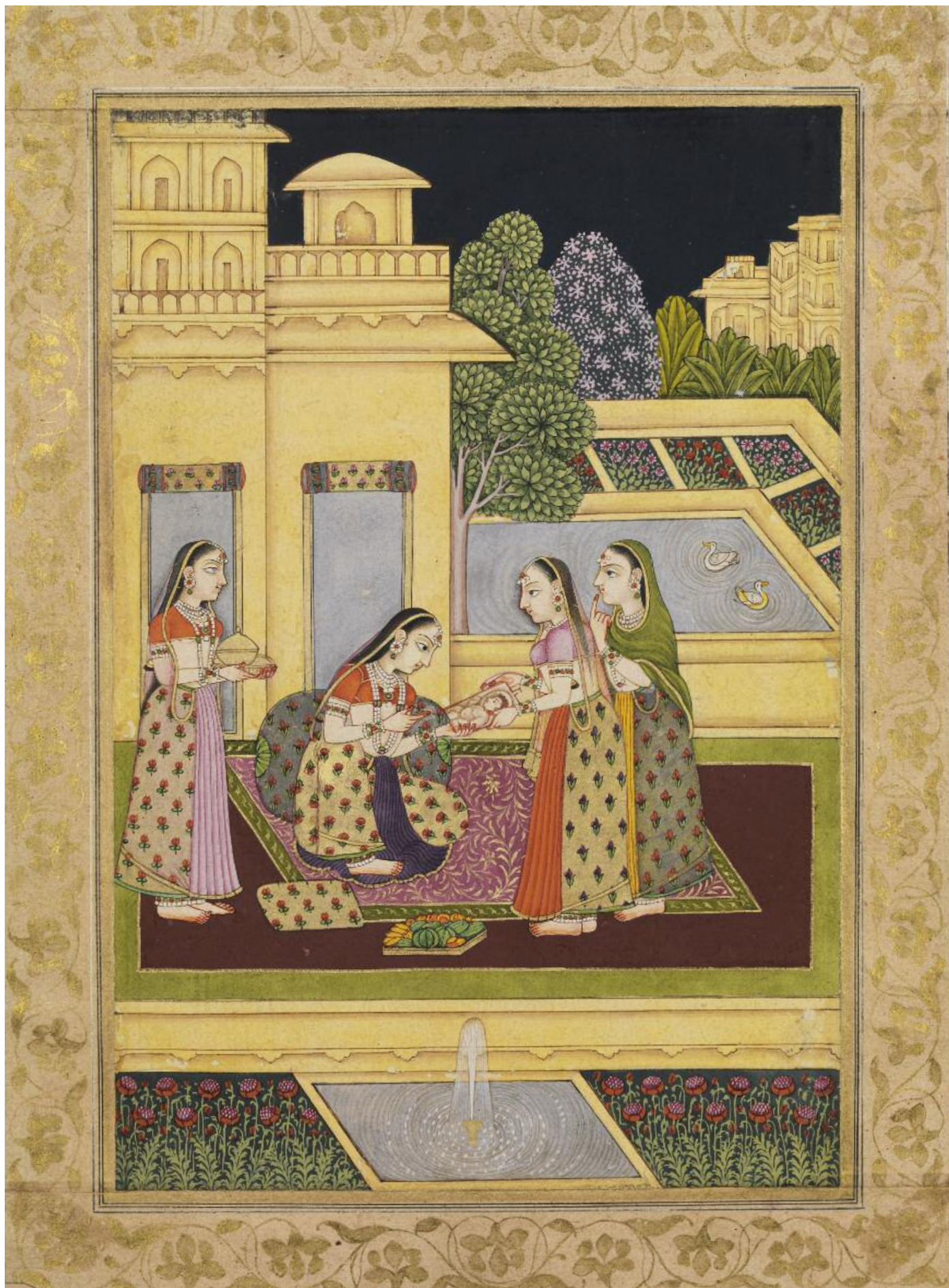


ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: DHANASRI RAGINI LADY EXAMINING A PORTRAIT OF A BABY

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 22 CM, 8 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 14.8 CM, 5 ⅞ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 28 CM, 11 IN
WIDTH: 20.8 CM, 8 ⅞ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold
on paper, within a gold floral border

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the reverse in Telugu:
Dahanasri
and in Persian on an attached label:
Dhanasri ragini hindol

PROVENANCE

Galerie Marco Polo, Paris, 1978
Comtesse Lillan Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (1914-2008)
and Serge Lifar (1905-86), the Russian dancer
and choreographer, Lausanne, Switzerland

EXHIBITED

Princesses et Courtisanes, Galerie Marco Polo,
Paris, 1978

PUBLISHED

Dallapiccola, A., *Princesses et Courtisanes*,
Galerie Marco Polo, Paris, 1978, no.44

HYDERABAD, CIRCA 1750

A lady is seated on a carpet on a terrace examining a picture of a boy child lying in a cot with cushions round his head. The drawing board is being held by one of her attendant women while two others are present at this night scene. A fountain plays in front between beds of poppies. Beyond the terrace is a mansion and a pool surrounded by parterres with a distant view of a city beyond.

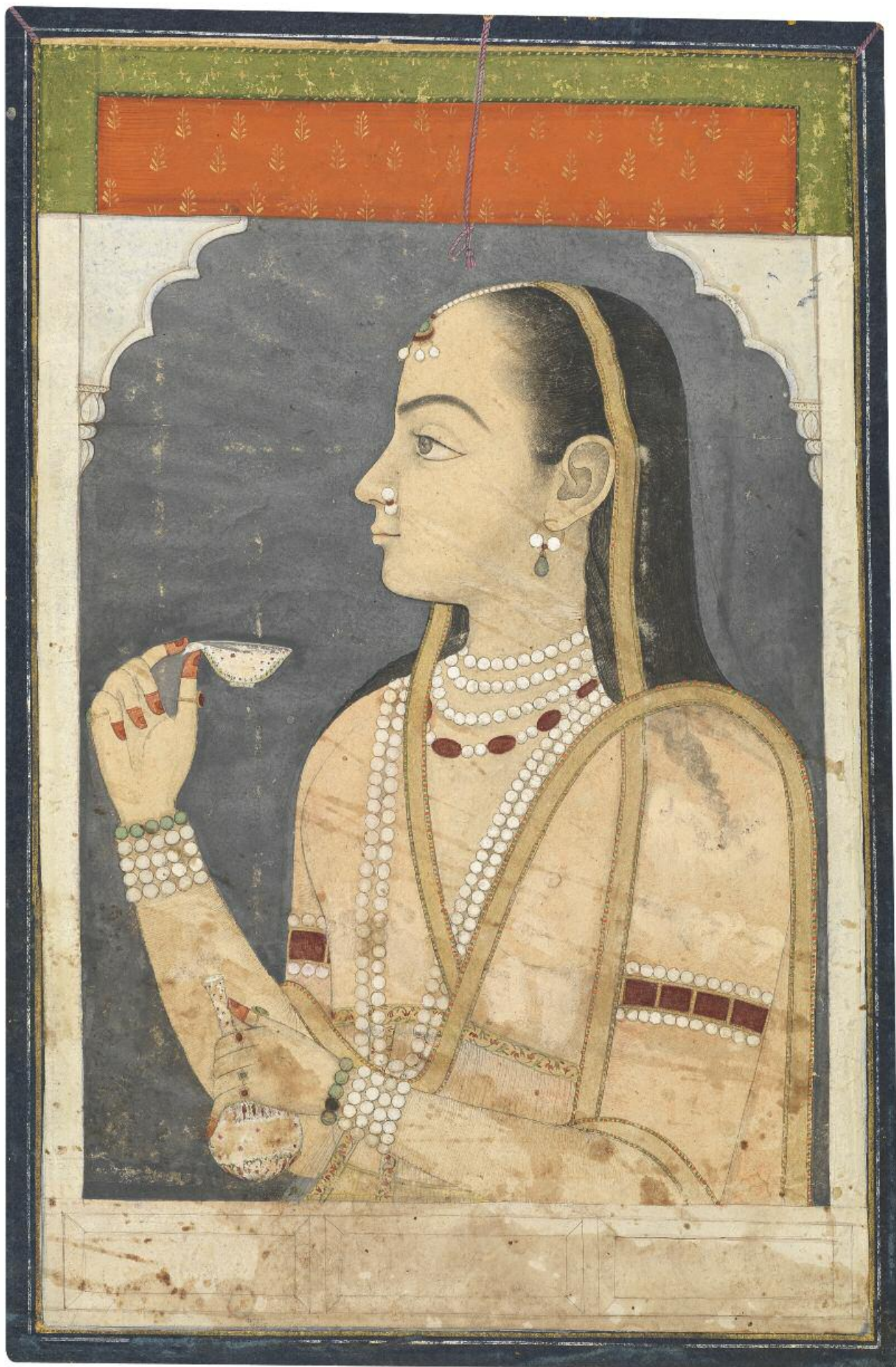
Dhanasri ragini is usually depicted as a lady suffering the pangs of separation, normally from her lover, and to assuage them she draws a portrait of him on a wooden panel, as in a stylistically very similar painting to ours in Berlin (Waldschmidt, fig. 86). One alternative iconography depicts her writing her beloved a letter, as in the Richard Johnson Hyderabad *Ragamala* in the British Library of circa 1760 (Falk & Archer, no. 426, xx), and in another Deccani version in the Moscatelli Collection (Glynn, Skelton & Dallapiccola, no. 17). According to Skelton (ibid., p. 72), this variation corresponds with the Persian translation of the *ragamala* text found on the painting of *Dhanasri ragini* from the earliest known Deccani series of the late sixteenth century (Zebrowski, fig. 29). A second alternative, as here, shows her looking at a picture of a baby, no doubt one she hopes to have by her absent lover. This same iconography of examining a portrait of a baby is found in a *Dhanasri ragini* from a contemporary Deccani *ragamala* set, in the Kumar Collection, Paris (Ebeling, fig. 88). In both instances the lady is not holding the portrait panel in order to draw it, but instead is being shown the portrait of the baby that is being held by the attendant. Certainly there seems here to be no sign of a brush for her to draw the image. The iconography of Deccani *ragamalas* is never completely fixed. A *Todi ragini* from the same set is in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich, while a Kedar *ragini* was sold in New York at Bonham's in 2012.

Nizam 'Ali of Hyderabad (r. 1762-1802) was a patron of music, poetry and painting and during his reign various exquisite *ragamala* sets were produced, many of them of court quality, exemplified by the *ragamala* now in the British Library, acquired by Richard Johnson when Resident to the Nizam's court 1784-85 (Falk & Archer, no. 426). It and the several other sets of court quality (Ebeling, nos. 69-73, now joined by Seyller & Seitz, nos. 47-52 and references), seem to belong to the early part of the Nizam's reign in the 1760s. They all display a keen interest in composition in depth, while architectural vistas in western type perspective, borrowed from topographical prints, are a key component of the style. These concerns remained central in the Hyderabad style for the rest of the century as in the six pages from a *Ragamala* (with similar gilt floral borders to ours) in the Moscatelli Collection, London (Glynn, Skelton & Dallapiccola, nos. 17-21). Our painting and other similar sets, with their conceptual approach to vegetation and architecture, seem more in tune with earlier Hyderabad painting without western influences and can be dated slightly earlier.

REFERENCES

- Bonham's, *Indian, Himalayan and Southeast Asian Art*, New York, 11 September 2012, lot 76
Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
Glynn, C., Skelton, R., and Dallapiccola, A., *Ragamala Paintings from India from the Claudio Moscatelli Collection*, London, 2011
Seyller, J., and Seitz, K., *Mughal and Deccani Paintings*, Zürich, 2010
Waldschmidt, E. and R. L., *Miniatures of Musical Inspiration in the Collection of the Berlin Museum of Indian Art, Part II, Ragamala Pictures from Northern India and the Deccan*, Berlin, 1975
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983





MINIATURE: FEMALE

HEIGHT: 27.5 CM, 10 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 17.7 CM, 6 7/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 34.9 CM, 13 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 24.8 CM, 9 7/8 IN

MINIATURE: MALE

HEIGHT: 27 CM, 10 5/8 IN

WIDTH: 18 CM, 7 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 35 CM, 13 3/4 IN

WIDTH: 25 CM, 9 7/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, laid down in a gold-sprinkled buff album page with dark blue borders and gilt rulings, the verso of the prince with a cheetah attacking an antelope, that of the princess with a bird in a tree, variously annotated in Persian and Nagari

INSCRIPTIONS

Each with a later inscription, in Gurmukhi script, the first over the prince:

Nur Jahan badshahi zadi

'Nur Jahan princess'

The second inscription is a literary quotation perhaps from Bihari's Satsai: 'The young girl in love, a flask of wine in her hand / Fills a cup and urges, "Drink this beloved"'

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland,
late 1960s-2013

MUGHAL, CIRCA 1750

A young man and woman, obviously part of a set of such portraits since they are numbered above, gaze to the left out of fictive windows. He holds a rose up to his nose, she a wine cup and a flask. Their windows are in fact architectural features with two uprights supporting an engrailed arch. The prince is identified -strangely, for the portrait seems definitely male- as either Nur Jahan, Jahangir's formidable wife, or else her daughter, it is not clear. This was Ladli Begum, Nur Jahan's only child, by her first husband Sher Afghan. Nur Jahan married her to Prince Shahryar, Jahangir's youngest son, and her espousal of his cause drove Shah Jahan into rebellion. The second inscription is a very apt quotation for all such window portraits of women.

Window portraits were one of the most popular of Mughal portrait formats in the eighteenth century and were especially used for apparent portraits of women. Their origin is in the *jharokha* portraits of Jahangir and the format was at first used exclusively for imperial portraiture. Aurangzeb's abandonment of his appearance at the *jharokha* for morning *darshan* as smacking of Hindu idolatry opened up the format for non-royals and especially for women. A small bust portrait could now be easily turned into a window portrait by the addition of a parapet below and a rolled up blind above. Thus the frame of the painting could be turned into a window through which the onlooker could gaze at the subject. Most Mughal window portraits are rectangular, but the addition of an arch, as here, especially appealed to Rajput taste, both in Rajasthan (Diamond, Glynn & Jasol, no. 9 & fig. 3) and the Punjab Hills (Archer, Guler 24, 26, 48 & 49), so it is rare to find such an embellishment in a Mughal window portrait (see Hurel, no. 163).

While the male portrait would seem to be an idealized one of a young Mughal prince, that of the female is more problematic. Apparent 'portraits' of women in earlier Indian painting are invariably either idealised representations of unavailable princesses, or else courtesans who are often depicted holding a flask or a wine cup. Whereas no male artist could have had access to the former, the latter were more readily available to serve as models. The window portrait format was often used for such portrayals of women (Falk & Archer, nos. 99, 179, 182, 199 & 203).

REFERENCES

- Archer, W. G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New Delhi, 1973
 Diamond, D., Glynn, C., and Jasol, K. S., *Garden & Cosmos: the Royal Paintings of Jodhpur*, London, 2008
 Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
 Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011

PAGE

HEIGHT: 19.5 CM, 7 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 11.9 CM, 4 3/4 IN

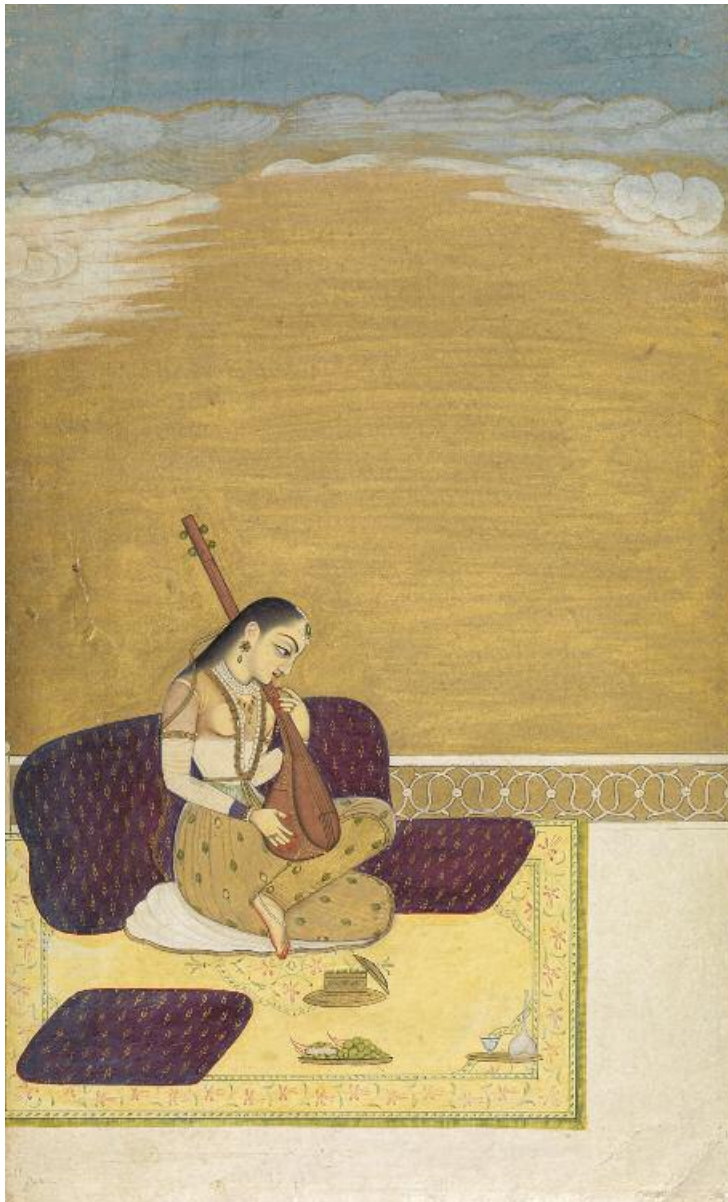
Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland,
late 1960s–2013

MURSHIDABAD, CIRCA 1755

In this dramatic painting a lady is seated on a terrace against gold-sprigged maroon cushions, her head is bent and she is deep in thought as she softly fingers the strings of her *tambura*. In front of her on a summer carpet are three trays of *paan*, fruit and a stem-cup with flask of wine. She wears a gold leaf-sprigged *paijama* with a front-opening *pesbwaz* over a *choli*, strings of pearls and emerald-set pendants. A diaphanous veil covers her loose hair that falls down her back and both hands and feet are painted with henna. Behind the delicate interlacing marble balustrade is a stark gold ground with white scrolling clouds fading into a blue sky.



Gold backgrounds are a feature of Murshidabad court painting in the 1750s, and now very rarely appear on the market. In this painting the gold creates a dramatic contrast with the deep maroon of the cushions, and lends considerable intensity to the lady's contemplative mood. Other examples include portraits of Husain Quli Khan, Deputy Governor of Dacca, in the Victoria & Albert Museum, and Nawab Saulat Jang in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, see *Arts of Bengal*, no. 69 and Hurel, no. 195. For an account of early Murshidabad painting, see Skelton.

REFERENCES

- Arts of Bengal: the Heritage of Bangladesh and Eastern India*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1979
 Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011
 Skelton, R., 'Murshidabad painting', in *Marg*, vol. 10, Bombay, 1956, pp. 10–22

A RELUCTANT MAIDEN IS LED TO A WAITING PRINCE ON A TERRACE AT NIGHT

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 27.5 CM, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN

WIDTH: 19.3 CM, 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 37.5 CM, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN

WIDTH: 29.5 CM, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, laid down in a gold-sprinkled pale pink and blue striped album page with gold rules

INSCRIPTIONS

A Persian inscription, in *nasta'liq*, above the left doorway reads:

'amal-i Faizallah
'work of Faizallah'

PROVENANCE

Doris Wiener, New York, 1960s

John Elliott, New York, 1970

Private collection, New York, 1970–2013

BY FAIZALLAH

AVADH, CIRCA 1760

This is an especially sumptuous and evocative version of a subject that was popular in the eighteenth century, with lavish use of gold and exquisite painterly detail. An eager prince, dressed in a turban, pearls and a diaphanous muslin jama over his orange *pajama*, whilst holding a flask and a garland of jasmine, lies on his bed at night while at the left maiden is prepared for his delectation. The artist Nidhamal is credited with the introduction of this motif into Avadh painting, see Markel & Gude, no. 20, for a picture of similar theme in the Polsky Collection.

The bed, which is dressed with a flower-sprigged gold brocade valance and cushions, is set on a terrace in front of two pavilions, between which we can see an ornamental lake and a distant garden pavilion. Overhead the dark sky is spangled with stars as well as the moon. On the left the reluctant or perhaps just shy girl has emerged from the dark doorway with its golden curtain and is being reassured by two older women, another of whom has turned to talk to the prince no doubt to reassure him that all will be well with the girl. Two other women attend the prince with fan and refreshments while a third in the foreground pours scent on a flambeau. A three-light candelabra burns on the terrace.

The pre-Mughal type of arch on the left doorway as opposed to the contemporary arch in the pavilion on the right testifies to the eclectic mix of sources that makes up Avadh painting. The newest fad is of course the inclusion of cast shadows from internal light sources. The prince's face and front are brilliantly illuminated from the candelabra, but his back and right thigh are in shadow. Other more general areas of shadow are applied more indiscriminately.

This seems to be an early work of Faizallah, an artist known for large and elaborate works of the Avadh school about 1770, although little work has so far been done on him. It is now known that he was the son of the Mughal artist Faqirallah (Seyller & Seitz 2010, p. 86) and both men presumably migrated to Lucknow around 1760. This is a work still very much in the Mughal style of the mid-century. His later work became more elaborate with more figures and an architectural screen closing the background as in *Krishna playing the flute*, formerly in the Ehrenfeld and Seitz collections (*ibid.* no. 25; Ehnobom, no. 33) or *The women of Egypt cut their fingers peeling oranges when first seeing Yusuf's beauty*, in the Musée Guimet (Markel & Gude 2010, no. 76). These paintings are similarly signed on a wall. His most characteristic mature works, however, are large architectural fantasies involving multiple terraces, pavilions and gardens seen individually in linear perspective, but with multiple vanishing points as in a well-known fantasy in the David Collection, Copenhagen (Welch 1985, fig. 186).

REFERENCES

- Ehnobom, D., *Indian Miniatures: the Ehrenfeld Collection*, New York, 1985
 Markel, S., and Gude, T.B., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow*, New York, 2010
 Seyller, J., and Seitz, K., *Mughal and Deccani Paintings*, Zürich, 2010
 Welch, S.C., *India: Art and Culture 1300–1900*, New York, 1985



20 THE NEGLECTED HEROINE

PAGE

HEIGHT: 18 CM, 7 1/8 IN

WIDTH: 10.2 CM, 4 IN

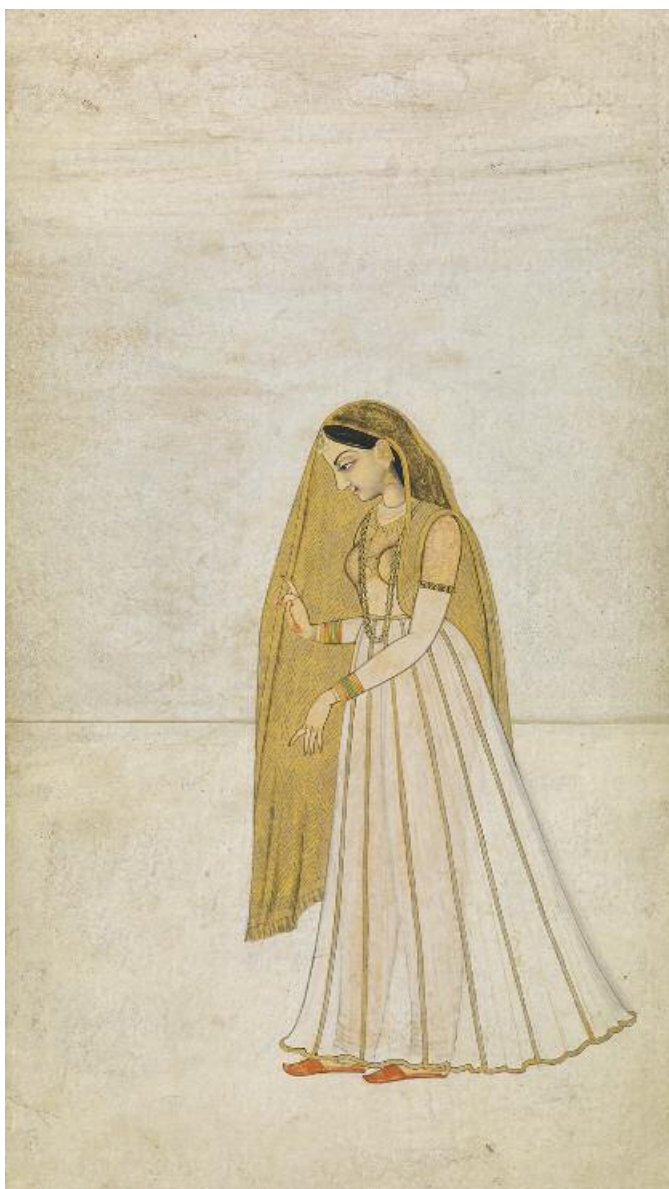
Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland,
late 1960s-2013

GULER, 1750-60

Standing on a stark ivory ground with a single horizon line, this delicately featured but pensive lady is drawn with exquisite sensibility. Dressed in a long diaphanous vertically-striped skirt over *pajjama*, she reaches for the edge of her fine gold veil, woven with herring-bone motifs. She wears gold necklaces, *karanphool* earrings, rows of coloured glass bangles and orange slippers. Her contemplative mood suggests she is an abandoned or neglected heroine, but her reaching for her veil with her eyes downcast suggests this is a study for a larger picture where she would be facing a man.



The minutely observed details of clothing and intensity of mood are in line with what was happening in Guler painting at this time, see Archer, Guler 16-40, for the slight changes in the heroine's physiognomy over this period. The line across the page recalls Nainsukh's penchant for a single line likewise dividing the ground from the wall as here, see Goswamy, pp. 179, 215 & 221.

REFERENCES

Archer, W. G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London and New Delhi, 1973

Goswamy, B. N., *Nainsukh of Guler: a great Indian painter from a small hill-state*, Zürich, 1997

21 LADY ON A MOONLIT TERRACE

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 23 CM, 9 IN
WIDTH: 14.8 CM, 5 7/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 23.3 CM, 9 1/8 IN
WIDTH: 15.6 CM, 6 1/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Private collection Switzerland, late 1960s-2013

GULER, 1760-70

On a terrace outside a closed pavilion a lady is seated on a bed looking up at the moon. An attendant is holding a cup of wine for her while of her two other ladies, one is falling asleep while the other watches with her mistress. These two are wrapped up warmly suggesting the night is cold, but their mistress is too enraptured at the thought of her lover to care.

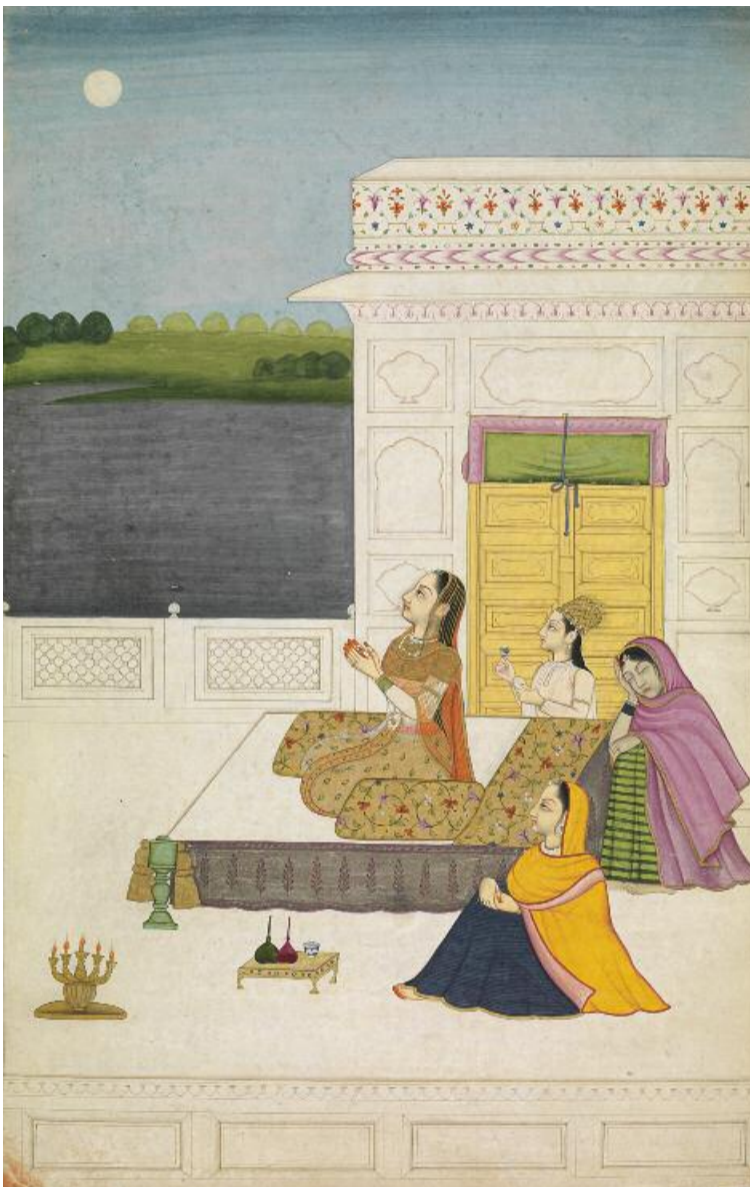
Although similar to several other terrace scenes from Guler at this time (Archer, Guler, 31 & 32-i), this painting has a stark, clean quality created by the artist's

contrasting of the white moonlit pavilion and terrace with the superbly detailed clothing of the ladies and the brocade of the cushions on the bed. In addition great attention has been given to the ladies' facial expressions.

There is a difference, however, in the treatment of landscape. Beyond the terrace is a lake, with a distant gentle landscape in which the trees are treated in aerial perspective with the distant ones farther than those nearer. The possibilities of aerial perspective were only beginning to be investigated in eastern India in the 1760s and 1770s, but Guler artists were extraordinarily open to the latest developments in the plains of India since Nainsukh's journey to Puri, with his new master Amrit Pal of Basohli, beginning in 1763 (Goswamy & Fischer, p. 270). Some references to this new technique can be seen in some other Guler paintings of the time (Archer, Guler 40), but it is more developed in some of the 'Early Kangra' masterpieces (Goswamy & Fischer, nos. 132b, 138 & 145).

REFERENCES

- Archer, W. G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, 1973
Goswamy, B. N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, New Delhi, 1992



AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: RAMKARI RAGINI A PRINCE BEGS FORGIVENESS FROM A LADY

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 20.3 CM, 8 IN

WIDTH: 16.5 CM, 6 ½ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 29.8 CM, 11 ¾ IN

WIDTH: 24.2 CM, 9 ½ IN

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down in a plain album page with ivory border and gilt rules

PROVENANCE

Eyre and Greig, London, 1987

Private collection, Virginia, 1987-2013

MURSHIDABAD, 1760-70

The prince begs forgiveness, genuflecting at the feet of the lady he has wronged, either through his neglect or perhaps through straying with another. His hands are raised in supplication, but she is still angry and while not turning her face away from him as often seen in this iconography, she nonetheless is drawing her veil across her face in rejection. The scene is set on a terrace outside a white pavilion. The lady is sitting on her bed placed outside in the hot weather, under a startlingly red *shamiana* which hangs from underneath the heavy *chajja* or eave of the pavilion. The couple's clothes and the details of the pavilion are painted in brilliant colours against an almost entirely white scenario, the bamboo blind with a design of repeating poppies with a brocade cover with irises rolled above it. The angry or neglected heroine is a trope in Indian poetical literature, here incorporated into *Ragamala* iconography. For *Ramkari ragini*, see Waldschmidt, pp. 215-22, figs. 67-70 and Ebeling, figs. 195-97.

The painting is from a set allied to the dispersed Impey *Ragamala* from Murshidabad, circa 1760, with eight paintings in the British Library (Falk & Archer, no. 368), and fourteen in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Leach, 6.271-84). See also *Arts of Bengal*, no. 77, for one in the Victoria and Albert Museum. For the *Ramkari ragini* from the Impey set, see Falk & Archer, no. 368-iv, similarly set on a terrace but there carpeted. The heroine has turned her face away and an attendant is also present. In the contemporary Johnson *Ragamala* from Murshidabad, the hero has advanced to kneeling on the bed beside his distressed mistress (Falk & Archer, no. 370-xxi). The Impey *Ragamala* artists have started experimenting with shadows by running dark streaks alongside the upright lines of buildings, but without really understanding the point, since these streaks are sometimes against the sky. Our artist has, on the contrary, grasped the point and gone further than the Impey artist and placed shadows where they would occur naturally, under the *chajja* and *shamiana* and indeed under the bed, as well as the gateway on the right thus imbuing it with a surreal quality.

REFERENCES

Arts of Bengal: the Heritage of Bangladesh and Eastern India, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1979

Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973

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

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

Waldschmidt, E. and R. L., *Miniatures of Musical Inspiration in the Collection of the Berlin Museum of Indian Art, Part II, Ragamala Pictures from Northern India and the Deccan*, Berlin, 1975



MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 17.5 CM, 6 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 9.5 CM, 3 7/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 18.6 CM, 7 3/8 IN

WIDTH: 10.3 CM, 4 1/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

James Drummond,
14th Viscount Strathallan,
18th Earl of Perth (b.1935),
Stobhall, Perthshire, Scotland

FAIZABAD OR LUCKNOW, 1770-80

The seated Virgin Mary holds the Christ Child in her arms, each with a gilt nimbus, while an elderly bearded man kneels in adoration before them. She wears a short jacket edged with fur over her long voluminous gown with a cloak wrapped around her. The man, probably a shepherd, wears a long gown tied round the waist while his fur-lined hat rests on the ground. Around them stand various women, in adoration or conversing, all dressed similarly to the Virgin but wearing fur-lined hats with upturned brims. The scene is set in front of a Renaissance style loggia, crowned by a Mughal-style cupola, within which curtains are arranged to form a tent. The background is derived from a northern European print, with half-timbered gabled houses with tiled roofs. Beyond is a lake with a bridge and distant hills, while in the sky angels amidst the rolling clouds play instruments or sprinkle stardust on the scene below.



Lucknow artists at the end of the eighteenth century drew eclectically from a variety of sources in order to create their paintings. Major artists such as Mir Kalan Khan and Mihr Chand were at the forefront of this movement to establish a separate artistic identity for Avadh, different to and separate from that of Mughal Delhi, and in line with its political separation. Mir Kalan Khan painted Christian scenes such as *The Christ Child in the Temple* (Benkaim Collection, Roy, no. 17, p. 168), and may well have painted the original on which our painting is based. A European nativity scene lies at the base of the composition, such as Johann Baptist Klauber's print of the *Adoration of the Shepherds* of the 1750s (British Museum, 1869, 0410.1605) published in Augsburg in the 1750s, in which similar figures appear in mirror reverse. Our artist, however, has dressed up his model in all sorts of eclectic guises. The fur-trimmed jacket and hats come from Afghan or Persian models, as worn by Nadir Shah (see Markel & Gude, no.14, p.16), and seen in Avadhi paintings (Losty & Roy, fig. 137). The modelling of the women's draperies is based on Tilly Kettle's Faizabad paintings of the early 1770s, as interpreted by artists such as Mihr Chand in his version of Kettle's *Nawab Shuja' al-Daula with Ten Sons* (Roy, fig. 27, p. 181). Mihr Chand's invention of a Roman triumphal arch in that painting perhaps finds an echo here in the arch behind the Virgin whose oval face, with her hair parted in the middle, is found in his work and that of his contemporaries (Markel & Gude, no. 186, p. 49), and again seems based on a Kettle painting, this time his famous *Dancing Girl* (Yale Center for British Art, in *ibid.*, no. 188, p. 48). The angels are not the Mughalised contemporary angels of Avadhi painting but, once again, are borrowed from a European source.

REFERENCES

- Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
 Losty, J. P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012
 Markel, S., and Gude, T.B., *India's Fabled City: The Art of Courtly Lucknow*, New York, 2010
 Roy, M., 'Origins of the late Mughal Painting Tradition in Awadh' in Markel and Gude, 2010, pp. 165-86

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 23.6 CM, 9 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 34.5 CM, 13 ½ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 24 CM, 9 ½ IN

WIDTH: 35.7 CM, 14 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Sam Fogg, London, 1999

Private collection, London, 1999–2013

MUGHAL, PERHAPS
MURSHIDABAD, 1770–80

A large group of intoxicated dervishes, mostly emaciated, is seated in five rows, some smoking *nargilas*, others drinking sherbet mixed with a narcotic from clay bowls, or else lying asleep. At the right two men run a stall selling these items, one pouring the sherbet into the bowls, the other preparing the *nargilas*. Another trader is selling bread. These traders seem to be sitting on some kind of brick platform with a reed hut behind. The dervishes are arranged in rows, seated on linear features that run across a dun-coloured landscape, with an orange and blue sky above.

Such drawings and paintings are remarkably consistent through the eighteenth century, showing the effects of opium and marijuana whether inhaled through *nargilas* or hookahs or drunk down in a sherbet as *bhang*. Normally the figural drawings are non-naturalistic and sometimes almost caricatures. The arrangement in rows suggests a series of figure studies, but unusually for such studies this one has been fully coloured and finished. A very closely related painting almost the same size is in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, dated 1730–50 in Leach, no. 4.40, pp. 511–14, featuring the same type of stall and stall holders and caricatured ascetics in rows, but in which the dervishes are mostly drinking the drugged sherbet rather than smoking. For another similar, but in mirror reverse, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, see Hurel, no. 132.

A related eighteenth century drawing is in the Jehangir collection in Mumbai (Khandalavala & Chandra, no. 43) and others of similar composition are in German private collections (Habighorst, Reichart & Sharma, pls. 67 and 68), where they are called Mughal, 1610 and 1620. The varied dates assigned to these and similar drawings illustrate the difficulties of placing them in a conventional art-historical milieu.





REFERENCES

- Khandalavala, K., and Chandra, M., *Miniatures and Sculptures from the Collections of the late Sir Cowasji Jehangir*, Bombay, 1965
- Leach, L. Y., *Mughal and other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, London, 1995
- Habighorst, L. V., Reichart, P. A., and Sharma, V., *Love for Pleasure: Betel, Tobacco, Wine and Drugs in Indian Miniatures*, Koblenz, 2007
- Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011

25 TEN VISHNAVITE ASCETICS

MINIATURE
HEIGHT: 22.5 CM, 9 IN
WIDTH: 16.3 CM, 6 ½ IN

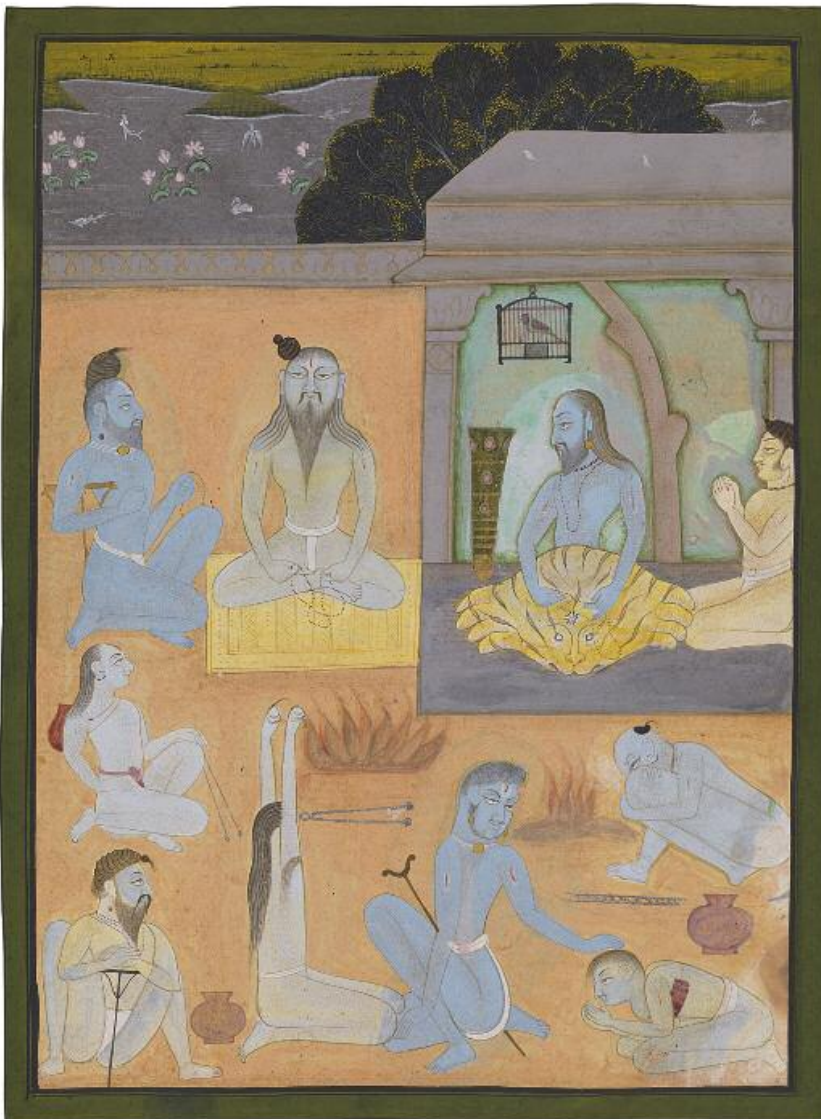
PAGE
HEIGHT: 27 CM, 10 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 20.2 CM, 8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE
Sven Gahlin, London, 1960s
Private collection, New York, 1960s-2013

RAJASTHAN, PERHAPS BUNDI, CIRCA 1790

Ten ascetics are portrayed in various ascetic or yogic poses inside a walled enclosure such as a *matha* or monastery, as suggested by the pillared structure in which the chief ascetic sits and the wall alongside it. He has a tiger skin over his legs, while a parrot is in a cage hanging from the wall. A *morchal* or peacock feather fan by the wall denotes the respect with which the head of such a *matha* is treated. Over the wall a lotus-filled lake is visible and fields beyond, but there is no horizon, paralleling the closed-in feeling of the monastery. *Mathas* or monasteries are of very old foundation in Hinduism, some of them going back to the great Advaita monist Sankaracharya himself. Vaishnava *mathas* are normally affiliated to one of the philosophical divisions within Vaishnavism - Sri Vaishnava, Dvaita, Gaudiya and so forth.



Indian artists had no difficulty in poking fun at holy men who were high on narcotics or on their own self-importance, but our artist here is more respectful to this group of ascetics. The ascetics are Vaishnavas judging by the sect marks on their foreheads. Many of the men have a fakir's crutch to support them in their postures. They are grouped around a fire with tongs placed ready to support the flaming brands. They sit engaged in yoga postures, or in meditation, or practicing asceticisms in the case of the *urddhva* with his hands upraised permanently over his head. Some wear their hair loose, others tied into a tight knot on top of their head. Two of them are acolytes, one waiting on the chief in the pavilion, the other bowing respectfully to the ascetic in the foreground who pats his head affectionately. The artist has not set out to illustrate different kinds of yogic postures but does include several. For a thorough study of the eighty-four *asanas* or postures in Hatha yoga, based on the illustrated manuscript in the British Library (Add. 24099), with which our drawing has some affinities in style, see Bühnemann.

REFERENCES

Bühnemann, G., *Eighty-four Asanas in Yoga: A Survey of Traditions*, New Delhi, 2007

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 20.7 CM, 8 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 14.5 CM, 5 ¾ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 28.4 CM, 11 ⅛ IN

WIDTH: 21.4 CM, 8 ⅝ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, with an inner border of blue with gold and silver flowers and a pink outer border

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland, late 1960s-2013

KANGRA, 1790-1800

Baz Bahadur was historically the last Sultan of Mandu (reg. 1555-62), until he was attacked and dethroned by Akbar's Mughal army. His fabled love for the Rajput songstress Rupmati is one of the staples of Indian poetry and painting, and the two of them riding together in the moonlight is one of the most consistent compositions in various styles of painting both Mughal and Rajput. The positions of the pair in our painting, for instance, she riding just beyond him and turning back to look at him, as well as those of the horses, are replicated in a Murshidabad version of circa 1760 (Falk & Archer, no. 372), save that there she has extended an arm round his shoulders. Only the costume details tend to differ according to the school of painting. The Murshidabad Rupmati wears a turban with aigrette while ours has the usual

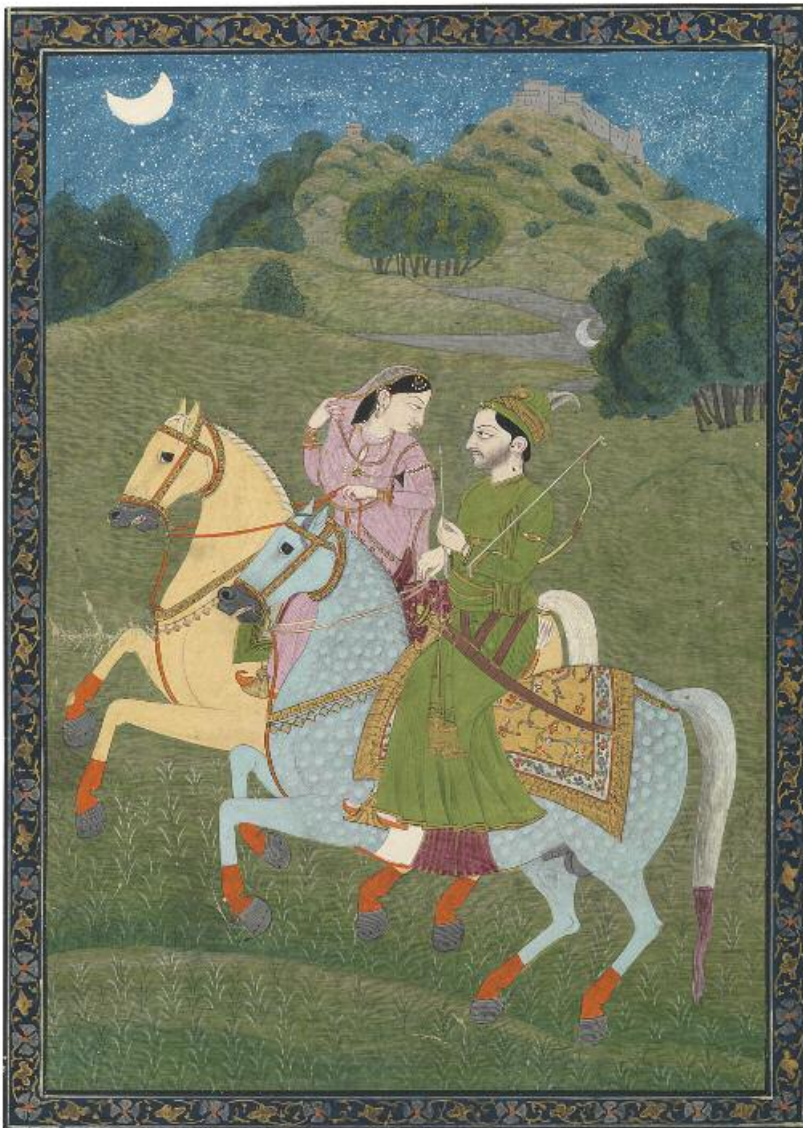
Kangra veil which she is adjusting.

An earlier Pahari version from Kulu also shows her wearing a turban (Archer, Kulu 34).

This evocative moonlight painting is a second version of one in the British Museum, once in the Coomaraswamy Collection (Curtis & Tallis, fig. 12), dated to 1790. Both are set in the kind of naturalistic landscape that was pioneered in Kangra in the *Bhagavata Purana* of circa 1780-85. Its exquisite sensibility to landscape is also seen in two *ragamala* paintings published in Archer, Kangra 37, i-ii. Here the landscape recedes to two conical green hills scattered with lines of trees. A fortress crowns the further hill. The night sky is scattered not with just the usual individual stars but with clouds of stars, while the crescent moon is reflected in a distant lake.

REFERENCES

- Archer, W. G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, 1973
 Curtis, J., and Tallis, N., *The Horse*, London, 2012
 Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981





VASUDEVA CARRIES THE INFANT KRISHNA ACROSS THE RIVER JUMNA

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 15.8 CM, 6 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 20 CM, 7 ⅞ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 19.1 CM, 7 ½ IN

WIDTH: 23 CM, 9 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, the inner border with alternating foliate and floral motifs on a dark grey ground, sprinkled pink outer border

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on a cover sheet in Nagari:

citra sankhya 6

‘painting no. 6’

On the reverse inventory numbers and a later

Hindi inscription:

Vasudevaji ka Krishnaji ko Mathura se Gokula le jana

‘Vasudeva going with Krishna from Mathura to Gokula’

PROVENANCE

Private collection, New York, 1990s–2013

KANGRA, CIRCA 1800

The birth of Krishna is narrated in the *Bhagavata Purana*, canto X, ch. 3. Vasudeva and his first wife Devaki were the parents of Krishna and his sister Subhadra, while his second wife Rohini was the mother of Balarama. Devaki was the sister of the demon king Kamsa of Mathura, and it was a prophecy that a child of Devaki would kill Kamsa that induced him to keep his sister and her husband in prison, and to kill all their children as soon as they were born. When Krishna was born, Vasudeva miraculously escaped and took the child across the River Jumna to Gokula, where the child was looked after by his foster parents Nanda and Yasoda.

The artist has created a highly evocative scene recalling the myth with considerable skill, depicting the figures with great sensitivity as well as highlighting the contrast in architecture between the palace buildings on the left and the village huts on the right. In addition, he has depicted the dark night, churning river and slanting sheets of rain to show the power of nature, heightening the drama of the child’s escape from certain death.

Vasudeva is carefully and tenderly carrying the infant Krishna wrapped up in a blanket across the river Jumna, its waters swollen by the torrential rain sent by Indra to cover Vasudeva’s escape. To shelter father and child from the storm, Vishnu’s great snake Sesanaga follows the pair and protects them with his hoods. Paintings of this scene often add an uncanonical wild animal such as a tiger, as here, to add to the dangers of the crossing. Lightning flashes in the sky above and from the thunderous black clouds the rain teems down, delicately depicted in streaks of white across the entire surface of the painting. Perched in the delightful landscapes on either side of the river are the city of Mathura with its palaces and the fortified village of Gokula with its sturdily built cottages in the Pahari manner. The figures and the buildings are illuminated by the flashes of lightning but not the dark countryside.

Another Pahari version, circa 1720, is in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, but it focuses on Vasudeva who is half submerged in the river, whilst observed by a tiger, but does not have the wealth of detail found in this painting. Few Pahari miniatures of this subject have been published. A Mandi version circa 1750, with Sidh Sen as Vasudeva, is in the Los Angeles County Museum and a late Kangra example is in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich (Boner, Goswamy & Fischer, fig. 555). For paintings from the slightly earlier Early Kangra *Bhagavata Purana*, see Randhawa, and for critical discussion see Archer and Goswamy & Fischer.

REFERENCES

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

Boner, G., Fischer, E., Goswamy, B. N., *Illustriertes Gesamtverzeichnis indischer Bilder: Sammlung Alice Bone, Geschenk an das Rietberg Museum Zürich*, Zürich, 1994

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

Randhawa, M. S., *Kangra Paintings of the Bhagavata Purana*, New Delhi, 1960



MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 27.4 CM, 10 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 19.2 CM, 7 1/2 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 39.5 CM, 15 1/2 IN

WIDTH: 28.8 CM, 11 3/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold
on paper, inscribed in Nagari on verso

INSCRIPTIONS

citra 15 lal pucch 'Picture 15 [in]red covers'

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Virginia, 1990s-2013

STYLE OF SAHIB RAM

JAIPUR, CIRCA 1800

Maharaja Pratap Singh was born in 1764 and was fifteen when he ascended the *gaddi* of Jaipur in 1779. His prime standing portrait from which all the others seem to spring is an almost life size painting on cloth by Sahib Ram in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur, painted when the sitter was twenty-nine years old in 1793, see Sachdev & Tillotson, p. 23, detail only. There he stands in the same attitude as our portrait but loaded with three-dimensional necklaces and other jewels standing out against the flatness of the treatment of face and clothing. We discern the shape of his chest only through the angled fall of his necklaces. The same is true of our painting: Pratap Singh's body is partly defined by the magnificent jewels round his neck. This magnificence extends here to his other jewels and also to his gem-set straight sword and dagger with jade lion-headed hilt, each with scabbard decorated in Jaipur enamel, the former with bold red irises. In contrast his flowing white *jama*

occupies much of the picture plane set off by an orange brocade *patka* and slippers, and a red turban with a gold brocade bandeau wound round it. A long rosary dangles from his pendent right hand as he strides through a plain green landscape with blue sky and clouds at the top. His power and royal status is reinforced by the presence of a gold nimbus.

A seated portrait of Pratap Singh attributed to Sahib Ram is in a private collection in New York (Aitken, fig. 10), and shows him with much the same attributes as here. Preliminary drawings for standing portraits similar to ours are in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (*ibid.*, figs. 11 & 12). Pratap Singh was especially devoted to Radha and Krishna and their two figures dancing comprise the central subject of a large painting in the Jaipur palace attributed to Sahib Ram, of which well-known preliminary drawings are in New York and Boston. For a recent study of them and associated works attributed to the Jaipur master Sahib Ram, see Aitken.

REFERENCES

- Aitken, M. E., 'Sahib Ram' in Beach, M. C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B. N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 623-40
Sachdev, V., and Tillotson, G., *Jaipur City Palace*, New Delhi, 2008



MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 17.2 CM, 6 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 12.5 CM, 4 7/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 24.5 CM, 9 5/8 IN

WIDTH: 19.7 CM, 7 7/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Virginia, 1987-2013

KANGRA OR MANDI, CIRCA 1810

A young man wearing only the prescribed garments for Hindu rituals (a *dhoti* and a loose upper garment slung round his shoulders) stands facing a *Sivalingam* preparing to offer *puja*. All around are the prescribed implements and offerings – a lota of water, flowers, a lamp, a conch. The young man's hand holding an *aksamala* or rosary is hidden by the glove, whose purpose is to intensify the spiritual experience of prayer while telling beads. The scene is set in a meadow with the towering peaks of the Himalaya behind, suggesting the home of Siva on Kailasa and Gangotri, the source of the River Ganga, which flows at the bottom of the picture.

Pictures of men engaged in solitary *puja* are comparative rare in Pahari painting, and not that common in Rajput painting either when compared with the versions of women engaged in such activity which often form part of *ragamala* iconography. For King Prithu doing *puja* from Bikaner, see Pal 2004, no. 74, while a famous series of Maharao Kishor Singh of Kotah worshipping Brijrajji is illustrated in Welch et al., nos. 56-62. Illustrations including the Himalaya are also rare in Pahari paintings except for the *Kedara Kalpa* series from Kangra where the mountains are depicted rather as in our painting. This series is now ascribed to the Purkhu family workshop, circa 1820, by Goswamy and Fischer, p.721. A particularly relevant example from that series in the depiction of mountains was in the Paul Walter Collection (Pal 1978, no. 72a), where young men approach the presence of Siva and have their hair coiled in similar style to our solitary young man.



REFERENCES

- Goswamy, B. N., and Fischer, E., 'Purkhu of Kangra' in Beach, M. C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B. N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 719-32
- Pal, P., *The Classical Tradition in Rajput Painting from the Paul F. Walter Collection*, New York, 1978
- Pal, P., *Painted Poems: Rajput Paintings from the Ramesh and Urmil Kapoor Collection*, Ahmedabad, 2004
- Welch, S. C., et al., *Gods, Kings and Tigers: the Art of Kotah*, New York, 1997

AN ILLUSTRATION TO A NALA AND DAMAYANTI SERIES: THE HAMSA BIRD RETURNS TO NALA FROM DAMAYANTI'S GARDEN

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 28.4 CM, 11 1/4 IN

WIDTH: 42.4 CM, 16 3/4 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 33.7 CM, 13 1/4 IN

WIDTH: 47 CM, 18 1/2 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, surrounded by a plain dark blue border with a gold inner border

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Belgium

Sold Bonham's, London, 2006

Private collection, London, 2006-13

PUBLISHED

Bonham's, *Islamic and Indian Art*, London,

12 October 2006, lot 287

KANGRA OR BASOHLI, 1800-10

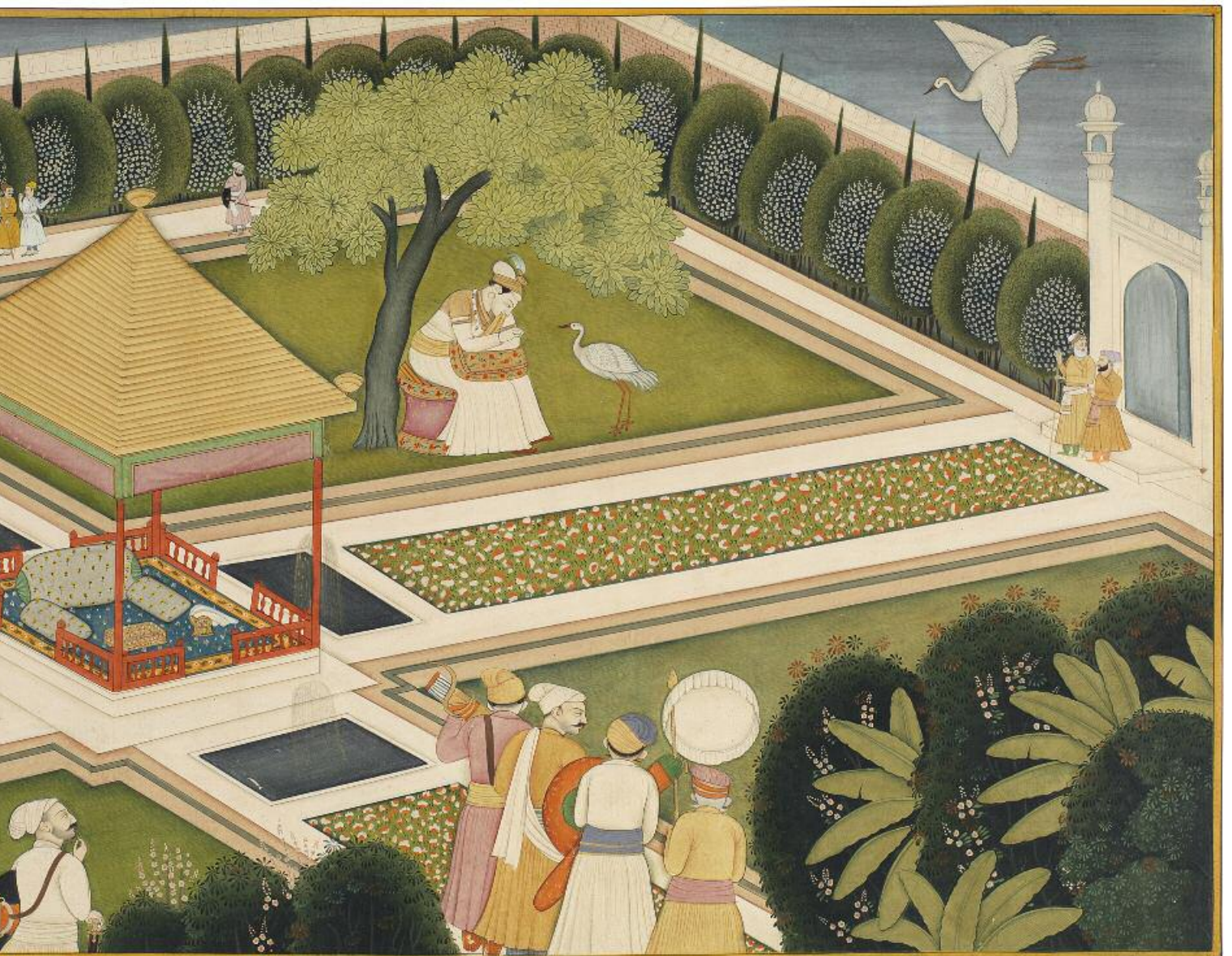
The story of King Nala of Nisada and his beloved Damayanti, princess of Vidarbha, is one of those told in the *Mahabharata* to while away the time while the Pandavas endured their exile in the forest. Nala and Damayanti fall in love at a distance through hearing about each other and a hamsa bird serves as the messenger between them. Here the *hamsa* arrives in Nala's garden to find him brooding about Damayanti, sitting all alone in the middle of his pleasure garden, although closely and sympathetically observed by his attendants who wait in the foreground with the insignia of royalty. The rectangular layout of the *char bagh* garden is for once not compromised and the artist achieves an admirably lucid rendition of this type of garden with its pleasure pavilion in the midst of pools, fountains and parterres, all surrounded by a wall in front of which cypresses and shrubs are planted with geometrical precision. This severity is tempered by the shrubs and attendants in the foreground and by the way the Lucknow-type of pleasure pavilion and the tree (meant to be an *ashoka*) rise above the line of the background wall.

Damayanti goes on to hold a *svayamvara*, a great gathering where the maiden was allowed to choose her own husband and of course, despite various gods wanting her, she picks Nala. The two are married and enjoy their conjugal bliss for twelve years but this is interrupted by Nala's love of gambling, in which he eventually he gambles away his kingdom. Blaming everything on bad luck and fearing to harm Damayanti because of it, Nala abandons her in the forest. The two take service with different masters, but eventually Damayanti returns to her father's kingdom and holds a fake new *svayamvara*, sure that Nala will turn up for this one too. The pair are eventually reunited and live happily ever after. The events leading up to the marriage were turned into an immense *mahakavya* or long epic poem in Sanskrit by Sriharsa in the thirteenth century and this is the version that was chosen for illustration in the Punjab Hills at the end of the eighteenth century.

The series exists in 110 preliminary drawings in sanguine in the National Museum, New Delhi (only partly published, some in Archer, Kangra 49); in a set of forty-seven fully finished paintings formerly in the collection of Dr. Karan Singh of Jammu and Kashmir and now in the Hari Tara Trust, Jammu (published in Goswamy 1975); and in forty-eight finished line drawings, dispersed, but with large numbers in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (published Eastman). The paintings break off in mid-series exactly where the finished line drawings take over. Some of the finished paintings exist in more than one version (e.g. Archer, Kangra 52 and 53, iv), as does our painting which replicates one in the Jammu collection (Goswamy 1975, pl. 9). The artist sticks closely to the version in Jammu although omitting a few details such as a pergola with flowering climbers in the top left corner of the garden and changing a few others such as the main lines of the *char bagh* garden bending slightly at the central pavilion.

Archer was of the opinion that the series was commissioned by Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, the sanguine drawings between 1790-1800 and the finished paintings 1800-10. Archer drew attention to several Guler-like details about the set such as the command of deep space seen in this and related drawings and paintings and the strict alternation of the surrounding shrubs, a very characteristic trait of Guler work. He explained this as being caused by Sansar Chand's artists taking temporary refuge in Guler during his troubles with





the Gurkhas and the Sikhs. Goswamy and Fischer on the other hand, while agreeing with Archer about the dates, attribute the painted series to the hand of Ranjha, Nainsukh's son, while working at the Basohli court, where indeed the series was discovered in the mid-1950s. They see the changes in Pahari styles at the end of the eighteenth century as being conditioned by the dispersal of the sons of Nainsukh and Manaku to various courts, and of course taking their inherited Guler mannerisms with them.

REFERENCES

- Archer, W. G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New York, Delhi, 1973
 Eastman, A. C., *The Nala Damayanti Drawings*, Boston, 1959
 Goswamy, B. N., *Pahari Paintings of the Nala-Damayanti Theme*, New Delhi, 1975
 Goswamy, B. N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, 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*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 687-718



MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 22.8 CM, 9 IN

WIDTH: 17.7 CM, 7 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 24.1 CM, 8 ½ IN

WIDTH: 18.8 CM, 7 ¼ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper, in an oval
format with scalloped edges and
white ground spandrels
illuminated with flowers

PROVENANCE

Private collection Switzerland,
late 1960s-2013

STYLE OF SAJNU
MANDI, 1808-10

Barahmasa series illustrate all the twelve months of the Hindu calendar, normally with the accompanying verses of Keshav Das from his *Kavipriya* or another Hindi poet, absent here. This is the normal iconography for Pausha, the coldest of the months corresponding to December-January, when it is intensely cold in the hills. For various Kangra depictions of the months, see Randhawa, pls. XXI-XXV, and figs. 80-89.

Here a prince and his lady are seated together enveloped in a voluminous orange-lined blue geometric blanket in a carpeted marble pavilion with recessed niches. Temporarily neglecting his hookah, he reaches out for a *paan* offered in a gem-set enamelled gold box by an attendant woman. It is clearly cold, since the pair needs to huddle together, while what appears to be a brazier on wheels is in front of them. Through the open rear window of the pavilion is a view depicting two cowherds round a fire, huts and a crane on the edge of a lake in the foreground, with beyond a range of snow-capped mountain peaks.

The iconography is very close, although in mirror reverse, to another painting of Pausha in the Chandigarh Museum (Archer, Mandi 44), stated by Archer to be almost certainly by Sajnu himself. This artist springs into prominence at Mandi from 1808 with various sets commissioned by or dedicated to Raja Isvari Sen (reg. 1788-1826). He is known to have been an artist originally from Kangra and was responsible for transforming the Mandi court style into one that was much influenced by both Guler and Kangra painting. An ascribed painting by Sajnu in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, depicts Isvari Sen worshipping Siva and is dated 1808 (Archer, Mandi 46).

This *Barahmasa* set from Mandi is normally painted in ovals within rectangles with illuminated corner pieces, while an elaborate surround often with scalloped edges forms the outer border (Archer, Mandi 43-45). Here the scalloped edges have been incorporated into the oval.

REFERENCES

- Archer, W. G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New Delhi, 1973
Randhawa, M. S., *Kangra Paintings on Love*, New Delhi, 1962

PAGE

HEIGHT: 20 CM, 7 7/8 IN
WIDTH: 32.1 CM, 12 5/8 IN

SKETCH

HEIGHT: 40 CM, 15 3/4 IN
WIDTH: 32 CM, 12 5/8 IN

Gouache on paper; with a pencil sketch
of one of the prisoners, watermarked
FELLOWS 1804, and a separate cover page

INSCRIPTIONS

On the cover page by E. S. Fraser:
*No. 48. The portraits of
two murderers in chains*

PROVENANCE

William (1784-1835) and James Baillie
Fraser (1783-1856), Moniack, Inverness
By descent to Malcolm Fraser Esq.
Sold Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, 1980
Catherine and Ralph Benkaim Collection,
Los Angeles, 1980-2013

PUBLISHED

Sotheby Parke Bernet, *Fine Oriental
Miniatures, Manuscripts and Islamic
Works of Art including the Fraser Album*, New
York, December 9, 1980, lot 171
(monochrome illustration)
Archer, M., and Falk, T., *India Revealed:
the Art and Adventures of James and
William Fraser 1801-35*, London,
1989, figs. 133 & 134

DELHI, 1816-20

The Fraser Albums of Delhi paintings are considered one of the finest groups of nineteenth century pictures yet known. They surpass all other known paintings of the period for their delicate realism, characterization and subtle composition of groups of figures. These naturalistic studies of local people were commissioned by William Fraser (1784-1835), and his brother James Baillie Fraser (1783-1856), in 1815-1819. William was in the regular civil service of the East India Company, and he spent most of his career as Assistant to the Resident at Delhi from 1805, doing the work of Collector of the District. James went out to Calcutta to be an independent merchant in 1814. He visited his brother in Delhi in 1815, and went with him on an expedition into the Himalayan foothills and Nepal to raise irregular battalions of mountaineers at the time of the Anglo-Nepal war. James became a competent draftsman and his views of the Himalayas and later of Calcutta were eventually published in England, two of the finest sets of aquatints published in the nineteenth century. He certainly came into contact with Delhi artists during his stay with William, and commissioned his brother to have figures drawn for him which he could then incorporate into his Himalayan views. This soon expanded into a much larger project of obtaining drawings of groups and individuals from Delhi and its neighbourhood as records of local life.

In this study of two captured murderers in shackles, the figures are drawn in black and brown tones against a plain background. One sits while the other stands. The modelling of both men's musculature and draperies is typical of the work of the major Fraser artist as well as their intense if withdrawn gaze. While both men look to the front, their thoughts seem to be bent inwards on their impending fate.

The Fraser Album was dispersed in two major sales, the loose pictures at Sotheby's in London, 7 July 1980, lots 1-45; and the album at Sotheby Parke Bernet in New York, 9 December 1980, lots 130-87, and are now scattered in private and public collections world-wide. For the latest study of them, see Dalrymple & Sharma, nos. 41-53. Several of the drawings in the Fraser Album, including this one, have second versions in the paintings made around 1820 for their friend James Skinner in his Album in the British Library (Archer, no. 170, XL).

The drawing was included in the bound Fraser Album but seems on account of its medium and somewhat hesitant and nervous line to be the work of an amateur European artist who may indeed have been James Baillie Fraser himself.

REFERENCES

- Archer, M., *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1972
Archer, M., and Falk, T., *India Revealed: the Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser 1801-35*, London, 1989
Dalrymple, W., and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-1857*, New York, 2012





MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 22.6 CM, 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ INWIDTH: 17.1 CM, 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 25.1 CM, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ INWIDTH: 19.9 CM, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper, with nineteenth century
English inscriptions on the verso

PROVENANCE

Christopher Hobson, London

Sven Gahlin, London

Sold Sotheby's, London, 1973

Private collection, New York, 1973-2013

GULER ARTIST IN THE PUNJAB, 1820-30

A holy man dressed in a pink robe and red sleeved coat, with a green pointed hat covering the nape of his neck, is seated on a *takht* or kind of throne in a landscape. He is holding a rose and a rosary. A male attendant stands behind waving a white cloth over him to ward off flies. In the foreground is a little terrace with a fountain and parterre of flowers with a plantain tree nearby, while a screen of alternating green and blossoming trees closes the background under a thunderous sky with lightning flashing across it. The landscape and trees especially are typical of Guler painting and shows its influence on the painting of the Punjab plains after Ranjit Singh's annexation of some of the Punjab hill states in 1809.

Although labelled on the reverse as the tenth Sikh Guru Gobind Singh (guruship 1675-1708), in his youth, the beardless holy man wears the kind of ascetic teacher's garb normal in north India in the nineteenth century. A *sannyasi* or Hindu Saiva ascetic in James Skinner's *Tasrih*

al-Aqwam of 1825 wears much the same kind of hat and robe (British Library, Add. 27255, f. 363v). More certainly, the attendant is not a Sikh since his hair has been cut. That the Guler artist knew that Gobind Singh initiated the non-cutting of hair as a sign of admission to the Khalsa, and accordingly painted the attendant with a cut hairstyle before this event, is perhaps too sophisticated a notion to be entertained here. Portraits of Guru Gobind Singh invariably depict him as a princely figure, bearded and turbaned, riding a horse with a hawk on his hand and carrying bow and arrows, with accompanying hounds and the normal kind of princely attendants with parasol, see Archer, fig. 7, also Stronge, no. 32. An early version of this standard iconography appears in a Polier album now in the British Museum (1920,0917,0.147), executed before 1786.

REFERENCES

- Archer, W. G., *Painting of the Sikhs*,
London, 1966
Stronge, S., ed., *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms*,
London, 1999

PUBLISHED

- Sotheby's, *Indian and Persian Miniatures*,
London, 27 March 1973, lot 271
(monochrome illustration)



AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: RAMKARI RAGINI A PRINCE BEGS FORGIVENESS FROM A LADY

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 30.3 CM, 11 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 20.8 CM, 8 1/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 19.4 CM, 7 5/8 IN

WIDTH: 13.2 CM, 5 1/8 IN

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Sotheby's, *Oriental Miniatures, Manuscripts and Printed Books*,
London, 5 July 1982, lot 15
Indar Pasricha Fine Arts, London, 1988
Private collection, Virginia, 1988-2013

MUGHAL, CIRCA 1820

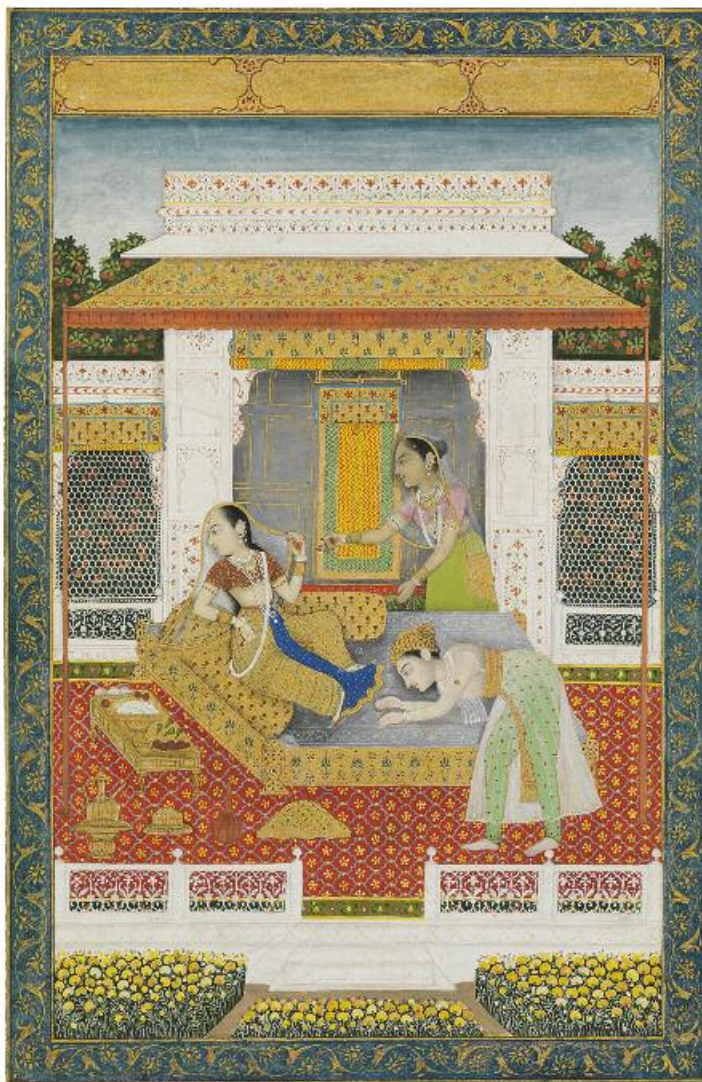
A prince approaches a lady on a terrace attended by a maid. He is bowing in supplication while she turns her face away despite the attendant trying to intercede for him. This is another example of Ramkari ragini, where the errant hero seeks forgiveness from his mistress, see also no. 22 of this catalogue. For other *ragamala* subjects from Delhi in this period, see a Dipak raga in the British Library (Falk & Archer, no. 231), and a Bhairavi ragini in the Binney collection (Binney, no. 89).

While all the better artists had left Delhi by 1765 – for safer and more rewarding cities elsewhere – some artists must have stuck it out in the beleaguered city, especially after the return of the Emperor Shah 'Alam in 1772, in order for artistic production to be resumed so readily after the Company's takeover in 1803. Falk & Archer, pp. 126-29, assign a small number of paintings to Delhi in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, but readily admit

that some of them might have been executed elsewhere. Portraiture both of the imperial family and others was the first sort of painting to revive after 1803 in a new style (for example Losty & Roy, pp. 202-20, and Dalrymple & Sharma, nos. 28-36). Also in this period in Delhi many artists practised recovering the ancient skills of the great Mughal painters by copying their work and creating new work in an archaistic style, as seen in the Wantage and Kevorkian Albums. They also included in their repertoire illustrated manuscripts both of histories such as those of Shah Jahan (Losty 2012, figs. 26-27), as well as the classics of Persian poetry including *Shahnamas*, *Gulistans* and the like (Leach, pp. 803-05). In our Ramkari ragini an artist is creating a *ragamala* scene derived from the mid-eighteenth century style of artists such as Fath Chand and Muhammad Faqirallah Khan (Falk & Archer, nos. 201-02), but adding new elements of sophistication and somewhat heavier modelling. The architectural decoration is particularly impressive as is the handling of the marble jalis through which the fruiting trees of the orchard are still visible. All in all, these archaistic paintings can be of wonderful quality, as here, though the overall effect can be somewhat dazzling.

REFERENCES

- Binney, E., 3rd, *Indian Miniature Painting from the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd: the Mughal and Deccani Schools*, Portland, 1973
Dalrymple, W., and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707-1857*, New York, 2012
Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
Leach, L.Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, London, 1995
Losty, J.P., Delhi: *Red Fort to Raisina*, edited by J.P. Losty, New Delhi, 2012
Losty, J.P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012



PAINTING

HEIGHT: 25.3 CM, 10 IN

WIDTH: 38 CM, 15 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 32.4 CM, 12 ¾ IN

WIDTH: 45.7 CM, 18 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, double border of buff and dark blue with gilt foliate motifs and matching rules

INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso a Persian inscription, detached and stuck down and repeated by another hand in pencil, reading:
asp-e shah jahan
 "Shah Jahan's horse"

PROVENANCE

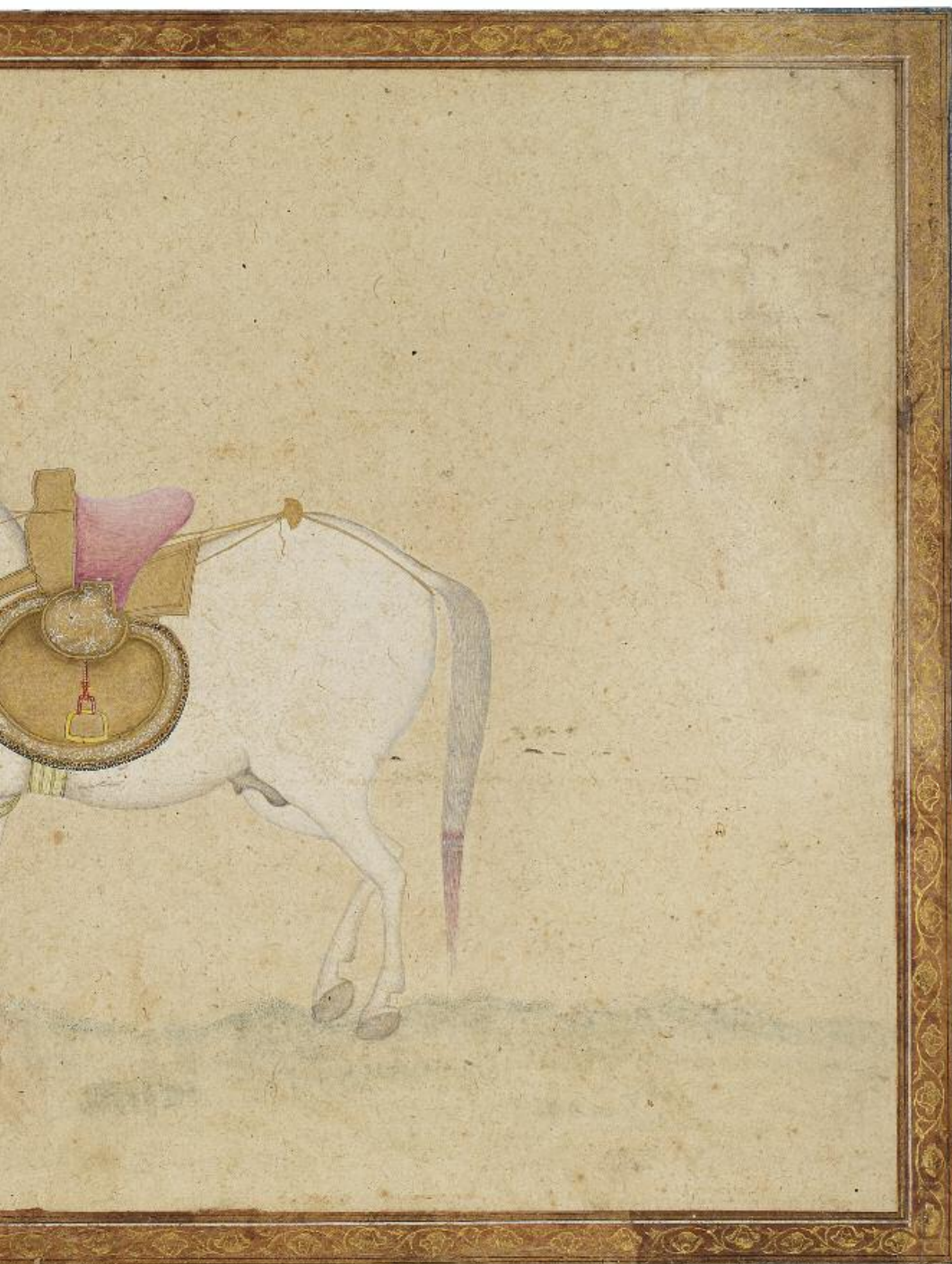
Professor Ghulam Yazdani (1885-1962)
 Private collection, New York, 1997-2013

PUBLISHED

Delhi Museum of Archaeology,
Loan Exhibition of Antiquities, Coronation Durbar, 1911: An Illustrated Selection of the Principal Exhibits, Archaeological Survey, Calcutta, 1913, pl. XLVI
Art of the Past, Soul of the Artist: Drawings by Indian Masters, exhibition catalogue, New York, 1997, no. 50

DELHI, CIRCA 1820





A grey stallion stands in profile richly caparisoned with his gilt-leather saddle and bridle. His princely boy rider stands before him holding out his hand which can just be seen connected to the horse's bridle by a leading rein. The boy is dressed in a short *jama* over his drawers and a jewelled and feathered turban. He is armed with sword, bow and quiver and is clearly going hunting, with one end of his *jama* pulled up for easier mounting of his horse.

Silhouetting the subject of a painting against a blank ground became briefly fashionable in Lucknow at the end of the eighteenth century, for example the works by Sital Das and his unnamed son in Falk & Archer, nos. 290-91. The heavier modelling here suggests the revived Mughal school in Delhi around 1820, as in the *Ramkari ragini*, no. 34 in the present catalogue.

REFERENCES

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

36 LADIES BATHING IN A POOL

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 15.9 CM, 6 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 9 CM, 3 ½ IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 23.2 CM, 9 ⅛ IN

WIDTH: 16.7 CM, 6 ⅝ IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, in an oval within a rectangular frame with illuminated spandrels

PROVENANCE

Private collection Switzerland, late 1960s-2013

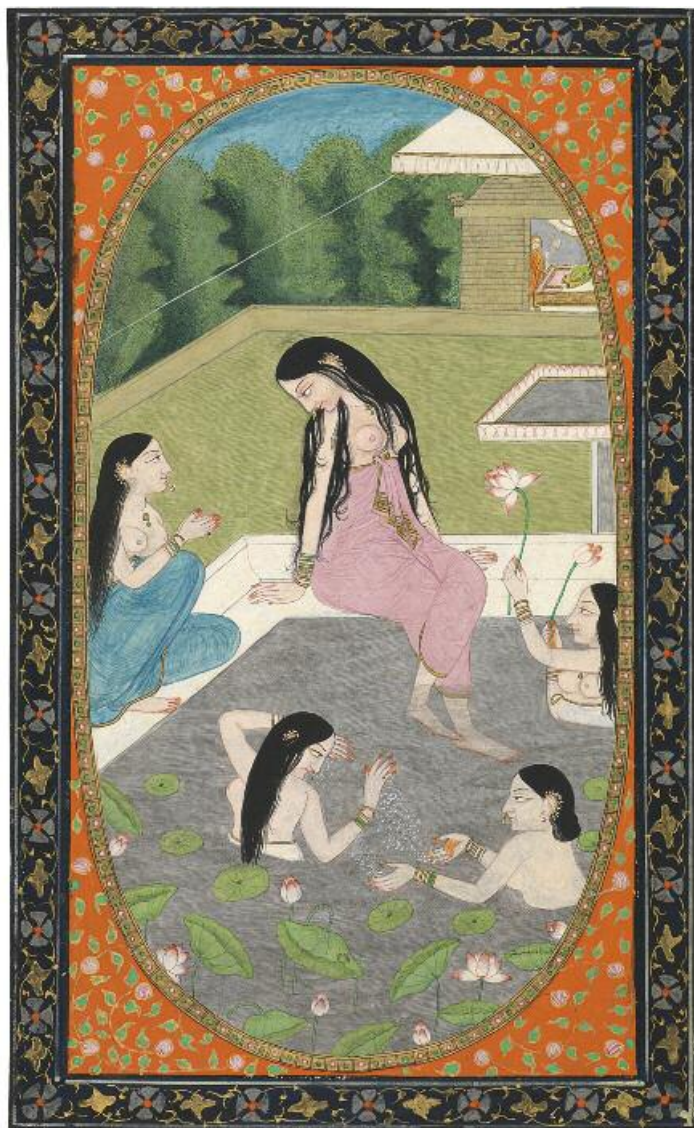
KANGRA, CIRCA 1820

A lady is seated on the edge of a rectangular lotus pool having emerged from her bath and wrapped herself in a sarong as she smiles bashfully at her inquisitive friend beside her. Other girls are still in the pool playing.

The composition is based on an earlier Guler one from the 1760s (Archer, Guler 42) showing the same corner of the pool enclosed by trees. Here our artist has invented a reason for the bath. In the background a bed is being prepared in a pavilion and our heroine is beautifying herself for her expected lover, as she responds bashfully to her friend's teasing.

REFERENCES

Archer, W.G., *Indian Paintings from the Punjab Hills*, London, New Delhi, 1973



37 TWO LADIES ON A TERRACE IN THE MONSOON SEASON

MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 23.2 CM, 9 1/8 IN

WIDTH: 17 CM, 6 3/4 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 30.3CM, 11 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 24.5 CM, 9 5/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, with inner gold floral borders and pink outer border

PROVENANCE

Private collection Switzerland, late 1960s-2013

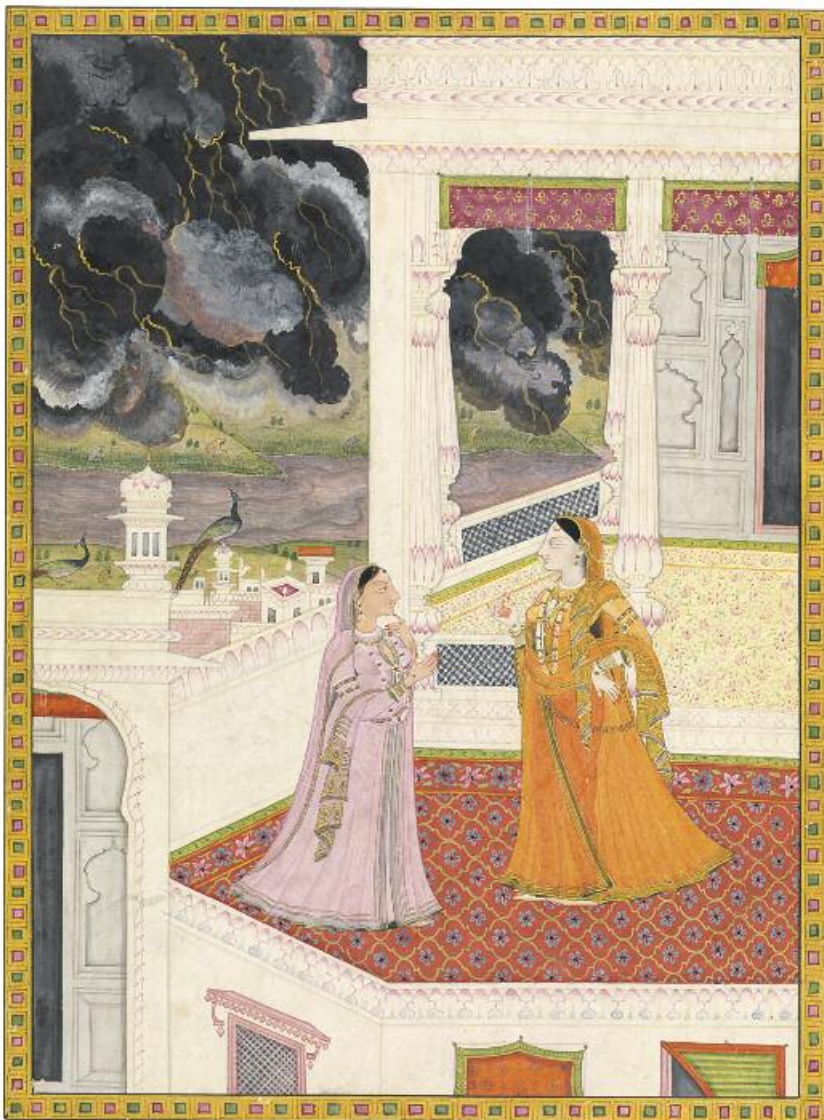
MANDI, CIRCA 1820

In this dramatic and evocative scene, thunderous clouds roll overhead pierced by gilt forked lightening while peacocks scream from palace cupolas, and two richly dressed court ladies converse on a carpeted terrace in the monsoon season.

The composition is based on one from a *Barahmasa* for the monsoon months of Savan and Bhadon, for instance a *Savan* formerly in the Lloyd Collection (Losty, no. 17), substituting a second lady for the prince. The architectural framework of roof terrace on which the participants stand, an open pillared pavilion in the background beyond the terrace, and a gateway below, all overlooking an extensive landscape, are very similar.

REFERENCES

Losty, J. P., *Indian Miniature Paintings from the Lloyd Collection*, Oliver Forge & Brendan Lynch Ltd., New York, exhibition catalogue, London, 2011



PAGE

HEIGHT: 20 CM, 7 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 24.4 CM, 9 5/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

PROVENANCE

Acquired in Gwalior 1931
Private collection, England, 1931-2013

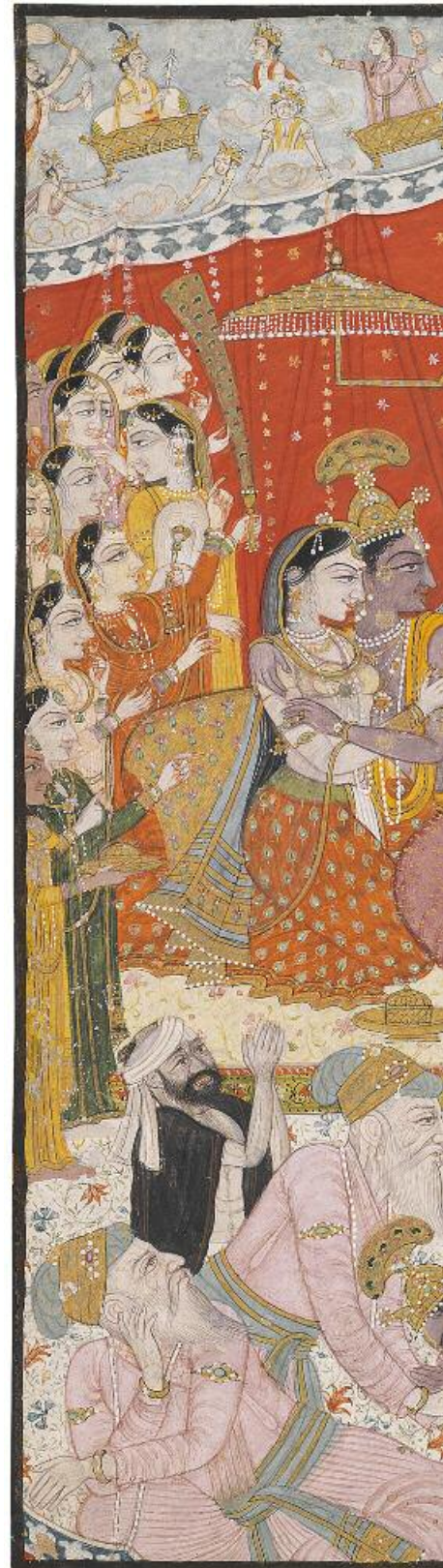
MANDI OR KANGRA, CIRCA 1820

These two vigorous and enchanting paintings, one enclosed within the confines of vast red tent walls, the other (no. 39) set more formally in a series of tented terraces, are full of movement and spontaneous detail, employing a rich and distinctive palette of red, green, yellow and pink, with lavish gilding enhancing their myriad details.

The tripartite narrative takes place on an embroidered white-ground summer carpet and shows, on the right, Krishna advancing eagerly amidst a crowd of his followers to fall firstly into the arms of his waiting beloved, at the left, and then, at lower left, he kneels at the feet of the princess's white-bearded father (shown in two aspects), to seek his blessing on their marriage.

On arrival, he is encircled by his cowherd friends, some bowing in supplication, and once in the arms of the princess, a parasol projects from amidst a row of celestial musicians celebrating in the clouds above beyond the confines of the red *qanat* walls. The princess has her women around her, two with a *morchal* and *chauri*, others proffering *paan*. The cowherds, at upper right, still with their boyish lovelocks hanging before their ears, prepare for the wedding by dressing themselves in their finery – donning *paijama* and winding turbans on their head, whilst no less than three of them check their appearances in mirrors. This is all borrowed finery, two pairs of men are attempting to don just the one *paijama*. The whole scene evokes a frenzied mood of celebration and the painting is highly unusual for its quirky detail and idiosyncratic portraits.

See note to no. 39





PAGE

HEIGHT: 20.4 CM, 8 IN

WIDTH: 25 CM, 9 7/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso a pasted down text folio
comprising thirty lines of Hindi script,
in red and black, mentions a work called
Karanabharana or 'Ornament of gesture'

PROVENANCE

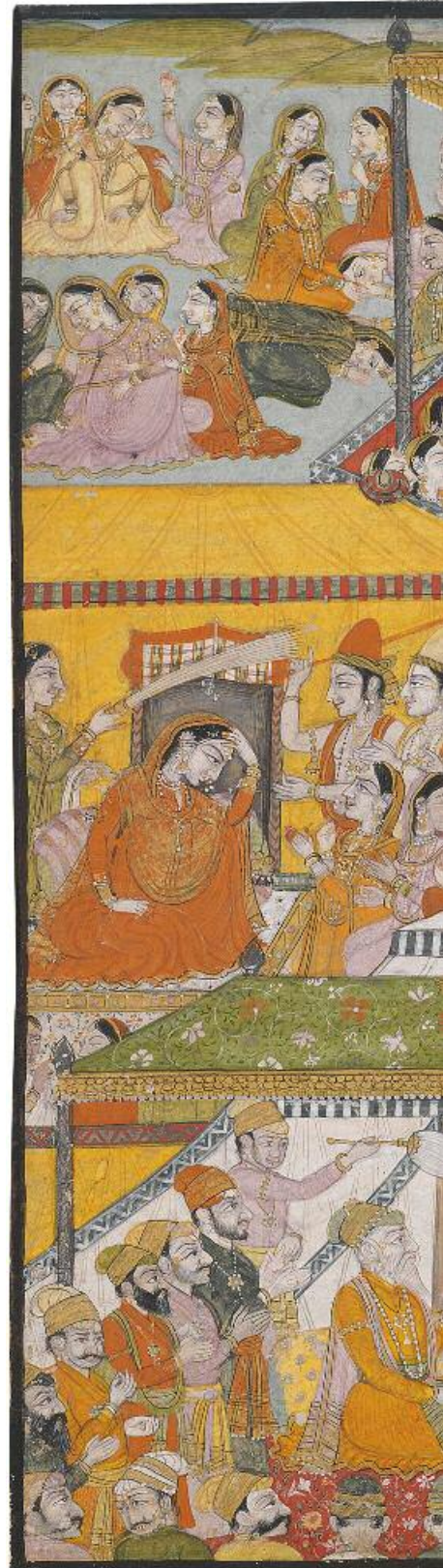
Acquired in Gwalior 1931
Private collection, England, 1931-2013

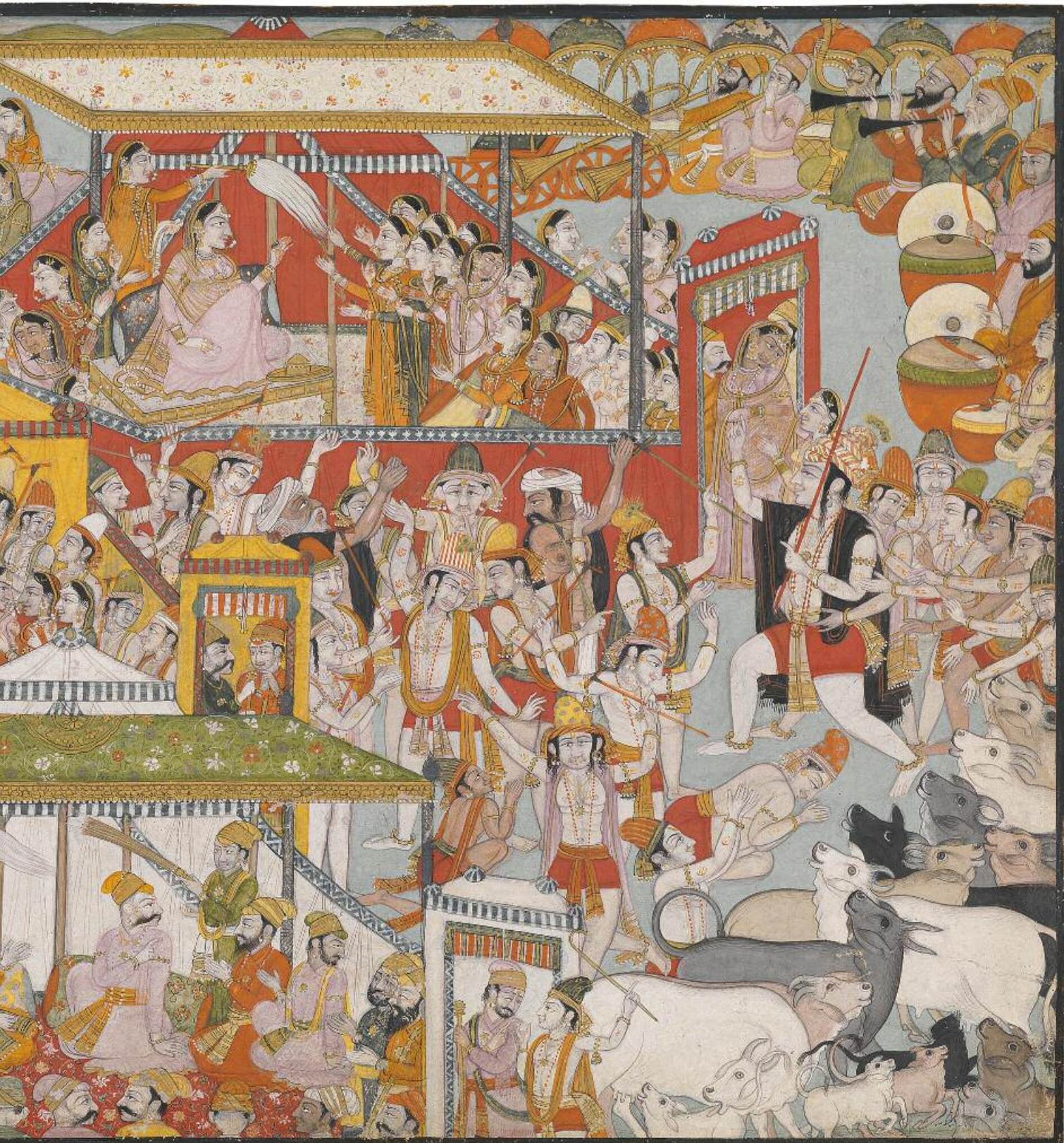
MANDI OR KANGRA, CIRCA 1820

Whereas the preceding painting (no. 38), from the same series, is suffused with frenzied activity arranged in an almost circular narrative, this painting is arranged more formally in three registers of figures at the left, contrasting with on the right the boy cowherds, cows and calves joining in the fray, to the accompaniment of the rows of seated court musicians. The vibrant palette remains much the same but with a balance of red and yellow against a pale blue ground. Balarama, wearing a tie-dyed turban has arrived for the wedding and advances to where the princess is sitting, apparently distraught at centre left, within a tented enclosure with her women, but above looking joyful in a marriage pavilion.

The subjects here are especially difficult to work out, since Krishna's relationship with the princess and her father seems to fit none of his marriages as narrated in the *Harivamsa*. Balarama's arrival at the marriage tent in which the king is seated with a host of visiting kings, no doubt for a *svayamvara*, suggests that this is the episode in the *Rukmini-harana* sequence where they conspire to cheat him at dice. But Krishna and Rukmini have fallen in love with each other from afar, and he does not meet her until he has carried her off from the temple, just before her marriage - arranged by her father and brother - to Susupala. Moreover, all the followers of Krishna and Balarama look like the young cowherds of Braj rather than the inhabitants of Krishna's princely city of Dwarka.

B. N. Goswamy is of the opinion (private communication) that the two paintings illustrate no known scenes from the Krishna legend, but are instead perhaps episodes from a theatrical performance, indicated especially by the *ganats* surrounding the action. He points out that a number of Pahari paintings are based on Krishna Mishra's eleventh century allegorical play, *Prabodhabandrodaya*, with action taking place in a space with cloth screens all around, although here the divine beings in the sky would suggest something out of a puranic text. The Hindi text pasted at the back, which might originally have been a dust cover for one of the paintings and detached from it, mentions an otherwise unknown work *Karanabharana*. There is detailed mention in the verses of playfulness between the *gopas* and Krishna, as well as Krishna's effect on the *gopis*. All this goes with the liveliness of the scenes depicted, including comic effects among the *gopas*, who play a crucial role round Krishna and Balarama, while the *gopis* surround the princess who perhaps in this context would be Radha. The elderly bearded man before whom Krishna kneels would be her father.





MINIATURE

HEIGHT: 29.8 CM, 11 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 21.3 CM, 8 3/8 IN

PAGE

HEIGHT: 37.7 CM, 14 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 27.8 CM, 10 7/8 IN

Opaque watercolour heightened
with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed above in red Nagari:

Nabab Mahammad Sa Khan kitab

Karnel Mukhtiyar dolo

and on the reverse in black Nagari:

(above) *Ram // Nibab Mahammad Sa Khan //*

kitab // Karnail [Mukh]tiyar daulau

and below: *kalam citara Bhati Sivdas*

Udairam ra ri samvat 1880 Maha suda 4 bud

The first inscription's meaning
is obscure, it is not clear how the
words are meant to fit together:

'Nawab Muhammad Sa Khan. Book.

The leading Colonel. Swing'

'the work of the artist Bhatti Shiv Das son of

Udai Ram, Wednesday the 4th *tithi* of the

bright half of the month Magha in Samvat

1880' [4 February 1824]

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Michigan

BY BHATTI SHIV DAS, JODHPUR,
DATED SAMVAT 1880/1824 A.D.

The subject of the painting is obviously a Muslim notable, perhaps a *musaddi* or official in the service of Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur (r. 1803-43). He is dressed in plain white muslin garments and turban over his purple *paijamas* and strikes a relatively subdued note compared to his magnificent dappled horse that prances across the page with swirling *chowries* attached to its mane and saddle. Three retainers with swords and a spear precede the Nawab and two with royal *chattar* (umbrella) and *chowrie* follow him, all placed within the red border that surrounds the painting.

Bhatti Shiv Das is an artist who worked for Maharajas Man Singh and Takhat Singh (r. 1843-73) of Jodhpur. In Man Singh's reign, according to Rosemary Crill, p. 140, his artists produced hundreds of equestrian portraits of the local *thakurs* and notables, the best of which use 'bold colours and strong lines that fill the whole frame of the painting' or as here exuberantly exceed it. For similar equestrian paintings of the local nobility, all proceeding across plainly coloured grounds under the strange Jodhpur convention of swags for clouds or sky, see Crill, figs. 93, 95, 105-06 & 114-15.

Shiv Das contributed like all the court artists to the lavishly illustrated large manuscripts of the sacred texts of the Nath sect, with which Man Singh was so intimately associated, as well as other large-scale series (Crill, pp. 150, 156). His plain style here documenting one of the Maharaja's officials or *thakurs* is rather different. More personal to Shiv Das perhaps is one of the most striking of Man Singh's devotional images of himself and the Nath *guru* Jalandharnath, 1820-25, showing him receiving a shawl from the enthroned *guru* at Diwali (Mehrangarh Museum, see Diamond, Glynn & Jasol, no. 32). In Takhat Singh's reign he produced highly decorative but well composed portraits of the Maharaja and his ladies around 1855, now in the Mehrangarh Museum (*ibid.*, figs. 143-44).

For paintings by Shiv Das's father Udai Ram, see Crill, figs. 74 & 126.

REFERENCES

- Crill, R., *Marwar Painting: a History of the Jodhpur Style*, Bombay, 2000
Diamond, D., Glynn, C., and Jasol, K. S., *Garden & Cosmos: the Royal Paintings of Jodhpur*, London, 2008

नवाब महंमद साबां किताब करणे लमु बतियार देलो



THE SAGE VASISTHA AND KAMADHENU THE WISH-FULFILLING COW

PANEL

HEIGHT: 40.5 CM, 16 IN

WIDTH: 51 CM, 20 IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 36 CM, 14 ¼ IN

WIDTH: 46.5 CM, 18 ¾ IN

Gouache heightened with gold over raised gesso on panel with crystal beads, within a frame of raised gold squares with glass infill over silver

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed below in Nagari:

Kamadhenu and Vasistha

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Europe, 1980s–2013

MYSORE, FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The great sage Vasistha is seated on a tiger skin under a tree with his cow Surabhi, the 'fragrant one', otherwise known as Kamadhenu, the 'wish-fulfilling cow' that was one of the products that arose out of the churning of the ocean by the gods and *asuras*. Here her calf Nandini is depicted suckling from her. Vasistha is offering her a tit-bit from a bowl which he has picked up from an adjacent tray. In Hindu iconography, she is generally depicted, as here, as a white cow containing numerous gods and goddesses with sages within her body. A later iconographic tradition also has her as a white cow with a female head and breasts and small folded wings (see Rao & Shastri, pl. 51). Above Vasistha's head the tree is full of various kinds of birds. The sage, cow and tree are silhouetted against a brilliant red ground.

The Kamadhenu is described in Hindu mythology as the mother of all cows. She is a miraculous 'cow of plenty' who provides her owner with whatever he desires and is often portrayed as the mother of other cattle. All cows are venerated in Hinduism as the earthly embodiment of the divine cow, and Kamadhenu although not worshipped as such is honoured through the general veneration for cows. The Kamadhenu became associated with the great sage Vasistha, the guru of the Ikshvakus or dynasty of Rama, who famously defended her against the king Visvamitra, who wanted to carry her off after the sage had entertained the king and his whole army with food and drink and everything else produced by her. She was able to produce an army to overcome first the king's army and then all his sons, until he finally realised his mortal power was no use against the mystical power of Vasistha and his cow. Visvamitra retreated and decided to work to become a sage rather than a king. His story is told in the first book of the *Ramayana*, where the Kamadhenu is the spotted cow Sabala.

Little remains of Mysore painting before the reign of Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar, who was restored to the throne of Mysore after the defeat of Tipu Sultan by the British at Seringapatam in 1799. The Maharaja was a great patron of the arts and sciences and was especially interested in music. He commissioned numerous illustrated manuscripts of the Hindu scriptures such as the *Bhagavata Purana* in the Binney Collection in the San Diego Museum (Goswamy & Smith, no. 115, pp. 268–73). For others of his manuscript commissions, see Mittal. Paintings of religious images, often against a brilliant red ground, as here, also flourished in this period for domestic use in Hindu homes. See Rao and Shastri for a survey of this material. The use of traditional pigment and the sparing use of gilded gesso in our painting suggests a date in the first half of the nineteenth century, after which chemical pigments and more lavish use of gesso and gilding became the norm in Mysore painting (Dallapiccola, pp. 16–17: compare her no. 12.11, a late nineteenth century painting of Virabhadra in the British Museum). The use of Nagari for the inscription suggests that the studio from which the painting came was based in northern Karnataka, near to the Maratha country, or else that it catered for a pilgrimage or indeed export trade for northern Indians.





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در دین و دنیا و آخرت
و در هر حال که باشد
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