





COURT ART OF THE ISLAMIC AND INDIAN WORLD

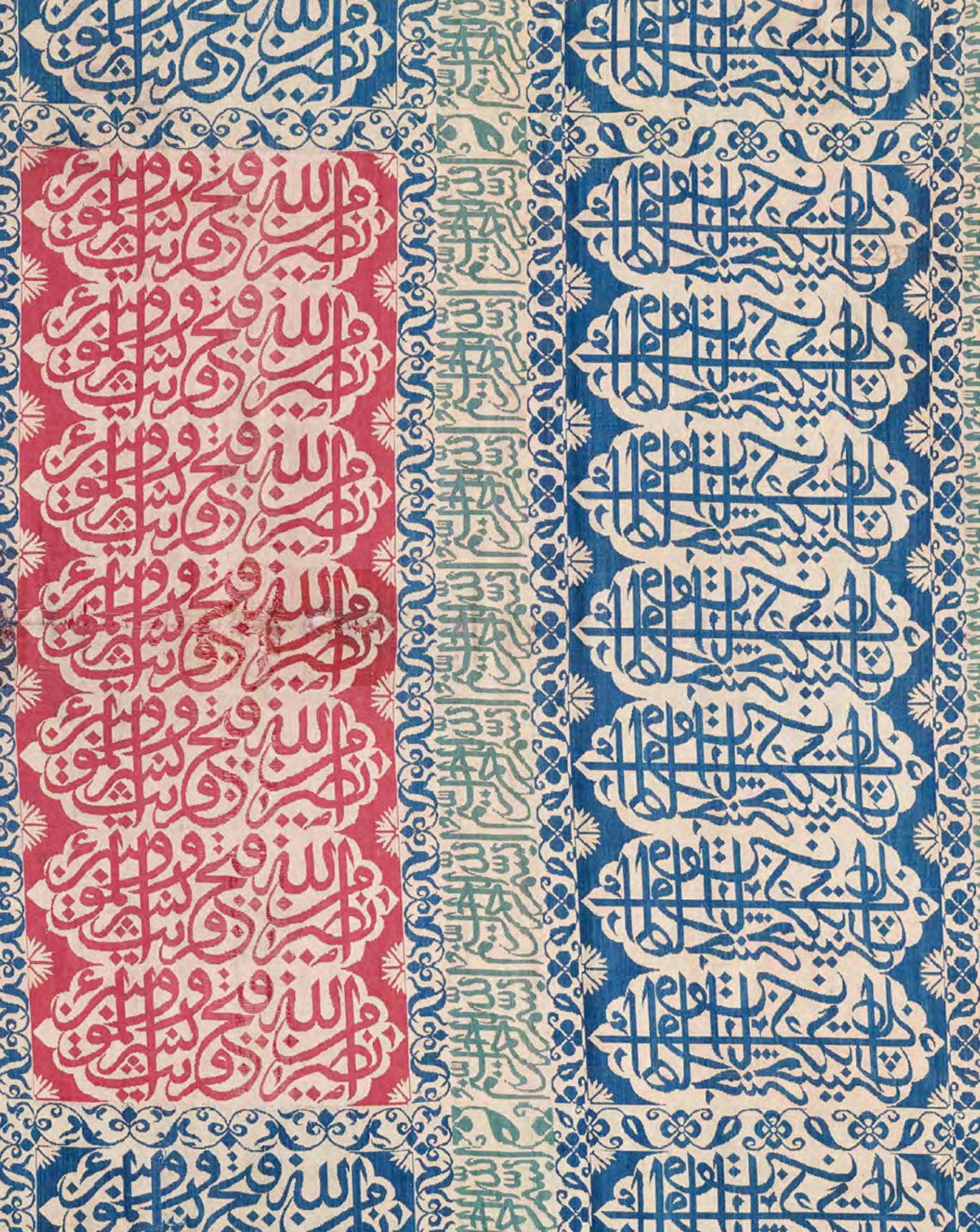
SECOND FLOOR
16 PALL MALL, ST. JAMES'S
LONDON SW1Y 5LU
TELEPHONE +44 (0) 20-7839 0368

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NINE ISLAMIC TEXTILES FROM A LONDON PRIVATE COLLECTION

Introduction

Since ancient times textiles have played an important role in court life throughout Asia. The 'Silk Route' is thought to have started in the second century B.C. traversing countries from Turkey to China. The role of textiles in nomadic societies, such as the Mongols, cannot be understated as they played a vital part in court ritual and establishing status, impressing friend and foe in equal measure. Although a flourishing silk industry had existed in Persia since pre-Islamic times, silk production expanded markedly in the early seventeenth century, thanks to stability and patronage brought about under Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1588-1629). Silk was most intensively farmed in the Caspian Sea provinces of Gilan and Mazandaran and was woven all over the country. Under Shah 'Abbas I, a state monopoly was established and the industry became centralised in the newly flourishing cities of Tabriz, Qazvin and Isfahan. As well as woven silk textiles and carpets, raw silk was also exported to Turkey, Russia, Central Asia, India, and Europe.

With the establishment of the capital at Isfahan in 1588, a new Armenian quarter developed at New Julfa in 1607, where a skilled community of dyers, weavers and embroiderers produced luxury textiles mainly for export. Centres such as Yazd and Kashan provided textiles for the domestic and export market and are particularly known for production of velvet and lampas-woven luxury silks. Production of exquisite textiles and carpets continued throughout the seventeenth century and into the early eighteenth century, as documented in the world's great collections.

REFERENCES

- Canby, S.R., ed., *Shah 'Abbas The Remaking of Iran*, London, 2009
Munroe, N.H., *Silk Textiles from Safavid Iran 1501-1722*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, May 2012 (web essay)
Thompson, J., *Silk: Treasures From The Museum Of Islamic Art*, Qatar, Doha, 2004
Wardwell, A. & Watt, J.C.W., *When Silk Was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles*, New York, 1997

A LARGE MONGOL 'CLOTH OF GOLD' BROCADE PANEL

1. MONGOL LAMPAS-WOVEN SILK BROCADE PANEL CENTRAL ASIA, CIRCA THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Woven in gold thread on a coral ground, forming a reticulated ogee design with tightly scrolling palmettes enclosed by hatched borders interrupted by intermittent rosettes, retaining both selvages, mounted with Perspex cover
129 by 33 cm.; 50 by 13 in.

THE MONGOLS

The Mongol empire came about in the course of the thirteenth century, started by the notorious Genghis Khan (d. 1227), whose hoards vanquished lands from China to the Caspian Sea. Countless millions were slaughtered or enslaved during this time. However, following the death of his grandson, Kublai Khan, in 1294, the empire split into independent khanates as the nomadic Mongols settled evolving eventually into the Yuan, Timurid and Mughal dynasties. One cannot understate the effect of the Mongol conquest in terms of cultural exchange, brought about by ease of communication and the resulting promotion of commerce.

THE MONGOL TENT

This sumptuous fabric is one of a small group of such panels that appear to have been used for the interior of a royal tent. As nomads, tents were ubiquitous in Mongol life, but royal tents of this splendour played an indispensable role as symbols of power and influence as kingdoms fell to the might of the Mongol armies.



A set of ten extraordinarily rare adjoining panels of this type is in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, see von Folsach, pp. 220, no. 209, where he discusses in detail this group, including a number of panels from the same textile in the David Collection, Copenhagen, accession nos. 4/1993 & 15/1989: <https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/dynasties/il-khanids/art/4-1993-15-1989>

He further observes that:

‘The Persian historian Rashid al-Din wrote about two tents that the Mongol Khan Hülegü received in 1255 and 1256 as gifts when he was near Balkh and Samarkand. The tent material is described as “gold on gold,” and this is precisely the effect that this type of textile with different woven metal threads made when it was new.’

PROVENANCE

Lisbet Holmes, London, 1988

Private collection, London, 1988-2022

REFERENCES

Folsach, K. von & Keblow Bernsted, A.M., *Woven Treasures: Textiles from the World of Islam*, Copenhagen 1993, no. 17

Folsach, K. von, “A set of silk panels from the Mongol period” in Blair, S. & Bloom, J. (eds.), *God is beautiful and loves beauty: the object in Islamic art and culture*, New Haven, 2013, p. 217-241

Shea, E. L., *Mongol court dress, identity formation, and global exchange*, Abingdon 2020

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.

Detail opposite



A MONGOL 'CLOTH OF GOLD' BROCADE PANEL

**2. MONGOL LAMPAS-WOVEN SILK BROCADE PANEL
CENTRAL ASIA, CIRCA THIRTEENTH CENTURY**

Woven in gold thread on a pale pink ground, comprising four rows of twenty-one scroll and rosette-filled hexagons forming lozenges in a latticed panel, retaining one selvage, mounted with Perspex cover
30 by 55 cm.; 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ by 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

See note to no.1

A fragment possibly from the same textile is in the David Collection, Copenhagen, inventory no. 14/1992
<https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/dynasties/il-khanids/art/14-1992>

PROVENANCE

Lisbet Holmes, London, 1988
Private collection, London, 1988-2022

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.





A RARE MASHRU TENT PANEL

3. LARGE RED SILK AND COTTON (MASHRU) TENT PANEL (KANAT) WITH GOLD-APPLIQUÉ DECORATION NORTHERN INDIA, PROBABLY JAIPUR, 1650-1750

The plain ground decorated with a vigorous flowering plant beneath a cusped arch with twin foliate spandrels, a horizontal panel of alternating poppy and cypress plants above and below, the surrounding borders of rosette-and-leaf motifs
180 by 11 cm.; 70¼ by 45¼ in.

Panels such as this were used in quantity to form an impressive tented room, when the ruler was travelling on hunting expeditions or to different parts of his territories where he would be required to receive local dignitaries in appropriate surroundings. Such scenes are recorded in various imperial manuscripts including the Akbarnama, where the use of sumptuous textiles formed a vibrant part of court paraphernalia, impressing visitors with not only tents but silk brocade canopies, carpets and draperies.

In the *Ain-i Akbari*, a Mughal sixteenth century administrative document, it was stipulated that orthodox Muslims should wear clothing made of simple materials such as linen and cotton and to avoid silk, velvet, brocade or fur. *Mashru* being part cotton and silk therefore became fashionable and it was used for household fabrics and the dress of courtiers, nobles and royalty. The loom draws the cotton yarn down and the silk fibres to the surface, the result thus having a silk face and a cotton backing.

The famous seventeenth century Jodhpur court tent is the only surviving complete tent, but this is made of crimson silk velvet embroidered in gold thread. However, a number of velvet

panels with closely related gold-appliqué floral decoration survive in the Metropolitan Museum, New York and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. The rarity of this particular panel is that it is made of *mashru*, a blend of cotton and silk, and that it retains its gold decoration.

Here the combination of robustly drawn gold floral motifs on a red *mashru* ground creates a vibrant contrast and one can only imagine the impact that massed panels in a large audience chamber would have created.

For the Metropolitan Museum's velvet tent-panel:
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/453054?ft=indian+tent+panel&offset=0&rpp=40&pos=1>

Victoria & Albert Museum:
<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O73931/tent-hanging-unknown/>

For the Lal Dera (Red tent) of Jodhpur:
https://www.reddit.com/r/ArtefactPorn/comments/hc11fh/lal_dera_red_tent_mughal_17thcentury_one_of_the/

PROVENANCE

Lisbet Holmes, London, 1986
Private collection, London, 1986-2022

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.

AN EXCEPTIONALLY FINE VELVET WITH IMAGES OF A MOTHER AND CHILD

4. LARGE AND RARE SAFAVID SILK VELVET PANEL PERSIA, 1600-25 A.D.

With three complete mothers-and-child and one half figure at lower right, each facing a cypress intertwined with a pomegranate tree with a seated dog in front, a leopard near the finial of the cypress; each wearing a diadem of leaves, necklaces, a pectoral and earrings and a full length long-sleeved dress covered by a pleated cloak, with dark shoulder-length hair; worked in a palette of dark green, navy, pale madder and browns on an ivory ground 165 by 31 cm.; 65 by 12¼ in.

SAFAVID VELVETS

A group of sixteenth and seventeenth century figural Safavid velvets, with both male and female figures, dating from the reign of Shah Abbas I (1588-1629) are known but they conform to a more typical Safavid style with slender figures possibly influenced by the court painter Reza 'Abbasi. These include a coat in the State Armoury Museum, Moscow, (see Scarce), another in the Royal Armoury and the famous Rosenborg Castle group, both in Stockholm, see Pope, plate 1060. Other velvets are in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, (Thompson, pp. 40-43, no. 8), the Keir Collection, London (Spuhler, no.107, pp.182-3 & 187), and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, accession no. T.226-1923: https://collections.vam.ac.uk/search/?q=T.226-1923&year_made_from=&year_made_to=

However, the sub-group to which this velvet belongs comprises a different and very distinctive group, as von Folsach points out, "the Madonna-like female figures ... set it apart ... with their dignified stature." The type and costume of the figures appear to be unique to this group and it is obvious that these figures are of Western derivation and may have been inspired by images of the Virgin and Child. The only other similar Safavid velvet known, depicting a seated nimbate Virgin suckling the Christ-Child, is in the Correr Museum, Venice, see Pope, plate 1061B, and was presented to the Doge of Venice by a mission sent by Shah 'Abbas in 1603. Another velvet in this group is a large figural panel in the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, see Thompson, pp.36-39, no.7, where the figures interact with the landscape in which they stand. A third with technical similarities depicting a standing lady in a thick cloak holding wine cup and bottle is published in Pope, pl. 1043. Another fragment is in the Textile Museum, Washington, see Bier, p. 239, no. 55.

A smaller panel from this group is now in the David Collection, Copenhagen, see von Folsach, no. 665 <https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/materials/textiles/art/1-1988>

Christian imagery became familiar to the Safavids due to the number of foreign visitors welcomed to Persia under Shah 'Abbas and additionally through the industrious Armenians who played a leading role in the development of the silk industry. In 1607 the Shah had a community of 150,000 Armenians moved from Julfa in Nakijevan and settled in New Julfa, Isfahan, where their right to worship as Christians was guaranteed by him. They set up what became a flourishing domestic and international trade in silk weaving, dispatching their merchants to Europe and Asia. This brought great prosperity to both the community and the country until the 1660s when they began to be taxed. As well as textiles, New Julfa became a centre of book production with its own binders, scribes and miniaturists based at All Savior's Monastery where, in 1636, a printing press was established. There is therefore a strong possibility that this velvet could have been commissioned by a Western patron, either one visiting Persia or an order that was made via one of the Armenian merchants visiting Europe.

PROVENANCE

This panel and three others, all smaller, were sold in London in the 1980s, when they were said to have been found in Tibet Spink & Son, London, 1987
Private collection, London, 1987-2022

REFERENCE

Baghdiantz McCabe, I., *The Shah's Silk for Europe's Silver: The Eurasian Trade of the Julfa Armenians in Safavid Iran and India (1530-1750)*, Atlanta, 1999
Bier, C., ed., *Woven from the Soul, Spun from the Heart*, Washington, D.C., 1987
Carswell, J., *New Julfa: The Armenian Churches and Other Buildings*, Oxford, 1968
Encyclopedia Iranica: Julfa <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/julfa-i-safavid-period>
Folsach, K. von, *Art from the World of Islam in the David Collection*, Copenhagen, 2001
Pope, A.U., ed., *A Survey of Persian Art*, Oxford, 1939
Scarce, J. 'Through a glass darkly: Glimpses of Safavid Fashion of the Sixteenth Century' in Thompson, J. and Canby, S., *Hunt for Paradise: Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501-1576*, Milan, 2003
Spuhler, F., *Islamic Carpets and Textiles in the Keir Collection*, London, 1978, no.107
Thompson, J., *Silk: 13th-18th Centuries: Treasures from the Museum of Islamic Art*, Qatar, Doha, 2004

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.

Detail opposite







A LARGE SAFAVID VELVET FROM THE SANGIORGI COLLECTION

5. SAFAVID SILK VELVET PANEL PERSIA, SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Comprising a full loom width and woven in a predominant palette of green-blue, yellow and gold on a cream ground, with ten cypress trees in four staggered rows, each growing from a stylised rocky mound flanked by birds in flight, cloud bands and two sinuous flowering plants, a formalised plant with single flower in between, with traces of metal thread
156 by 70 cm.; 61¼ by 27 in.

SANGIORGI COLLECTION

A distinguished dealer whose father, Giuseppe (1850-1928), established a gallery at the Palazzo Borghese, Rome, to sell the collection of Walter Pol. His son Giorgio's collections of Ancient and Islamic Textiles and Ancient Glass were published by him in 1911 and 1914 respectively. His collection of Ancient Gems was sold at auction in New York in 2019.

A series of scallop-edged voided velvet tent panels, with similar foliate motifs and cypress trees, is in the Textile Museum, Washington D.C.: <https://collectionsgwu.zetcom.net/en/collection/item/13815/>

PROVENANCE

Giorgio Sangiorgi (1886-1960), Rome
Spink & Son, London, 1985
Private collection, London, 1985-2022

EXHIBITED

Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome, 1911
Spink & Son, London, 1985

PUBLISHED

King, D., *Textiles from the Sangiorgi Collection*, London, 1985, no.20

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.

Detail



A FINE CALLIGRAPHIC TOMB-COVER

6. SAFAVID DOUBLE-SIDED SILK TOMB COVER PERSIA, SEVENTEENTH-EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Woven in blue, green and red on an ivory ground, with four vertical rows of nine *thuluth* cartouches, each flanked by further calligraphy and leaf-and-rossette borders, comprising a full loom width; mounted, framed and glazed
157.3 by 91.5 cm.; 62 by 36 in.

The dramatic and visually arresting combination of calligraphy and a strong palette combine to create a dynamic effect in this sacred tomb-cover. In a tradition set by the Safavid royal family, who were buried at the Shrine of Imam Riza in Mashhad or that of Fatimeh Ma'summeh in Qum, such covers were used to envelop the carved stone or inlaid wood sarcophagi that enclosed their wood coffins.

The inscriptions contain typically Shi'a invocations, reflecting the sect of Islam practised by the ruling Safavid dynasty. As often with such tomb-covers, alternate columns of calligraphy are woven in reverse, and these contain names of the Prophet's descendants which may symbolise a shared sacred lineage legible only to the deceased.

A closely related seventeenth century example is in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, accession no. 1922-22-90, where almost identical calligraphic cartouches flank three red panels
<https://philamuseum.org/collection/object/40569>

For others of this type, in the Musée des Tissus in Lyon and the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, see Tokatlian, pp.100-01, no.38 and Thompson, pp.46-49 respectively. A smaller example, signed Muhammad Husayn Bin Hajji Mohammad Kashani and dated A.H. 1122 / 1710-11 A.D., was sold at Christie's, 25 April 2013, lot 111

INSCRIPTIONS

In green on ivory ground: *bismillah al-rahman al-rahim*

Green medallions on left: *ya Husayn madhlum*

In red: *nasr min Allah wa fath qarib wa bashir al-mu'minin*
'help from Allah and an imminent victory. 'So` give good news [O Prophet] to the believers'

PROVENANCE

Colnaghi Oriental, London, 1984

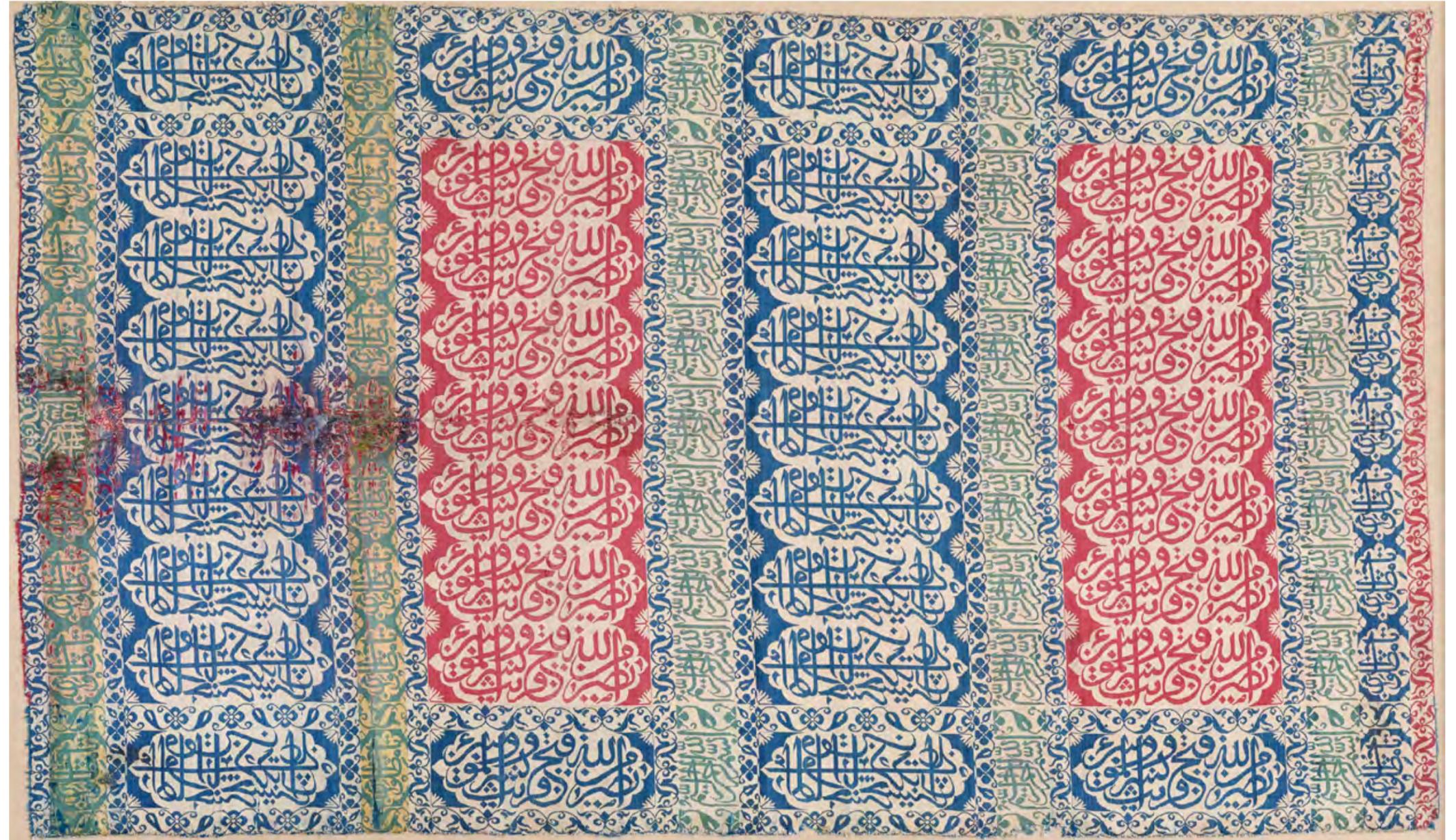
Private collection, London, 1984-2022

REFERENCES

Thompson, J., *Silk 13th to 18th Centuries*, Doha, 2004

Tokatlian, A., *Soies de Paradis*, Paris, 2008

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.





**7. SAFAVID SILK BROCADE PANEL
PERSIA, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

Woven in a palette of apricot, green and black on a silver ground with a repeating design of twenty-one motifs comprising a bird in a flowering tree with a butterfly hovering above it, arranged in seven staggered rows, formed of several pieces; mounted, framed and glazed
114.8 by 43.9 cm.; 45¼ by 17¼ in.

This distinctively Safavid palette became popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth century and was frequently used in the production of luxury textiles for court clothing. Miniature paintings of the period document such fashions.

A panel closely related in terms of palette and repeating motifs is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acquisition no. 49.32.99, <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/450991?ft=49.32.99&offset=0&rpp=40&pos=1>

For another related example see Guiffrey & Migeon, Paris, 1908, pl.69.

PROVENANCE

Spink & Son, London, 1983
Private collection, London, 1983-2022

EXHIBITED

Spink & Son, *Islamic Textile Design: Islamic Textiles & Their Influence in Europe*, London, 1-30 June 1983, p.17, no. 38

REFERENCES

Guiffrey, G. and Migeon, G., *La Collection Kelekian: Étoffes & Tapis d'Orient & de Venise*, Paris, 1908

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.



Detail opposite

A FINE SAFAVID COURT SASH

8. SILK BROCADE COURT SASH PERSIA, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Woven with a reticulated silver field of diminutive cypress trees, each fringed end with six hexagonal medallions containing flowering plants around a central rosette, in a palette of gold, silver, coral and green heightened with touches of turquoise and white matched in the borders
432 by 62 cm.; 246 by 170 in.

This exquisitely woven sash is an outstanding example in terms of technical perfection, palette and design. The field, with its densely woven rows of silver cypresses on a dark ground, is superbly contrasted with the two end-panels. Each of these, with six pointed cartouches filled with symmetrically arranged sprigs of flowering iris around a central medallion, match the gold-ground border of alternating rose and iris flowers. The palette, which is predominantly of coral, green and white on a silver or gold ground, is distinctively Safavid.

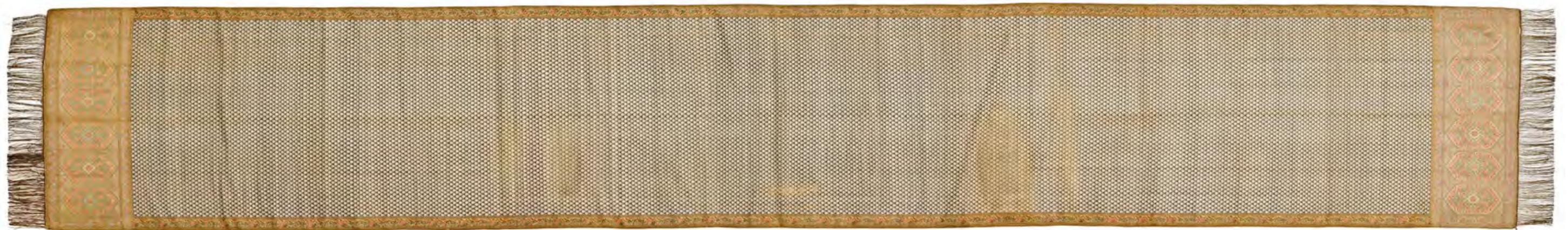
Other closely related court sashes are in the following collections :

National Museum, Cracow: An almost identical sash is ascribed to Kashan, circa 1736, see Bidronska Slota, B., 'Persian Sashes Preserved in Polish Collections' in *Carpets and Textiles of the Iranian World 1400-1700*, Oxford, 2003, p.179
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, accession no. 11.58.1:
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/446162?ft=11.58.1&offset=0&rpp=40&pos=1>
Kelekian Collection: see Guiffrey, J. and Migeon, G., *La Collection Kelekian: Étoffes & Tapis d'Orient & de Venise*, Paris, 1908, pl.66.
David Collection, Copenhagen

PROVENANCE

Jean Soustiel, Paris, 1988
Private collection, London, 1988-2022

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.





A FINE MUGHAL COURT SASH

9. SILK BROCADE COURT SASH (PATKA) INDIA, LATE SEVENTEENTH/EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Woven in a rich palette of red, green and gold, the crimson field with columns of repeating chevrons, either fringed end with a row of six flowering plants on a gold ground with scroll-and-rosette borders
248 by 49 cm.; 97 by 19 in.

The court sash was worn by men over a traditional frock-coat or *jama*, by being wound several times around the waist so that the decorated sash-ends could be displayed. As documented in many Mughal portraits, gem-set daggers and other court accoutrements were tucked into the *patka* at the waist. Other Mughal court sashes are in the Victoria & Albert Museum,

London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, see Murphy, p.99, no.269.

PROVENANCE

Nasli (1902-71) and Alice (1910-93) Heeramanek, New York
Spink & Son, London, 1988
Private collection, London, 1988-2022

REFERENCES

Murphy, V., 'Textiles' in Skelton, R., et al., *The Indian Heritage: Court Life and Arts under Mughal Rule*, London, 1982

This item can be viewed, by appointment, at a London warehouse.





Works of Art

A FINE ANATOLIAN CANDLESTICK

10. GOLD- AND SILVER-INLAID COPPER ALLOY CANDLESTICK CENTRAL OR EASTERN ANATOLIA, CIRCA 1250 A.D.

Of splayed form with concave sides, the drip-tray recessed, the cylindrical neck with overhanging mouth reflecting the form of the body

19.8 cm.; 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. height

19.5 cm.; 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter

ANATOLIAN CANDLESTICKS

This fine candlestick forms part of a group often associated with the town of Siirt, in south-east Turkey, but in this case may in fact be from Diyarbakir, slightly further west. It is decorated with three large roundels depicting scenes from the hunt as well as others showing celebrations with musicians and drinkers. Others in the group include the Nuhad Es-Said collection candlestick (Allan, 1982, no.7), and similar pieces in the Louvre (Rice, D.S., 1954, pp.1-39, pl.7a), Bologna (Rice, 1954, pl.11), and the Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi in Istanbul (Rice, 1954, pl.8, a-d).

A detailed description written by Professor James Allan is available on request. However, the salient points are:

DESCRIPTION

The body is decorated with three large roundels. Each contains a mounted huntsman, the first with some sort of hunting weapon in his hand, the second with a hawk on his left wrist, the third with a cheetah on the horse's crupper. Below each of them is an animal which appears to be a cross between a hare and a hunting dog! Between the three large roundels are pairs of small roundels, one above the other, containing a tambourine player and a flautist, a harpist and lute-player, a standing dancer and a drinker. Dividing each small roundel from its partner is a horizontal band with a central gold swastika-pattern hexagon between two animals. In two cases the latter consist of a unicorn and lion, but in the third the animals are a lion and a bull. The drip tray is decorated with three roundels, each containing an interlaced six-pointed star. Between the roundels are three bird-like creatures on an arabesque ground.

COMMENTARY

Although much inlay is missing, the quality of this piece is unmistakable. Not only are the figures in roundels well designed, but the arabesque work on the ground is of high quality, and the scrolls behind the individual figures are very

finely done. The human-headed calligraphy on the candle-holder is strongly rendered, and the bird-like creatures on the drip tray have a wonderful, almost calligraphic, feel to them.

The candlestick belongs to a large group of candlesticks which vary in their metal contents, in their decorative schemes, and in their details. The general consensus is that they were manufactured in one or more centres in central or south-eastern Anatolia, and that some at least of them were made in the town of Siirt in south-east Turkey. The evidence for this is summarised in Allan, 1982, pp.59-60.

If we try to tie down the origin of this particular candlestick more closely, two features stand out. The first is that, at some stage in its life, it belonged to a man called Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahman, who describes himself as a water-seller (*al-Suji*) from Ahlat, on the shores of Lake Van, eastern Turkey.

More interesting, however, is the appearance of a bull among the pairs of animals around the candlestick's waist, which is very unusual. Animal friezes on such metal objects usually consist of animals associated with the hunt e.g. hares, dogs, and lions, alongside mythical beasts e.g. sphinxes or unicorns (see e.g. Allan 1982 no.8). I cannot recall ever coming across a bull before. The art and architecture of the various Saljuq dynasties in Turkey is notable for its use of images borrowed from antiquity, particularly in its coinage. Perhaps the finest examples of such sculptures are those which decorate the walls of Diyarbakir, which date from the Saljuq period. Of more particular interest for our purpose, however, are the two showing a lion attacking a bull which decorate Diyarbakir's Ulu Cami. See: <https://romeartlover.it/Turmag24.html>

These were probably introduced, with the inscription next to them, by the Artuqids, in 1117 AD. The Artuqid palace in Diyarbakir was also decorated with similar sculptures. It is very tempting, therefore, to attribute this candlestick to a workshop in Diyarbakir.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

We are grateful to Dr. Peter Northover, who conducted an Analysis and Metallography report on the candlestick and a copy of his report, dated June 2022, is available on request.





INSCRIPTIONS

Around the base, in cursive, damaged and with extra letters, Arabic benedictions for the owner, not all deciphered:

رمعلاو] دعاصلا دجال او ذفانل/ رمال او الماشل لابقال او مئادل زعلا
 لاعف) اعطعلا] انك] ادعلا او ربل] و... / ... عىل اعلا تم ارلعل او] دل اعلا
 اعقيل او زعلا ... / ... ؟ظودلا (ارودلا) هبح اصلل (بح اصلل) ؟عنداعول او
 (هبح اصلل) بح اصلل او انشلا و دمحل او
 'Perpetual glory and complete prosperity and penetrating

command and rising good fortune [and] everlasting life [and] elevated generosity ... and piety and favour and happiness(?), for (its) owner. Wealth(?) ... glory and long life and praise and laudation to (its) owner.'

On the inside of the base, an owner's inscription:

يچوصلل ا يطالخل نمحل ا دبج نب دمحم
 'Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Rahman al-Khalati al-Suji (the water-seller)'

The inscription around the candle-holder bears the words *al-'amr al-da'im* three times, and more of the benedictions are to be found on the edge of the drip tray.

PROVENANCE

Tevfik Kuyaş (1916-89), Davos, Switzerland, acquired in the 1960s
 Private collection, Switzerland, by descent

REFERENCES

- Allan, J., *Islamic metalwork. The Nuhad Es-Said Collection*, London 1982
- Atil, E., Chase, W. T., and Jett, P., *Islamic Metalwork in the Freer Gallery of Art*, Washington D.C. 1985
- Rice, M., 'The Seasons and the Labors of the Months in Islamic Art', *Ars Orientalis*, London, vol.I, 1954, pp. 1-39



11. SAFAVID COBALT-BACKED BLUE-AND-WHITE POTTERY DISH
PERSIA, PROBABLY KIRMAN, MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Of rimless form standing on a low foot-ring, painted in blue and white on a cream slip incised with a fish-scale design forming four pointed lobes, the central lozenge with projecting two-part pointed arches fringed in leaves alternating with ogee medallions filled with palmettes and foliage; the exterior sides cobalt, a double band inside the foot-ring enclosing a pseudo-Chinese character mark
 8 cm.; 3¼ in. height
 41.5 cm.; 16½ in. diameter

In Yolande Crowe's comprehensive survey of the Victoria & Albert Museum's extensive collection of Safavid pottery, she places this type of bowl in the 'Floral and Incised' group dated to the reign of Shah Abbas II (1642-66), when the arts of the Safavid royal court were at their zenith. She describes this group as "possibly the most sophisticated group of Persian ceramics of Safavid times" (Crowe, p.124)

Dr. Crowe further suggests that this style may be derived from incised ceramics of the Yongle period (1403-24). The plain

coloured glaze of the exterior is a feature of this style and appears on a group of related bowls in the Victoria & Albert Museum, see Crowe, pp. 124-127, nos. 166-176, a number of which also feature identical diminutive foliate motifs filling the ogee medallions.

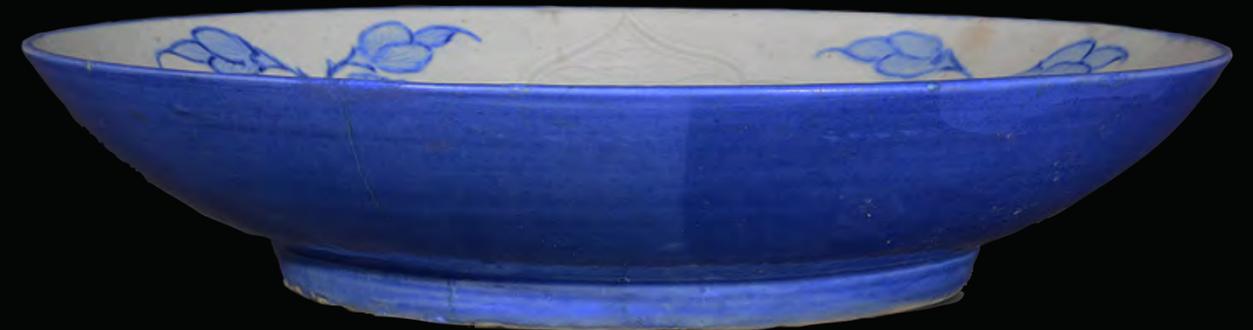
Another dish of this type is in the Louvre, Paris, see *Istanbul, Isfahan, Delhi*, p. 223, no. 98

PROVENANCE

Private collector (d.1998), England
 Christie's, London, 6 October 2011, lot 171
 Private collection, London, 2011-22

REFERENCES

Crowe, Y., *Persia and China: Safavid Blue and White Ceramics in the Victoria & Albert Museum 1501-1738*, La Borie, 2002
Istanbul, Isfahan, Delhi: Three Capitals of Islamic Art: Masterpieces from the Louvre Collection, Paris, 2008





12. SAFAVID LAVENDER-GLAZED POTTERY DISH
PERSIA, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Of shallow form on a low foot, painted in underglaze pale lavender, the border moulded with a continuous row of linear motifs; printed label 'RRJC' with 605 in ink, inside the footring 34.7 cm.; 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter

The shape of this type of dish is thought to have been derived from Chinese celadon wares. A number of closely related monochrome dishes, in green, amber or cream, with similar moulded rim, are in the Victoria and Albert Museum, including two of this palette:

<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O109223/dish-unknown/>
<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O109219/dish-unknown/>

PROVENANCE

Richard Ronald John Copeland (1884-1958), president and chairman of Spode-Copeland, Staffordshire
Acquired from the above by Leonard Whiter, director of Spode, early 1960s-1974.
By descent to Whiter's son: Bonhams, London, 19 April 2016, lot 89
Private collection, London, 2016-22



13. **IZNIK POTTERY RIMLESS DISH**
TURKEY, CIRCA 1580

Painted in underglaze green, turquoise, cobalt and bole red with black outline on a white ground, wearing a turban and a buttoned tunic, a quiver of arrows and a hawker's drum at his thigh, flanked by two exotic birds and two flowering plants, a choppy river of eight fish in front of him, the border with half-rosettes, ten small floral motifs encircling the foot-ring; with a nineteenth century oval label numbered in ink and a rectangular 'Eskenazi Antichita' label
30 cm.; 11¾ in. diameter

This is one of only two Iznik figural dishes that can be dated to the sixteenth century. Its scene of a high-ranking official apparently about to ford a river whist out hawking is full of idiosyncratic motifs yet in a familiar Iznik lexicon. The abstracted figure whose traditional hawk has been replaced by a harpy is one of the most fascinating and unique subjects found on Iznik pottery.

The Adda family made their fortune as cotton merchants in Alexandria and for generations were discerning art collectors.



According to Humphris (1967), Fernand Adda formed his collection of over 200 pieces of Iznik pottery between 1923 and 1959, much of it on the advice of the dealer Alfred Spero (1900-70).

PROVENANCE
Fernand Adda (1890-1965), Alexandria: sold Palais Galliera, Paris, 3 December 1965, lot 893
Cyril Humphris, London, 1967
Sotheby's, London, 4 December 1972, lot 37: Eskenazi, Milan

Private collection, Italy: sold Christie's, London, 17 June 1999, lot 1
Private collection, London, 1999-2022

PUBLISHED
Rackham, B., *Islamic Pottery and Italian Majolica*, London, 1959, pp. 142-3, pl. 226
Humphris, C., *69 pieces of Islamic Pottery and Italian Maiolica from the Adda Collection*, London, 1967, no. 14
And when Iznik went abstract, Cornucopia, vol.XI, no.63, 2021, p.14

14. **KUBACHI POTTERY DISH WITH THE BUST OF A WOMAN**
NORTHERN PERSIA, EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Painted in underglaze blue, yellow and green with black outline on an off-white ground, with the bust of a veiled woman in a garden holding a small pomegranate filling the central roundel, the cavetto plain, the borders with seven oval cartouches of floral motifs reserved in blue, the foot-ring unglazed
32.3 cm.; 13¼ in. diameter

A Kubachi dish in the Louvre, Paris, compares closely to this example, see *Istanbul, Isfahan, Delhi*, 2008, pp. 216-7, no. 93. The pomegranate has since ancient times been a symbol of fertility and prosperity in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Islamic World.

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Japan, 1980s-2011; Christie's, London, 7 April 2011, lot 141
Private collection, London, 2011-2022

REFERENCES

Istanbul, Isfahan, Delhi: Three Capitals of Islamic Art: Masterpieces from the Louvre Collection, Paris, 2008



15. **SAFAVID BLUE AND WHITE POTTERY FLASK**
PERSIA, 17TH CENTURY

The pilgrim-flask body on a splayed foot, painted in underglaze cobalt blue on a white ground with motifs comprising loose sprays of flowers, a ring of *ruyi* motifs on collar and above foot and a band of lotus leaves below the bulbous mouth, a pseudo-Chinese mark inside the foot
33 cm.; 13 in. height

PROVENANCE

Art Market, London, 1999
Private collection, London, 1999-2022



16. SAFAVID BLUE AND WHITE POTTERY JAR
PERSIA, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Of squat form with convex shoulder and short flaring neck, decorated in blue and black on a white ground with rosettes and foliate tendrils divided by bands of scrolls, *ruyi* and chain motifs, a pseudo-Chinese reign mark inside the foot-ring
13.8 cm.; 5½ in.

PROVENANCE

Galerie Koller, Zurich, May 1977
Private collection, Switzerland, 1977-2015



17. **LARGE SAFAVID BLUE AND WHITE POTTERY BOWL**
PERSIA, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Of deep flaring form on a short foot-ring, painted in blue and black on a white ground, with a turbulent landscape of ducks and other birds in flight amidst a contorted tree, geometric rocks and scudding clouds, a lower border of elongated *ruyi* motifs; the inside with a circular medallion of similar motifs and a broad border of vertical scroll motifs; a square pseudo-Chinese reign mark inside the foot-ring
17.7 cm.; 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. height
36 cm.; 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter

PROVENANCE

Pierre Le Tan (1950-2019), Paris: Sotheby's, Paris, 17 March 2021, lot 282





18. 'BIDRI' SILVER-INLAID METAL HUQQA BOTTLE
DECCAN, CIRCA 1750-1800

The spherical body decorated with dense linear inlay arranged in vertical rows, filled with alternating chevron and lozenge motifs, divided by dentate bands, with ridged flaring neck
18 cm.; 7 in. height

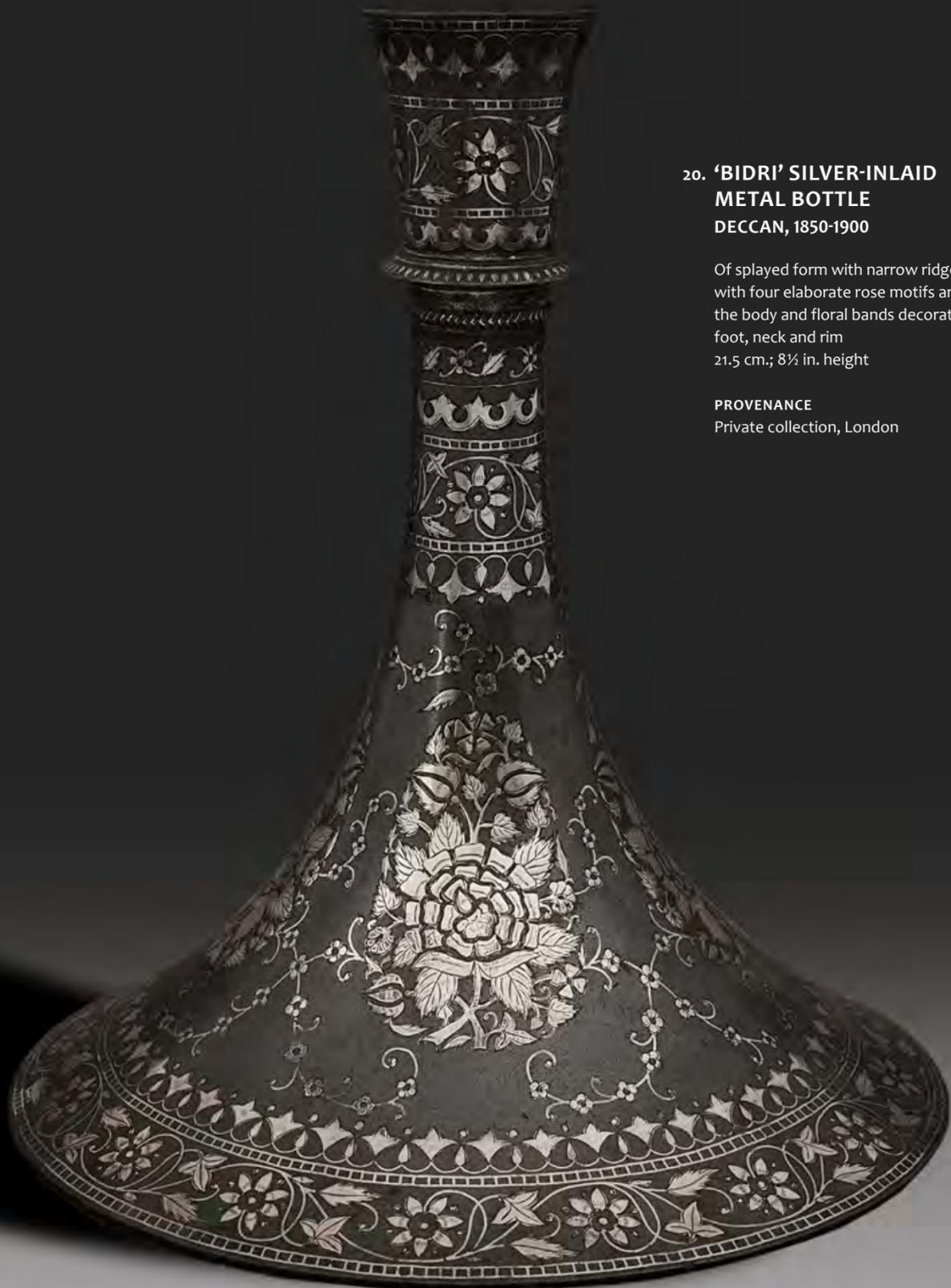
PROVENANCE

Acquired at auction in London in the 1990s



19. 'BIDRI' SILVER-INLAID METAL HUQQA BOTTLE
DECCAN, CIRCA 1750-1800

The bell-shaped body of splayed form with ridged flaring neck, decorated with a repeating lattice of ogees enclosing iris heads, the borders with dense floral, poppy-head, dentate and chevron motifs
16 cm.; 6¼ in. height



20. 'BIDRI' SILVER-INLAID
METAL BOTTLE
DECCAN, 1850-1900

Of splayed form with narrow ridged neck,
with four elaborate rose motifs around
the body and floral bands decorating the
foot, neck and rim
21.5 cm.; 8½ in. height

PROVENANCE
Private collection, London



21. BRONZE FINIAL WITH A STYLISED MAKARA HEAD TERMINAL
DECCAN, CIRCA EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Of square section terminating in the form of a *makara*, with
leonine features, bulging eyes, protruding fangs and incised
tiger-stripes
7.5 cm.; 3 in. height
15 cm.; 5¾ in. length

The *makara*, or hybrid leonine creature is found throughout India
and is imbued with tutelary powers, with which it protects people
and buildings. This object may have come from a piece of furniture
such as a throne or a palanquin. The tiger-stripe decoration on
its head has associations with Tipu, Sultan of Mysore (1750-99),
who used it to decorate many of his court objects, arms and
textiles. For one of Tipu's swords, the hilt with similar tiger-stripe
decoration, see Archer, Rowell & Skelton, no.33.

PROVENANCE
Ernest Ohly, Berkeley Galleries, Davies Street, London

From 1942, William Ohly (1883-1955), and his son Ernest
(d. 2010) dealt in Antiquities, Tribal and Indian Art, as well
Modern British Art, the gallery closing in 1977. In the post-war
period William founded the non-profit Abbey Arts Centre for
burgeoning artists at his estate in Barnet and in 1952 a Museum
of Ethnography was opened there.

REFERENCES
Archer, M., Rowell, C. and Skelton, R., *Treasures from India: the
Clive Collection at Powis Castle*, London, 1987



22. OTTOMAN ENAMELLED SILVER
DOCUMENT CASE
TURKEY, TUGHRA OF ABDULMEJID (1839-61)

Decorated around the exterior with a repeating design of single leaves, each enamelled in silver and dark red, the upper portion unscrewing, its lid removable to reveal a chalk sprinkler, the lower portion opening to reveal an ink-well, the top and foot each with foliate decoration, stamped on the underside with the *tughra*
27 cm.; 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. height
4.3 cm.; 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter

In the nineteenth century document cases of this type were used whilst travelling, so that a letter could be written, the ink dried with chalk from the container, and the letter swiftly dispatched.

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Switzerland, until 2012





Works on Paper

**23. A HIGHLY IMPORTANT ILLUSTRATION FROM THE 'ACCESSION' SHAHNAME OF SHAH ISMA'IL II
KAY KHUSRAU RECEIVED BY PIRAN IN KHOTAN
ASCRIBED TO THE ARTIST ZAYN AL-'ABIDIN
PERSIA, QAZVIN, CIRCA 1576-7**

Opaque colours with gold and silver on paper, the verso with four columns of text in twenty-two lines, additional verses in the margin, and a gold rubric in mid-page occupying the two inner columns, with rules of blue, black, red and gold
21.8 by 24.5 cm.; 8 3/4 by 9 3/4 in. painting
45.8 by 31.6 cm.; 18 by 12 3/4 in. folio

This lyrical scene is amongst the rarest subject for any *Shāhnāma*, and here it is treated with great delicacy and lightness of hand by Zayn al-'Abidin. This virtuoso artist's skill as both a painter and an illuminator have been put to full and splendid use, creating a vibrant work worthy of its imperial patron.

At the centre of a sumptuous pale mauve ground stands the wise and dignified figure of Piran, having descended his gold throne to greet the contrastingly youthful Kay Khusraw at the edge of a meandering stream. Seven secondary figures surround them, all in white turbans and silk brocade robes with swords mostly strung from their belts. The landscape is filled with spring-blossoming prunus, a cypress and to the right a dominant maple tree containing song birds. The vibrancy of the scene is further enhanced by the courtiers' robes - in a palette of royal and cobalt blue, saffron, chocolate and gold - contrasting with the bright white of turbans and prunus and the startling maple boasting a pale green trunk and leaves of flame, saffron and dark grey. The trunk echoes the green of Piran's inner garment and the leaves reflect the colours of the courtiers' garments.

In an essay on this folio, written in April 2018 by Dr. Eleanor Sims, she concludes:

"This picture from the "Accession" *Shāhnāma* of Shah Isma'īl II Safavi, ascribed to Mir Zayn al-'Abidin and displaying many of his signature features, is a mature and unmannered example of the Qazvin style of sixteenth century Persian manuscript painting. "Kay Khusrau Received by Piran in Khotan" fits well into just the period of Isma'il's short reign, between the late summer of 1576 and November of 1577."

Dr. Sims has also tentatively suggested the possibility, on stylistic grounds, that the manuscript could have been conceived before 1557.

THE SHAHNAME BY ABU'L-QASIM FIRDAUSI TUSI

The painting comes from a dispersed royal Safavid copy of the *Shāhnāma*, the Persian Book of Kings, one of the world's longest epic poems, written by the celebrated court poet Firdausi. This epic poem is an account of the reigns of fifty rulers of Iran, from its earliest days down to the Sasanian period, the last pre-Muslim dynasty to rule in Iran before the Arab conquest of 651. A work of at least 50,000 rhyming verses and often many more, the *Shāhnāma* was completed early in the eleventh century and was composed entirely in Persian, with virtually no Arabic word or phrase.

IMPORTANCE OF THE ISMA'IL II 'ACCESSION' SHAHNAME

It is recognised that the two most important *Shāhnāma* manuscripts of the Safavid period are those commissioned by Shah Tahmasp in 1525 (the "Houghton" *Shāhnāma*) and Shah Isma'īl II's of 1576-7.

Both are of exceptionally large format, sharing a four-column layout with twenty-two lines of text, Tahmasp's (47 by 32 cm.) being only slightly larger than Isma'il's (46 by 31.6 cm.). The former has around two hundred and fifty paintings as opposed to the fifty-five so far identified from the latter. A distinguishing feature of Isma'il's manuscript is the outer marginal ruling enclosing the inner written surface.

Shah Isma'īl II's inspiration was his father Tahmasp's 1525 accession *Shāhnāma*, the magnificently illustrated and most famous Persian manuscript extant. Upon the death of Shah Tahmasp in 1576 Isma'il succeeded to the throne and immediately assembled the finest painters and illustrators of the day to work on his "Accession" *Shāhnāma*.

In 1976 B.W. Robinson wrote the first of two articles attempting the reconstruction of the manuscript by tracing and identifying as many of its paintings as possible. His article lists forty-nine, and this was augmented by a subsequent article in 2005 where he identified six further paintings including the present example, bringing the total known to fifty-five. His relevant comments include:



- Though the colophon does not survive, “the date of the miniatures is fixed by stylistic considerations at about 1575-80” (Robinson, 1976, p.5)
- “It is also clear that it is a royal manuscript; its scale, its lavish and impressive illustrations with their attributions to well-known court artists, leave no doubt on that score”
- Shah Isma‘il II “was an extremely cultured man” and a practiced calligrapher, poet and painter, and Robinson leaves no doubt that he commissioned this manuscript
- He also notes that with his reign cut short “all the surviving miniatures ... are confined to the earlier part of the epic”, coinciding with his death after only fifteen months’ reign, and in view of that “the miniatures may thus be dated with some confidence to 1576-7”

SUBJECT OF THE PAINTING

As Robinson noted, this scene is very rarely illustrated, the only other instance is recorded in the Cambridge *Shāhnāma* database, pp. 355-357, see Sims’s essay. The illustration expands on two of the fundamental themes of the *Shāhnāma*: the first is that of kingly legitimacy and the second is the ancient rivalry between Iran and Turan. Thus it adds detail to the broader story of Kay Khusrau and his pivotal position in the legendary enmity between Iran and Turan.

THE PAINTER MIR ZAYN AL-‘ABIDIN

Tutored by his grandfather, the great painter Sultan Muhammad, who was one of the premier painters of Shah Tahmasp’s *Shāhnāma*, Zayn al-‘Abidin spent his entire life in royal service. Of the forty-nine paintings identified by Robinson in 1976, four are by this artist, at the time all in the Rothschild collection, subsequently sold by Colnaghi’s (pp. 34-35, 37 & 46). Of the six identified by Robinson in 2006, two are ascribed to him. Robinson comments:

- “produced work remarkable for superb execution and rich colouring”
- “as good an illuminator as a painter... a man of great dignity and nobility of character”
- “his work in this manuscript... is all outstanding for its superb execution and rich colouring; faces and rocks are painted with the utmost skill and delicacy, the drawing is always sure and firm”

ROBINSON’S 2005 DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRENT FOLIO

“Another fine miniature by this excellent painter. Pale mauve ground with no horizon or visible sky. Piran’s throne is set up in a garden; a large maple tree with boldly variegated leaves and frequented by birds, to the right, and a stream running across the foreground. Six courtiers, grouped in pairs, are wearing Turkish-style turbans, and another courtier, more elderly and carrying a stick, lower right. Piran, with a greying beard, and

the pretty little prince, occupy the middle ground. It is perhaps noteworthy that both Piran and Kay Khusraw are wearing crowns (very unusual for the former), the elderly man with one feather and the younger prince with two; one of the courtiers in the lower left-hand pair is depicted in profile in the same style of ‘Ali Asghar (see no.3).”

OTHER LEAVES FROM THIS MANUSCRIPT

- Two folios from the Lowe Collection, each ascribed to the artist Siyavush, were sold at Christie’s, London, 31 March 2021, lots 52 & 53. https://www.christies.com/lot/lot-6361855?ldp_breadcrumb=back&intObjectID=6361855&from=sales-summary&lid=1
- Eight folios: Aga Khan Museum of Art, Toronto, formerly in the collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan (1933-2003)
- Two folios: Abolala Soudavar Collection: Art and History Trust
- Five folios: Chester Beatty Library, Dublin
- One folio: David Collection, Copenhagen
- One folio: Freer/Sackler Galleries, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
- One folio: Museum of Islamic Art, Qatar: acquired Sotheby’s, London, 25 April 2012, lot 475
- Two folios: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
- Double-page frontispiece: The Nasser David Khalili Collection, London
- Sixteen folios: Riza-yi Abbasi Museum, Tehran
- One folio: Seattle Art Museum, Seattle
- One folio: De Unger/Keir Collection, London

INSCRIPTIONS

Apart from the main text, additional poetry in eight couplets is written near the bottom of the verso, while the gold rubric at the centre of the page announces Afrasiyab’s consultation with Piran regarding Kay Khusrau. On the recto, the illustrated page, is ascribed the name of the artist, “Zayn al-‘Abidin”, written just above the *chinar* tree. Robinson, (2005, pp.298-9) convincingly argues the case for this (and other signed works in the manuscript) being in fact signatures, not attributions, and here describes his “neat and compact writing” being in character with Zayn al-‘Abidin’s exacting style of painting.



Detail opposite



PROVENANCE

Musée des arts Decoratifs, Paris, 1912, when the manuscript was complete
 Georges-Joseph Demotte (1877-1923), Paris. By 1914 Demotte was offering individual leaves, and at the time of his death still had seven in stock.
 Million family, Paris, until 2006, (one of the six published by Robinson in 2005)
 Sam Fogg, London, 2006
 Private collection, London, 2006-22

PUBLISHED

Robinson, B.W., "Shah Isma'il II's copy of the Shah-Nama: Additional Material", in *Iran*, vol. 43, London, 2005, pp.291-99, colour plate 4

REFERENCES

Bloch, E., *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Persian Paintings... at the Galleries of Demotte Inc.*, New York City, np., n.d. [1929], nos. 60-66
 Cambridge Shahnama Database, Warner & Warner, vol. II, pp. 355-7
 Grube, E.J., *Muslim Miniature Paintings from the XIII to XIX Century from Collections in the United States and Canada*, Venice, 1962, no. 60, p. 82
 Marteau, G. and Vever, H., *Miniatures Persanes*, 2 volumes, Paris, 1913
 Robinson, B.W., *Persian Miniature Painting from collections in the British Isles*, London, 1967, no. 56, p. 62
 Robinson, B.W., "Rothschild and Binney Collections: Persian and Mughal Arts of the Book," *Persian and Mughal Art* (P & D Colnaghi), London, 1976, cat. 19, pp. 32-47
 Robinson, B.W., "Isma'il II's Copy of the Shāhnāma," *Iran*, Volume XIV, 1976, pp. 1-8, pls I- VIII
 Robinson, B.W., "Shah Ismā'īl II's Copy of the Shāh-Nāma: Additional Material," *Iran*, Volume 43, 2005, pp. 291-299
 Sims, E., *The Tale and the Image*, Volume XXV of the Nasser David Khalili Catalogue of Islamic Art, 2018
 Sims, E., 'A folio from the Isma'il II Shahnama', commissioned essay on the present work, April 2018 (unpublished)
 Welch, S.A., *Artists for the Shah*, New Haven and London, 1976, passim

We are grateful to Dr. Eleanor Sims for her assistance and advice in cataloguing this folio.



Detail

24. AN IMPORTANT LEAF FROM THE "THIRD" AKBARNAMA MANUSCRIPT

**KAMAL KHAN DEFEATS THE GAKHARS AND CAPTURES SULTAN ADAM IN 1563
ASCRIBED TO MUKUND AS DESIGNER AND KISHANDAS, SON OF LA'L, AS PAINTER
LEAF FROM THE 'THIRD' AKBARNAMA
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1595-1600 A.D.**

Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down on a nineteenth century backing, a collection number inscribed on the lower margin, a sketch of a kneeling prince on the reverse 34 by 21.6 cm.; 13¼ by 8½ in. painting
36 by 24 cm.; 14¼ by 9 ½ in. folio

Both compositions show a middle-aged bareheaded figure, arms tied behind his back or wrists bound before him, being ushered into the presence of a mounted warrior even as the battle rages on. Only one other such scene appears in the two other copies of the Akbarnama. Now in the Fondation Custodia, Paris, it occurs late in the Beatty Akbarnama and depicts a conspicuously young Da'ud, captured during the conquest of Bengal, see Gahlin, S., *The Courts of India*, Zwolle, 1991, p.21, no. 20, plate 20.

Kamal Khan was the son of Shir Shah, Sultan Adam's older brother and the chief of the hill tribe Gakhar, who occupied the land between the Beas and Indus rivers. He was imprisoned in Gwalior after Sher Shah's death and Sultan Adam became chief. Whilst in prison, Kamal Khan sent a petition to Akbar who ordered Sultan Adam to divide his lands with his nephew. When he refused, troops were sent by Akbar capture and imprison him.

SUBJECT

The identification of the subject as the capture of Sultan Adam during the battle against the Gakhars in 1563 is established by comparison to scenes in the Victoria & Albert Museum's

Akbarnama, folio no. 31/117, and the double-page composition by Surdas on folio 84b of the 1597 (or 1602-03) Chester Beatty Library Akbarnama. The left-hand folio was sold at Christie's, London, 26 October 2017, lot 183: <https://www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/kamal-khan-defeats-the-army-of-gakhars-6099440-details.aspx>

ATTRIBUTION

All known leaves from this manuscript were re-mounted in the nineteenth century, so the inscriptions are taken to have been transcribed by the court librarian from the original album pages. In the twenty or so known paintings, the majority of scholars, including the late Robert Skelton, J.P. Losty and Linda York Leach, have accepted these attributions. This painting has an ascription mentioning two artists:

(i) Mukund

The fact that Mukund is described as designer puts him in the rank reserved for senior artists. Verma, S.P., *Mughal Painters and Their Work*, Delhi, 1994, pp. 304-08, records fifty-three works by this prolific artist, who is listed by Abu'l Fazl as one of the leading painters of Akbar's reign, named in inscriptions from around 1582-4.

He lists sixteen folios he worked on from the Razamnama in the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, Jaipur, one of which "Birth of Parikshit" was drawn by Mukund and painted by La'l,



see Verma, S.P., "La'l the Forgotten Master" in Das, A.K., *Mughal Masters – Further Studies*, Bombay, 1998, p.70, no. 2.

Five works by him are also in the Keir Collection, see Robinson, B.W. et al., *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book*, London, 1976, nos. V.8-10, 16 & 37, plates 109 & 111. A *nim qalam* drawing of a dervish, signed by Mukund, from the Sven Gahlin Collection, was sold at Sotheby's, London, 6 October 2015, lot 8.

(ii) Kishendas, son of La'l

This artist would have coloured the painting, overseen by and finished by Mukund. Son of the well-known painter La'l, only a few works are recorded by him. Another page from this manuscript, "The Child Akbar in his cradle attended by nurses", now in a private collection, is also ascribed to Kishandas, son of La'l, in the lower margin. John Seyller has identified two paintings ascribed to Kishandas in the Chester Beatty Akbarnama, one of which appears on a painting by La'l (fig. 24) with the date regnal year 42 or 47 (1597 or 1602-03), see Seyller, J., 'Scribal notes on Mughal manuscript illustrations', *Artibus Asiae*, vol. XLVIII, 3/4, 1987, p. 275.

OTHER LEAVES FROM THIS MANUSCRIPT

The late scholars Robert Skelton, Linda York Leach and J.P. Losty have concluded that this manuscript was commissioned by Hamida Banu Begam (c. 1527-1604), wife of Humayun and mother of Akbar, see Leach, L.Y., "Pages from an Akbarnama" in Crill, R., Stronge, S. and Topsfield, A., *Art of Mughal India: Studies in Honour of Robert Skelton*, London, 2004, pp. 42-55. For five folios recently on the market, see Ray, S., *Indian and Islamic Works of Art*, London, 2018, no. 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6.

OTHER LEAVES ARE IN THE FOLLOWING COLLECTIONS:

- Royal collection, Jaipur: Humayun receiving Kamran Mirza, by Lal, Dhanu and Khem Karan, see Ashton, L., *The Art of India and Pakistan*, London 1950, pl. 127.
- Polsky Collection, New York: Feasting and Music following the Marriage of Humayun and Hamida, by Asi and Daulat, see Leach (2004), pp. 44-5, nos. 2, 3 & 4
- Cleveland Museum of Art, USA: The game of wolf-running in Tabriz, by Banwari, see Leach (2004), pp. 46, no. 5
- Khalili Collection, London: Bayram Khan doing obeisance before Humayun, by Bahman, see Leach, L.Y., *Paintings from India*, London, 1998, pp.50-53, no. 10
- Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore: Courtiers gathered for the presentation of a cheetah, by Nandi
- Private collection, London: Four leaves, see Leach (2004), pp. 42-55, nos. 1, 6, 7 & 8

INSCRIPTIONS

The inscription on the lower margin two artists names: *tarh-i mukund 'amal-i kishandas walad-i la'l* "Design by Mukund, work of Kishandas son of La'l."

PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Emperor Akbar
Private collection, London
Private collection, London, 2003-22



Detail opposite



25 . PORTRAIT OF A STANDING NOBLEMAN
MUGHAL, CIRCA 1660-80
VERSO WITH CALLIGRAPHY BY MĪR 'IMĀD AL-HASANI, 1600-15

Drawing with opaque watercolour and gold on paper, in a reduced album page with a specimen of calligraphy on the reverse

19 by 9 cm.; 7½ by 3 ½ in. painting
17.2 by 10.5 cm.; 6¾ by 4¼ in. calligraphy
22.9 by 13 cm.; 9 by 5¼ in. folio

The nobleman stands on an unpainted ground with strips of sky and landscape with delicately flowering plants. He wears a poppy-decorated *patka* over a white *jama*, his hands resting on the gold hilt of a straight sword, while a jade-handled dagger is pushed through his cummerbund.

This fine portrait reflects the fashion for the austere in the early Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) period. Despite the emperor's ban on history painting in 1668, numerous surviving portraits up to the end of his reign testify that portraiture remained a flourishing art patronised by princes and noblemen, the artists presumably being those let go from the imperial studio. See Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981, pp. 406-17.

CALLIGRAPHY BY THE MASTER MĪR 'IMĀD AL-HASANI (?1554-1615)

This calligraphic composition in *nasta'liq* script by one of the great Persian masters of that hand, Mīr 'Imād al-Ḥasanī, probably dates from circa 1600-15. He was from Qazvī but moved to Isfahan where he died in 1615, reputedly murdered after falling foul of Shah 'Abbas. His work, and that of Mīr 'Alī Heravī, was admired and avidly collected by the Mughal emperors Jahangīr and Shah Jahan, both of whom had it included in imperial albums.

This example, comprising Persian verses, set on clouds against a gold ground covered with sprays of hibiscus and other flowers, is prominently signed in the lower panel: *'The wretched, sinful pauper, Mīr 'Imād al-Ḥasanī. May his sins be forgiven.'*

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Switzerland, until 2011



**26. SEATED NOBLEMAN SMOKING A HUQQA
MUGHAL, CIRCA 1700**

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

16.8 by 15.2 cm.; 6½ by 6 in. drawing

19.8 by 18.3 cm.; 7¾ by 7¼ in. folio

An unidentified Mughal nobleman sits leaning against a red bolster with a meditation band encircling his contracted legs. He is dressed in a white *angarkhi* and turban and sports a magnificent black beard. He is smoking from a gem-set jade huqqa. Behind him stands an attendant youth wearing a similar costume and holding a cloth of honour. 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 and of Shaista Khan

ascribed to Gyan Chand, both circa 1670 (Falk & Archer 1981, nos. 107 & 109), and in the Fondation Custodia, Paris, also ascribed to Chitarman (Gahlin 1991, 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. 187A and 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. This drawing seems to stand at the beginning of that trend.

PROVENANCE

Garner collection, London, until 2012

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

Martin, F.R., *The Miniature Paintings of Persia, India and Turkey*, London, 1912

27. **LADY LISTENING TO MUSIC**
MUGHAL INDIA, 1730-40

Opaque pigments and gold and silver on paper, laid down in a plain album page with black and white rules; on the reverse a stylised iris arrangement with bees, a jackal and a cock
23 by 16.5cm.; 9 by 6½ in. painting
30 by 21cm.; 11½ by 8¼ in. folio

A lady dressed in green *paijama* with a long brocade *patka*, a diaphanous *peshwaj* and an orange turban is reclining against silver brocade cushions on a bright yellow rug laid out on a terrace. She is listening to two female musicians playing the *tambura* and what appears to be a double-ended drum covered in brocade, while an attendant brings a bowl of fruit. A white awning decorated with stylised clouds covers them. Everything the lady could possibly want is waiting for her on the rug – flowers and garlands to refresh her, betel chews in a gem-encrusted *pandan* and others already prepared on the rug, a spittoon, fruit and a gem-set gold flask of wine with a cup. The scene is set at night, perhaps a lake would be visible in daylight behind the elegantly foliate balustrade, while white clouds scud above the awning partially covering the moon.

Ladies amusing themselves on terraces became one of the standard compositions of Mughal artists in the eighteenth century. Artists such as Anup Chattar (Losty & Roy, fig. 123) and Dalchand (McInerney, fig. 1) laid the groundwork early in the century and many other artists copied their images or made

variations on them. Here the artist has paid great attention to the principal lady with a crisply defined portrait and outline and played interesting geometrical games with her clothes as all the many gold lines of hems and folds converge on her navel.

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed above in Persian with the fanciful description:
padshahzadi-ye dara shikuh

“Royal daughter of Dara Shikuh” and numbered 57

Inscribed on the reverse in Urdu:

kali sosan

“black iris” and numbered 58

PROVENANCE

Album assembled in Lucknow in the 1780s

Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), Ms. 26074

Sotheby's, *Bibliotheca Phillipica*, London, part IV, 26th

November 1968, lot 332 (unillustrated)

Collection of Françoise and Claude Bourelier, Paris, 1970s-2014:

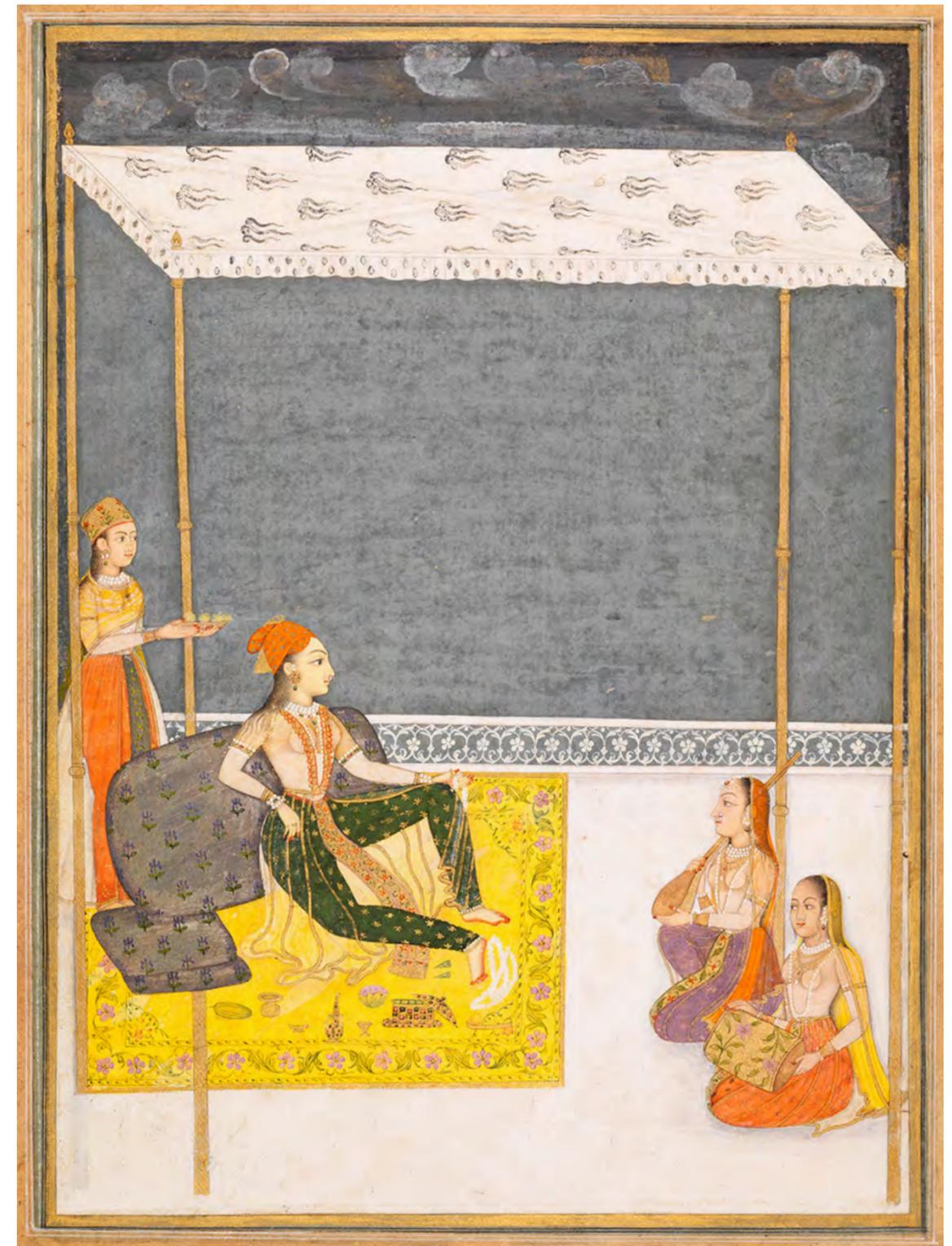
Hôtel Drouot, Paris: Artcurial, 4 November 2014, lot 246

REFERENCES

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

McInerney, T., 'Dalchand', in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and

Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 563-78



28. PORTRAIT OF A STANDING RAJPUT NOBLEMAN
AMBER UNDER MUGHAL INFLUENCE, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Opaque pigments and gold on paper
23.2 by 12 cm.; 9 by 4¾ in. painting
27.2 by 17.9 cm.; 10¾ by 7 in. folio

This is a carefully drawn and coloured portrait of a nobleman of perhaps forty years who stands in a landscaped foreground on a pale green ground. Wearing striped pajama, a gold brocade *patka* over a white *jama* with matching *dupatta* and a turban banded in brocade. He wears a slender moustache, a pair of gold hoop earrings with a ruby between two pearls and a ring on each of his little fingers.

He stands looking calmly into the distance but ready for action since the thumb of his right hand is hooked round the hilt of his *katâr*, while the other rests on his shield, a gold-hilted sword behind it.

The nobleman is almost certainly Hindu and a Rajput, since he ties his *jama* on the left side under his armpit, from which hang brocade-tipped lappets. The possibility of him being a Rajput prince from Amber or Bikaner is ruled out by the almost complete absence of the jewellery with which the Rajput princes adorned themselves. The small moustache, long sideburn and backwards curl seen in our portrait, although fairly

ubiquitous among fashionable young men in the seventeenth century, were certainly worn by the Raja of Amber Ram Singh and his son Kunwar Kishan Singh and grandson Raja Bishan Singh (Das, figs. 5-8; Falk & Archer, no. 135) and our warrior perhaps copied this fashion.

The artist has paid considerable attention to details of the clothing. One particularly striking detail is the appearance of movement of the flaring *jama* where in its depiction, through rhythmic and repetitive folds, it seems more Rajput than Mughal. The same treatment of folds at the bottom of a *jama* is seen in a portrait of Kunwar Kishan Singh on an elephant that Das, fig. 8, calls Mughal style under Amber patronage.

PROVENANCE

Françoise and Claude Bourelier, Paris, 1970s/80s-2014; Hotel Drôuot, Paris: Artcurial, 4 November 2014, lot 242

REFERENCES

Das, A.K., 'Court Painting for the Amber Rulers circa 1590-1727' in *Court Painting in Rajasthan*, ed. A. Topsfield, Bombay, 2000, pp. 41-56
Falk, T. and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981





29. **A SHEPHERD CARRYING A LAMB**
DECCAN, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Brush drawing with wash and some colour and gold on paper, blue border with gold rules, verso with a calligraphic page of four oblique lines of black *nasta'liq* in white clouds on gold, with corner spandrels, laid down in a buff album page
11.8 by 8.5 cm.; 4½ by 3¼ in. drawing
16.2 by 9.2 cm.; 6¾ by 3¾ in. calligraphy
39 by 24.5 cm.; 15½ by 9¾ in. folio

An obese man, so fat his belly overhangs most of his cummerbund, is carrying a lamb of a fat-tailed sheep variety, with its mother standing alongside. He is wearing a *jama* with an *angavastra* over his shoulders, voluminous *paijama* drawn in round his ankles, and a red pointed cap with a brocade cloth wound round it. A pouch hangs from his belt. He has an intense face with a pointed nose, a black beard and moustache, and stares out into space.

The subject was a popular one in seventeenth century India. There are two versions in the Johnson Collection in the British Library, one Mughal, circa 1630, the other Deccani, circa 1640-60 (Falk & Archer, nos. 59 and 447, for the latter see Smith, pl. CXV).

Our version seems based on a model such as the Johnson Deccani version, where the wide *paijama* are caught into the tops of boots. The subject was traditionally thought of as a representative of the Good Shepherd in Christian iconography.

INSCRIPTIONS

The verses on the back are fragmentary verses from a *muqatta'ah* of Hafiz

PROVENANCE

Sir Robert Dent (1895-1983)
Maggs Bros., London, 1973
Private collection, England, 1973-2017

PUBLISHED

Maggs Bros., Bulletin no. 21, London, 1973, p.134, no. 201
Losty, no.14

REFERENCES

Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
Losty, J.P., *Indian and Persian Court Painting*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., exhibition catalogue, New York, 2018
Smith, V.A., *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, Oxford, 1911

30. THE PRINCELY BARD NOKAR RECITING A POEM
KISHANGARH, 1750-75

Ink and colour with gold on paper, inscribed in Devanagari on the verso
15.6 by 10.7 cm.; 6 by 4½ in.

This fascinating and enigmatic drawing shows a young garlanded bard, apparently named Nokar, reciting some kind of play or ballad based on the story of the horse Chetak. The bard would normally be accompanied by musicians, as in a drawing from the Fraser Album (Archer & Falk, fig. 81). The inscription names him and calls him a *bhandavamsa*, of the race of bards, but he seems dressed more like a prince with jewelled pendants and jewels in his brocade turban band, an embroidered *patka* over a *jama* finely striped in gold, and a garland of jasmine.

He is named as from the court of Nawab Azam Khan, but precisely who this may be is a little problematic. A Nawab Azam Khan, son of Nawab Amir Khan, is recorded as owning a *haveli* in Delhi near the Jama Masjid in the time of Muhammad Shah (Blake, p. 80), but nothing seems to be known of him or his connection with Rajasthan or Kishangarh.

BALLAD OF PRATAP SINGH'S HORSE CHETAK

Chetak ('illusion' or 'magic') is the name traditionally given to the horse ridden by Maharana Pratap Singh of Mewar (1540-1597) at the Battle of Haldighati, fought in June 1576 between the Mughal forces and those of Mewar. Chetak, although wounded, carried Pratap safely away from the battle, but then died of his wounds. The story is recounted in court poems of Mewar from the seventeenth century onwards. The horse is first named

"Chetak" in an eighteenth-century ballad, *Khummana-Raso*, that was translated in the first volume of James Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* in 1827.

The drawing is exceptionally intense as the young bard concentrates on the telling of his story using his hands to emphasise his points. He is isolated in space as a preparatory but finished drawing. For comparable single-study drawings from Kishangarh, see Goswamy & Bhatia, nos.138 and 139, a prince and a Vaishnava, and Welch & Masteller, no. 65, a prince proceeding to worship.

INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso in Devanagari:

Natak Chetaka / Bhandavamsa Nokar Sarkar Navab Azam Khan ji kai

PROVENANCE

The Arcade Gallery, London, 1978

Private collection, London, 1978-2018

REFERENCES

Archer, M., and Falk, T., *India Revealed: The Art and Adventures of James and William Fraser 1801-35*, London, 1989

Blake, S., *Shajahanabad: The Sovereign City in Mughal India*, 1991

Goswamy, B.N., and Bhatia, U., *Painted Visions: The Goenka Collection of Indian Paintings*, New Delhi, 1999

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



31. **RAJRANA ZALIM SINGH JHALA RECEIVING HIS SON MADHO SINGH**
KOTA OR JHALAWAR, CIRCA 1820

Opaque pigments and gold on paper, red border with white rules

23.8 by 26.1 cm.; 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. painting

25.2 by 29.3 cm.; 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. folio

Rajrana Zalim Singh Jhala (1739-1824) receives his son Madho Singh (1773-1834) who sits facing his father with his palms joined in veneration. Zalim Singh Jhala was for several generations the chief minister of the Kota state under his maternal nephew Maharao Umed Singh (b. 1761, reg. 1771-1819), who seems to have preferred cultural and religious pursuits to governance. He is sometimes depicted hunting with his young nephew (Welch et al., nos. 45 & 49). In 1819 Umed Singh signed a treaty of alliance with the East India Company that guaranteed the continuation of this political and administrative subordination of the Maharao of Kota to Zalim Singh and his heirs. Umed Singh's successor Maharao Kishor Singh (r. 1819-28) refused to accept this state of affairs and fought a battle with the forces of Zalim Singh at Mangrol in 1821, but was soundly beaten and fled to the sanctuary of Srinathji at Nathdwara. He eventually returned to Kota when Zalim Singh's son Madho Singh became regent in his turn in 1824. This subordination of the Maharaos to the Jhalas was not ended formally until 1838 under Maharao Ram Singh II (b. 1808, r. 1828-66). When Kota was divided and the Jhala estate in south-east Kota became the new state of Jhalawar with its capital at Jhalrapatan: the first Rajrana was Madho Singh's son Madan Singh (b. 1808, r. 1838-45). See Bautze, pp. 51-55, for an account of this period.

Zalim Singh was well over eighty years old when he died, much older than his appearance here, so the painting would have to be based on one done about 1800, when the eldest son Madho

Singh would have been aged about twenty-seven and the two youngsters seated beside Zalim Singh would be the latter's younger sons Kumar Madan Singh and Kumar Prithviraj Singh. Seated next to Madho Singh is his daughter, Ajab Kanwar Bai Sahib, who married Maharaja Bishan Singh of Bundi in 1792. Clearly all the participants in the painting could not be all at the right age to be portrayed thus, so various *charbas* must have been used to create this family portrait. The identity of the young child next to Zalim Singhji is not clear, but is possibly one of Zalim's sons by his second wife, a Muslim lady.

The composition is increased by a few persons but still retains the traditional formula of a double portrait. The scene is set on a terrace with the participants sitting on a summer carpet and the Rajrana on a smaller rug. He holds the mouthpiece of a hookah which the artist daringly places outside the picture proper and on the frame, connected to Zalim Singh by its sinuous curves.

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the left hand border with the names of the sitters:
rāje jālam sīghjī mādō sīghjī

PROVENANCE

Günter Heil (1938-2014), Berlin, pre-1991-2016
J.P. Losty, *Indian Paintings from the Heil Collection*, London, 2016, no. 18

REFERENCES

Bautze, J. 'The History of Kotah in an Art-Historical Context' in Welch, S.C., et al, *Gods, Kings and Tigers: the Art of Kotah*, New York, 1997



32. A FINE LEAF FROM THE IMPEY ALBUM BY ZAIN AL-DIN
**BLOSSOM-HEADED PARAKEET ON A
BRANCH OF A KARONDA SHRUB**
BY ZAIN AL-DIN, PAINTED FOR LADY IMPEY
CALCUTTA, DATED 1777

Watercolour and gum arabic on Whatman paper, watermarked J WHATMAN, the verso with the black ink Impey seal, lined in conservation paper, the number 22 written in ink at upper left 47.3 by 60 cm.; 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

THE ARTIST AND HIS PATRONS

Shaikh Zain al-Din is sometimes described in the inscriptions on the pages from the Impey album as coming from Patna, also known as Azimabad. He was trained as a court painter in the naturalistic Mughal tradition almost certainly at Murshidabad, the capital of the Nawabs of Bengal, where a court studio flourished in the 1750s and early 1760s. In a brief war with the East India Company 1763-64, Nawab Qasim 'Ali moved his capital to Patna, taking his artists with him, where there flourished for a short while a school of painting including presumably Shaykh Zain al-Din among the artists, although no work from him is signed in this period.

With the defeat of Nawab Mir Qasim in 1764, traditional patronage at Murshidabad and Patna came to an end. Many Mughal-trained artists in eastern India began looking for patronage to the emerging British ruling class. By 1774 Shaikh Zain al-Din had moved to Calcutta where he encountered Lady Impey and her husband, Sir Elijah, Chief Justice of Bengal, 1774-82. The Impeys were fascinated by the exotic flora and fauna of India and kept a menagerie and aviary on their estate in Calcutta. Lady Impey commissioned three Patna artists, Shaikh Zain al-Din being the most gifted, to record meticulously the fauna in their garden and menagerie. The birds were her great passion, which were to be depicted life-size if possible – and with precise measurements if not – and drawn from life, sitting on a branch of the tree which they habitually frequented. The bird drawings are normally inscribed with the name of the tree as well as the bird, in Persian, together with the name of the artist, the date and other details of Lady Impey's patronage and scientific details in English. Sometimes only the Persian words were written, everything else was meant to be added later but forgotten. The album contained some 326 paintings by Shaikh Zain al-Din and his contemporaries, Bhavani Das and Ram Das, of which 197 were studies of birds, 76 of fish, 28 of reptiles, 17 beasts and 8 of plants. When the Impeys returned to London in 1783, Lady Impey showed her collection to ornithologists, who were quick to realise both its scientific and artistic merits (Falk & Hayter 1984; Losty 2004).



Paintings of birds, animals and flowers had been an important Mughal genre since the time of Jahangir (1605-27), who was a keen amateur naturalist. Shaikh Zain al-Din's studies reveal a thorough adaptation of Mughal technique to the conventions of British natural history painting and the larger format of the Whatman paper brought from England. In Indian art, the Impey series of natural history drawings is considered the finest of its kind.

THE PARAKEET

Psittacula roseata is one of a group of similarly-marked parakeets, predominantly green in body plumage, but with a conspicuously marked head. The male of this species has a head of rich mauve-pink separated from the green by a black collar and chin. The bird in the painting is the rather more subtle female. Fortunately, the maroon shoulder patch is clearly visible to distinguish her from the near-identical and closely related Plum-headed Parakeet.

Blossom-headed parakeets, also known as rose-headed parakeets, are among the most delicately coloured of the group, and have the most tuneful voice. Although their name refers to their colour, they do in fact feed on blossoms as well as fruit. They inhabit forest edges, clearings and cultivated land and have a wide distribution throughout north-east India to south-east Asia depending on the availability of the fruit and flowers which they like. Karonda or karanda, *Carissa carandas*, is a species of flowering shrub in the dogbane family, *Apocynaceae*. It produces berry-sized fruits that are commonly used as a condiment in Indian pickles and spiced dishes and can be made into tarts as a substitute for apples or gooseberries.

IMPEY PAGES IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Examples from the Impey series are now in many international private and public collections including:

- Wellcome Institute, London
- Victoria & Albert Museum, London
- British Library, London
- Ashmolean Museum, (Topsfield 2008, nos. 78-80)
- Bodleian Library, Oxford
- Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford
- San Diego Museum of Art
- Minneapolis Institute of Arts
- Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

One of the most celebrated of the bird paintings that is rather similar to our parrots is the green-winged macaw in the Binney Collection in the San Diego Museum (Goswamy & Smith 2005, no. 123).

For a recent survey of the work of these artists see Topsfield 2019, pp. 39-76.

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed at lower left in *nasta'liq*:

Karundika derakht ('Karonda tree'). *Faridi tuta*.

And in English:

Parrot of Frid (the Dervise) Female. In the Collection of Lady Impey in Calcutta. Painted by Zain al-Din [in Persian] Native of Patna 1777

PROVENANCE

Sir Elijah (1732-1809) and Lady Impey (1749-1818), Calcutta and London

Lady Impey: Phillips, London, 21 May 1810

Colnaghi, London, 1980s

Private collection, London, 1980s-2014

Private collection, Paris, 2015-2022

EXHIBITED

Asia Week, New York 2014, Oliver Forge & Brendan Lynch Ltd., see Losty, pp.48-52, no.23

REFERENCES

- Falk, T., and Hayter, G., *Birds in an Indian Garden*, Colnaghi Oriental, exhibition catalogue, London, 12 June – 14 July 1984
- Goswamy, B.N., and Smith, C., *Domains of Wonder: Selected Masterworks of Indian Painting*, San Diego Museum of Art, 2005
- Losty, J.P., 'Mary Lady Impey', in the *New Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004
- Losty, J.P., *Indian and Persian Painting 1590-1840*, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., Asia Week New York, 2014
- Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Mughal India*, Oxford, 2008
- Topsfield, A., 'The natural history paintings of Shaikh Zain ud-Din, Bhawani Das and Ram Das' in Dalrymple, W. (ed.), *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company*, London, 2019



Detail opposite



33. A YOUNG PRINCE WITH A TETHERED HAWK
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1730-40

Graphite heightened in white, saffron, yellow, black and grey on paper, laid down in a now cropped album page, with gold borders and an appliqué strip of gold paper with floral motifs across the top
17 by 11.3 cm.; 6½ by 4½ in.

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Switzerland, until 2018

34. EUROPEAN GENTLEMAN STANDING IN A FLOWERY FIELD

DECCAN, 1680-1700

Drawing with colours and gold on paper, laid down in a gold-splashed cream album page with a matching margin with gold floral meander

16 by 8.8 cm.; 6¼ by 3½ in. drawing
39.7 by 28 cm.; 15½ by 11 in. folio

A young European gentleman of slightly foppish appearance stands in a field dotted with flowers. He wears a jacket and over it a half-length coat with its split sleeves unbuttoned, while his pantaloons are thrust into his boots. On his head is a wide-brimmed hat with a large white feather adorning its brim and round his neck is a white ruff, while he carries a sword in his left hand and holds up what seems to be a wine cup in his right.

Another version of this drawing, circa 1680, is in the British Library (Falk & Archer, no. 464), except that the flowers are replaced by a little dog jumping up. There he is obviously wearing stockings of uneven height with shoes, whereas our artist has interpreted both as boots.

Indian paintings and drawings featuring Europeans very often show them in what was to Indian eyes a poor light – is our man eyeing up the cup regretting that it is empty? – while dogs were never seen very favourably in Indian eyes. Only when they commissioned paintings themselves do we get results commensurate with European self-imagery, such as the two paintings of himself receiving petitioners and riding with his retainers commissioned by Cornelis van der Bogaerde, circa 1687 (Haidar & Sardar, nos. 194-95).

INSCRIPTIONS

On the verso is an Arabic poem, supposedly uttered by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib on manumitting his slave Qunbur. It is signed at the bottom: *namaqahu al-'abd raushan-raqam* 'The slave Raushan Raqam wrote it.'

This is likely to be the scribe Muhammad Isma'il Ghafil, who acquired the title 'Raushan Raqam' ('Luminous Pen'). A native of Mazandaran, he emigrated to India and gained fame at the court of Aurangzeb. His dates are unknown, but he was still alive in 1097 (1685-6 A.D.) when he penned an album page, now in Istanbul University Library, see Bayani, pp. 636-38.

PROVENANCE

Sotheby's, London, 12 October 1990, lot 101
Private collection, Derbyshire, 1990-2020

REFERENCES

Bayani, M., *Ahval va Athar-i Khushnavisan-i Iran*, 4 vols., reprint, Tehran, 1363/1984
Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
Haidar, N., and Sardar, M., *Sultans of Deccan India: Opulence and Fantasy*, New York, 2015



35. **RADHA AND KRISHNA TAKE SHELTER IN A TREE**
GARHWAL, 1820-30

Opaque pigments and gold on paper, within a blue margin with white lattice work and a pink surround
15.5 by 12.7 cm.; 6¼ by 5 in. painting
22.5 by 17.4 cm.; 8¾ by 6¾ in. folio

Krishna and Radha have taken shelter from a storm in a hollowed-out tree, where they embrace closely. He is holding his arms round her tenderly as he looks out from their shelter to observe the weather. Wearing his usual yellow *dhoti* and *dupatta* and crown with a peacock finial adorned with sprigs of flowers, he holds his flute in his right hand. She is only clad in a diaphanous white sari and seems very shy at finding herself in this intimate situation with Krishna. The vast trunk of the tree rises abruptly from a somewhat bare hillside, and just one branch with leaves emerges from it sideways above their heads. Only a few trees are seen on the hillsides and above is a stormy sky full of thunderous clouds. The artist takes a rather impressionist view of the bad weather. One wonders too what Radha and Krishna are doing on this hillside in the Himalayan foothills.

The artist has fun depicting the long and thick black rope of Radha's hair through the diaphanous *sari*, a kind of hair style that Garhwal artists paid particular attention to in the 1820s (Archer: Garhwal nos. 32-33). Krishna has a slightly unusual profile for this period with a more prominent nose and slightly protruding upper lip, as found in a Garhwal painting of Krishna stealing the bathing girls' clothes, now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London (*ibid.*, no. 33). Also perhaps of significance, his crown too has rather more peaks than usual and some of his hair falls loose in front of his ear.

PROVENANCE

Christie's, London, 10 October 1989, lot 59
Private collection, Derbyshire, 1989-2020

REFERENCE

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





EIGHT PAINTINGS DEPICTING SCENES FROM THE COURT OF KING THEBAW, LAST KING OF BURMA

ACQUIRED IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY BY A SOLDIER SERVING IN BURMA
PRIVATE COLLECTION, ORKNEY ISLANDS, BY DESCENT

THE LAST BURMESE KING

King Thebaw's (1858-1916) brief reign, 1878-1885, ended when he was deposed, following intrigues with the French, including sending an 1883 delegation to Paris. He was exiled to India and his country annexed by the British in 1886, making him the last of the Konbaung Dynasty (1752-1885). Although little is known about court art of the period it seems apparent that folding manuscript (parabaik) painting continued after this date. One such painting depicts the departure of King Thebaw from Mandalay by the artist Saya Chone: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Anglo-Burmese_War#/media/File:Saya_Chone's_%22King_Thibaw_Leaving_Mandalay%22.png

Another of the same subject is in the Schoyen Collection: <https://www.schoyencollection.com/history-collection->

PROVENANCE

Acquired by the great uncle of the 2022 vendor, who served in Burma but was killed in the First World War (1916-18)
Private collection by descent, Oglaby, Stromness, Orkney Islands, until 2022

[introduction/modern-history-collection/deportation-king-thibaw-ms-2475](https://www.bl.uk/introduction/modern-history-collection/deportation-king-thibaw-ms-2475)

A third parabaik depicts a contemporary depiction of a dance performance for the royal family, see: <https://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/burmese.html>

Contemporary photographs of the royal family and their palaces survive in the British Library and show that details of dress and architecture are correctly observed in these paintings, for example:

The King and his two Queens: Supayalat and Supayalay (1885): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Anglo-Burmese_War#/media/File:Thibaw_Min_1885_crop.jpg

The King's palace guards: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Anglo-Burmese_War#/media/File:King_thibaws_guard1885.jpg

REFERENCES

Ah Yein, U., 'Chinlone: the Burmese Cane-ball game', *Guardian magazine*, London August 1960
San May, S., *Traditional Games in Burma*, former Curator of *Burmese Collections at the British Library* (blog)

36. TWO SCENES FROM KING THEBAW'S COURT: KING THEBAW WITH QUEEN SUPAYALAT AND QUEEN SUPAYALAY WATCHING THE JAVELIN-THROWING FESTIVAL IN THE MONTH OF TABAUNG; AND THE KING AND HIS QUEENS WATCHING A DANCE PERFORMANCE BURMA, THIRD QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The former depicting the nimbate King Thebaw with his Queens, attended by four prostrate servants in the canopied gallery of an elaborate pavilion with gilt columns and flamiform eave finials; with four mounted participants flanking the tall pole target and spears dotted about, massed white-clad prostrate servants recede into the distance with wood pavilions beyond, with massed helmeted troops on horseback in the foreground, painted within an oval with white surround;

The latter with the nimbate King with his Queens, flanked by seven prostrate servants, observing from the canopied gallery of a grand pavilion with trellised panels, gilt columns and

red-lacquered flamiform eave finials, a couple in court dress dancing under a domed open pavilion, two male figures and two drummers in two gilt enclosures beyond, surrounded by rows of massed white-robes servants, gouache on cloth
60 by 72.5 cm.; 23¾ by 28½ in. oval; 67 by 77.4 cm.; 26¾ by 30½ in. overall
59 by 76.2 cm.; 23¾ by 30 in. oval; 64.5 by 81.3 cm.; 25¾ by 32 in. overall, (each framed and glazed)

INSCRIPTIONS

The first inscribed in Burmese in the foreground translating as: *Javelin throwing festival in the month of Tabaung*



37. TWO SCENES DEPICTING ROYAL PURSUITS:
A DISPLAY OF ELEPHANTS AND A POLO MATCH
 BURMA, THIRD QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The former depicting a herd of elephants entering a brick-built enclosure with a central platform, eight attendants behind cages, five princes shaded by parasols surrounded by numerous seated male attendants on an upper viewing perimeter of the wall, a pair of dancers and a group of musicians to the right; the polo match within the palace walls, with eight participants on

horseback engaged in the game, two at either side in reserve, three princes seated on Colonial style chairs and shaded by parasols to the left, groups of seated attendants to either side, gouache on paper, each comprising six folds of a *parabaik* 35.5 by 105 cm.; 14 by 41½ in. each (framed and glazed)





**38. TWO COURT SCENES DEPICTING A BOAT RACE AND A ROYAL PROCESSION
BURMA, THIRD QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

The former observed by the King and his two cheroot-smoking Queens seated in an open waterside pavilion watching two competing boats of ten oarsmen and a coxswain, prostrated servants below them, an observation barge to the left depicting oarsmen and courtiers paying homage; the procession depicting the King and Queen in a horse-drawn gilt carriage, proceeded by

soldiers and generals and surrounded by blue-coated attendants holding three fringed parasols, two princesses in an open gilt carriage behind, palm and other trees and four sections of white trellis fencing behind, gouache on cloth
37 by 54.5 cm.; 14½ by 25½ in.; 35 by 49.8 cm.; 13¾ by 19¾ in.



**39. THE KING ARRIVES BY BARGE TO VISIT HIS TWO QUEENS IN A GARDEN PAVILION
BURMA, THIRD QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

Standing on an open veranda, gilt flames at his shoulders, to greet the seated royal ladies, two kneeling servants shade him with parasols while below in the garden an array of courtiers, *dha*-bearing guards, and helmeted soldiers guard his way, his empty barge beyond, gouache on cloth
39 by 62 cm.; 15½ by 24¾ in.



**40. VIEW OF THE PALACE AT MANDALAY FROM OUTSIDE THE WALLS
BURMA, THIRD QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

With a group of painted wood pavilions around a central pagoda, each with gilded eaves and flamiform finials, guarded by six turban-wearing Sikh soldiers and a groom with two horses, three

Burmese officials to the left, horses and carts to the right, painted within an oval with white surround, gouache on cloth 66.5 by 87 cm.; 26½ by 34¼ in.

OLIVER FORGE | BRENDAN LYNCH

SECOND FLOOR
16 PALL MALL, ST. JAMES'S
LONDON SW1Y 5LU

TELEPHONE +44 (0) 20-7839 0368
INFO@FORGELYNCH.COM
FORGELYNCH.COM

Photography by
LEE TURNER
LMPHOTOGRAPHY@BTINTERNET.COM
and
RICHARD VALENCIA
RICHARD@RV-PHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Design by
THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE
HALL@BURLINGTON.ORG.UK



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