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CATALOGUE
J. P. LOSTY

Front Cover

FOLIO FROM THE IMPEY ALBUM:
AN ORNATE LORIKEET ON A BRANCH OF THE INDIAN CHERRY TREE
BY ZAIN AL-DIN, CALCUTTA, DATED 1777 (*No. 24*)

Left

A LADY IN A GARDEN SURROUNDED BY BIRDS
ATTRIBUTED TO RAHIM DECCANI, GOLCONDA, CIRCA 1670 (*Detail, No. 8*)

Inside Back Cover

A GATHERING OF THIRTY DERVISHES
SAFAVID PERSIA, ISFAHAN, CIRCA 1620 (*Detail, No. 5*)



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TWO PAIRS OF PARROTS PERCHED IN A TREE

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 26.7 CM, 10 ½ IN
WIDTH: 16 CM, 3 ¼ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 17.8 CM, 7 IN
WIDTH: 8 CM, 3 ⅛ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed in *nasta'liq*:
'tarh-i Kanha 'amal-i Khem valad-i Narayan
'drawn by Kanha, coloured by Khem son of
Narayan' with the number 112

PROVENANCE
Manuscript dispersed in 1913
Hagop Kevorkian (1872-1962), New York
Sotheby's, *Highly Important Oriental
Manuscripts and Miniatures, the
property of the Kevorkian Foundation*,
London, 7 December 1970, lot 96
Sotheby's, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts
and Miniatures, the property of the Kevorkian
Foundation*, London, 27 April 1981, lot 65
Colnaghi, London, 1981-83
Private collection, Virginia, 1983-2014

LEAF FROM THE FIRST OR 'SOUTH KENSINGTON' BABURNAMA
BY KANHA AND KHEM
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1589 A.D.

The Baburnama

Babur's memoirs is one of the greatest and most interesting of pre-modern autobiographical books. He records in detail not only the events of his own tumultuous life, but also his reactions to India on first coming into that fabled land in 1526, and to its people, its flora and its fauna. It was written in Turki, the ancestral language of the Mughals, and his grandson Akbar ordered it to be translated into Persian for the better comprehension of his court. This work was entrusted to Akbar's friend Mirza 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan, who presented the finished translation to Akbar in November 1589. Court artists immediately set about producing an illustrated version. This manuscript was dispersed in a sale in 1913, but twenty folios are in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Stronge, pp. 86-91). At least three more illustrated manuscripts based on this first version were produced within the next ten years: now in the British Library (see Suleiman); divided between the Moscow State Museum of Eastern Cultures and the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore; and in the National Museum, New Delhi (see Randhawa).

Babur in his memoirs describes those fauna and flora of India that differ from Central Asia, just before relating how his forces defeated those of the Sultan of Delhi, Ibrahim Lodi, at the Battle of Panipat in 1526. In the dispersed manuscript, this section occupies thirty folios, most with paintings on both sides, some of them arranged two or more to the page in horizontal format.

In this painting two pairs of parrots, green and red, are perched in a tree on the bank of a rocky stream. Babur's description of parrots comes second in his account of the birds of Hindustan, immediately after the peacock. In Annette Beveridge's translation (pp. 493-94):

'The parrot (H. tuti) is another. This also is in Bajaur and countries lower down. It comes into Ningnabar and the Lamghanat in the heats when mulberries ripen; it is not there at other times. It is of many, many kinds. One sort is that which people carry into those (Tramontane) countries. They make it speak words. — Another sort is smaller; this also they make speak words. They call it the jungle-parrot. It is numerous in Bajaur, Sawad and that neighbourhood, so much so that 5 or 6,000 fly in one flock (khail). Between it and the one first-named the difference is in bulk; in colouring they are just one and the same. — Another sort is still smaller than the jungle-parrot. Its head is quite red, the top of its wings (i.e. the primaries) is red also; the tip of its tail for two bands'-thickness is lustrous. The head of some parrots of this kind is iridescent (susam). It does not become a talker. People call it the Kashmir parrot. — Another sort is rather smaller than the jungle-parrot; its beak is black; round its neck is a wide black collar; its primaries are red. It is an excellent learner of words... [here Babur writes about parrots speaking intelligent words]. Another kind is of a beautiful full red; it has other colours also, but, as nothing is distinctly remembered about them, no description is made. It is a very beautiful bird, both in colour and form. People are understood to make this also speak words. Its defect is a most unpleasant, sharp voice, like the drawing of broken china on a copper plate.'

The artists

As the first of the four main *Baburnama* manuscripts, its artists were responsible for the invention of the iconography, and its style is undeniably livelier and more spontaneous than the later manuscripts. It was also painted in a lighter and thinner style that allows the draughtsmanship to shine through. Kanha has here presumably drawn the outlines of two pairs of parrots, while Khem had the unenviable task of applying the colours to try to match Babur's somewhat confused descriptions.

Kanha was one of the major artists of Akbar's studio in its middle years, up to the *Akbarnama* of 1590-95 (see Beach, p. 81). He was responsible for the drawing of most of the birds at the beginning of Babur's descriptions of the birds of Hindustan in the dispersed manuscript of the *Baburnama*. Khem son of Narayan is perhaps the same as Khem Khurd, Khem the younger, who appears in the second *Baburnama* of 1590-93. Beach believes Narayan to be the son of the major early Akbari artist Khemkaran (*ibid.*, p. 236).

Apart from those in the V&A, there are pages from this manuscript in most major collections of Mughal painting, including the British Museum and the Keir Collection, London; Musée Guimet, Paris; Chester Beatty Library, Dublin; National Museum of Pakistan, Karachi; Binney Collection, now San Diego Museum of Art; Sackler Gallery, Harvard; Freer Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Rhode Island School of Design; Philadelphia Free Library; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto.

REFERENCES

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Beach, M. C., *The Imperial Image*, Washington, 1981
Binney, E., *Indian Miniature Painting from the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd*, Portland, 1973
Randhawa, M. S., *Paintings of the Babur-nama*, New Delhi, 1983
Smart, E., *Paintings from the Baburnama: a Study of Sixteenth Century Mughal Historical Manuscript Illustrations*, Ph. D. thesis, S.O.A.S., University of London, 1977
Smart, E., 'Six folios from a dispersed manuscript of the Babur-Nama,' in *Indian Painting*, Colnaghi, London, 1978, pp. 109-32
Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book 1560-1660*, London, 2002
Suleiman, H., *Miniatures of the Babur-Nama*, Tashkent, 1970





FOLIO
HEIGHT: 39.5 CM, 15 ½ IN
WIDTH: 27.5 CM, 10 ¾ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 16.5 CM, 6 ¼ IN
WIDTH: 9 CM, 3 ½ IN

CALLIGRAPHY
HEIGHT: 15.2 CM, 6 IN
WIDTH: 8.4 CM, 3 ¼ IN

Opaque pigments with gold and ink on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
The calligraphy on the reverse is by Mir Husain al-Husaini from Jami's *Haft Aurang*

PROVENANCE
Sotheby's, *Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*,
London, 1 July 1969, lot 99
Maggs Bros., London
Sotheby's, *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*,
New York, 2 June 1992, lot 126
Private collection, France, 1992-2014

2 A PRINCE GIVING GIFTS TO A PETITIONER

FOLIO FROM AN UNKNOWN AKBAR PERIOD MANUSCRIPT MUGHAL INDIA, 1590-1600

In a scene set in a red sandstone pavilion, a young prince is gratifying an older petitioner with a dish heaped with gold pieces that an attendant is bringing forward. The prince and petitioner as well as a noble attendant are seated on a blue carpet in the pavilion, while other attendants wait in the green tiled courtyard. Through a doorway in the rear the wall and above it we can see a beautiful garden with trees silhouetted against a gold sky. The painting is of fine quality from an imperial manuscript, but by the 1590s it was unusual even in small Mughal manuscripts for the painting to be confined within the margins of the text panels. Dispersed pages from a little imperial manuscript of the *Divan* of Shahi from the 1590s are good examples of the way paintings exceeded the text margins at this period (Welch 1959, figs. 4 & 5; Welch 1963, no. 5; Colnaghi, no. 14).

The text is from *Salaman va Absal*, one of the seven *masnavis* in Jami's *Haft Aurang*. It is the story of a garment-patcher and does not seem to relate to the subject of the painting. Nonetheless the whole page is of a piece, suggesting that it was put together as an album leaf rather than as part of a manuscript, perhaps with the painting done first for a discontinued manuscript production, while some verses were afterwards added to the blank columns above. Thus the calligraphy on the verso consists also of verses from the same text, the *Haft Aurang* of Jami, but this time from another *masnavi*, *Tuhfat al-Abrar*.



Two pages apparently from the same manuscript, laid down in folios in Warren Hastings's album, were sold at Sotheby's, *Bibliotheca Phillippica: Persian, Turkish and Arabic Manuscripts, and Persian Miniatures*, London, 26 November 1968, lots 380-81

REFERENCES
Colnaghi, P & D., *Paintings from Mughal India*, London, 1979
Welch, S. C., 'Early Mughal Miniature Paintings from two Private Collections,' in *Ars Orientalis* III, 1959, pp. 133-46
Welch, S. C., *The Art of Mughal India*, New York, 1963

3 A STANDING DERVISH HOLDING A BEGGING BOWL IN A LANDSCAPE

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 34.5 CM, 13 ½ IN
WIDTH: 22.2 CM, 8 ¾ IN

DRAWING
HEIGHT: 13 CM, 5 ⅛ IN
WIDTH: 5.1 CM, 2 IN

Ink drawing with some colour and gold on paper, inner margins ruled in colours and gold, inner border with three Persian couplets written in elegant *nasta'liq* in black ink, laid down in an album page richly decorated with stylised floral and vegetal motifs

INSCRIPTIONS
The border with three Persian couplets written in *nasta'liq*
The reverse with inventory numbers including Maggs Bros.: SAS.402-S5/77

PROVENANCE
Hagop Kevorkian (1872-1962), New York
Sotheby's, *Important Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures: the property of the Hagop Kevorkian Fund*, London, 2 May 1977, lot 60
Maggs Bros., London, 1977
Private collection, Massachusetts, 1977-2014

SCHOOL OF RIZA-YI'ABBASI
SAFAVID PERSIA, PROBABLY ISFAHAN
CIRCA 1600-10

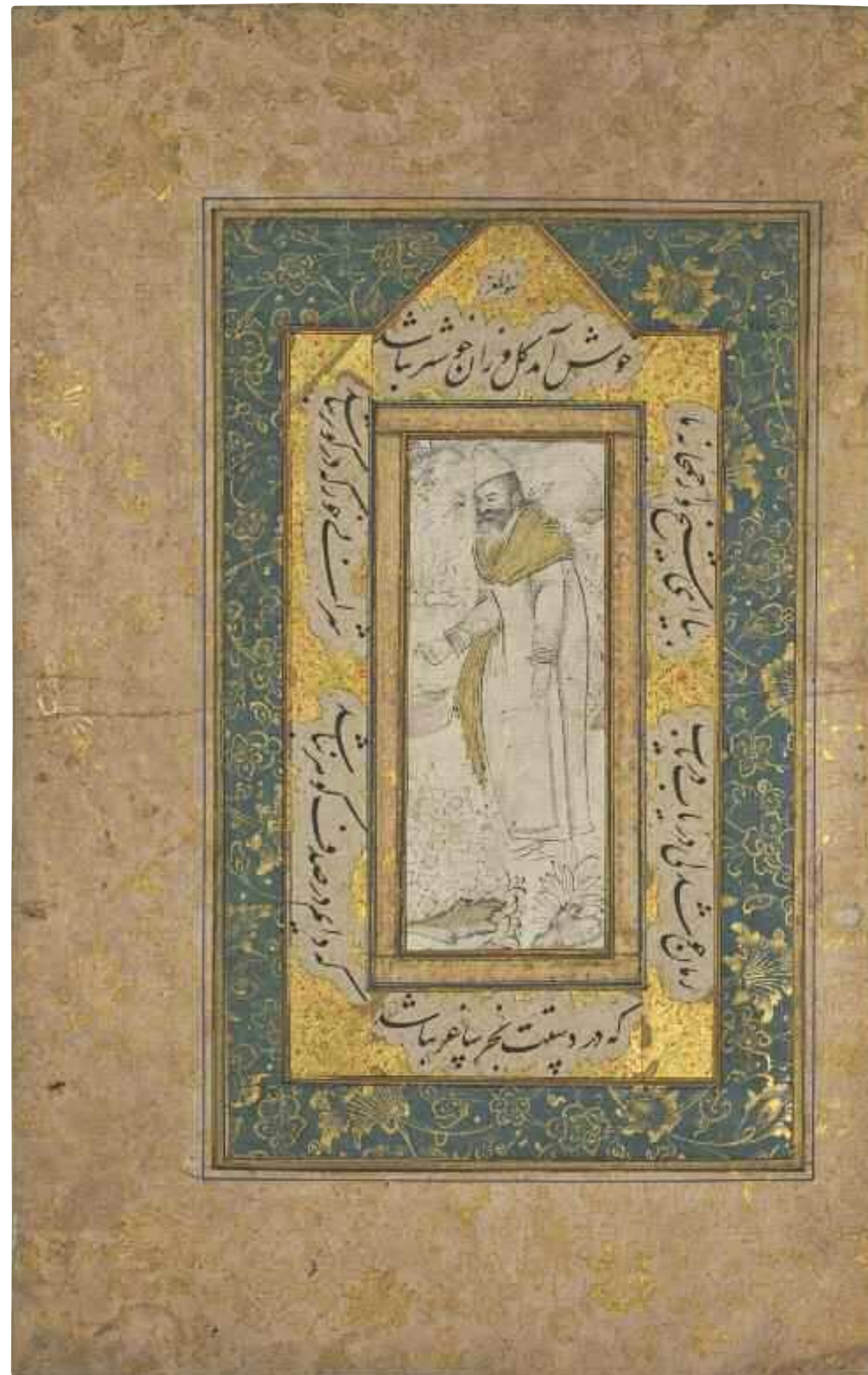
Riza-yi Abbasi

Riza-yi Abbasi (circa 1565-1635) is considered the leading artist of the Isfahan school that flourished during the later Safavid period. He was to spend most of his professional life working at the court of Shah Abbas I (reg. 1587-1629). In 1603 he received the honorific title of Abbasi from his patron the Shah in recognition of his artistic achievements. He accompanied the Shah on his campaign to Khorasan in 1598, and joined his new court in Isfahan in 1598. Riza was to remain there until the Shah's death, except for a short period when he left the court, apparently seeking greater independence and freedom to associate with Isfahan's 'lower mortals' such as athletes, wrestlers, beggars and wayward youths. However towards the end of his life he began painting older men such as tutors and their pupils, dervishes, shepherds as well as Europeans, birds and flowers. Although this drawing of a dervish is not signed nor dated, it clearly belongs to this group which he produced towards the end of his life.

Compare this portrait to another of an old man in a landscape, early seventeenth century (Atil, p. 58, no.21), and to two drawings in the Topkapi Saray Library, Istanbul, dated circa 1604-05 (Canby, nos. 43 & 45).

REFERENCES

Atil, E., *The Brush of the Masters: Drawings from Iran and India*, Washington, 1978
Canby, S. R., *The Rebellious Reformer: the drawings and paintings of Riza-yi 'Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996





4

ST. JEROME IN HIS STUDY

ALBUM PAGE

HEIGHT: 28.3 CM, 11 IN

WIDTH: 23 CM, 9 IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 10.5 CM, 4 1/8 IN

WIDTH: 6.7 CM, 2 5/8 IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper,
laid down within frames of beige and blue
with gold floral scrolls in a buff coloured
album page splashed with gold

PROVENANCE

Private collection, England, 1960s-2013

MUGHAL INDIA, 1600-20

The influence of European art on Mughal artists in the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir has been much discussed (recently for instance in Losty & Roy, pp. 119-22). While European works of art must have trickled through to the Mughals from earlier in the reign of Akbar, the most sustained influence came in 1580 when three Jesuits, led by Fr. Rudolf Aquaviva, arrived at the court in Fatehpur Sikri. They had been specifically requested to come from Goa to talk about Christianity in the 'Ibadat Khana (House of Worship) for Akbar's weekly discussions of religion (see Bailey, pp. 148-161). The first Jesuit mission brought Christopher Plantin's Polyglot Bible (Antwerp 1568-72) and other engraved Christian images as well as paintings of the Virgin and Child copied from the early Roman icons. The first two Jesuit missions (of 1580-3 and 1591) stayed relatively briefly, but the third mission in 1595 was led by Fr. Jerome Xavier (see Carvalho), who remained at the Mughal court until 1615. Both Akbar and Jahangir eagerly collected whatever paintings and prints the fathers brought to them, and Mughal artists used such prints both as exemplars for copying and to suggest means of improving their command of space and volume.

Prints of St. Jerome, the translator into Latin of what became the Vulgate Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek, were relatively common in sixteenth century Europe, showing him as a learned scholar seated in his study, writing, with other books around him and his iconic lion and red cardinal's hat nearby. Our Mughal artist has travelled some way from the original print of St. Jerome, no doubt based on earlier Mughal versions that have not survived. He is sitting on a blue-carpeted plinth placed in front of a Mughal arch opening onto a blue and gold sky between two pilasters in a red sandstone wall. His writing is supported by a cushion not a bookstand, his lion has been transformed into a cat and his red cardinal's hat into a black shield. There is however an appealing simplicity about this miniature showing the saint as an avuncular old man resting his head on his hand as he tires of writing, surrounded by broad planes of muted colour instead of the usual business of most Mughal miniatures.

REFERENCES

Bailey, G. A., 'Between Religions: Christianity in a Muslim Empire' in Flores, J. and Vassallo e Silva, N., *Goa and the Great Mughal*, Lisbon, 2004

Carvalho, P. M., *Mir'at al-Quds (Mirror of Holiness): A Life of Christ for Emperor Akbar*, Boston, 2012

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

Verma, S. P., *Biblical Themes in Mughal Painting*, New Delhi, 2011

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 33.9 CM, 18 $\frac{7}{8}$ IN
WIDTH: 22.6 CM, 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ IN

DRAWING

HEIGHT: 26.5 CM, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ IN
WIDTH: 19.4 CM, 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ IN

CALLIGRAPHY

HEIGHT: 14.6 CM, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ IN
WIDTH: 7.9 CM, 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ IN

Drawing with washes of colour and gold on paper, laid down in a gold-sprinkled album page, verso with four *nasta'liq* couplets, each verse incorporated within a cloud-band on a ground of pink hatching, stylized floral and vegetal motifs, interspersed with illuminated corner-pieces

CALLIGRAPHY

Four couplets, 8 -12 from the versed *munajat* (prayers to God), composed by the Imam 'Ali, known as *munajat-e manzumeh-ye hazrat-e 'ali*

PROVENANCE

Warren Hastings,
Governor General of India (1732-1818),
Daylesford House, Oxfordshire
Sold Farebrother Clark and Lye,
22 August 1853, lot 861
Sir Thomas Phillipps Bt. (1792-1872)
Bibliotheca Phillippica, ms. 14.167-8
Anon. sale, Sotheby's, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures*, London,
11 October 1982, lot 32
Ralph Benkaim (1914-2001),
Los Angeles, 1982-2003
Christie's, *Islamic Art and Manuscripts*,
London, 14 October 2003, lot 149
Private collection, London, 2003-2014

SAFAVID PERSIA

ISFAHAN, CIRCA 1620-30

ALBUM PAGE:

PERSIA OR THE DECCAN, CIRCA 1600-25

This facinating drawing compares closely to three other versions of the same subject: in the British Museum, London (Canby, pp. 166-7), the Museum of Fine Art, Boston (Gray, pp. 156-7) and the Oriental Institute, St. Petersburg (Sims, p. 260, no. 176).

According to Sheila Canby, the earliest version is the St. Petersburg drawing, with twenty-one dervishes, which appears to be the prototype. Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1587-1629) donated 1,162 pieces of Chinese porcelain, mainly blue-and-white, to the Shrine of the Sufi Sheikh Safi at Ardabil in 1611, which would have been seen by pilgrims and made available to dervishes. Wares with distinct Chinese - and Safavid - patterns appear in this drawing, thus dating it to circa 1620. The Boston version, however, probably also produced in Isfahan but with its birds, monkey and buildings added in India, was previously dated by Gray and Robinson to circa 1615. Canby dates the British Museum version, with twenty-one dervishes, to circa 1640, observing the replacement of the Chinese patterns on the vessels with landscapes characteristic of late Safavid blue-and-white wares.

A similar Indian version, but with twenty-five dervishes, was sold at Sotheby's, London, 11 July 1972, lot 53, described as a Mughal version of a Persian original and dated 1660-80, where again the porcelain is clearly Safavid in style. The present drawing, acquired by Hastings in India and laid down in a Deccani album page mounted with verses by Imam 'Ali (an obvious Shia trait), illuminates a moment when artistic exchanges between Persia and the Deccan were frequent.

REFERENCES

- Canby, S. R., *Shah 'Abbas, The Remaking of Iran*, London, 2009
Gray, B., *Persian Painting*, London, 1977
Qumi, Shaykh 'Abbas, *Miftab al-jinan*, London, 1984, pp. 238-40
Robinson, B. W., *Studies in Persian Art*, volume II, London, 1993
Robinson, B. W., "Muhammadi and the Khurasan Style", in *Iran, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, volume XXX, London, 1992
Sims, E., *Peerless Images: Persian Painting and its Sources*, London and New haven, 2002
Swietochowski, M. L., *Persian Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, 1989





6 JAHANGIR BEING ENTERTAINED IN THE ZENANA

ALBUM PAGE
HEIGHT: 20.4 CM, 8 IN
WIDTH: 13.7 CM, 5 ½ IN

DRAWING
HEIGHT: 31.2 CM, 12 ¼ IN
WIDTH: 20.3 CM, 8 IN

Brush drawing with colours on paper,
laid down in an early nineteenth
century album page with floral borders
in imitation of those of Shah Jahan

INSCRIPTIONS
Originally with a paper cover sheet
inscribed in William Fraser's hand:
Very old picture of Akbar in his harem,
also inscribed in Persian: *nمبر 1*

PROVENANCE
William Fraser (1784-1835)
James Baillie Fraser (1783-1856)
By descent to Malcolm R. Fraser Esq.
Sotheby's, *Arts of the Islamic World*,
London, 3 October 2012, lot 82

PROBABLY BY A FEMALE COURT ARTIST
MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1620

Jahangir is portrayed relaxing in the *zenana* of a palace, seated against a bolster, while various women attend on him. One lady surely intended for Nur Jahan is seated in front of him handing him a jade cup and saucer, while the others are all standing bearing fly whisks, cups or other objects. In this it resembles the well-known painting in the Freer Gallery Washington D.C. showing Nur Jahan entertaining Jahangir and Sultan Khurram (Beach, no. 35). One of the women at the bottom right corner is dressed in male costume, as often in *zenana* scenes (Das, fig. 11 for instance). The group at the bottom left corner includes a woman holding an album or portfolio, a well-known sign in the work of artists such as Bichitr, Bishndas or Balchand that is taken to mean that this is a self-portrait of the artist of the main picture. This would suggest in our painting that the artist is a woman in the *zenana*, which gives the depiction of the women and the figure assumed to be Nur Jahan an unusual authenticity. This might also help to explain the unusual technique of this miniature, which is more of a drawing with added washes of colour than a fully finished painting. The artist has obviously been influenced in her depictions of women with heavy jowls and low foreheads by the artist Bishndas, for instance see Das, figs. 5 and 11. A similarly tinted drawing of a princess with companions and musicians in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, in a style influenced by Bishndas, may be by the same female artist as our painting (Hurel, no. 20). Jahangir here lacks the solid rotundity of his earlier portraits and has assumed the air seen in portraits of his last decade, though he is not yet as grey as in his last dated portrait by Daulat of 1627 (Crill & Jariwala, no. 13).

The artist
Female artists in Mughal India are rare. Khurshid Banu painted a scene of an elephant fight around 1600, now in the Howard Hodgkin Collection (Topsfield, no. 11). Sahifa Banu painted a portrait of Shah Tahmasp in the Wantage Album in the V&A (Stronge, pl. 82, pp. 116-17) in an Iranian-influenced style, while there is a famous drawing in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, showing a female artist at work in the *zenana* from the reign of Shah Jahan (Desai, no. 60).

Fraser Collection
For William Fraser (1784-1835) and his collection of paintings by Delhi artists of the early nineteenth century, see Archer & Falk. Fraser also collected earlier paintings and other contemporary copies of seventeenth century Mughal paintings. His brother James Baillie Fraser in Calcutta refers in a letter to his father dated 20 August 1819: *I have just received from William a portfolio of native drawings, some old and valuable ...* as well as the modern ones that we now know as the Fraser Album (Archer & Falk, p. 40). Most of the nineteenth century copies in the Fraser collection were dispersed at Sotheby's in London, 14 October 1980, lots 161-211. Many of these new copies of earlier works were mounted into album pages with floral borders reflecting those of the imperial albums of Shah Jahan. More rarely an original early work was mounted within nineteenth century floral borders as here.

REFERENCES
Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court*, Washington/Ahmedabad, 2012
Crill, R., & Jariwala, K., ed., *The Indian Portrait 1560-1860*, London, 2010
Das, A.K., 'Bishandas' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 259-78
Desai, V., *Life at Court*, Boston, 1985
Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011
Stronge, S., *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: the Art of the Book 1560-1660*, London, 2002
Topsfield, A., *Visions of Mughal India: the Collection of Howard Hodgkin*, Oxford, 2012





ALBUM PAGE
HEIGHT: 19.5 CM, 7 ¾ IN
WIDTH: 29.8 CM, 11 ¾ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 13 CM, 5 ½ IN
WIDTH: 21.5 CM, 8 ½ IN

CALLIGRAPHY
HEIGHT: 17.5 CM, 6 ¾ IN
WIDTH: 8.3 CM, 3 ¼ IN

Opaque pigments and gold on paper, laid down
in an album page, calligraphy on the verso

PROVENANCE
Christie's, *Important Islamic
and Indian Manuscripts*, London,
19 April 1979, lot 208
Maggs Bros., *Oriental Miniatures
and Illumination*, Bulletin no.33,
October 1980, no.34, plate XIII
Private collection, Massachusetts, 1980-2014



GOLCONDA, 1650-75

The bird, though spectacularly colourful, is not a fantasy bird from an artistic imagination. It is a Himalayan monal, a type of pheasant, otherwise known as the Impeyan Monal, *lophophorus impejanus*. It was named by the English ornithologist John Latham in 1790 in honour of Lady Impey (see catalogue nos. 23-24). It occurs fairly commonly throughout the Himalaya and is the national bird of Nepal. Apart from the matt black underparts and chestnut tail, all the red, green and blue areas are comprised of wonderful, metallic, iridescent feathers, certainly qualifying it as one of the most beautiful birds in the world. As in most pheasants, the spectacular plumage occurs only in the male; the female is an unremarkable barred brown, with blue skin surrounding the eye, and a white chin and throat. This bird, with no green shown on the upper breast, is almost certainly of the ‘normal’ colour variety and would have had a white patch on its back, hidden behind the wings in this painting.

The bird stands alert within the confines of the painting’s frame with no background other than gold spiralling arabesques of peonies and other flowers. The brilliantly coloured feathers are individually outlined in gold and decorated with gold lines creating a sumptuous effect. The painting still seems to be in its original album page since the gold background decoration is also found on the album frame. An added date on the album page upper left of A.H. 1107/1695-6 A.D. gives a *terminus ante quem* for the construction of the album. The calligraphy on the reverse is a *siyah mashq* or practice sheet that includes a prayer and is surrounded by a similar elegantly decorated album page.

A pair of birds stands against a background of floral sprays in a small Deccani painting in the Freer Gallery of Art, thought to be Golconda, circa 1620 (Zebrowski, fig 141). These birds are recognisably the ancestors of our monal. Brilliantly coloured like ours, they have rather less of the gold outlining. They also appear somewhat more naturalistically rendered than our bird: their posture appears to have been taken from the life and both are looking startled by something happening off the page. Our bird is more schematically rendered apart from its clawed feet. In particular the rendition of the eye is the same, perfectly circular and outlined in gold with dark triangular patches emerging from it. Our bird is clearly later and has lost the naturalistic appearance of the earlier Golconda birds.

Brilliantly coloured birds amidst flowers or floral scrolls are ubiquitous in Golconda hangings of the seventeenth century and it may be that our bird is a study for such a textile (see Sardar, figs. 1 and 3) and also catalogue no. 8.

REFERENCES

Sardar, M., ‘A Seventeenth-Century *Kalamkari* Hanging in the Metropolitan Museum of Art’ in Haidar, N., and Sardar, M., eds., *Sultans of the South: Arts of India’s Deccan Courts, 1323-1687*, New York, 2011, pp. 148-61
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 17.8 CM, 7 IN
WIDTH: 25.7 CM, 10 ¼ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 14 CM, 5 ½ IN
WIDTH: 21.9 CM, 8 ¾ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper
within two painted album frames

PROVENANCE
Acquired by an English family in
New Delhi in the 1960s
Private collection, London, 1960s-2012



AT’TRIBUTED TO RAHIM DECCANI
GOLCONDA, CIRCA 1660-80

A dark-skinned lady is seated in a jewelled gilt-wood chair in a garden. She is wearing an orange *peshwaj* with a long *patka* while a transparent red *orbni* covers her head and falls down her back over the armrest of the chair. She holds a little gold cup in her hand and appears to be deep in thought, as she is taking no notice of the boy in front of her who smilingly holds up to her another gold cup with one hand while holding a gold flask in the other. He is dressed in a long white *jama* worn over striped *pajama* with one brocaded and another white *patka* and a jaunty cap on his head. The ropes of pearls and the rich *patka* indicate that he is not just a servant.

The scene is set in a flower-filled garden dominated by two flowering trees in white and blue. A blackbuck and his doe are in front of the lady and a magnificently displaying peacock and a peahen (Indian peafowl, *pavo cristatus*) are behind her. The lower part of the painting is composed as one scene, even though the relative sizes of the lady and the attendant seem mismatched, and the clumps of flowers are linked together by other smaller groups of flowers and plants including irises. The clumps are continued round the edges of the painting while three large birds are depicted somewhat incongruously at the top. The centre bird is a male tragopan, most probably a Satyr Tragopan, *tragopan satyra*, though some artistic license has been applied to the bird’s underparts. Tragopans are among the most exquisitely coloured of all birds, though their beauty is seldom seen in the wild – tragopans inhabit dense forests of bamboo and rhododendron high in the Himalaya. The bird at top left appears to be some kind of pheasant though the colours do not actually fit any known species, whereas the magnificently feathered and pinioned bird at the top right seems to be imaginary. While unreal birds might suit the imaginative ambience of Deccani paintings, they are also found in Mughal paintings, as Asok Das’s recent study of Mansur’s work demonstrates (Das, V. 59-63).

The artist
The exquisite painting and composition are very close to the work of the artist who signs himself as Rahim Deccani in one painting now in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Leach, no. 9.681, pp. 948-51, col. pl. 137; Zebrowski 1981, fig. 176), while a lacquered box in the V&A is securely attributed to him as well (*ibid.*, figs. 169-74). Very few other works have been attributed to him (including Zebrowski 1983, fig. 175). Leach dates the Dublin scene to 1660-70, possibly in Kashmir (hence the epithet Deccani, which she thinks otherwise unnecessary if the artist is from the Deccan), while Zebrowski dates them 1675-1700 and from Golconda. Both show idyllic scenes in a garden with beautiful young people strung out along the base of the painting against a plain background as is the case with ours, while details such as the flowering trees, the deer and the European chair are common to all.

The subject
The subject of the painting is mysterious as Deccani paintings often are. The ‘boy’ seems more like a small man and if so, what is the point of the disparity between their sizes? Why are the flowering clumps continued round the side of the composition? What are the three big birds doing at the top of the



painting? These birds recall two brightly coloured birds amidst clumps of flowers in a Golconda painting in the Freer/Sackler Gallery dated by Zebrowski (1983) to circa 1620 (*ibid.*, fig. 141). Our painting is perhaps a preliminary design which might help to explain the thin almost transparent painting on somewhat rough paper. If the design is for a textile such as *rumal* or floorspread or indeed for the side or lid of a box, this might also explain the varied viewpoints. In a floorspread such as the mid-seventeenth century one from Golconda in the V&A (Swallow & Guy, pl. 137), birds and humans are dwarfed by giant flowers. In Deccani paintings and textiles differently scaled figures coexist happily. Catherine Glynn has published two Bijapur paintings in the Musée Guimet of large birds amidst flowering plants (Glynn, figs. 5-6) which had influence on Bikaner painting. In the large Golconda hanging from the mid-century, with parts in the Metropolitan Museum and the V&A (Sardar), disparities of scale between full size and half-length figures troubled neither the artist nor the patron, while in the borders men and apparently gigantic birds co-exist happily among flowering plants (*ibid.*, fig. 4; Swallow & Guy, pl. 138). Such disparity of size is also found in the well-known painting of diminutive pigeons in a rose bush now in the Aga Khan Collection (Colnaghi, no. 36; Goswamy & Fischer, no. 33), which is best attributed to Golconda around 1650.

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A DOUBLE-SIDED FOLIO FROM A DISPERSED MANUSCRIPT OF FIRDAUSI'S SHAHNAME ‘THE BOOK OF KINGS’

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 30.5 CM, 12 IN
WIDTH: 19.5 CM, 7 7⁄8 IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 25 CM, 9 7⁄8 IN
WIDTH: 14 CM, 5 1⁄2 IN

Ink, opaque watercolour, gold and silver on paper, text on either side in four columns of black *nasta'liq* , rules in gold, headings in red *nasta'liq*, recto with signature

INSCRIPTIONS
Signature of Mu'in Mussavir written in faded black ink in lower margin: *raqam-i kamineh mu'in mussavir* 'the work of the humble Mu'in Mussavir', With the Persian number "16" in the right outer margin on verso

PROVENANCE
North American private collection
Sotheby's, *Arts of the Islamic World*, London, 3 October 2012, lot 72



RUSTAM AND HIS HORSE RAKSH FIGHTING THE DRAGON (THIRD STAGE)
RUSTAM LASOING THE WITCH WATCHED BY RAKSH (FOURTH STAGE)
SIGNED BY MU'IN MUSSAVIR
SAFAVID PERSIA, ISFAHAN, CIRCA 1660-70

The artist
Mu'in Mussavir (active 1630-97), considered one of the most celebrated and prolific Persian artists of his time, was a pupil of the painter Riza'-yi Abbasi. He lived in Isfahan and worked at the courts of both Shah Safi (reg. 1629-42) and Shah Abbas II (reg. 1642-66). Mu'in also worked for other distinguished and rich patrons such as the superintendent of the shrine at Mashhad, which necessitated him to live outside the capital at certain times in his long career. According to Sheila Canby, 'in addition to single page drawings and paintings of a wide variety of subjects, he illustrated at least six *Shahnama* manuscripts during that period as well as several versions of the *Tarikh-I Jahangusha-yi khaqan sahibqiran* (History of the World-Conquering Lord of Fortunate Conjunction)', see Ekhtiar, Soucek, Canby and Haidar, pp. 228-229. Canby adds, 'Mu'in's distinctive style, which shows little of the European and Indian influences so popular at the Safavid court from the 1640s onwards, featured painterly brushwork and a fondness for a particular shade of violet pink which can clearly be observed in this double-sided folio.' The same distinctive colour can be seen in the present folio.

Other folios from this manuscript
Many factors, including the size of the folio, the Persian foliation number to be found on the right outer margin of the verso, the *nasta'liq* script written in four columns, the extension of the painted surface between the columns and the wording of the signature inscription in lower outer margin, all confirm that this folio almost certainly originates from the dispersed manuscript of the *Shahnama* now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. It is dated by Massumeh Farhad to A.H. 1077 / 1666-67 A.D., see Farhad, pp. 126-27. The Museum's registration documents state that the manuscript contains twelve illustrations but originally had twenty-one. The missing nine illustrations were in the collection of the Olsen Foundation, Bridgeport, Connecticut, but some or all have since been dispersed with one folio in the Springfield Museum, Massachusetts, three folios in the Binney Collection at the San Diego Museum of Art, and one folio in the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection.

For another folio signed by Mu'in, depicting "The fire ordeal of Siyawush", Isfahan, dated A.H. 1065 / 1654-55 A.D., from another manuscript of the *Shahnama* in the Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan Collection, see Canby 1998, pp.82-86. The second volume of this manuscript is in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, see Arberry, p. 42, pls. 31-33.

REFERENCES
Arberry, A.J. et al., *The Chester Beatty Library: a Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures*, volume III, Dublin, 1962
Canby, S.R., *Shah Abbas, The Remaking of Iran*, London, 2009
Canby, S.R., *Princes, Poets and Paladins: Islamic and Indian Paintings from the Collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan*, London, 1998
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Grube, E.J., *Muslim Miniature Paintings from the XIII to XIX Century from Collections in the United States and Canada*, Venice, 1962
Schroeder, E., *Persian Miniatures in the Fogg Museum*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1942
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AN ILLUSTRATION FROM THE MURRAY ALBUM:
THE EMPEROR AURANGZEB AND A FALCONER

ALBUM PAGE
HEIGHT: 40.5 CM, 16 IN
WIDTH: 27.8 CM, 10 7/8 IN

MINIATURE
HEIGHT: 23.5 CM, 9 1/4 IN
WIDTH: 15.5 CM, 6 1/8 IN

Opaque pigments heightened
with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed in crude and later *nasta'liq* on
verso: *tasvir-i Dara Shikoh* [crossed out]
Bahadur Shah [written instead]
va Sultan Mahmud

PROVENANCE
From an album assembled in the eighteenth
century for Colonel John Murray, who was
commissioned to the Bengal Army in 1781
Sale of the Murray Album, Sotheby's,
London, 15 June 1959, lot 117;
nineteen individual folios from the album
were sold on 3 April 1978, lots 79-97
Hagop Kevorkian (1872-1962), New York
Sotheby's, *Important Oriental Manuscripts
and Miniatures: the property of the
Hagop Kevorkian Fund*,
London, 21 April 1980, lot 138
Lloyd Collection, London, 1980-2011
Private collection, Germany, 2011-14

PUBLISHED
Losty, J.P., *Indian Miniature Paintings
from the Lloyd Collection*,
Oliver Forge & Brendan Lynch Ltd.,
New York, exhibition catalogue,
London, 2011, no. 8

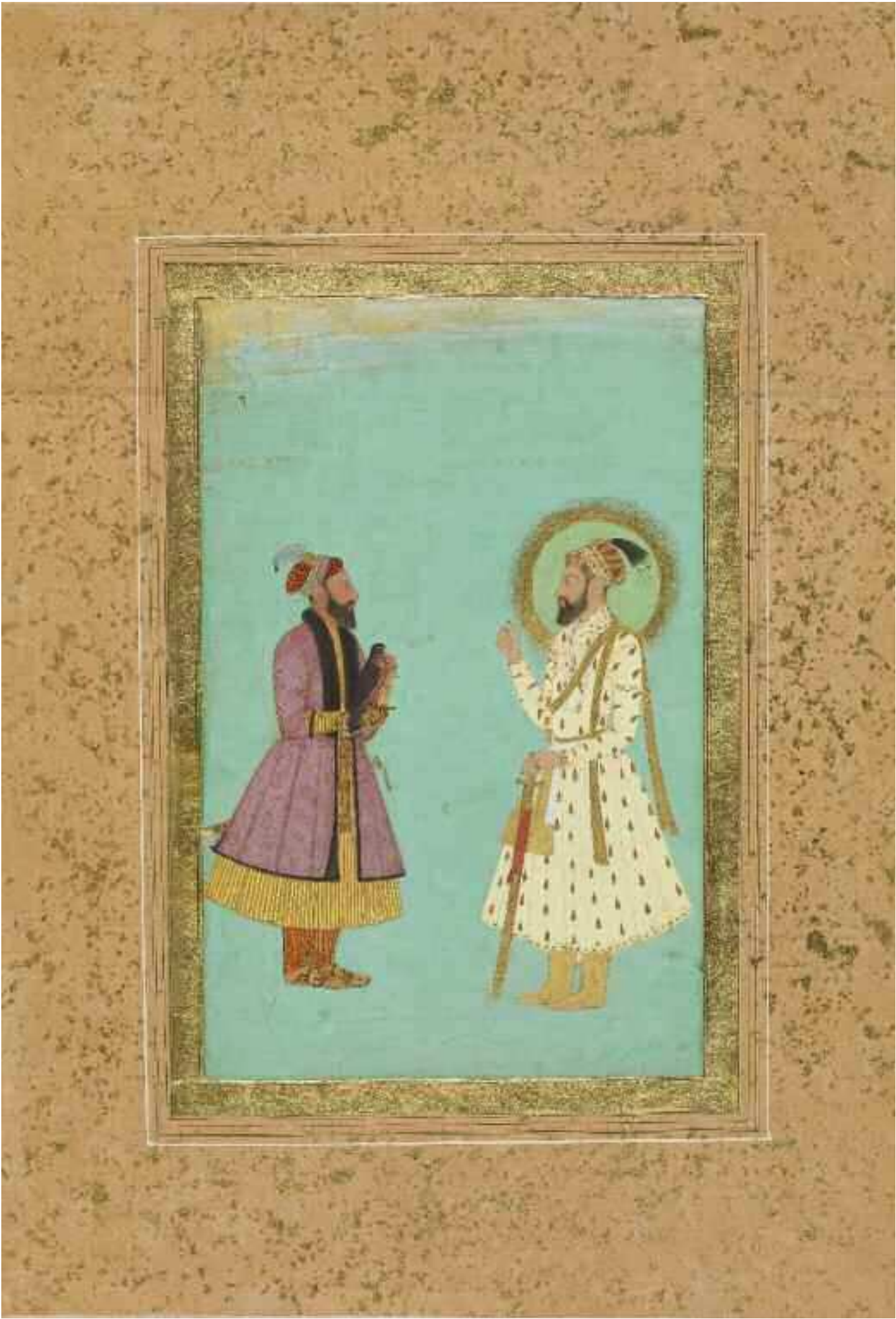
MUGHAL INDIA, 1665-70

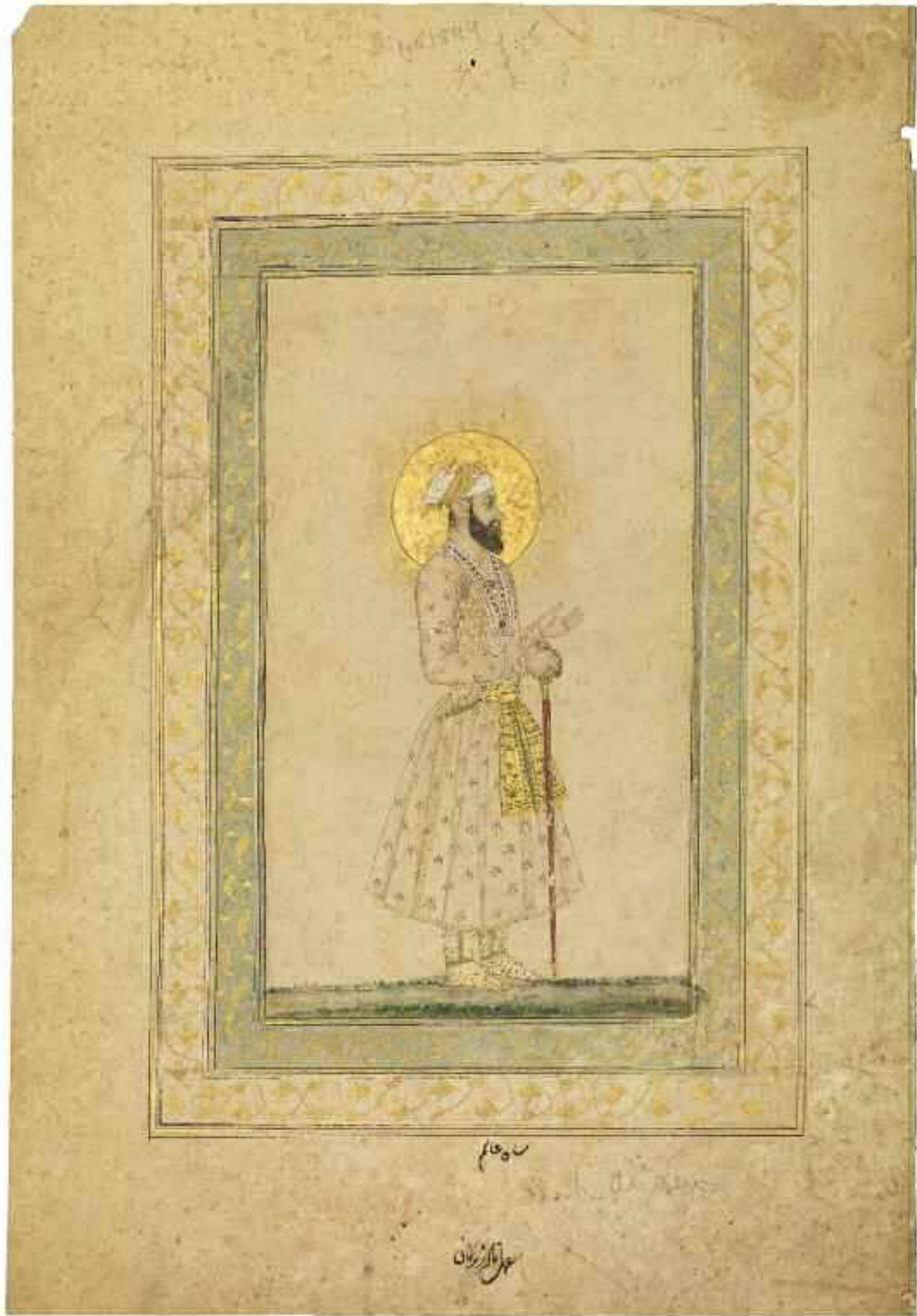
The nimbate emperor stands facing left dressed in a striking cream jama decorated with green and orange petals and a striped turban ornamented with an aigrette and pearls. He holds his right hand up (the object he would have held is missing) and leans his left on the hilt of drawn sword. Interestingly he wears a thin scarf wrapped round his body in the Deccani manner, as worn in particular by the Sultan of Bijapur, Muhammad 'Adil Shah (1627-56), see Zebowski, figs. 94-99, suggesting that he already saw himself as the ruler of Bijapur. Some of the details of his costume are unfinished. Facing him stands a bearded figure carrying a falcon on his gauntleted right hand. He is dressed in a purple surcoat with a fur tippet over a gold *jama* with thin stripes. There is no ground for them to stand on and they float in a very old-fashioned way before an eau-de-nil background with hints of a gold sky at the top.

The subject
Although sold in 1980 as a portrait of Aurangzeb, when the painting reappeared in 2011 the later inscription on the reverse was followed and the prince was identified as Aurangzeb's second son Mu'azzam, who reigned as Bahadur Shah I or Shah 'Alam I 1707-12, and hence 'Sultan Mahmud' was thought to be possibly one of his sons (Losty, no. 8). Subsequent research (Losty & Roy, pp.154-56, figs. 97-98) on disentangling the very similar portraits of Aurangzeb, Mu'azzam Bahadur Shah, and the latter's son 'Azim al-Shan (Falk & Archer, no. 148 for example) would seem to indicate that this cannot be Mu'azzam, since he lacks the distinguishing curl behind his ear, nor likewise can it be the latter's son 'Azim al-Shan. It would seem instead to be Aurangzeb himself as originally proposed.

Aurangzeb's hair and beard are just turning grey which would date the portrait to around 1665-70, when the emperor (born in 1618) would have been around 50 years of age. It is therefore contemporary with, and closely resembles, a portrait in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, showing the emperor enthroned with a young prince standing before him (Leach, no. 4.6). This as Leach pointed out is one of the very rare portraits of the emperor from early in his reign and dates from round the time of his banning of history painting, and hence imperial portrait painting, in 1668. Our painting is in a similar category. Others from this period show him with his young son A'zam Shah (Beach 1978, no. 67) and caught in a shaft of light being entertained by musicians (Beach 2012, no. 22G). In these he has no nimbus. Unlike these last two, however, our Aurangzeb has a nimbus but it is evident that the nimbuses on those two paintings, which both come from imperial albums, have been over-painted in the royal studio after Aurangzeb turned against such imagery in 1668.

REFERENCES
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Beach, M.C., *The Imperial Image: Paintings for the Mughal Court*, Ahmedabad, 2012
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., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London, 1983





FOLIO PAGE

HEIGHT: 34.3 CM, 13 ½ IN
WIDTH: 24.5 CM, 9 ¾ IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 19.7 CM, 7 ¾ IN
WIDTH: 11.4 CM, 4 ½ IN

Drawing with gold and some colour
on paper, laid down in a plain album
page with two outer borders of leaf
designs in gold on blue and buff

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed below in *nasta’liq*:
Shah ‘Alam and ‘amal-i Nadir al-Zaman
(a spurious attribution)
On the verso: *Shah Aulum* [sic]

PROVENANCE

Private collection, south of France

MUGHAL INDIA, CIRCA 1680

Prince Mu’azzam (1643–1712) afterwards Shah ‘Alam Bahadur Shah, stands with one hand resting on a straight sword, the other held in gesture. He is wearing a light coloured *jama* sprigged with flowers and a gold brocade cummerbund and turban band. He was born in Burhanpur in 1643, the second son of the Emperor Aurangzeb. Having spent his youth in the Deccan when his father was engaged in conquering the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda, he was appointed Governor of Lahore and the north-west. He was awarded the title of Shah ‘Alam Bahadur on 15 October 1676 for his expedition to Kabul. Aurangzeb reluctantly had him imprisoned from 1687–94 as he seemed to have been conspiring with the ruler of Golconda, but he was forgiven and returned to the north-west where he had built his power base. He was in Kabul when Aurangzeb died in the Deccan in 1707 and had to fight to seize the throne (his elder brother having predeceased him) from his younger brothers.

Most known portraits of him date from his days as a prince prior to his imprisonment in 1687. A good standing portrait close to ours is in the British Library (Losty & Roy, fig. 97), but with the position of the hands reversed. Another, seated, is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Hurel, no. 109). Both have been consistently misidentified as his father Aurangzeb, whom he closely resembled, and it can indeed be difficult to tell them apart, as well as from Bahadur Shah’s own son ‘Azim ush-Shan. All three had similar facial features such as highly arched eyebrows, beautifully sculpted noses without deviations, and angular jaws, and wore heavy yet trimmed beards. In stature, they are represented as tall with slender figures. Close inspection reveals Bahadur Shah to have a thicker neck, heavier beard, and often in pictures a single curl along his sideburns, as well as somewhat wider than usual ears with a slight point to the back, all traits visible in our portrait. The drawing has been ‘finished’ by having a landscape added below the prince’s feet, no doubt in Avadh in the later eighteenth century, as was often the case with drawings from the Polier Collection.

Two group portraits in the Binney Collection in the San Diego Museum show him as emperor and not unnaturally, since he was sixty-four years old when he came to the throne, with a grey beard (Dalrymple & Sharma, no. 3; Binney, no. 73). Our portrait shows him still looking relatively young, and with his beard still dark in a way similar to the London and Paris portraits from around 1680. The solid gold nimbus must have been added after he came to the throne in 1707. He reigned until 1712 whereupon another bloody struggle for the throne ensued among his own sons.

REFERENCES

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Dalrymple, W., and Sharma, Y., *Princes and Painters in Mughal Delhi, 1707–1857*, New York, 2012
Hurel, R., *Miniatures et Peintures Indiennes*, Paris, vol. I, 2010, vol. II, 2011
Losty, J. P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012

AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES:
VARADI RAGINI

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 25.7 CM, 10½ IN
WIDTH: 20 CM, 7⅞ IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 22.1 CM, 8 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 11.5 CM, 4 ½ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the back in *nagari*:
Berari

PROVENANCE

Sotheby’s, *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*,
New York, 23 March 2000, lot 207
Moscatelli Collection, London, 2000-14

EXHIBITED

Brighton Museum and Art Gallery
22 October 2011 - 8 January 2012
Dulwich Picture Gallery, London
25 January - 27 May 2012

PUBLISHED

Glynn, C., Skelton, R., and Dallapiccola, A.,
*Ragamala Paintings from India from the Claudio
Moscatelli Collection*, London, 2011, no. 12

BUNDI, CIRCA 1680

Varadi or Baradi or Desavaradi *Ragini* has a consistent iconography showing the heroine longing for her lover by raising her arms above her head. Sometimes she links her hands in an aching expression of longing, but sometimes the lover is present so her raised unlinked arms show her impatience as she looks at the bed. Our heroine is perched on a *morba* and gazing longingly at the vacant bed, while her companion seated on a little *chabutra* seeks to calm her with some incense in a burning brazier held out in her hand. The scene is set on a terrace outside a two-storeyed pavilion, with a cupola and *chhatris* on the roof. Unusually for a Bundi *ragamala* series, there is no text or inscription in the upper panel, although some writing has been obscured along the upper border.

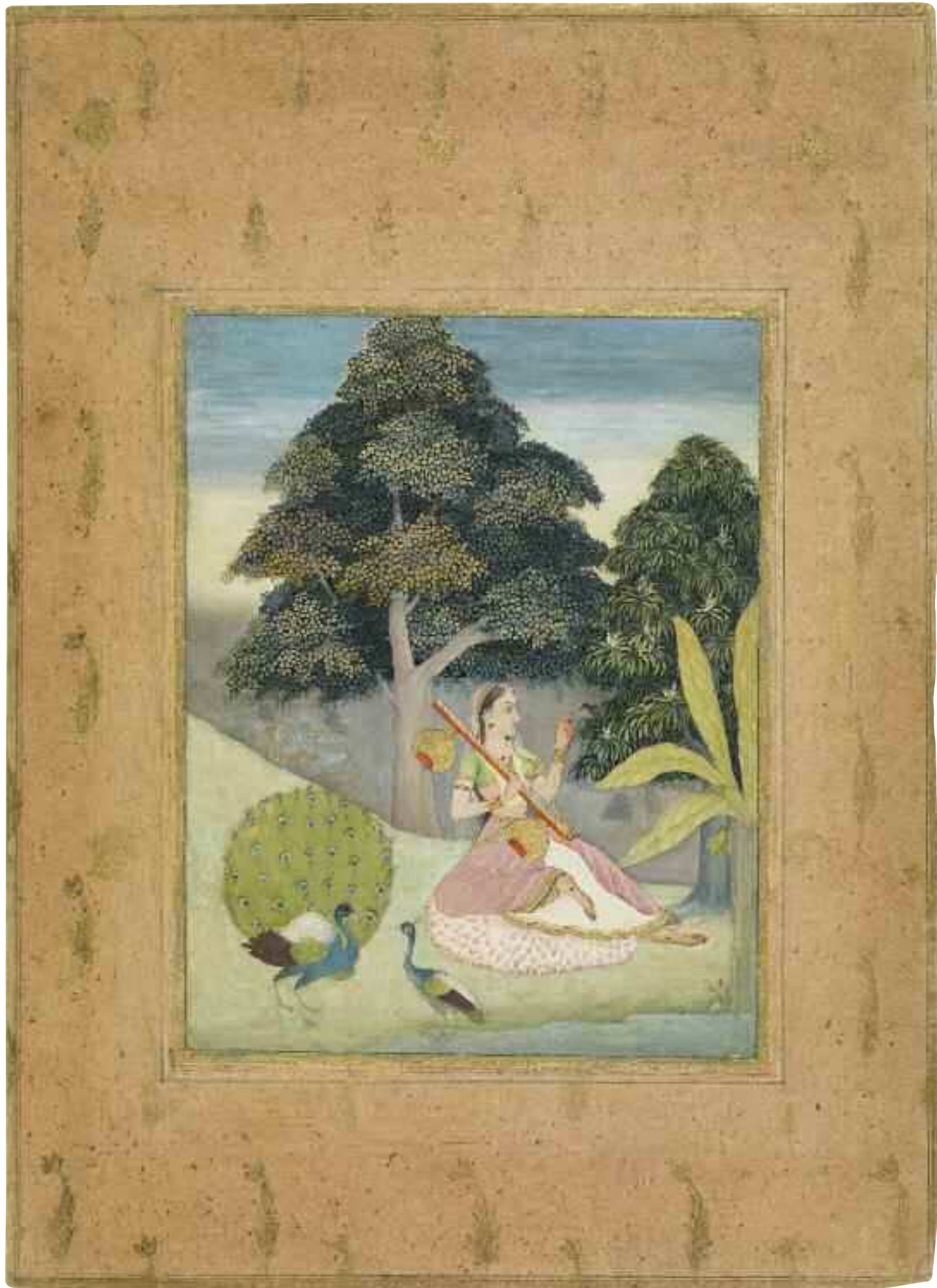
The well-known dispersed set of the Chunar *Ragamala* of circa 1591 (Skelton; Ebeling , pp.84-88, 155), painted by Mughal artists displaced from the imperial atelier, forms the foundation stone on which all later Bundi and Kotah *ragamalas* are based. For two centuries the Bundi artists of *ragamala* sets followed the same iconography and composition of the circa 1591 set for their own work. The interest in three dimensions consistently displayed by Bundi artists, inherited from their Mughal artistic ancestry in the 1591 *ragamala*, is evidenced here in the convincing perspectival view of the pavilion and the clear demarcation of the space into receding zones.

There are several well-known series of Bundi *ragamala* paintings from around 1680, all widely dispersed. One, the ‘Kanoria *Ragamala*’, has both Hindi and Persian inscriptions naming the *ragini* in the yellow panel at the top (Archer, figs. 6-11, for the V&A, Kanoria and Bickford Collections; Binney, no. 13). Our painting is a close version of the Baradi *ragini* in the Kanoria Collection (Archer, fig. 6). The various publications of Joachim Bautze have sorted out the different series which have often been confused (Bautze 1987 and 1991, pp. 86-105). He dates the Kanoria *ragamala* to 1660-80 and the others circa 1680 or 1680-90. Our painting displays the wonderful crispness of the best Bundi painting of the period. While the omission of the inscription in the yellow panel might simply be an aberration, the measurements of the painting surface are slightly larger than the other *ragamalas* of this period, suggesting that this is from a different series, and so far no other example of this series seems to be known.

REFERENCES

Archer, W. G., *Indian Painting in Bundi and Kotah*, London, 1959
Bautze, J., *Drei Bundi ‘Ragamala’ ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Rajputischen Wandmalerei*, Stuttgart, 1987
Bautze, J., *Lotosmond and Löwenritt: Indische Miniaturmalerei*, Stuttgart, 1991
Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973
Skelton, R., ‘Shaykh Phul and the Origins of Bundi Painting’ in *Chhavi* 2, Banaras, 1981, pp. 123-29





13

AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: GUJARI RAGINI

BY RUKNUDDIN
BIKANER, CIRCA 1680

ALBUM PAGE
HEIGHT: 26.4 CM, 10 ¼ IN
WIDTH: 19.3 CM, 7 ½ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 15.2 CM, 5 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 11.9 CM, 4 ¼ IN

Opaque pigments and gold on paper,
laid down in a buff album page
with gilt decorations

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed on reverse in *nagari* in blue
and black ink:

Gurjari 26 kam rukndi ro am 1
'Gujari *ragini* no. 26, work of Ruknuddin, no. 1'
With an ink stamp of the Collection of the
Maharaja of Bikaner, signed Khet Singh
and dated 1964, inventory no. 3997

PROVENANCE
Royal Collection, Bikaner
Sotheby's, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts
and Miniatures*, London,
20 November 1986, lot 135
Private collection, Germany, 1986-2014

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. Mughal artists were present in Bikaner in the mid-seventeenth century, but another strong influence came from the Deccan as the Maharajas of Bikaner, Karan Singh and Anup Singh, consistently sent back paintings and artists from the Deccan where both were fighting as military commanders in the armies of Aurangzeb.

The artist

The greatest of all Bikaneri seventeenth century artists, Ruknuddin was responsible for beginning a *Ragamala* series around 1680 for Maharaja Anup Singh (reg. 1674-98). Ruknuddin successfully combined Hindu themes with a Deccani aesthetic in this and other series. Here the exquisite Gujar *ragini* is sitting on a bed of lotus petals on a hillside, holding her *vina* over her right shoulder, and with her left hand raised and pointing at a black bird perched in the mango tree in front of her. She is dressed in a green bodice and pink skirt with a white *patka* attached to her waistband and a transparent *orbni* wound round her lower body and over her head and shoulders. A large tree rises behind her while in the foreground a peacock displays in front of a peahen by a stream. The artist is not particularly bothered by a Mughal concern to have to express a naturalistic space, so he chooses to have his background lost in a misty haze from which the details of the town and trees emerge only faintly.

This was one of six pages from a *ragamala* series sold at Sotheby's, London, 20 November 1986, lots 132-37. Two more pages similarly mounted and inscribed are in the Goenka Collection, Mumbai (Goswamy & Bhatia, no. 113) and in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (Kossak, no. 33). Other contemporary Bikaner *ragamala* pages by different artists are in the Brooklyn Museum (Poster, nos. 114-15) and the Goenka Collection (Goswamy & Bhatia, no. 114), while other pages from a series dated 1695 were sold at Sotheby's, London, 9 December 1970, lots 12-19 and 11 December 1973, lot 243, including a Dipak *raga* now in the Binney Collection in the San Diego Museum (1990.791). For a discussion of some of the different workshops in Bikaner in the late seventeenth century, see Krishna.

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Goswamy, B. N., and Bhatia, U., *Painted Visions: the Goenka Collection of Indian Paintings*, New Delhi, 1999
Krishna, N., 'Bikaneri Miniature Painting Workshops of Ruknuddin, Ibrahim and Nathu' in *Lalit Kala*, no. 21, 1985, pp. 23-27
Kossak, S., *Indian Court Painting 16th - 19th century*, New York, 1997
Poster, Amy G., et al., *Realms of Heroism: Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum*, New York, 1994

AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RASIKAPRIYA SERIES: KRISHNA SEEKS RADHA'S FORGIVENESS

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 27 CM, 10 ½ IN
WIDTH: 19 CM, 7 ⅝ IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 19.2 CM, 7 ½ IN
WIDTH: 13.8 CM, 25 ¼ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper,
partially restored red borders

INSCRIPTIONS

On the reverse in nagari:

pano 11 Nur ro Sa 1744 am 4

'Leaf 11 [work] of Nur [uddin]

Samvat 1744 [A.D. 1687] no. 4'

Hand-written in ink: B. R. No.3/11,

with a stamp of the Collection

of the Maharaja of Bikaner,

dated 14.5.1963, no. 5981/3

PROVENANCE

Royal Collection, Bikaner

Sotheby's, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts*

and *Miniatures*, London,

20 November 1986, lot 139

Private collection, Germany, 1986-2014

BY NURUDDIN

BIKANER, DATED SAMVAT 1744 /1687 A.D.

The painting would seem to illustrate *Rasika priya* 12.6, when Radha's friend addresses Krishna:

'How can I say such words to her who is so bashful? At this time of the night she does not come to my home and I feel that she must be resting at home after spending time with the maid. You have endeared yourself to another woman by entreating her, but she is inferior even to her servant. I know you are Nanda's son but how can I forget she is Vrishabhanu's daughter?'
(translation H. Dehejia, p. 288).

Krishna is seated in a graceful open pavilion being addressed by the *sakhi*, Radha's confidante, while Radha lies asleep upstairs sharing a bed with the maid. No doubt the *sakhi* is reproaching Krishna for his infidelity, for he is then seen kneeling in front of another woman on the terrace beside the pavilion and stroking her foot. At the back of the terrace is an arcade through which may be seen a woodland glade, with above it massing dark clouds and a colourful evening sky. The whole picture is remarkable for its gracious elegance and overall blue tonality.

According to Goetz (p. 111) this *Rasika priya* series consists of 187 paintings and was begun by Ruknuddin at the time of siege of Golconda in 1687. It was continued by his pupils including Nuruddin until the death of Maharaja Anup Singh in 1698, when there was a hiatus before being resumed in 1712 and more or less completed. For others in the series see Goetz nos. 78 (by Ruknuddin) and 93 (by Nuruddin), and Gray, fig. 174. Pages from a *Rasikapriya* by Nuruddin are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1981.371.1) and the former Khajanchi Collection, Bikaner (Khandalavala & Chandra, no. 72), a third by Ibrahim is in the Brooklyn Museum (Poster, no. 113), and a fourth by Hasan, son of Ahmad, is in the Goenka Collection, Bombay (Goswamy & Bhatia, no. 118). For a discussion of the different workshops in Bikaner in the late seventeenth century, see Krishna 1985.

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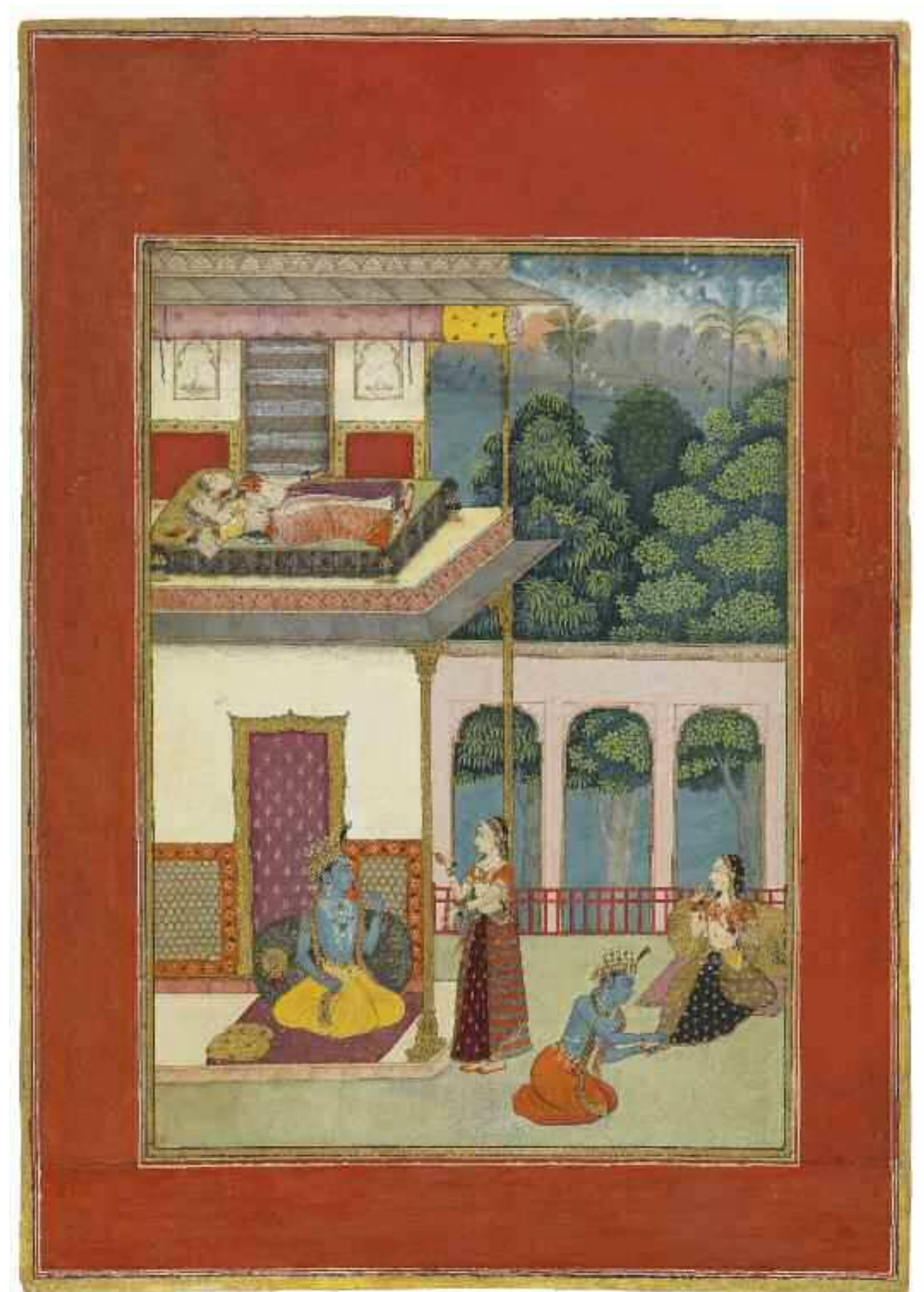
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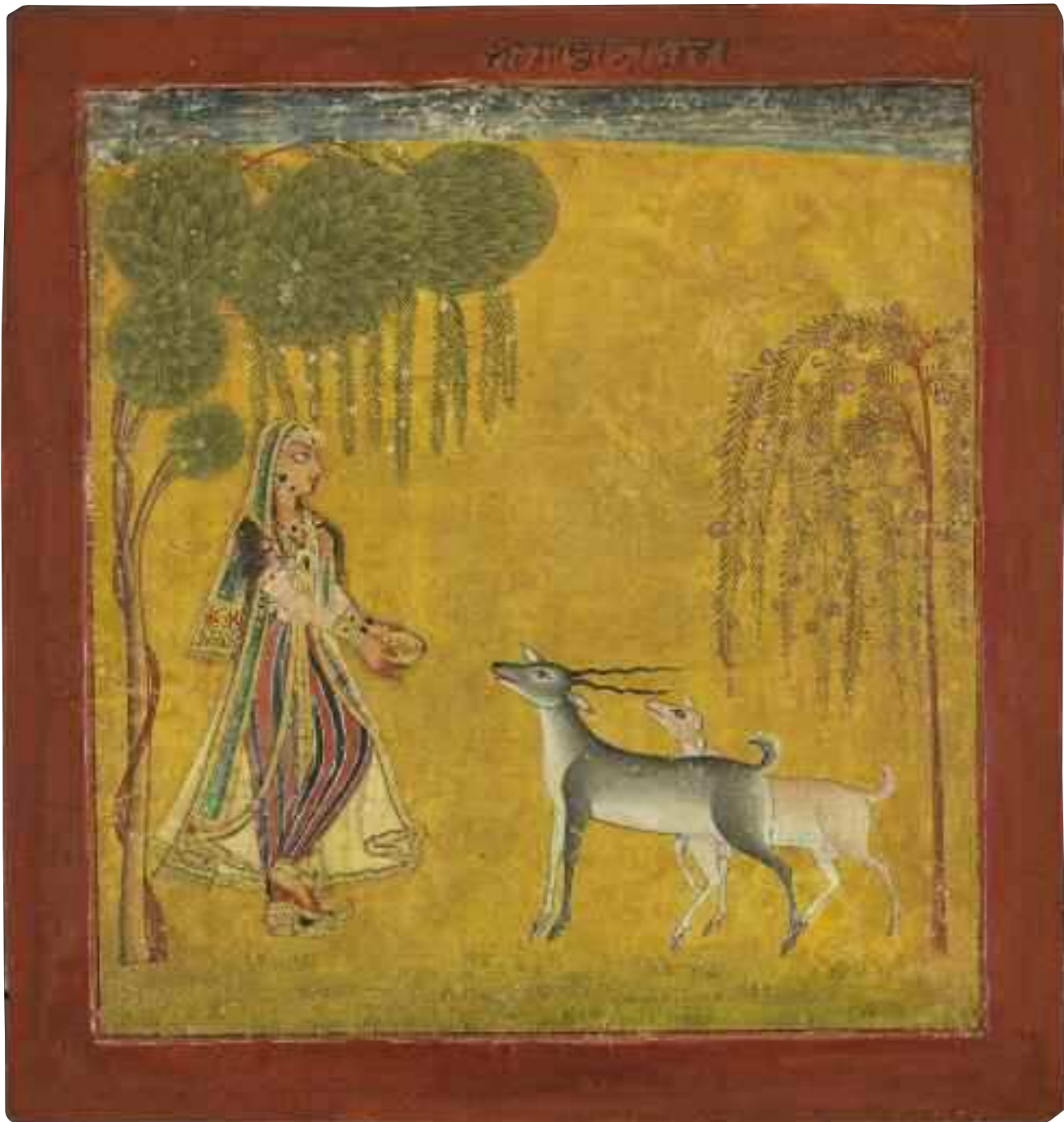
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15 AN ILLUSTRATION TO A NAYIKA SERIES:
LADY WITH DEER

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 20 CM, 7 ¼ IN
WIDTH: 18.8 CM, 7 ¼ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 17 CM, 6 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 15.5 CM, 6 IN

Opaque pigments with gold
and beetle-wing on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed in *takri* characters above:
saragana nayika
‘the heroine with a companion’
and on the verso: 15

PROVENANCE
Latifi Collection, Bombay
Private collection, England,
1970s–2014

BASOHLI, LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A lady stands her legs elegantly crossed beneath a tree holding out a dish to an expectant blackbuck and its mate. She wears the long transparent *pesbwaj* and tight striped *shalwar* underneath associated with early Basohli paintings (Goswamy & Fischer, no. 17). Over her head and shoulders she wears what appears to be a light *patka* with flowering poppies as the end-pieces. She stands beneath a tree with a creeper entwined round its trunk sending cascades of blossom down over her – a long-standing image of lovers – while a similar flowering tree stands sentinel over the deer. The blackbucks’ bodies are beautifully and smoothly modelled. The otherwise blank yellow ground extends to the top of the painting and ends in a band of blue sky.

The composition resembles two earlier Basohli paintings in Boston and Ahmadabad published by Archer: Basohli 5(i) & 5(ii), both showing a lady and a companion under trees with expectant deer, that he identifies as coming from a *nayika* series. She is the *prositapatika nayika*, the lady waiting anxiously for her husband and confiding in her companion. The inscription identifies our lady as the *saragana nayika*, which is not a term used in either Sanskrit or Hindi classifications of heroines, but appears to mean the lady with a companion and fulfils the same function as the *prositapatika nayika*, she whose lover is absent. The second of Archer’s two paintings, in the Mehta Collection in Ahmadabad, is the closer to ours in composition, in clothing details such as the poppy-ended *patka*, and in the modelling of the deer, it also has the same yellowish background and blue sky above as in our painting, but with a stream with lotuses across the bottom.

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16 AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES:
KAKUBH RAGINI

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 30.8 CM, 12 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 23.7 CM, 9 ⅜ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 27 CM, 10 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 19.7 CM, 7 ¾ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, a
short *nagari* inscription on the back

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed in *nagari*: *ragani Kakubh 28*
with a verse from a *ragamala* text:
‘Kakubh the third wife of Meghamalar
raga’, *kakubh ragani* on the verso

PROVENANCE
Rose-Marie Sarasin de Bontems,
Comtesse d’Escayrac-Lauture (1906-92)
Château de Penthes, Geneva



CENTRAL INDIA, CIRCA 1700

Kakubh *ragini* is traditionally a lady with peacocks, but also can be simply a pair of lovers in the morning. This painting explores several sub-stories. As Ebeling suggests, in the context of a *Madhumadhavi ragini* from an eighteenth century Jaipur set (1973, pl. C.23), at the approach of the rainy season peacocks utter their cries, suggesting that they are hungry or thirsty and kind-hearted ladies from the palaces round which the birds congregate bring them food and drink. Here our lady, her body in an unusual elegantly twisted posture, reaches up to the bird in the tree with a cup apparently giving it wine poured from the flask in her other hand, while her attendant holds a tray with two other cups, one prepared for the lady’s absent lover. At the approach of the rainy season princes and warriors cease their warfare and return to their loved ones, as suggested here by the other attendant preparing a bed in the pavilion alongside.

This charming painting is rather difficult to place stylistically but seems to come from Central India around 1700, a period of painting on which little has been published. The layout of flat-roofed pavilion with *chhatris* and terrace supported by a brick base with steps up is found in several early seventeenth century schools including Mewar, Marwar and Malwa. Later the same layout is found in paintings from Sirohi and Amber. The tall elegant ladies in our painting are more Mughalised than in earlier Malwa series and have also taken to wearing a plain skirt as here rather than the horizontally striped one of earlier sets. By the turn of the century the flat and schematic early style of Malwa was changing into a more Mughalised style associated with the court at Datia. For discussions of Malwa painting in the seventeenth century see Krishna and Dye.

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Ebeling, K., *Ragamala Painting*, Basel, 1973
Krishna, A., *Malwa Painting*, Varanasi, 1963

17 THE MONKEYS CHASE THE DEMONS BACK
TO LANKA

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 22 CM, 8 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 32 CM, 12 ½ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 19.2 CM, 7 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 29.2 CM, 11 ½ IN

Opaque pigments on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed above in *takri* characters:
cali ? ‘movement’
and on the reverse in *nagari*:
26 Lanka and in *takri*: *26*

PROVENANCE
Sotheby’s, *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*,
New York, 20 September 2005, lot 126
Private collection, Germany, 2005-14

A PAGE FROM BOOK 6, THE YUDDHAKANDA OR LANKAKANDA
(BOOK OF BATTLES OF LANKA), OF THE SHANGRI RAMAYANA
STYLE III, 1700-10

The ‘Shangri’ Ramayana

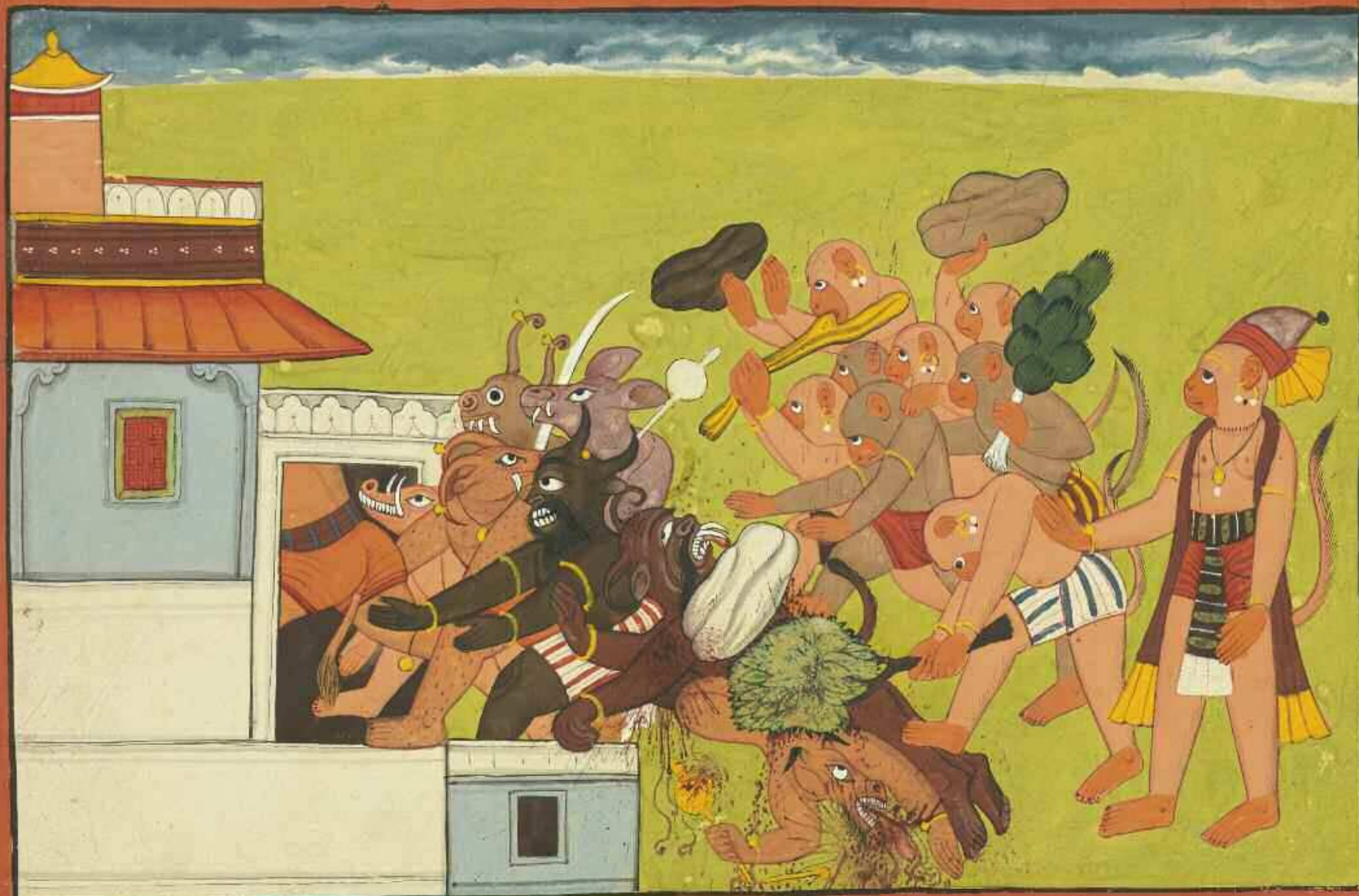
The painting comes from the famous set of paintings known as the ‘Shangri’ *Ramayana*, a series that W. G. Archer thought was executed at Shangri in the eastern Punjab Hills state of Kulu (Archer, pp. 317-30). Archer discerned four major painting styles in the manuscript. More recently, Goswamy & Fischer (, pp. 76-79), questioned this attribution to Kulu and assigned paintings in Archer’s first two styles to Bahu near Jammu in the western group of hill states, on the basis of stylistic affinities with a portrait of Raja Kripal Dev of Bahu, one that Archer thought was done by a Kulu artist linked to the Shangri series.

Style III of this dispersed series, including these wonderfully humanized portraits of the monkeys, is found mostly in the Book of Kiskindha and Book of Battles, characterised by Archer as notable for ‘*the impish treatment of the monkeys, the rioting exuberance with which the trees are depicted and the bold gusto which is everywhere apparent*’ (Archer, vol. I, p. 328). For discussion as to the disputed origin of the series, see among others Archer, pp. 325-29; Goswamy & Fischer, pp. 76-91 (although they do not take a view on the place of origin of Styles III and IV); and Britschgi & Fischer, pp. 12-14, who attribute the entire series to Bahu.

In this vigorous painting, the determined monkeys wielding rocks and tree trunks have chased the demon army back to the safety of the city of Lanka. The energetic élan of the determined monkeys as they crush their enemies with their improvised weapons, the copious amounts of spurting blood and the terror of the fleeing demons are all admirably caught. The number 26 suggests several chapters before the *nagapasa* episode of Indrajit’s binding Rama and Laksmana with serpentine weapons (numbered 60-61). The only passages that fit in this context are chapters 42-43 in Shastri’s translation of the *Ramayana*, in which the demons make sorties against the monkeys, but the inscription on the obverse here (apparently *cali*, possibly referring to the animated movement of the figures) is not precise enough for identification. Other paintings in this style from the Shangri *Ramayana* are in various public and private collections, including the Museum Rietberg, Zürich (Britschgi & Fischer, nos. 73-5); the Polsky Collection, New York (Topsfield, no. 49); the Los Angeles County Museum (Heeramanek, pl. 100); Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi (Krishna, fig. 543); the National Museum, New Delhi; and the British Library, London (Add. Or. 5696).

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The Ramayana of Valmiki, translated by H.P. Shastri, London, 1952-59
Topsfield, A., ed., *In the Realm of Gods and Kings – Arts of India*, London, 2004



18

THE MUGHAL EMPEROR SHAH ‘ALAM BAHADUR
SHAH WITH FOUR OF HIS SONS

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 45.9 CM, 18 IN
WIDTH: 37.5 CM, 14 ¾ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 42.5 CM, 16 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 33.5 CM, 13 ¼ IN

Opaque pigments and gold with
use of impasto on paper,
Lall & Son label on verso

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed below in *nagari* with the names of
the participants, from left:
*Khwajasta Akhtar; Maazuddin; Patsab Sab
Alam; Azimuddin; Rafi al-Ka...*

PROVENANCE
Ganesh Lall & Son, Agra
Szerer Collection, Paris
Boisgirard, *Collection Szerer*, Hôtel Drouot,
Paris, 22 October 2008, lot 111
Xavier Guerrand-Hermès,
Paris, 2008-2013

Shah ‘Alam, Bahadur Shah, emperor 1707-12, the eldest surviving son of Aurangzeb (reg. 1658-1707) came to the throne after a vicious succession struggle between himself and his brothers. This painting is a witness to a similar event which ensued on his own death in 1712, when all four of his sons pictured here fought to claim the throne. Sultan Khujaista Akhtar Mirza (1673-1712) was killed in the war of succession in 1712. Sultan Mu‘izzudin (1661-1713) was the victor in that war and reigned for a year as Jahandar Shah but was quickly dethroned. Sultan ‘Azim ush-Shan (1664-1712) claimed the throne in 1712 from his base in Patna but was defeated and drowned in the River Ravi during a battle in Punjab. His son Farrukhsiyar was able to defeat and kill Jahandar Shah in 1713 having made an alliance with the powerful Sayyid brothers. Sultan Rafi’ al-Qadr Rafi ush-Shan Mirza (circa1671-1712) was also killed in 1712 during the war with his brothers, but all three of his sons were briefly enthroned after the deposition and death of Farrukhsiyar in 1719, in the political struggles engineered by the Sayyid brothers. They then put on the throne the son of Khujaista Akhtar, Muhammad Shah (reg. 1719-48).

Maharana Amar Singh of Mewar (reg. 1698-1710) introduced to both Mewar architecture and painting a Mughal aesthetic (Topsfield, pp. 122-25). The former is seen particularly in such constructions as the Amar Vilas pavilions at the top of the north end of the palace at Udaipur, while in painting he moved the emphasis from mythological and poetical subjects towards portraiture and the recording of durbars and others events at court. The latter involved a more naturalistic handling of space and spatial relationships than had hitherto been the case in Mewar. Amar Singh’s most favoured and important artist, the anonymous ‘Stipple Master’, experimented with a *nim qalam* style derived from earlier Mughal drawings as well as opening the space between his figures (Glynn). One of the ways this Mughal treatment of space could be learned was through simply copying Mughal paintings, of which the present painting is a good example. The original Mughal painting would have been very similar to the group portrait by a Mughal artist of this same emperor Shah ‘Alam, Bahadur Shah, and four sons now in the Binney Collection in the San Diego Museum of Art (Dalrymple & Sharma, no. 3). There the sons are unnamed but must be the same four princes as in our painting, although they seem slightly older. Amar Singh’s ‘Stipple Master’s’ naturalistic innovations in painting did not last long. Our Mewar artist has imitated the composition of the San Diego painting but subverted its naturalistic intent in the interests of traditional Rajput flat planes of colour and abstract pattern-making, except for the thunderous clouds in the sky which are also seen in some Amar Singh portraits (e.g. Topsfield, fig. 97).

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19

AN ILLUSTRATION TO A RAGAMALA SERIES: DHANASRI RAGINI OF SRI RAGA

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 30.7 CM, 12 ¼ IN
WIDTH: 19.9 CM, 7 ¾ IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 23.7 CM, 9 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 14.6 CM, 5 ¾ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed in *nastal'iq* on the verso:
dhanasri ragini-i sri rag

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Europe
Christie's, *Islamic Art, Indian Miniatures, Rugs and Carpets*, London,
19 October 1993, lot 7 (part lot)
Moscatelli Collection, London, 1993-2013

EXHIBITED

Brighton Museum and Art Gallery
22 October 2011 - 8 January 2012
Dulwich Picture Gallery, London
25 January - 27 May 2012

PUBLISHED

Gynn, C., Skelton, R. and Dallapiccola,
A.L., *Ragamala Paintings from India
from the Claudio Moscatelli Collection*,
London, 2011, pp.72-3, no.17

HYDERABAD, CIRCA 1760-80

Dhanasri ragini is a lady suffering the pangs of separation from her lover, and to assuage them she normally draws a portrait of him on a wooden panel, as in a slightly earlier Hyderabadi painting in Berlin (Waldschmidt, fig. 86). A rarer alternative iconography is for her to be writing her beloved a letter, as in our version and also in the Richard Johnson Hyderabad *Ragamala* in the British Library of circa 1760 (Falk and Archer, no. 426, xx). According to Robert Skelton (Glynn, Skelton & Dallapiccola, 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). Another alternative shows her looking at a picture of a baby, no doubt the one she hopes to have by her absent lover (Losty, no. 16). The iconography of Deccani *ragamalas* is never completely fixed.

Nizam 'Ali of Hyderabad (reg. 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 and Seitz, nos. 47-52 and references) all follow each other's iconography very closely and 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, learned no doubt 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 slightly later *Ragamala* in the Moscatelli Collection, London (Glynn, Skelton & Dallapiccola, nos. 17-21), the set from which our painting comes. While aware of the 1760s *ragamalas* they are all less concerned with the exploration of depth using western perspective, while further developing the iconography.

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Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, London and Los Angeles, 1983

A MUGHAL NOBLEMAN ON A TERRACE, PERHAPS NAWAB SHAHAMAT JANG

FRAMED

HEIGHT: 96.5 CM, 38 IN

WIDTH: 66 CM, 26 IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 79 CM, 31 IN

WIDTH: 48.5 CM, 19 ½ IN

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver, painted in reverse on glass and silvered, in a twentieth century chinoiserie frame

PROVENANCE

Muncaster Castle, Cumbria, seat of the Pennington family, house sale, mid-1970s
Private collection, Surrey, mid-1970s-2013

BENGAL, POSSIBLY CALCUTTA, 1760-80

This is a rare example of a large eighteenth century portrait in this technique, after a Murshidabad original of circa 1755. Extremely few eighteenth century paintings on glass of this scale and quality have survived, although crude reverse-painted nineteenth century glass paintings are ubiquitous in western India. The technique originated in China, and because the frames of such paintings often have ink characters in Chinese on the reverse, these may in fact have been painted and framed in China and sent on the trade routes between Canton and Gujarat. However, this is patently not the case here, as the style of this painting clearly relates to centres of Mughal painting in the later eighteenth century such as Avadh and Murshidabad.

Various details of the painting suggest that the painter is copying a Murshidabad portrait of around 1750-60, as in the V&A's two versions of Nawab Alivardi Khan with his nephews and grandson, see *Arts of Bengal* no. 68 or Losty 2002, fig. 1, for the second of these. The absence of the normal accompaniments of hookah, interlocutors, attendants and so forth suggests that the painter is abbreviating his model. The costume details, of a short brocaded *patka* and a *jama* with wide gold border at hem and shoulder-scales, are seen in the *jama* worn by Alivardi Khan's nephew Shahamat Jang in the V&A paintings, as is the silver trim on the brocaded cushions against which the nawab rests. Alivardi Khan and his other nephew Shaukat Jang are dressed more plainly in both paintings. There is in fact a close resemblance between the figure and costume of Shahamat Jang and our nawab, except that his beard is somewhat longer. Also similar are the red rail and the green hedge running along the background of both paintings, suggesting that our figure has been copied from a similar *darbar* scene.

Reverse painting on glass was widely practised throughout Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth century and spread to China in the eighteenth century where Canton artists specialised in the art. The panes of glass had to be imported. The subjects that they painted were the traditional ones of the Chinese export trade but they also painted copies of engravings to order. These are normally of western subjects, but there is for instance in the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, a reverse painting on glass from Canton copied from the version by the Avadhi artist Nevasi Lal, of Tilly Kettle's Shuja ud Daula and his ten sons, as engraved by P. Renault and published in Paris in 1796, together with the inscription. See http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/rise_fall_canton_04/cw_gal_02_thumb.html

Normal Chinese reverse paintings on glass conform to Chinese taste and, while heavily pigmented and brightly coloured, do not as a rule make use of gold and silver or attempt to imitate gems as was traditional in Indian miniatures. The entire surface of the back of the glass was painted and the painting was then covered over with a reflecting surface. The figural subjects of the aforementioned nineteenth century Canton glass paintings for the Indian market, with their unpainted skies, tend to have Chinese facial features. This is not the case here as our nobleman gives no indication of being painted other than by a Mughal artist. It is possible that Chinese artists introduced the technique into Bengal in the later eighteenth century and that it was taken up by local artists. The silvered upper half of the painting reflects the Murshidabad practice of the 1750s of having gold or silver grounds for the sky, see the Nawab Husain Quli Khan of Dacca in the V&A in Losty 2014, fig. 1.

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Losty, J. P., 'Painting at Murshidabad 1750-1820' in *Murshidabad: Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, ed.

R. Llewellyn-Jones and Das, N., Mumbai, 2014 (forthcoming)



FOLIO
HEIGHT: 17.8 CM, 7 IN
WIDTH: 28 CM, 11 IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 14.8 CM, 5 7⁄8 IN
WIDTH: 24.7 CM, 9 3⁄4 IN

Opaque pigments and gold on paper

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

PROVENANCE
The Earls of Sandwich,
Hinchinbrooke Castle, Huntingdonshire
Bonham's, *Islamic and Indian Art*, London,
12-13 October 2005, lot 376 (unillustrated)
Private collection, Germany, 2005-2014

MARATHA, FROM NAGPUR, CIRCA 1750

The subject
The coronation of Rama in Ayodhya marks the culmination of the original *Ramayana* story, when all his allies who have aided him in his quest to recover Sita come to Ayodhya to witness his final triumph. The large compositions necessary to represent this scene were reduced in size as icons for more personal devotion, showing Rama enthroned with Sita beside him, the ever faithful Laksmana attending on his brother, and Hanuman the epitome of service to the divine, bending reverently before the enthroned divinity. This somewhat larger composition encompasses these figures, but also includes other friends and allies in his campaign to recover Sita from the clutches of Ravana, the *raksasa* king of Lanka.

Here all three of his brothers participate by holding the insignia of royalty: Bharata holds the leaf-shaped fan, Laskmana the *chowrie* and his twin brother Satrugghna the *chattri* or parasol. Bharata shared more of Visnu's essence than the twins so, often as here, he is painted as blue as Rama himself. Behind them stand Vibhisana, Ravana's brother and his successor as king of Lanka, and two of the monkey chiefs, presumably Sugriva and Angada. Opposite are seated Vasistha and other family priests, while other monkey princes and Jambavan the King of the bears stand. All do reverence to the enthroned couple. The style of the *dhotis* worn by the standing figures with wide shawls wrapped round their hips are of interest here (see below). The scene is set on a carpet viewed in plan across the bottom of the painting while above is a wide hanging of lotuses and lotus petals.

The Sandwich paintings
The painting comes from a group all formerly in the collection of the Earls of Sandwich, possibly collected by the eight earl on his visit to Ceylon and India in 1878-79. He records being given gifts by the Raja of Pittapur when visiting his mansion in Madras (Montagu, p. 28). The style of painting relates closely to mid-eighteenth century Hindu Hyderabad painting with the heroes wearing the tall crowns typical of that style (for instance Falk & Archer, no. 427, iv). Very little has been published on either Hindu Deccani painting of the period or more especially here Maratha painting, which seems to have centred at this date round Nagpur. Pages of a loose-leaf dispersed *Bhagavata Purana* have been attributed to that city by Dr. Moti Chandra (ibid., nos. 561-62), with a similar manuscript in the Mumbai C.S.M.V.S. Museum (54.2, 1-4). More importantly for our purposes a complete manuscript, now in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, of the Marathi classic text, Jnanadeva's *Jnanesvari*, a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*, is profusely illustrated in a rich style similar to our page (Dye, no. 162, pp. 370-74). It is dated 1763 at Nagpur and copied by the scribe Narayana for a patron who is named as the son of Sri Gopinath. Little vignettes are interspersed within the text with the figures silhouetted against a coloured ground. A vignette illustrated by Dye (no. 162, 5) is a reduced version of our painting and painted in the same style, leaving no doubt as to its provenance, although lacking the carpet and with a different hanging above. The figures are silhouetted against a solid red ground rather than the green of our example. For another in the



group, a raja dressed for *puja*, see Losty, no. 8, now in the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore, where the attendant figure has a *dhoti* and shawl wrapped round his hips in the same style. For others in the group see Bonham's, *Islamic and Indian Art*, London, 12 October 2005, lots 375 & 376.

Nagpur, originally the centre of a Gond kingdom and never Mughalised, was taken over in 1743 by Raghoji Bhonsle, a Maratha general governing Berar for the Peshwa. After his death he was succeeded by his son Janoji (1755-73). They and their eighteenth-century successors were roughly spoken warriors, continually fighting, who were uninterested in the arts, and certainly never founded a court studio. Such artistic patronage as there was at Nagpur must have been from wealthy merchants such as the son of Sri Gopinath, who had possibly been exposed to the sophisticated court at Hyderabad and was stirred into emulating its artistic productions.

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

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 32.7 CM, 12 7/8 IN

WIDTH: 43.7 CM, 17 1/4 IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 26.8 CM, 10 1/2 IN

WIDTH: 37.6 CM, 14 3/4 IN

Opaque pigments and
gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed in *nagari*
on the reverse:

'Maharana Ari Singh is
riding the horse
Shiv Prasanna and
hunting bear, the artist
Jugara [Jugarsi].
Entered into the royal
store in Samvat 1829'
[1772 A.D.]

PROVENANCE

Mewar Royal Collection



BY JUGARSI

MEWAR, CIRCA 1772

Maharana Ari Singh (1761-73) is depicted on a galloping horse turning in the saddle to fire his matchlock at two bears, one of which has already fallen wounded. Broad washes of green define the foreground, while the background is solid green turning to streaks of white and blue at the top of the painting marking the horizon and the sky.

The painting is very close to one showing Ari Singh hunting boar dated 1762 (Topsfield 2002, fig. 182), where obviously the same *charba* has been used for the horse and rider, although the horse is a bay and there is a difference in treating the clothes and accoutrements. The same *charba* but in mirror reverse has been used for both the wounded bear and the wounded boar, with the addition of tusks in the latter case. Topsfield has remarked (2002, p. 198) that Ari Singh never seemed to tire of an unending stream of near identical equestrian processions or hunting scenes. For other work ascribed to Jugarsi, son of the artist Jiva, see *ibid.* fig. 173, a wonderfully impressionistic bear hunting scene done for Jagat Singh II in 1750, and fig. 183, a sketchier scene of Ari Singh and companions hunting boar in 1762, but with a more finished landscape than in our painting (also Topsfield 1980, pl. 15). Jugarsi, like other Mewar artists of Ari Singh's reign, seems to have had to record every single hunting kill performed by their royal master. The same *charba* of horse and rider was used by Jugarsi to record the maharana killing a buffalo in 1761 but with a bow and arrow in a painting now in Melbourne (Topsfield 1980, no. 156).

REFERENCES

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



PROVENANCE
Sir Elijah (1732-1809) and Lady Impey
(1749-1818), Calcutta and London
Lady Impey,
sale at Phillips, London, 21 May 1810
Colnaghi, London, 1980s
Private collection, London, 1980s-2013

TWO PAINTINGS OF PARROTS FROM LADY IMPEY’S ALBUM OF NATURAL HISTORY DRAWINGS

**BY SHAIKH ZAIN AL-DIN
CALCUTTA, 1777**

The artist and his patrons
Shaikh Zain al-Din is sometimes described in the inscriptions on the pages from the Impey album of natural history drawings 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 court artists with him, and it is only from this time that there flourished for a short while a school of Mughal painting in the city 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, perched 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 with 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 (see Falk & Hayter; Losty).

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 imported Whatman paper. In Indian art, the Impey series of natural history drawings is considered the finest of its kind.

Other folios from the Impey Album
Examples from the Impey series are now in many international private and public collections including the Wellcome Institute, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the British Library, London; the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Topsfield 2008); and the 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).

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, Caron, *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
Topsfield, A., *Paintings from Mughal India*, Oxford, 2008, nos. 78-80

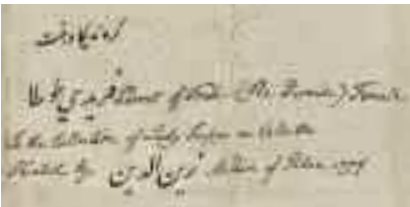


مهره نایله ورنه

West of Pond (The Tower) Female
 In the Collection of Lady Soper in Calcutta
 Painted by زين الدين in 1774

A BLOSSOM-HEADED
PARAKEET ON A BRANCH
OF A KARONDA SHRUB

BY ZAIN AL-DIN
PAINTED FOR LADY IMPEY
CALCUTTA, DATED 1777



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.

AN ORNATE LORIKEET
ON A BRANCH OF THE
INDIAN CHERRY TREE

BY ZAIN AL-DIN
PAINTED FOR LADY IMPEY
CALCUTTA, DATED 1777



Trichoglossus ornatus, the Ornate Lorikeet is also known as Ornate Lory, the names lory and lorikeet are loose terms, with lorikeet usually applied to the smaller, longer-tailed species in the same way as parrots and parakeets. They form a distinct group within the parrot family, feeding largely on soft fruits and nectar, and are characterised by having have a brush-like surface to their fleshy tongue, an adaptation to nectar feeding.

Ornate Lorikeets are confined to the island of Sulawesi (formerly Celebes) and its outlying islands. They are relatively abundant and highly sociable birds, inhabiting cultivated land, coconut palm plantations, secondary forest, and even towns. The sexes are alike and exquisitely coloured. Lady Impey clearly had birds brought to her from south-east Asia to stock her menagerie in Park Street, Calcutta. The 'Layura tree' seems to be an error for Lasura, *Cordia dichotoma*, the 'Indian cherry tree', which has edible fruits that this parrot clearly likes and is native to much of east, south-east and south Asia. The immature fruits are also pickled.



Detail, no. 24



درخت لیوا

Florulae variae des Indes Orientales. Buffon.

باند بنو طوطا
Pala longicauda

In the collection of the British Museum
Printed by the printer of the British Museum of Natural History 1777

LADIES BATHING IN A MINIATURISED GARDEN

FOLIO

HEIGHT: 28.2 CM, 11 ⅞ IN

WIDTH: 31.8 CM, 12 ½ IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 25.7 CM, 10 ⅞ IN

WIDTH: 29.2 CM, 11 ½ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscribed on the reverse in *nasta'liq*:
baygumat-i sayyid rizvi-khan
'Ladies of Sayyid Rizvi Khan'

With a long English inscription in ink in an eighteenth or nineteenth century hand:

Favourite ladies of the Nabob Rezoo Khan amusing themselves in a garden through which runs a river some fishing some bathing & some rowed by women in barges. I fancy the painter thought he should please me by introducing some English vessels, one of the inconsistencies that sometime appear in Indian pictures. For it is not very likely British ships should be sailing in the gardens of a seraglio. His Highness the Nabob appears with his guard taking the air in his palanqueens. [sic.]

MURSHIDABAD, CIRCA 1780

In this strange scene, ladies interrupt their bathing and fishing to urge on a couple of women who are trying to catch a flock of peafowl. This part of the painting is realistically depicted, divided between two rocky mounds covered with trees. In the foreground, however, on the waters of the lake, three miniature pleasure boats are passing by with the oars and steering paddles operated by an all-female crew. Beyond the rocky mounds three British warships float on the lake in front of an imposing Indian cityscape. Further back still a royal procession is passing all on foot save for a few elephants, with the nawab being conveyed in a palanquin.

The subject

The subject exhibits and attempts to unite several different strands of Murshidabad painting. The women and the rocky hills rising out of a lake are found in other Murshidabad paintings such as a painting of circa 1775 in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Leach, no. 6.374). In that painting a nawab is relaxing with his mistress on one island while a woman attempts to catch a peacock. Other women bathe while the lake in the foreground and the background is treated naturalistically. This approach developed out of what was going on in Murshidabad painting in the 1760s such as the Impey *Ragamala* (*ibid.*, 6.271-284; Falk & Archer, nos. 368, i-viii) and the slightly later Johnson *Ragamala* (*ibid.*, nos. 370, i-xxxvi). The British warships are found in even earlier Murshidabad paintings such as in the manuscript of the *Dastur-i Himmat* in Dublin from 1755-60 (Leach, nos. 6.21-231). Three of the paintings illustrated (nos. 6.54-56) show three-masted ocean-going vessels although they are not flying British flags as ours are. Such ships of course would have been readily visible along the lower reaches of the River Hugli from Calcutta to the sea.

The miniaturist approach to the rendition of the pleasure boats in the foreground comes from Murshidabad landscape paintings of the 1760s, which take a bird's eye view of a vast swathe of landscape and render each element in miniature and with painstaking detail (e.g. Losty & Roy, figs. 119-20; Leach 1995, no. 7.103; Sotheby's, London 31 May 2011, lots 109-10). The processional scene on the other hand is more imperial Mughal in inspiration from the 1740s and 1750s (e.g. Losty & Roy, fig. 109; McNerney, fig. 15) although it had spread to Murshidabad as well in the 1760s (Galloway & Losty no. 32).

While some late Mughal artists in the later eighteenth century took a naturalistic approach to their subjects and attempted to create unified compositions, others took a more traditional approach, as in the way paintings were composed in the Rajput studios, and used individual elements of varying sizes to create a more playful design. There are Rajput elements in Murshidabad painting that have yet to be satisfactorily explained and this nonchalant approach to relative sizes is one of them. The long English inscription suggests that the painting was done for the writer, who appears to have been of some consequence in the city, perhaps the Resident Sir John Hadley D'Oyly or his successor Robert Pott. Nothing unfortunately is known of Sayyid Rizvi Khan, who would appear from his Sayyid designation to be related to the royal house of Bengal. The Nawab of Bengal passing in the procession must be Nawab Mubarak al-Daula (reg. 1770-93).



REFERENCES

- Falk, T., and Archer, M., *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981
 Galloway, F. and Losty, J.P., *The Divine and the Profane: Gods, Kings & Merchants in Indian Art*, London, 2012
 Leach, L. Y., *Mughal and Other Indian Paintings in the Chester Beatty Library*, London, 1995
 Losty, J. P., and Roy, M., *Mughal India: Art, Culture and Empire – Manuscripts and Paintings in the British Library*, London, 2012
 McNerney, T., 'Mughal Painting during the Reign of Muhammad Shah' in Schmitz, B., ed., *After the Great Mughals: Painting in Delhi and the Regional Courts in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Bombay, 2002, pp. 12-33

TWO PORTRAITS OF A MAN AND WOMAN OF RANK IN A LUCKNOW PALACE INTERIOR

LEFT PAGE
HEIGHT: 22.4 CM, 8 ¾ IN
WIDTH: 15.5 CM, 6 ⅛ IN

RIGHT PAGE
HEIGHT: 22.1 CM, 8 ⅝ IN
WIDTH: 15.1 CM, 6 IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
The verso of the male portrait inscribed
in ink: *29th November 1790*

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Zürich, 1970s - 2013

LUCKNOW, 1785-90

A man and a woman in princely dress stand on a hexagonal-patterned carpet in front of a row of engrailed arches, the middle one split across the two paintings and through which we can see parkland. The gentleman wears *narwabi* costume of long *jama* and short fur-tipped jacket, a shawl and a turban, whilst the lady is dressed in long voluminous robes. Such portraits are usually claimed to be after an original by the English artist Tilly Kettle. His well-known oil painting of a dancing girl, painted during his visit to Faizabad in 1772-73, is in the Yale Center for British Art (Archer, fig. 31), but there are no known copies of it by Lucknow artists. Likewise there are no Kettle paintings showing this type of female portrait, but of course much of his work in Lucknow was destroyed during the uprising of 1857.

The female portrait here is a well-known image of which several versions exist. That now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Cummins, pl. 113), is the most finely detailed and has some claim to be the earliest, being dated circa 1773. The lady is close to ours but she is viewed in slightly askew perspective. That formerly in the Archer Collection and now in the British Library (Archer 1979, fig. 37) is a close but less detailed version of the Boston picture. The latter seems to be from a set of such portraits including one of the Nawab of Avadh Asaf al-Daula (reg. 1775-97), also now in the British Library (Archer 1972, pl. 48). He is seated on a European-style chair under the same arch with the same mouldings on plinth and capitals.

The Archer/British Library version is inscribed 'A woman of rank in the Dress of the Country' but it is unlikely that Kettle would have had access to such a woman and she is probably the *bibi* of one of the many Europeans resident in Lucknow at this time. Such studies were assembled into albums of costume studies: our pair seems to be from such an album showing a lady and gentleman in typical Avadhi dress. The man's costume is the same as that worn by the Nawab Shuja' al-Daula and his ten sons in the two known Lucknow versions of Kettle's now lost painting, by Nevasi Lal in Paris and by Mihr Chand in Berlin (Archer 1979, fig. 33-34).

REFERENCES

Archer, M., *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, 1972
Archer, M., *India and British Portraiture*, London, 1979
Cummins, J., *Indian Painting from Cave Temple to the Colonial Period*, Boston, 2006



THE ENTHRONED DEVI

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 27.7 CM, 10 ⅞ IN
WIDTH: 22.2 CM, 5 ⅝ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 19.5 CM, 7 ¾ IN
WIDTH: 13.7 CM, 5 ⅝ IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

PROVENANCE
W. B. Manley (1885-1971), London
collection stamp on verso, number 298D.
Sotheby's, *Oriental Manuscripts and Miniatures and Printed Books: the property of Dr. W. B. Manley*, London, 14 July 1971, part-lot 235, sold to Maggs Bros., London

GULER, 1780-90

The Devi or Great Goddess sits with her eight arms displaying the weapons or signs by which the divine powers given her by the gods are recognisable: conch, goad, lotus, discus, shield, mace, banner and sword. She was created by the combined powers of the gods to overcome the fearsome Buffalo-demon which none of them could do by themselves: this is her fearsome aspect when she rides her lion or tiger into battle and decapitates the demon (see for instance Dehejia, no. 7), but she also has a benevolent side as here. She is sitting peaceably on a lotus seat against a bolster on a hexagonal golden throne with attached golden parasol, attired as a princess from the hills with a long *peshwaj* and an *orbni* wrapped round her shoulders and head on which is placed a crown. For a comparable peaceful image, see *ibid.* no. 20, the twenty-armed Bikaner Devi dancing on a lotus in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. The Goddess is portrayed in profile, as in Pahari portraits, facing left but strikingly some of her left arms are depicted carrying weapons in front of her instead of being displayed to the side as is usual (Dehejia, no. 7 for instance).



The royal imagery is here carried further than ever before. Apart from her crown, throne and parasol, she is nimbate, and positioned in a palace setting. The normal arch enclosing a royal portrait in the Guler tradition has been extended so her throne is placed within an arcade between two rows of arches. Throne, parasol and crown are covered with jewels. Rich hangings occupy the background with a vista of blue sky and nothingness beyond. Such appurtenances normally accompany royal portraiture from Guler and our artist has in fact united two of the dominant iconographies of later Guler painting, of royal portraiture and of the illustrations of the text of the *Devi Mahatmya*, the great text summing up the creation and worship of the Goddess (see T.R. Coburn in Dehejia, pp. 37-58, also nos. 13-15 therein). Various series of this key text were prepared in Guler including a series divided between the Lahore Museum and Chandigarh Museum and dated 1781 (Aijazuddin, pp. 29-33, illustrated Guler 41, i-xxxiv), while other series were also made between 1780 and 1800 (Goswamy & Fischer, p. 691).

REFERENCES

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Dehejia, V., *Devi the Great Goddess: Female Divinity in South Asian Art*, Washington, 1999
Goswamy, B. N., and Fischer, E., 'The First Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh of Guler' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B. N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Zürich, 2011, pp. 687-718

28

RAJA PRAKASH CHAND OF GULER AND RAJA SANSAR CHAND OF KANGRA

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 21.9 CM, 8 7/8 IN
WIDTH: 15 CM, 5 7/8 IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 19.2 CM, 7 5/8 IN
WIDTH: 12.9 CM, 5 IN

Opaque pigments and gold on paper

PROVENANCE

The obliterated circular ink stamp reads:
Lieut. Col. H. K. Tandan collection
This painting does not appear however in
the catalogue of the Tandan Collecton

GULER OR KANGRA, CIRCA 1790

The two rulers are seated together on a carpeted terrace with a long marble balustrade, a triangular vista of garden edged with cypresses and flowering trees ending in a pavilion, all viewed within a cusped white marble arch. The painting is a variant of the double portrait in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Archer 1973, Guler no. 52), painted circa 1785 at Guler, of Raja Prakash Chand of Guler (born circa 1748, reg. 1773–90, died 1820) and Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra (born 1765, reg. 1775–1823) seated smoking on a terrace. Our painting is similarly sensitive as to the way the rulers are portrayed, suggesting a Guler artist, as Sansar Chand's Kangra portraits are somewhat less refined. Sansar Chand is here shown with the hint of a moustache and must be in his later teens, so the meeting is meant to be no later than 1785.

The subjects

Prakash Chand was something of an oddity according to Archer (vol. I, p. 129) – simple, pious and perhaps a little crazed, he overspent wildly on charity. He was on friendly, if tributary terms, with Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, at this time about to begin his rise to control of the eastern Pahari states. While the same *charba* may well have been used as in the V&A painting, but reversed, both rulers are depicted slightly older, with Prakash Chand sporting the full beard and moustaches he seems to have affected in about 1790. For further portraits of these rulers, see Archer, Guler 49–56 and Kangra 9–22, and Aijazuddin, p. 38, figs. 17 and 18. A particularly close portrait of Prakash Chand is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Cummins, pl. 110), showing him with a full beard, as here, and a closer approximation of his somewhat unusual turban.

Our painting is very typical of a Guler portrait with its view through an arch on to a landscape, here a garden with a pavilion and a typically Guler alternation of flowering and dark green trees and cypresses. However, it is Sansar Chand who appears to be the host suggesting that the original Guler composition has been reversed to achieve this end.

REFERENCES

Aijazuddin, F. S., *Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum*, London, 1977
Archer, W. G., *Indian Painting from the Punjab Hills*, London, 1973
Cummins, J., *Indian Painting from Cave Temple to the Colonial Period*, Boston, 2006
Tandan, R. J., *Indian Miniature Painting*, Bangalore, 1982



29

FOUR-ARMED VISNU WITH LAKSMI IN ATTENDANCE

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 28.5 CM, 11 1/8 IN
WIDTH: 21 CM, 8 1/4 IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 23.3 CM, 9 1/8 IN
WIDTH: 15.8 CM, 6 1/4 IN

Opaque pigments with
gold and silver on paper

PROVENANCE

Private collection, Canada, 1970s–2014

PERHAPS AFTER A GULER ORIGINAL KANGRA, 1810–20

Visnu or Narayana, looking as young and resplendent as his avatar Krishna, sits crowned and enthroned on a green throne seat. His four arms carry the usual attributes of Visnu – mace, lotus, conch and discus. Lasksmi crouches before him reverencing his left foot – his right is raised up and placed on the throne in the traditional posture of royal ease adopted by divinities, *maharaja-lilasana*. Visnu's posture is a somewhat daring exercise in converting to a perspective view from the side a composition always seen from the front in earlier sculpture and painting. Behind the throne stands a young woman with a chowrie and the white cloth signifying royalty. The divinity is here treated exactly like a raja, enthroned on a terrace with dishes awaiting his pleasure. Two baluster columns enclose the scene, their linking arch half hidden by a textile blind, while instead of a landscape there is beyond the terrace a gold ground sky streaked with orange and with rolling clouds.

Portraits or scenes viewed through an arched opening had become a commonplace of Guler painting from the 1750s. A portrait of Raja Govardhan Chand smoking a hookah, circa 1750 (Archer 1973, Guler 24), employs exactly the same type of pillar and capital with acanthus leaf moulding as does our painting here. A golden sky frames the figures with rolling coloured clouds and garish streaks above, while a rolled-up blind closes the scene at the top. The vividly coloured sky is also found in Basohli painting at this time (Archer, Basohli 25–26) and reflects influence from Mughal painting both from Delhi and Avadh, possibly brought back to the hills after Nainsukh's pilgrimage with his new patron Raja Amrit Pal of Basohli to distant Puri in 1763. A lady smoking a hookah on a terrace has exactly the same kind of arched format and background as ours (Losty, no. 17). Despite the obvious Guler associations, the painting seems considerably later and was presumably copied from an earlier Guler composition. For an almost identical painting from the Galbraith Collection, see Welch & Beach, no. 77.

REFERENCES

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Losty, J. P., *Indian Painting 1600–1870*, exhibition catalogue, New York, Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd., London, 2012
Welch, S. C., and Beach, M. C., *Gods, Thrones and Peacocks*, New York, 1965



FOLIO

HEIGHT: 20 CM, 7 7/8 IN
WIDTH: 28 CM, 11 IN

PAINTING

HEIGHT: 17.7 CM, 7 IN
WIDTH: 25.7 CM, 5 1/8 IN

Opaque pigments and gold on paper

KANGRA, CIRCA 1830

The painting illustrates an episode from the story of Siva and the enchantress Mohini and comes from a sequence of nine unpublished paintings illustrating the whole story. The demon Bhasmasura wanted to propitiate Siva and underwent frightful penances to gain a boon from him. Siva eventually appeared to him and gives him a wonderful gold bangle, which had the magical property of reducing instantly to ashes anyone he touched on the head with it. Bhasmasura immediately wanted to test his powers by touching Siva himself on the head and thereby reduce him to ashes, which caused Siva and his family to flee from the demon. Siva prayed to Visnu for help to stop Bhasmasura from killing him, and Visnu appeared as the beautiful enchantress Mohini. The demon was bewitched by her and stopped chasing Siva. Mohini, the divine enchantress, danced for Bhasmasura and encouraged him to dance likewise. Since he was a devotee of Siva as Nataraja (Lord of the Dance) he began to dance and imitated all Mohini's movements. She eventually touched her own head and when the demon did so, he was instantly burnt to ashes. Siva was bewitched by Mohini as well and pursued her shamelessly even in front of his own wife Parvati. He is depicted here chasing after her but she constantly eluded him. Mohini is really a form of *maya* or illusion. Siva in his frustration at not being able to have Mohini was overcome by his desire and discharged his seed upon the ground. His desires abated, Siva realised that he was under an enchantment and returned to Parvati.

Our painting clearly derives from earlier treatments of this subject. A 'Siva chasing Mohini' in the Chandigarh Museum (Ohri, fig. 4) has the same figures with Siva there in three-quarter profile set against a sparse landscape and Mohini running into a cavern within the piled up brown rocks. Ohri attributes this to a Guler-Chamba artist, circa 1780. It was later copied in Garhwal and set in a much more lyrical landscape with more brightly coloured rocks, flowering trees and shrubs, with the view closed by a lotus lake (Kramrisch, p. 213). Our artist seems to be following the Garhwal version, even to the same sort of rocks and their colours, but has extended the landscape beyond the lotus lake to include distant hills. Flowering shrubs are included in the foreground as in the Garhwal version but substituted by more realistic and spikier green shrubs growing between the crevices of the rocks.

The clear palette and extraordinary rocks here suggest a kinship with the artist of the *Kirata Arjuniya* from Kangra of about 1820 (Archer, Kangra no. 61). This *Kirata Arjuniya* series was apparently seen by William Moorcroft at Sansar Chand's court in 1820, giving one of the few firm dates in Pahari painting (*ibid.*, vol. I, p. 305). Another picture from this series is illustrated in Pal, no. 6, with similar large piled up rocks and spiky little trees.



REFERENCES

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Kramrisch, S., *Manifestations of Shiva*, Philadelphia, 1981
Losty, J. P., and Galloway, F., *Sringar: an Exhibition celebrating Divine and Erotic Love*, London, 2007
Ohri, V. C., 'Nikka and Ranjha at the court of Raja Raj Singh of Chamba', in Ohri, V.C., and Craven, R., ed., *Painters of the Pahari Schools*, Bombay, 1998, pp. 98-114
Pal, P., *Painted Poems: Rajput Paintings from the Ramesh and Urmil Kapoor Collection*, Ahmedabad, 2004

31 A LADY SEATED ON A TERRACE BY THE RIVER GANGES

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 11.5 CM, 4 ½ IN
WIDTH: 9 CM, 3 ½ IN

Gouache with gold on ivory,
modern gilt frame

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Massachusetts

PATNA, CIRCA 1840

In this exquisite portrait, the unknown lady is seated on the floor facing forward, her right leg elegantly crossed over her left, wearing a green skirt splashed with gold flowers, a dark blue bodice with red flowers, and a fine muslin shawl loosely draped around her shoulders. Her hair is pulled tightly back exposing the fine lines of her face. Beneath her is what appears to be a white durrie with a blue ring design, viewed in perspective, while a dark blue curtain with a more traditional floral scroll design hangs to the right. An opaque white glass *paan-dan* and spittoon are to her left on the durrie. Beyond is visible a wide river with a pinnacle budgerow sailing along and a mistily depicted opposite shore. Few Britons kept *bibis* at this date, so the patron would almost certainly have been an Indian nobleman wanting a portrait of a favourite in his *zenana*.

It is most unusual in any Indian portrait for the sitter to be shown full face. A well-known exception is the portrait of Maharaja Ram Singh of Jaipur seated in the lotus position from around 1870 (Welch, no. 64). Even the naturalistic portraits in the Fraser Album mostly are portrayed slightly to the side, and those that are not, have assumed the interiorising gaze habitual to late Mughal portraiture (e.g. Archer & Falk, no. 131). It is the Fraser dancing girls who stare boldly out at the viewer even if portrayed slightly from the side (*ibid.*, nos. 15, 127 and 128). This boldness was not continued in later Delhi painting of such women as in the group of courtesans in the San Diego Museum (Goswamy & Smith, no. 117), and nor is it here in this beautiful lady's self-absorbed look.

Although Mildred Archer (pp. 215–27) grouped almost all the extensive collection of nineteenth century paintings on ivory in the V&A as coming from Delhi, there are demonstrable differences between them in style and composition. A painting such as ours has origins in the classical British portraits of the late eighteenth century, of seated sitters with curtains and pillars as props, as used by Thomas Hickey, Robert Home and the like in Calcutta. Patna artists such as Lallji and his son Hulas Lal adopted this convention, as in the rectangular portrait of William Fraser painted paradoxically in Delhi before they returned to Patna (Archer & Falk, fig. 11), but it was never favoured by Delhi artists who instead for the most part preferred the oval format with the sitter set against a neutral ground. The extremely wide river seen in our portrait should caution against too ready an assumption that all these paintings were done in Delhi, for obviously the wide river is the Ganges seen at its most majestic in Patna before debouching into its channels further east. It is an obvious prop for Patna paintings as seen in Dip Chand's double portrait of Ashraf 'Ali Khan and Muttubby of 1764 in the British Library (Losty & Roy, figs. 112–13).

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32 RAJA SUCHET SINGH

FOLIO
HEIGHT: 26.3 CM, 10 ¾ IN
WIDTH: 18.2 CM, 7 ¼ IN

PAINTING
HEIGHT: 18.9 CM, 7 ½ IN
WIDTH: 12.4 CM, 4 7/8 IN

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
In *nasta'liq*: *shabih-i Maharaja Suchet Singh*,
in *nagari*: *sri Raja Suchet Singh*; cover sheet:
Soocheyt Sing one of the Jummoo family
and brother of Goolub Sing.
Maggs Bros. inventory no. SAS 295, 5.11.76

PROVENANCE
Maggs Bros., *Oriental Miniatures and Illumination*,
Bulletin no. 27, London, June, 1977, no. 53
Private collection, Massachusetts, 1977–2014



PUNJAB, CIRCA 1840

Raja Suchet Singh (1801–44) is seated on an oval rug, his left hand resting on a bolster behind him and holding a cloth, while his sword rests in the crook of his right arm, a shield strapped to his back. He wears a white *jama* and a yellow shawl and turban worn in the Sikh fashion covering the nape of his neck. The scene is set on a terrace with a marble parapet but there is no landscape beyond, just a jade green background with the gold-ground *nasta'liq* inscription above.

The subject

Suchet Singh was one of the three Dogra brothers from a junior branch of the Jammu royal house. Gulab Singh (1792–1857) entered the service of the Maharaja of the Punjab, Ranjit Singh (reg. 1799–1837), in 1810 and was soon joined by his younger brothers Dhian Singh (1796–1843) and Suchet Singh. Unwilling and unable to trust his Sikh counsellors, Ranjit Singh gradually made Dhian Singh his chief adviser in his later years, so that eventually in 1828 he became his prime minister, while his handsome son Hira Singh (circa 1816–44), was the maharaja's favourite. The two brothers rose with him. In 1820 the eldest brother Gulab Singh had been made Maharaja of Jammu, displacing the senior line. Suchet Singh was apparently more of an adornment to the court than a minister but was an able soldier.

The portrait conforms to the format of portraits of Sikhs done around 1840 when large numbers of portraits of individuals of importance in the Sikh kingdom were prepared (Archer, *passim*). By this date Sikh portraits were becoming highly stylised, flat, and with crisp zigzagging of cloth folds replacing the earlier more subtle modelling of draperies. It cannot however be said that this portrait much resembles others supposed to be of Suchet Singh, such as *ibid.* fig. 23, where his moustache does not bristle upwards nearly so aggressively as in our portrait. It is this feature that must have led Maggs Bros. to mistakenly identify him in 1977 as Ranbir Singh, Gulab Singh's third son and successor as Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in 1857, whose moustaches do exactly this (see *ibid.* figs. 57–58).

REFERENCES

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FOLIO
HEIGHT: 21 CM, 8¼ IN
WIDTH: 18 CM, 7 IN

OVAL MINIATURE
HEIGHT: 7.2 CM, 2¾ IN
WIDTH: 6.2 CM, 2⅝ IN

Opaque pigments and gold on paper

INSCRIPTIONS
Inscribed above in *nasta'liq*:
shabih-i Bigam Samru sahib
'portrait of Begum Samru Sahib'

PROVENANCE
Private collection, Lausanne

AFTER A PORTRAIT BY JIVAN RAM
DELHI, 1840-45

The Begum Samru (1745-1836) is shown bust length facing to the right and holding the snake of her hookah. Her head and body are wrapped in a voluminous yellow Kashmir shawl, with *butas* on the border that goes over her fur cap decorated with a *turra* of pearls. A red curtain swag is behind her and a vase of flowers, all standard props in nineteenth century Indian portraiture in a European mode.

The subject

The Begum was one of the most extraordinary characters of nineteenth century India. There are various accounts of her youth and parentage, none of them reliable, except that she appears to have been a Muslim and very fair. In 1765 in Delhi she married the German mercenary soldier Walther Reinhardt (circa 1720-78), whose sobriquet Sombre was because of his swarthy appearance (Samru supposedly being an Indian corruption of sombre or else his nom-de-guerre Summer). On his death in 1778 she succeeded to his *jagir* (landholdings) at Sardhana, some fifty miles north-east of Delhi close to Meerut, and to the command of his mercenary troops, leading them often into battle. She converted to Catholicism in 1781, under the name Johanna Nobilis. In 1803 when the East India Company added Delhi and its environs to its growing empire, she was confirmed in her estates and thereafter lived peacefully at Sardhana and at her other houses in Meerut and Delhi, offering hospitality to all important visitors. Towards the end of her life she built a new palace at Sardhana and also, in 1822, a huge church and persuaded the Vatican to make it into a cathedral with her chaplain, Father Giulio Cesare Scotti, as the first (and last) bishop. Her funerary monument was carved in marble in Italy by Adamo Tadolini in 1842 and shipped to her cathedral in Sardhana.

In her later years the Begum was a patron of artists. Her earliest portrait, on which all later miniature portraits seem to be modelled, is dated 1811-12 and is now in the British Library (Losty & Roy, fig. 147). Her yellow shawl has a very thin border and the background is a neutral brown. This is too early to be by the major Indian artist who she patronised from at least 1828, Raja Jivan Ram. The Commander-in-Chief Lord Combermere's A.D.C., Captain Mundy, refers to Jivan Ram when he writes while visiting the Begum in 1828 in Meerut, where she kept a large establishment: '*Her Highness afterwards protested a great friendship for his Lordship; sent him her portrait, and insisted upon a return of the compliment. The picture, a work of a native artist who resides at Meerut, and has made respectable progress in the art, was an exceeding good likeness*' (Mundy, vol. I, p. 375). This miniature painting sent to Lord Combermere must be very like one attributed to Jivan Ram and now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, which was presented by General Briggs to the museum in the old East India House in 1831 (Archer, no. 146). In this Jivan Ram has introduced a blue curtain swag and a large *buta* motif on the borders of the yellow shawl. Another version of this portrait is in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (Leach, no.7.120, pp. 790-91). More versions are listed in Bautze, p.190, n.33, some of them printed. The Begum also patronized other artists such as George Beechey and William Melville: details of some twenty-five paintings in oils which hung in her palace at Sardhana are to be found in Cotton.

Our portrait is based on this image of the Begum by Jivan Ram but seems to be a little later and to have been done in a studio in Delhi. It is surrounded by a white oval cartouche decorated with gold strapwork and foliate arabesques set against blue-ground spandrels. This decorative arrangement is the same as in the portrait of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II in the Delhi Book of Sir Thomas Metcalfe dated 1844 (Losty & Roy, fig. 164), which likewise is based by an anonymous artist on an earlier portrait by Ghulam 'Ali Khan. Above the oval frame the Emperor has an imperial parasol in gold, a device echoed in our painting by what looks like a cardinal's hat in the same position.



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