

PERSIAN & INDIAN PAINTINGS

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Khusraw and Gol seated in a garden, from Attar's *Khusraw-nameh*

India, second half of 15th century

Gouache heightened with gold on paper

Painting 21.5 × 12.5 cm

Folio 28.2 × 16.3 cm

Though the manuscript from which this leaf originates has also been attributed to Ottoman Turkey and Iran, there is now a consensus that it was made in India sometime in the second half of the 15th-century. Though the figures are clearly based on contemporary Iranian models, there are various indications of an Indian origin. Particularly noticeable here is the unusual and exuberant vegetation: whereas in Persian paintings of the period solid gold was typically used to fill the sky above the horizon, the artist here has misunderstood the concept and filled it with an extravagantly blossoming bush and clusters of flowering vegetation. No doubt this impulse came from what B.W. Robinson has described as the Indian “abhorrence” for blank space. For B.W. Robinson’s discussion of Indian manuscripts illustrated in a basically Persian style with various tell-tale local influences, see B.W. Robinson, *Fifteenth-Century Persian Painting: Problems and Issues*, New York and London, 1991, pp. 65–67. For a similarly extravagant flowering bush, see an anthology made from 15th century India in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, published in *ibid.*, fig. 21.

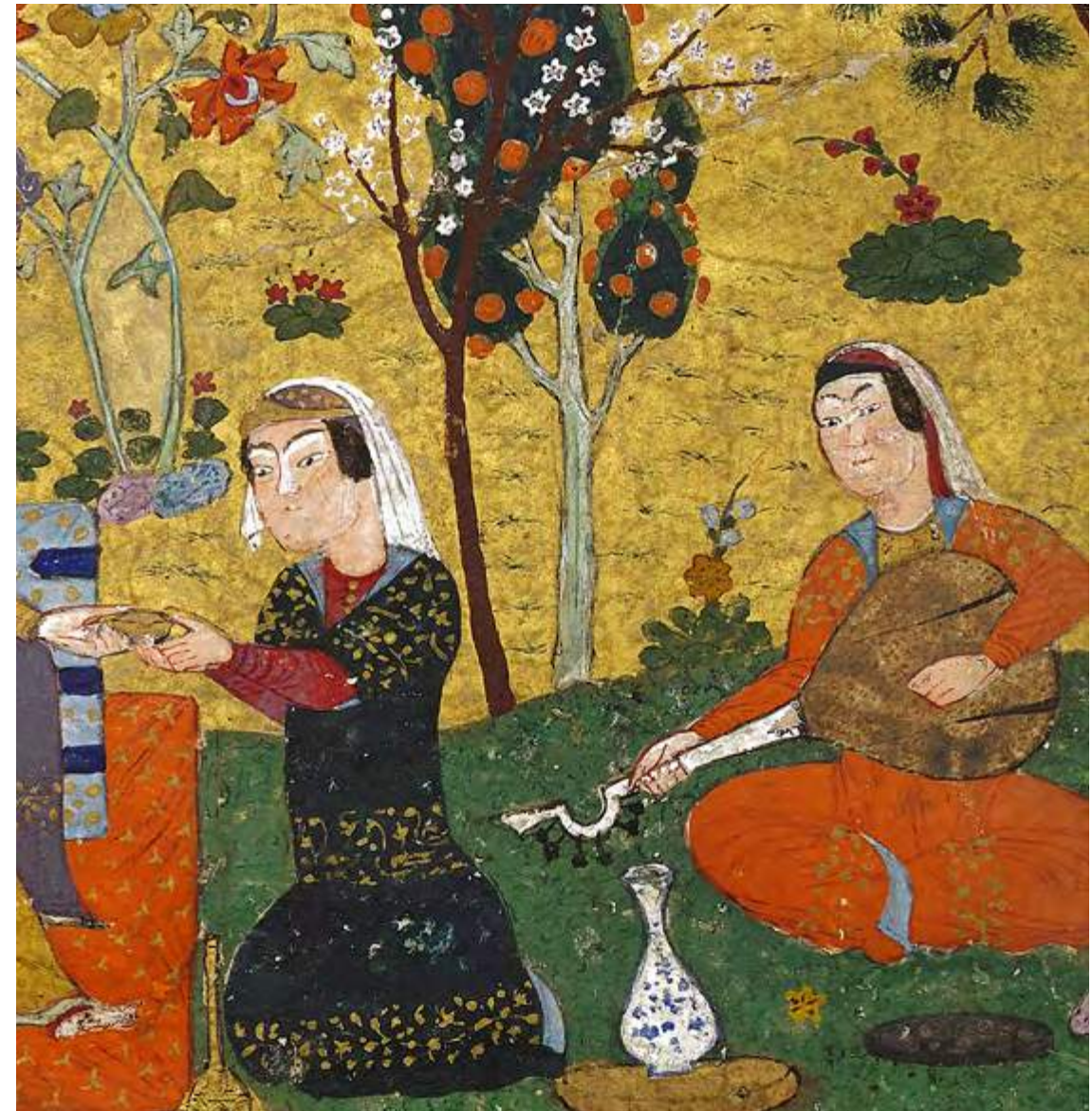
Another unusual feature of the manuscript is the use of *naskh* script, which in Iran by this point had fallen out of fashion for the copying of verse in favour of *nasta’liq*. It continued, however, to be used in Sultanate India, and this hand as

well as the vocalization have been compared to that of a copy of a *Ni’mat-nameh* made in Mandu in c. 1495–1505 (see J.P. Losty, *Art of the Book in India*, London, 1982, no. 41, p. 67).

The leaf comes from a very rare illustrated copy of the *Khusraw-nameh* of Farid al-Din Attar, which concerns the love of Khusraw, the emperor of Rum, for Gol, the daughter of the king of Khuzistan. Here the lovers are seen seated together in a garden.

Other leaves from this manuscript were sold at Christie’s (16 October 1980, lot 55, & 13 April 2010, lot 70), and at Sotheby’s (28 April 2004, lot 50, & 9 October 2013, lot 211).

Though it is frequently alleged that the three leaves belonging to Stuart Cary Welch sold at Sotheby’s in lots 175–177 (12 December 1972) originated from this manuscript, they appear to belong rather to a Sultanate copy of Nizami’s *Khamsah*.



Iskandar dismounts a Russian warrior, from Nizami’s *Khamsah*

Shiraz, c. 1490
Opaque watercolour on paper
Painting 11 × 14 cm
Folio 30 × 18.8 cm

This leaf from a copy of Nizami’s *Khamsah* is illustrated in the bright Turkoman commercial style of late-15th-century Shiraz. According to B.W. Robinson, this style probably originated in North-West Iran under Turkman patronage in the first half of the 15th century and spread with the eastward expansion of Turkman rule (B.W. Robinson, *Fifteenth-Century Persian Painting: Problems and Issues*, New York & London, 1991, p. 23). However, with the development of new styles under the rulers Pir Budaq and Sultan Khalil, this style fell out of favour in court ateliers; it continued to develop in Shiraz, on the other hand, where it became the reigning idiom for manuscripts produced in the last quarter of the 15th-century. Copies of Nizami’s *Khamsah* as well as Firdawsī’s *Shahnameh* were particularly popular, and B.W. Robinson lists around one hundred dated manuscripts in this style (*ibid.*, p. 39).

Typical of manuscripts in this style are the tall, narrow text block, the high landscape filled with dense, green foliage, and the figures with large, round faces, bulbous turbans and costumes of patterned textiles. For comparable copies of the *Khamsah*, see one copied in Shiraz in 1490, now in the Topkapi Palace Library, H. 1008/K.416 (Ivan Stchoukine, *Les peintures des manuscrits de la Khamseh de Nizami au Topkapi Saray Müzesi d’Istanbul*, Paris, 1977, no. XVII, PLL. L.LI), and another copied in 1492, now in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (A.J. Arberry (ed.), *The Chester*

Beatty Library: A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts and Miniatures, Volume II, Mss. 151–200, Dublin, 1960, no. 171, PL. 14).

The patterning of the costumes and the rendering of the landscape, here, however, is much more detailed and colourful than in those copies mentioned above and most other manuscripts in this style, where they are often executed rather perfunctorily. Many of the costumes here are decorated with large, extravagant gold buds and floral scroll, and the soldiers’ and horses’ armour has been richly decorated with variety and detail; the saddle of the dismounted Russian, for example, has been executed with the kind of medal-lions, rosettes and cloud bands found on tooled leather bindings of the period, and the contrasting gold and steel of Iskandar’s armour is also striking.

The scene has been rendered with a degree of humour that raises the manuscript above the occasionally routine manuscripts of the period; the Russian is suspended by Iskandar’s lasso in mid-air, while his alarmed steed is already rushing forward with its ears pinned back.

Another folio, possibly from the same Nizami’s *Khamsah*, is in the David Collection (Inv. 43/1981) dated Shiraz 1500-1510 (von Folsach, K., *For the Privileged Few – Islamic Miniature Paintings from the David Collection*, 2007, no. 27).

Provenance
Kevorkian Collection
Private collection, Switzerland

Exhib ited
Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2001



Shirin visits Farhad in the mountains, from Nizami's *Khusrau and Shirin*

Safavid Shiraz, mid- 16th century

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, with six lines of of *nasta'liq* script above and two below, catchword, the reverse with 21 lines of elegant black *nasta'liq* script

Painting 17.4 × 14.5 cm

Text panel 20.1 × 11 cm

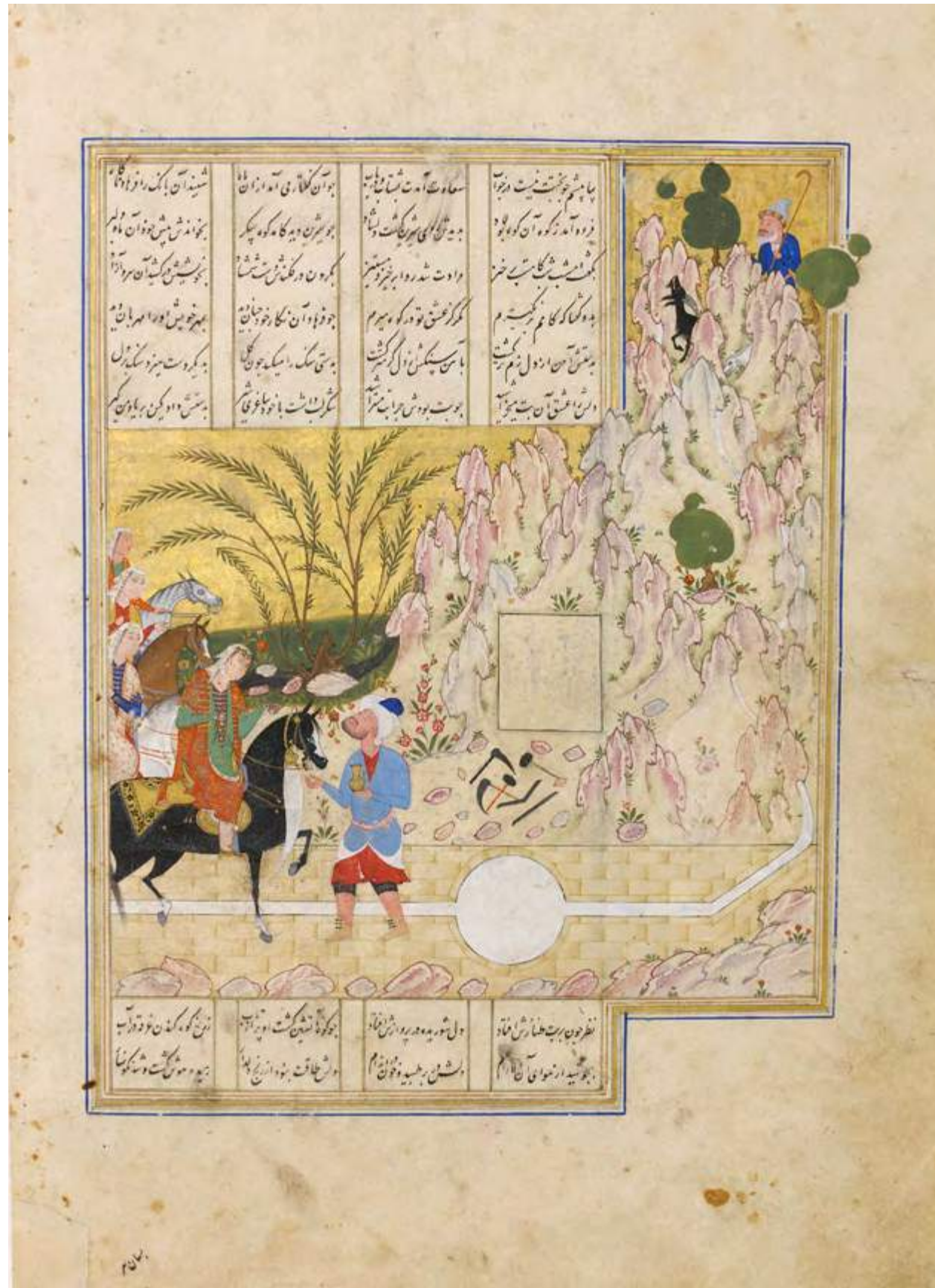
Folio 30.6 × 19.4 cm

Farhad dressed in a blue tunic with the trousers rolled up, approaches Shirin who is elegantly dressed in fine robes astride a black horse. Farhad offers Shirin a pitcher of milk which is the fruit of his impossible labour of carving a channel of milk in the mountains. Behind the couple is a engraving of them in the mountainside produced by Farhad, while Shirin's lady companions on the left and a shepherd and his goat observe from the rocky mountain above. The scene is set against a gold background with flowering plants and trees, with six lines of *nasta'liq* script above and two below divided into four columns by gold and blue rules, catchword, the reverse with 21 lines of elegant black *nasta'liq* script divided into four columns with a heading in blue *nastaliq* script on a ground of vines issuing gold and polychrome foliage

Farhad, the innocent and ill-fated admirer of Shirin, is a master stonemason and talented sculptor. The various tools of his trade are depicted behind him at the foot of the rockface where Farhad has carved an idealised image of himself with his beloved Shirin into the side of the mountain. Farhad approaches Shirin with a golden cup containing milk from the goats that can be seen high up on the horizon. Shirin expressed a desire to have

fresh milk from the goats that graze up in the high mountains and Farhad upon hearing this carves an elaborate channel for the milk to flow from the mountains down to a pool at the side of Shirin's palace. This labour of love is an extraordinary show of devotion.

The artist who produced this detailed work is clearly the same artist who worked on the lavishly illustrated copy of Sultan Husain Mirza's *majlis al-'ushshaq* 'assembly of lovers' dated to the equivalent of 1552 CE and in the collection of the Bodleian Library, (inv. MS. Ouseley Add. 24, Robinson, B.W. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Paintings in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford University Press, London, 1958, p. 97). The artist, who B.W. Robinson referred to as 'Artist B' clearly had a talent for portraiture as can be seen in the remarkably fine depiction of Farhad and Shirin which has been etched into the rocky landscape of this painting. The angle of Farhad's head looking up at Shirin on her horse is echoed closely in an illustration by the same artist in the *majlis al-'ushshaq* manuscript, (Scollay, Susan (ed.); *Love & Devotion from Persia and Beyond*, Bodleian Library Press, Oxford, 2012, fig. 7.3, p. 86). The *majlis al-'ushshaq* manuscript in the Bodleian is the earliest known dated illustrated copy



of the text. The illustrations in the Bodleian copy served as the model for most other illustrated versions of the text which were produced in the second half of the 16th century, (*ibid.*, pp. 83–84). The artists therefore that worked on the Bodleian manuscript and our painting were some of the most proficient artists of the Shiraz school in the mid-16th century, whose creativity and talent would be imitated and reproduced for the rest of the century.

The artist of this painting also worked extensively on a lavishly illustrated copy of Nizami's *Khamsah* that is now in the collection of the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. (inv. F.1908.199). The artist produced a very accomplished illustration of Shirin mounted on her steed being carried by Farhad, (inv. F.1908.264, Guest, Grace Dunham; *Shiraz Painting in the Sixteenth Century*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., 1949, plate 6). The painting in the Freer contains a similar finely drawn depiction of Farhad and Shirin etched into the mountainside and sharp angular rock formations that contain animal and figural forms. B.W. Robinson also noted the ingenuity of this artist for placing flowering plants as emerging from both above and unusually, below rocky formations. The large flowering plant with red flowers that appears between the faces of Shirin and Farhad is an example of this. These floral flourishes with bursts of colour contrast brilliantly with the stark rocky landscape which dominates the right hand side of the painting.

Provenance

Ex Kevorkian Collection, sold Sotheby's
London, 21 April 1980, lot 59
Private collection, Switzerland

Exhibited

Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2001



Nawfal vanquishes Layla’s Tribe, an illustration to the *Khamsah* of Nizami

Shiraz c.1560–70

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, verso with 20 lines of *nasta’liq* with illumination

Painting 23 × 18.4 cm

Folio 39.3 × 25.6 cm

The illustration shows Nawfal in orange robes and a grey gold-speckled turban astride a tall camel looking down upon supplicants and prisoners from the tribe of Layla. Observers stand in each of the upper corners with an orange banner extending into the upper right hand margin, and the battlefield is punctuated with flowering plants and a curved tree on the horizon, flanked by four lines of *nasta’liq* above and three lines below divided into four columns with gold and polychrome rules, the text panel set inside gold, blue and red rules, catchword, the reverse with 20 lines of elegant *nasta’liq* with similar illumination and a single heading in white script on gold ground with scrolling floral polychrome vine.

This painting is characterised by the wonderfully detailed patterned textiles that typify the best of the painting ateliers which were producing luxury illustrated manuscripts in the second half of the 16th century. The slightly top-heavy cylindrical turbans with their single strip of gold thread are closely related to those found in an illustration to a *Shahnama* manuscript which is dated to c. 1560–70 formerly in the Pozzi Collection, (Robinson, Basil W., *L’orient d’un collectionneur: Miniatures persanes, textiles, céramiques, orfèvrerie rassemblées par Jean Pozzi*, Geneva, 1992, p. 61, Cat. 86).

The artist has chosen to encapsulate the scene of victory transforming into defeat. Nawfal hears that his confidant Majnun’s proposal to the beautiful Layla has been rejected by her proud father. In defence of his friend’s honour, Nawfal launches a bloody attack on the father of Layla and starts a war between their two tribes. After much bloodshed, the tribe of Nawfal prevails and this scene depicts the moment that the defeated father of Layla has dismounted and comes on foot before the victorious figure of Nawfal who is seated high above on his camel. There is a defiance though in the high raised hand gesture of Layla’s father, who despite admitting defeat at the hands of Nawfal, refuses to give his daughter over to Majnun as Nawfal demands. Thus, Nawfal is shown slightly crumpled over in his saddle, deflated from his position of triumph as he learns that the bloodshed and struggle on the battlefield has failed to produce the outcome that he sought for his friend.

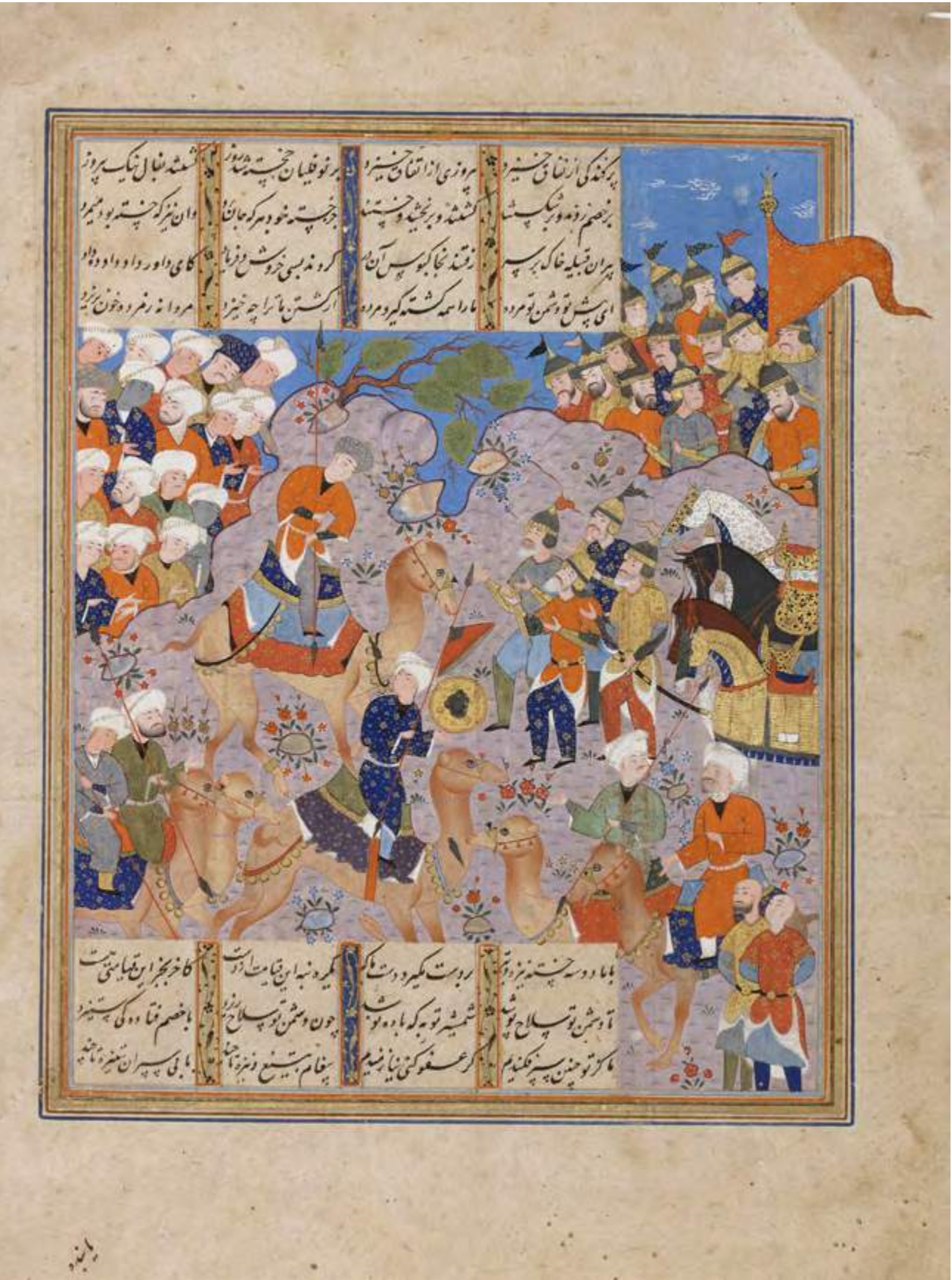
Provenance

Sotheby’s London, 15 April 1985, lot 150

Private collection, Switzerland

Exhibited

Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2001





Gushtasp plays polo before Caesar, an illustration to Ferdowsi's *Shahnama* 'Book of Kings'

Shiraz, second half of the 16th century

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, with seven lines of black *nasta'liq* script above and one below, verso with 21 lines of black *nasta'liq* script

Painting 26.5 × 21 cm

Text Panel 23.4 × 12.8 cm

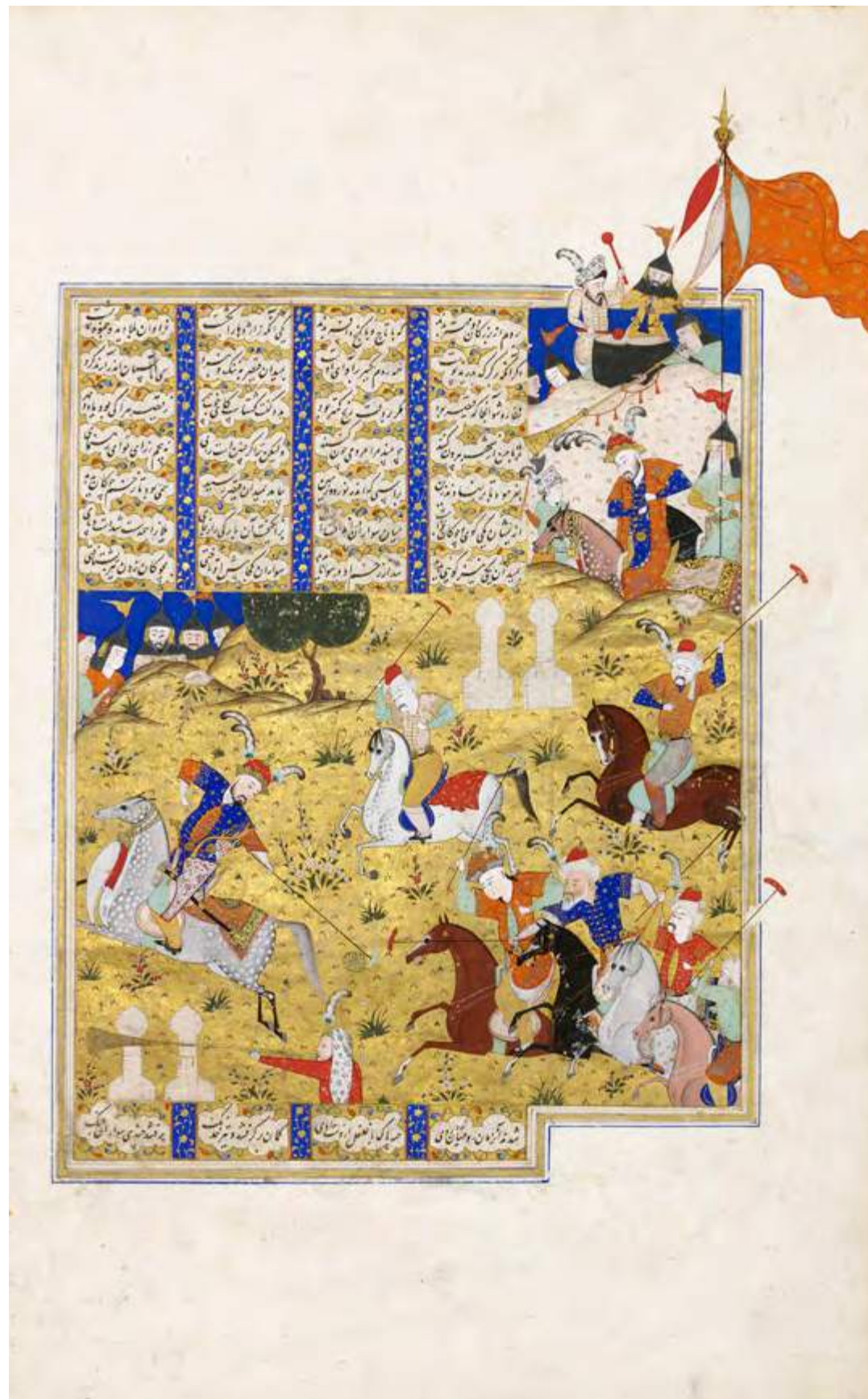
Folio 37.1 × 23.6 cm

Gushtasp wearing his regal finery including a crown with three plumes strikes the polo ball with his green-tipped mallet as he approaches the white goal posts with dome-shaped finials. Caesar with a red crown containing four plumes looks on from above, musicians eagerly beat a drum and blow horns on a ground rendered a striking gold colour and punctuated with flowering plants. A large orange banner extends into the margin, with seven lines of black *nasta'liq* script above and one below, with the text set in a white cloud reserved against a background of scrolling polychrome vine on gold ground, split into four columns by bands of gold scrolling floral vine on blue ground, the text panel set inside gold and blue rules, catchword, the reverse with 21 lines of elegant black *nasta'liq* script on gold speckled ground, divided into four columns by gold rules.

Gushtasp, the Iranian Prince, travels incognito to the west hearing of the great beauty of the daughter of the Roman Emperor. He completes several feats before the Roman Emperor in order to win the hand of his daughter. This scene depicts the Prince, dressed in all his glory, wearing a crown with three plumes just about to strike the large rosette-shaped ball and score a goal. The Roman

Emperor, who is wearing similar imperial regalia to Gushtasp is observing the scene from above. The detail of the musicians energetically playing the drums and blowing long horns give a great sense of atmosphere to what is depicted as a fast-paced and exciting sporting match.

The finesse of the drawing with the refined and delicate moustaches of the figures coupled with the elegant detailing on the robes and the fine plumes emanating from the crowns of the two royal figures are testament to the skill of the artist who executed this work at the high point of the Shiraz school in circa 1570–1580 CE. A similar grand frontispiece from a *Khamsah* of Nizami, now in the Topkapi Saray Palace Library, which also has figures sporting very closely related crowns is dated by Lâle Uluç to circa 1580–85 CE, (Inv. A.3559, Uluç, Lâle; *Turkman governors Shiraz artisans and Ottoman collectors: Sixteenth century Shiraz manuscripts*, Istanbul, 2006, no. 187, p.245). Lâle Uluç describes the 1580s as the high point in Shiraz manuscript production. Manuscripts are noted for their large size and their increased use of expensive materials such as gold, and with a greater concentration of intricately illuminated areas. The gold ground in this painting is certainly an indication that



this was a major commission possibly from a figure close to the imperial household.

Provenance

Paris, Drouot, 30 May 1984, lot 7
Private collection, Switzerland

Exhibited

Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2001



A Drunken Party

Probably Bukhara or Qazvin, second half of the 16th century

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper laid down on card; set within gold rules, verso with a calligraphic composition in black shikasteh *nasta'liq* script with a section of a vegetal border outlined in gold

Painting 17.3 × 11.2 cm

Folio 24.8 × 17.5 cm

The painting depicts revellers cooking food in a large pot over a fire, with a musician playing a *daf* percussion tambourine in the upper left hand corner, set inside a two-toned green landscape punctuated with flowering plants, gnarled trees and flowers set against a high gold background, the margins with trees and flowering plants inhabited with birds and animals in gold set within gold rules, the reverse with a section of a calligraphic composition in black shikasteh *nasta'liq* script with a section of a vegetal border outlined in gold.

The second half of the 16th century witnessed a revival of Persian painting in the style of the Herat masters of the previous century. The successors to the Timurid rulers, particularly the Shaybanids of Bukhara sought to emulate the sophisticated courtly culture of their predecessors. The Shaybanids, following in the tradition of the Timurids, viewed important calligraphers and artists as part of the spoils of war and conquest. The Shaybanid ruler, 'Ubaydullah Khan, occupied Herat in 1528–29 and took many of the city's prized artists and calligraphers with him back to Bukhara. As a result, a highly sophisticated tradition of painting emerged in Bukhara in the 16th century. The tall and elegant figures with their rounded faces and tightly wrapped

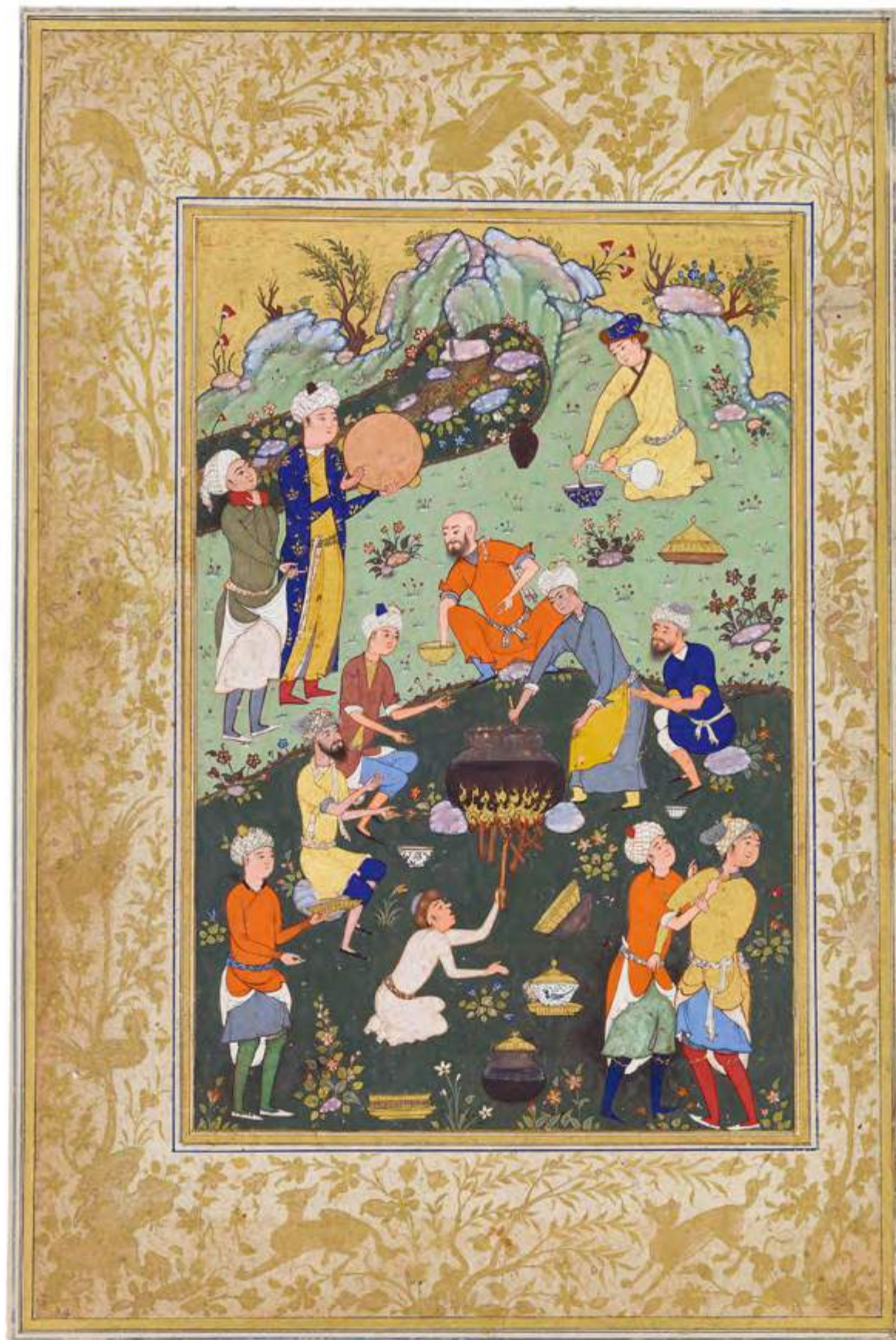
circular turbans with short knop finials found in this scene of revelry are closely related to a painting of a Prince and his attendants in a landscape which was in the collection of the East India Office Library and attributed by B.W. Robinson to late 16th century Bukhara, (inv. J. 26.6, Robinson, B.W.; *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1976, cat. 921, pp. 186–87). The painting in the India Office Library and this painting depict similar scenes of royal pastimes confirming the strong link between painting and the court. The artists responsible for each of these paintings have added the detail of gold stripes in the turbans and accurate depictions of the folds of the fabric as they are layered and tucked in to form the circular structure of the headgear. The faces of this painting however are slightly more expressive, particularly those of the two youths cavorting in the lower right-hand corner, adding a layer of sophistication which is not present in the India Office Library miniature.

The early Safavid styles of painting, in particular those connected to the Imperial Safavid court, initially based at Tabriz and subsequently at Qazvin, also show strong influence from earlier works produced in Herat. The long slender figures of our painting and the turban style are echoed

in a double-page court and garden scene currently in the Keir Collection, attributed to the artist Bahram Quli working in Qazvin in circa 1570–80 (Inv. III.296, Robinson, B. W.; Grube, Ernst J.; Meredith-Owens, G.M.; Skelton, R. W., *Islamic Painting and the Arts of the Book*, Faber and Faber, London, 1976, plates 61 and 62). The Keir collection paintings contain figures that have expressive facial features that are comparable to those present in this miniature. This would suggest that this miniature was most probably painted in a sophisticated court atelier producing works in the style of the Herat master painters at either Qazvin or possibly in Bukhara towards the end of the 16th century.

Provenance

Collection of Tom Maschler, formed in the 1960s and 70s









Iskandar comforts the dying Dara, from Firdawsi's *Shahnameh*

Probably Mashhad, copied by Qutb al-Din ibn Hasan al-Tuni in AH 998 / 1580 AD

Opaque watercolour on paper

Painting 23.8 × 14.4 cm

Folio 34 × 23.9 cm

This painting is of one of the most frequently illustrated subjects in sixteenth century copies of the *Shahnameh*. It comes from a manuscript completed in AH 998 / 1580 AD by the scribe Qutb al-Din ibn Hasan al-Tuni, which originally contained twenty-four paintings in the Safavid court style of the last quarter of the period (Sotheby's auction catalogue, *Fine Oriental Manuscripts, Miniatures and Qajar Lacquer*, London, 22 April 1980, lot 271).

The manuscript belongs to a small group made for court circles in the troubled period between the reigns of Shah Tahmasp (1524–1576) and Shah 'Abbas (1587–1629). The most celebrated of this group of manuscripts is a copy of the *Shahnameh*, thought to have been commissioned by Shah Isma'il II upon his succession in 1576 (see B.W. Robinson, "Isma'il II's copy of the *Shahnama*", *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, vol. 14, pp.1–8; Sheila Canby, *Princes, Poets & Paladins: Islamic and Indian paintings from the collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan*, London, 1998, nos. 32–7, pp. 56–57).

With paintings from that manuscript, this illustration shares the large, slender figures and landscape of high, mauve rocks. While the style is normally associated with the capital, Qazvin, it is also possible that manuscripts of a courtly quality were produced in Mashhad, where the governor Ibrahim Mirza had assembled an atelier

for the production of his superb copy of Jami's *Haft Aurang* between 1556 and 1565. It has been suggested, on the basis of the *nisba* of the scribe who copied this manuscript, al-Tuni, from Tun in Khurasan, as well as the rather baroque, twisted form of the rocks on some of the leaves that it may have been completed there rather than Qazvin (see Charles Melville & Barbara Brend, *Epic of the Persian Kings: The Shahnameh of Ferdowsi*, London, 2010, no. 69, p. 174; Sotheby's, 22 April 1980, lot 271).

Though this aspect is not particularly evident in the rocks in this painting, there is nonetheless a mannerist feel to the figures, particularly evident in the exaggeratedly elongated, outstretched arm of Dara and willowy form of Iskandar, that may point to a Khurasani origin. For the mannerist tendency in Khurasani painting in the context of a copy of the *Sifat al-'Ashiqin* made in Mashhad in 1581, see B.W. Robinson, *Persian and Mughal Art*, Colnaghi catalogue, London, 1976, no. 24.

In this episode from the *Shahnameh*, Iskandar comforts the dying Persian emperor Dara (Darius). Though Iskandar's demand for tribute lead to war between Rum and Iran, Iskandar was appalled at the assassination of Dara by two of his ministers who decided to betray their master and side with Iskandar, and came to the side of his dying former enemy to offer comfort.

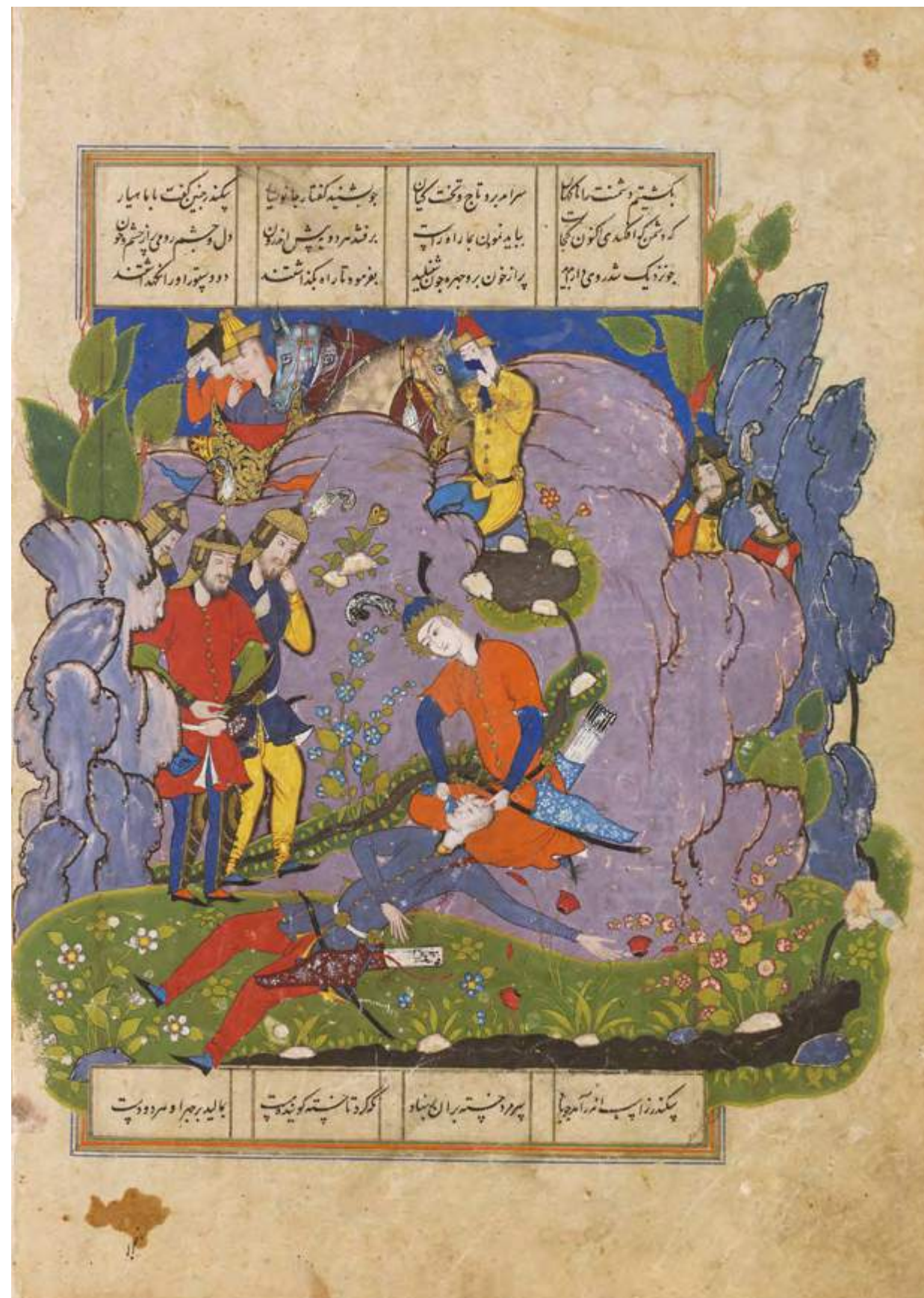
Literature

Brend, B., and Melville, C., *Epic of the Persian Kings: The Art of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2010

Canby, S., *Princes, Poets and Paladins: Islamic and Indian Paintings from the Collection of Prince and Princess Sadruddin Aga Khan*, British Museum, London, 1998

Robinson, B.W., 'Isma'il II's copy of the *Shahnama*', *Iran*, vol. 14, 1976a, pp. 1–8

Robinson, B.W., *Persian and Mughal Art*, exhibition catalogue, Colnaghi, London, 1976b





A Youth holding a pomegranate

School of Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni
Probably Isfahan, Central Iran
Mid-17th century
Painting 16.3 × 11.2 cm
Folio 29 × 17.6 cm

This portrait of an elegant youth follows in the remarkable style of the painter Riza-i Abbasi who was key in revitalising and fundamentally revolutionising the school of painting that flourished in the Safavid capital at Isfahan in the late 16th and early 17th century. The Isfahan school, as it became known, found expression in the focus given to expressive portraiture of figures in society. In this case the focus is that of poised youth, at rest with a face marked by contemplation. His outfit is a myriad of colours punctuated by sophisticated patterns.

Riza-i Abbasi's initial portraits tend to be more restricted in their use of colour and pattern. His later work produced from the 1620s shows an interest in textile ornamentation. In particular a portrait now in the British Museum dated to c. 1625–26 shows his prowess in emulating elegant silk brocades, (Inv. BM 1920–9017–0298, Canby, Sheila R. *The Rebellious Reformer: The Drawings and Paintings of Riza-yi Abbasi of Isfahan*, London, 1996, cat 113, p. 145). Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni was an artist who flourished in the generation after Riza-i Abbasi. He developed further this idea of sumptuously decorated textiles and signed a portrait which contains three figures, two of which are wearing garments that have designs containing palmettes flanked by cusped foliage, very similar to those found on the

jacket of our youth, (Martin, F. R.; *The miniature painting and painters of Persia India and Turkey from the 8th to the 18th Century*, Vol. 2, London, 1912, plate 152). F.R. Martin correctly identified the signature of that painting but places the place of production as Bukhara and the date as c. 1580. We now know that Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni died in 1666 CE and was initially active under the patronage of Hassan Shamlu in Herat and later came to Isfahan. Perhaps it was the influence of the Herat school which Martin mistook for Bukhara. Martin also publishes a portrait of a young man who is seated in a very similar fashion to that of our figure. That young man, with fine arched eyelashes and a small mouth with rounded upper and lower lips wearing a voluminous turban, is very closely related to the youth depicted in this painting, (*ibid.*, plate 151). It is probable that the artist responsible for this portrait like those of the paintings published by Martin had his origins in Herat and later travelled to Isfahan. The facial features in particular with their sparse details and the accentuated curved eyebrows owe much to the portraiture of Herat and the broader region of Khurassan.

A portrait of Khusrau Sultan holding a falcon in the Art and History Trust collection that is attributed to Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni shows a similar flair for textile decoration but with slightly more

delineated eyes, (Soudavar, Abolala; *Art of the Persian Courts: Selections from the Art and History Trust Collection*, New York, 1992, cat 122, p. 294). A further portrait, that of a lady holding a carafe, signed by Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni, was sold at Sotheby's London, 25 April 2012, lot 478. While it is challenging to define the exact style of Muhammad Yusuf al-Husayni, it is clear that our portrait of a youth shares many of the features associated with his works. His works evolved over a period of time and were marked by his transition from Herat to Isfahan. The common feature is always an elegant rendition of detail – particularly that of textile patterns and a grace and poise in the delicate outlines of his figures. These are certainly features shared by this remarkable portrait.

Provenance

Private collection, Switzerland, collected before 1972





Bahram Gur facing the Dragon

School of Muhammad Zaman

Probably Isfahan, Central Iran

Last quarter of the 17th century

Opaque pigments heightened with gold mounted on card, slightly reduced in size,
areas of creasing to the surface and traces of lacquer deposits which have
penetrated the fibre of the paper

Painting 16.2 × 25.1 cm

The artist Muhammad Zaman who was active in the second half of the 17th century was a highly talented court painter who ingeniously combined European, Moghul and native Persian imagery into dream-like paintings enthused with texture and bold colours.

This painting depicts the archetypal Persian hero, Bahram Gur, who is taking aim at an open-mouthed dragon. It probably originally served as an illustration to the *Haft Paykar* of Nizami, which describes how the hero Bahram Gur was asked to save a favourite horse of a Princess by slaying a fearsome dragon. Muhammad Zaman was familiar with the scene and had produced several related versions of this episode in the story of the labours of Bahram Gur.

Muhammad Zaman as an artist is mainly associated with the adaptation or appropriation of European imagery, mostly sourced from Dutch prints; and their presentation within a Persian context. This trend for European inspired imagery, known as *Farangi Sazi*, can be used to reduce the importance of Muhammad Zaman as an artist and to view him simply as an elegant copier of imported prints. The genius of his opus is not in his ability to copy imagery but in his masterful

combination of European slants on perspective and techniques of representing shadows and volume within a Persian visual context. This depiction of Bahram Gur facing the dragon has a very minimalist use of shading around the edges of the forms of the protagonists, set against a panoramic background with a low horizon and a sense of perspective, which can all be defined as European influenced elements. Yet, the composition of the scene and the visual language of the painting remain firmly rooted in the native Persian tradition. An earlier depiction of a rider fighting a dragon attributed to c. mid-16th century Qazvin shows the dragon lyrically coiled around the rider, (Langer, Axel; *The Fascination of Persia: The Persian-European Dialogue in the Seventeenth-Century Art & Contemporary Art of Tehran*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 2013, cat 120, p. 223). Muhammad Zaman produced his own version of this scene, now in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in St. Petersburg, that accentuated the lyrical entwinement of the two struggling beings but with his own particular sense of shading and a green landscape that are closely related to our painting (Inv. E-14 fol. 95r., Langer, Axel; *The Fascination of Persia: The Persian-European Dialogue in the Seventeenth-Century Art & Contemporary Art of Tehran*, Museum Rietberg,

Zurich, 2013, cat 119, p. 223). Of particular resonance in our painting is the form of the dragon's curved serpent-like body and its open-mouthed head with pronounced horns. The form of the dragon's head can not only be compared with the depiction in the St. Petersburg painting dated to prior to 1675 CE, but also to Safavid metalwork forms, especially to terminals found on processional standards or '*alams*', (Canby, Sheila R.; Thompson, Jon; *Hunt for Paradise Court Arts of Iran, 1501-1576*, Skira Publishers, Milan, 2003, cat. no. 8.17, p. 222).

Muhammad Zaman's skill as a painter was confirmed by a commission he received from the imperial household to add three illustrations to the incomplete copy of Nizami's *Khamsah*, which had originally been ordered by Shah Tahmasp in 1539-43 CE, that is now in the British Library. Muhammad Zaman added his three paintings to the manuscript in 1675 CE. Of these, one depicts Bahram Gur riding away from a very similar looking dragon, having just fired a double-headed arrow into its eyes (BL. OR 2265, f.203v). In this case Muhammad Zaman closely follows the description of the event as described in the verses of Nizami, which specify that a special double-headed arrow was used to blind the dragon with a single shot. Our painting depicts a Bahram Gur with a very



intense stare just before firing his shot at the dragon giving it a wonderful sense of anticipation.

The use of stippling or *au pointillé* is a very recognisable feature of both the illustrations in the British Library *Kham-sah* and also in this painting. Axel Langer has suggested that this technique was adapted by Muhammad Zaman as a response to European portrait miniatures that were produced using an application of stippled pigments on an enamel base. Pocket watches with European portrait miniatures were known to have been exported and highly prized within elite circles in Iran as far back as the late 16th century (Langer, 2013, p. 205). Muhammad Zaman's depiction of Bahram Gur slaying the dragon from the British Library *Kham-sah* has stippling mainly confined to the figure of Bahram Gur and is absent from the dragon, whereas our painting features this technique on both the figure of Bahram Gur and noticeably also on the dragon.

Muhammad Zaman is known to have produced a further image of Bahram Gur shooting a dragon which is now in the collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library and is dated 1085 AH (1674–75 CE), (Inv. M.496, fol 35, Schmitz, Barbara; *Islamic and Indian Manuscripts and Paintings in The Pierpont Morgan Library*, New York, 1997, fig 77 and p. 54). The Pierpont Morgan illustration depicts the figure of Bahram Gur riding away from the dragon rather than confronting it though the outline of the dragon is remarkably similar to our painting. It is clear that our painting has a number of qualities which can be associated with the refined style and technical skill of Muhammad Zaman.

The modelling of the face though and in particular the shape of the eyes is a departure from the more heavily shaded and pronounced features produced by Muhammad Zaman. A further illustration in the St. Petersburg Muraqqa', that of an audience with the Grand Vizier, Shah Quli Khan dated AH 1106 / 1694–95 CE and attributed to Muhammad Sultani, demonstrates how a closely related artist was capable of producing a work for an imperial patron that was in a very similar style to that of Muhammad Zaman yet with his own particular features, (von Habsburg, Francesca (ed.), *The St. Petersburg Muraqqa' Album of Indian and Persian Miniatures from the 16th through the 18th Century and Specimens of Persian Calligraphy* by 'Imad al-Hasani, Leonardo Arte, Milan, 1996, plate 190, folio 97r., p. 110). The work of Muhammad Sultani confirms that there were a number of highly skilled artists probably active in the same studio as Muhammad Zaman who were capable of producing highly refined works of imperial quality.

Provenance

Private collection, Switzerland, collected before 1972



A Rare Indo-Persian Royal Portrait

Signed Muhammad Reza-i Hindi

Probably Isfahan, Iran

Dated AH 1162 / 1748–49 CE

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper laid down on card, the reverse with an Indian calligraphic composition of intertwined black nasta'liq signed by Muhammad 'Arif and dated AH 1122 / 1710–11 CE, surrounded by decorative floral margins

Painting 27 × 17.5 cm

Folio 29 × 17.5 cm

This remarkable portrait of a couple on a terrace could be a rare depiction of the Afsharid ruler and legendary general, Nadir Shah (r.1736–47 CE). Nadir Shah was known for his military prowess having first consolidated his power base in Iran at the expense of the Safavids, and subsequently for invading India and defeating a much larger Mughal force. Nadir Shah famously sacked Delhi and plundered the untold riches of the Mughal imperial treasury and carried off the spoils back to Iran. Aside from the famous peacock throne and countless other jewels, Nadir Shah also attracted the services of elite court artists to follow him to Iran. In this case the artist responsible for this painting- Muhammad Reza- travelled to Iran and produced works there adding the epithet or nisba of hindi to his name, thus confirming his Indian origins setting himself apart from the other local artists.

The work that he produced in Iran was a unique combination of Mughal elements of naturalism and a sense of tension. The swirling dark clouds heavy with the coming storm is a reference to baramasa painting styles depicting lovers during different seasons. Here the monsoon clouds gather above our couple emphasizing the latent passion of the moment just

before the rain starts to pour.

The figures themselves show influence of the dream-like fluidity found in 18th century Isfahan school painting. Nadir Shah, particularly when depicted by Indian trained artists tends to be shown with quite strong delineated facial features, a pronounced aquiline nose and a severe expression. One such portrait was painted by the artist Muhammad Panah, (Martin, F.R. *The miniature painting and painters of Persia and India and Turkey from the 8th to the 18th century*, vol. 2, plate 168). It is possible that the discrepancies in terms of facial features can be explained as a matter of style in that our Persian-influenced portrait lacks some of the attention to naturalism as found in its Indian equivalent. In contrast to the differences in terms of the facial structure, there is the distinctive feature of the folded ear that appears to be consistent with most representations of Nadir Shah. The ear is shown folded forward possibly to make space for the turban. This is echoed in a closely comparable painting which was identified as representing Nadir Shah and possibly one of his sons on a terrace, (Sotheby's London, 21 April 1980, lot 90). The other common quality is the distinctive form of the four-pointed

turban, known as the kullah-i nadiri or the 'cap of Nadir', which was a symbolic item of headgear promoted and used exclusively during the reign of Nadir Shah and his short-lived successors. The four-pointed turban was a symbolic gesture of respect to the four 'rightly guided' caliphs of Islam. It was a political gesture by Nadir Shah in an attempt to form a more syncretic form of Shi'a Islam in Iran that could find more political common ground and be more acceptable to their hostile Sunni neighbours. This effort at religious reform collapsed with the end of Nadir Shah's short-lived Afsharid dynasty (1736–1796) and therefore confirms that our male figure had to have been a member of the Afsharid court, if not a portrait of Nadir Shah himself.

The folded ear does not appear to have been a feature of the turban style. Muhammad Reza-i Hindi produced a portrait of a scribe also wearing the kullah-i nadiri turban without a folded over ear which is dated AH 1169 / 1755–56 CE and is now in the David Collection, (inv. 15/2002). Thus it appears more likely that the folded ear is a distinctive element of portraiture and therefore probably a quality which the artist chose to use to identify the figure as Nadir Shah.



Muhammad Reza-i Hindi's career seems to have followed a remarkable trajectory. Having initially moved from India to Iran, he is then recorded as having produced a series of later works back in India. Noticeably among these is a posthumous portrait of Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-48 CE), which Muhammad Reza-i Hindi painted in 1764 that is now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (inv. 2013.347.a; Quintanilla, Sonya Rhie and DeLuca Dominique; Mughal Paintings, Art and Stories, Cleveland Museum of Art, 2016, front cover illustration). Another remarkable series of his paintings can be found in the Forbes Album which was collected by Sir Charles Forbes, who served in the British East India Company in Bengal from 1765 to 1779. This album was later dispersed at

Sotheby's in London on the 10th of December 1962. A painting from this album by Muhammad Reza-i Hindi is now in the British Library, (inv. Add. Or.2410). Muhammad Reza-i Hindi seems to have been an artist of sufficient calibre to have found significant patronage in royal circles both in Iran and in India. He seems to have had a remarkable talent for adapting his style to suit the fashion and circumstances of his patrons. This painting is a remarkably rare and artistically successful expression of that adaptability representing a unique hybrid style of Persian and Mughal elements.

Provenance

Private collection, Switzerland, collected before 1972



Portrait of a Princely Youth

India, Mughal, c. 1600

Opaque watercolour heightened with gold on paper, laid down on a later album page

Painting 15 × 8.6 cm

Folio 19.3 × 12.8 cm

Inscribed up the left hand side, in Persian: راجه دکن بیجانگر *rajah-i dakan bijanagar*

“Rajah of the Deccan, Bijanagar (i.e. Vijayanagar)”), and below the painting, on the

right: راجه سبھا (?) *(rajah(-i ?) subha* “Rajah (of ?) Subha (?).”), and below the

painting, in the middle: عمل محمد افضل *(‘amal-i muhammad afzal* “Work of Muhammad Afzal.”)

In this sensitive study of a young prince, he stands in the formal court position wearing a diaphanous *jama* over orange pink *paijama* and an undershirt. A tie-dyed *patka* is around his waist with a dagger hanging from it. He wears his *jama* tied in the Hindu fashion under the left armpit. The only half-legible inscription on the left at least indicates that the youth is a Raja, but the remainder is less legible. It does seem to indicate a connection with the Deccan and possibly a place called Bijanagar or Vijayanagar – the Deccani capital Bijapur of course means the same thing, ‘City of Victory’.

Portraits of boys are rare in Mughal painting. Two are in the Jehangir collection in Bombay (figs. 26–27) and another in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (6, Leach no. 3.69). See also Colnaghi 1976, no. 111, for a portrait of Shah Shuja’ as a boy.

We do not know of an artist Muhammad Afzal working at this early period, although Verma mentions a later, mid-17th century Mughal painting of girls with fireworks signed ‘work of Muhammad Afzal’ in the Freer Gallery of Art Washington (Verma, 1994, p 293).

Provenance

Royal collection, Mewar

Spink and Son

Private collection, Japan

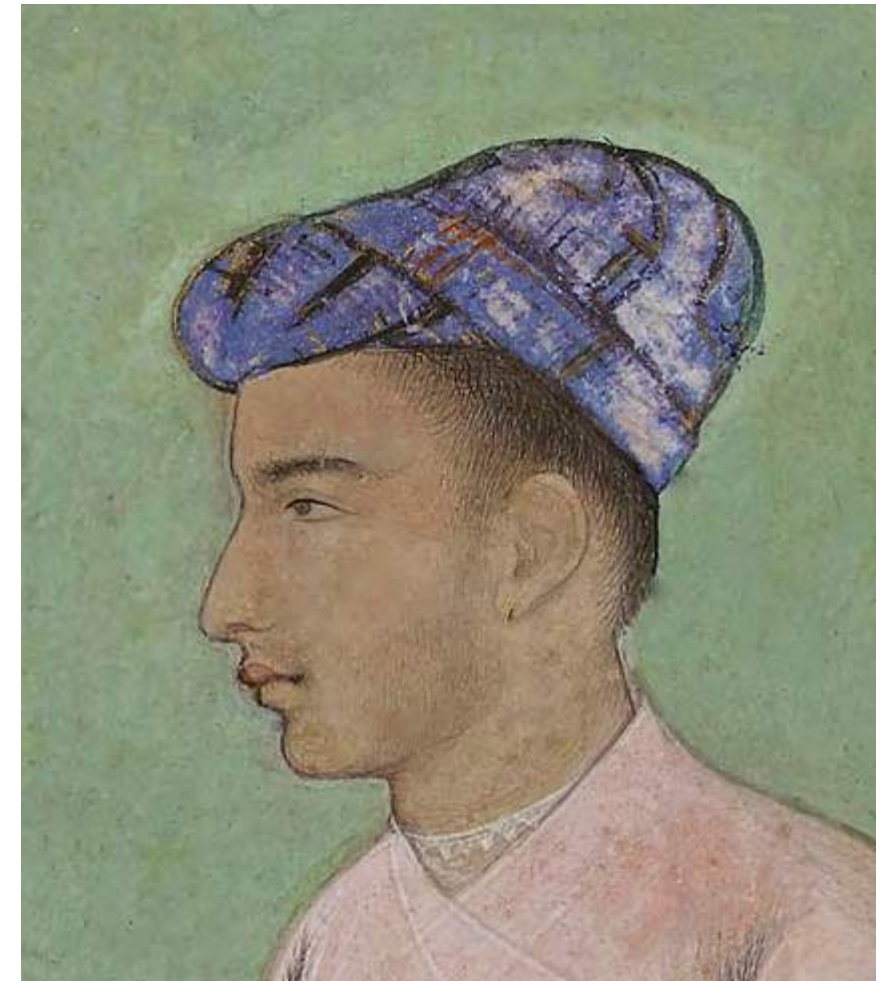
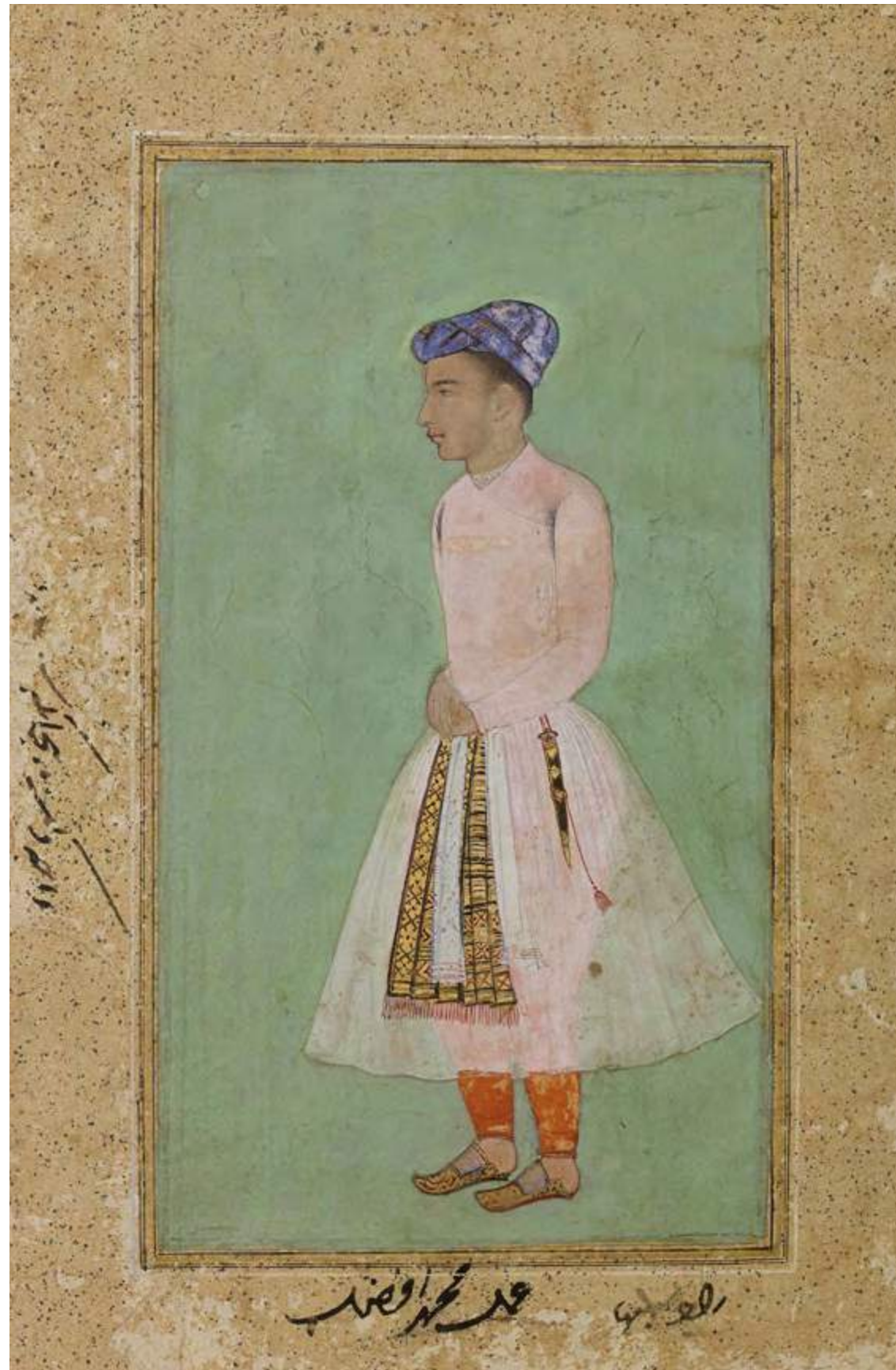
Literature

Colnaghi, P. & D., *Persian and Indian Painting*, exhibition catalogue, London, 1976

Khandalavala, K., and Chandra, M., *Miniatures and Sculptures from the Collections of the late Sir Cowasji Jehangir*, Bombay, 1965

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

Verma, S. P., *Mughal Painters and their Work: a Biographical Survey and Comprehensive Catalogue*, Oxford University Press, Delhi etc., 1994



A Falcon on a Perch

Deccan, perhaps Bijapur, early 17th century

Opaque watercolour and gold on paper

Painting 12.5 × 9.5 cm

Album page 20.5 × 17.5 cm

The falcon with sharp green beak and well defined talons, golden eye, white feathered chest and brown, white and dark grey striated wings, is portrayed in imperious profile standing with raised right talon on a perch covered with red and blue cloth, against a brilliant yellow background. Falcons on their perches were favourite subjects for noble patrons of artists in the Mughal Empire, but Deccani paintings of such birds are much rarer. Our unknown artist uses his technique to express the softness of the bird's white feathers on its chest and legs, darkening underneath the bird's body, and then uses infinite shades of brown to give volume and life to its wings. One fearsome talon grasps the perch, the other is raised with curving claws as if to pounce on its prey. Yet despite the superlative naturalism that he is capable of, our artist gives his bird an impossible green beak and a golden eye and in true Deccani fashion has it silhouetted against a brilliant yellow ground. He also omits the jesses that would have tethered its legs to its perch and that are normally portrayed in such paintings.

The finest birds in Mughal painting were those commissioned by Jahangir who was a keen observer of nature and who maintained a rich menagerie and an aviary. His outstanding atelier of painters recorded unusual specimens. These

portraits are carefully observed and taken from life. In 1619 Jahangir ordered Mansur to draw the likeness of a falcon brought from Persia. He writes: 'What can I write of the beauty and colour of this falcon? There were many beautiful black markings on each wing, and back, and sides. As it was something out of common, I ordered Ustad Mansur, who has the title of Nadir ul 'Asr to paint and preserve its likeness' (Jahangir, vol. 2, p. 108). A falcon on a round bird-rest ascribed to Nadir al-'Asr Ustad Mansur from the Goloubew Collection now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts may possibly represent this falcon brought from Persia (Verma 1999, p. 13). A study of a Barbary falcon similarly ascribed to Mansur is in the Man Singh Museum, Jaipur (*ibid.*, p. 96). Other studies of falcons appeared from famous old collections at Colnaghis in London in the 1970s (Colnaghi 1976, no. 101, and 1978, no. 27).

Literature

Colnaghi, P. & D., Persian and Indian Painting, exhibition catalogue, London, 1976

Jahangir, Emperor of Hindustan, *The Tuzuk-i Jahangiri or Memoirs of Jahangir*, translated by Alexander Rogers, edited by Henry Beveridge, Royal Asiatic Society, London 1909–14

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



A prince listening to music at night: illustration to a *Ragamala*

By a Deccani artist, in the style of the Jaipur painter, c. 1720–40

Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper, the borders with gold floral decoration on a salmon pink ground

Painting 23.5 × 15.7 cm

Folio 28 × 19.5 cm

Inscribed on the reverse in *nasta'liq*: *arana az-dipak* ('Arana from Dipak (*raga*)' and in *nagari*: *arana*?

A prince lies languidly on his bed missing his beloved while a musician plays her *vina* for him and a female attendant massages his feet. He is lying in a canopied bed inside a pavilion with high red walls and an orange dado. His sword lies beside him along with drinks and a pan box while his bow and arrows hang on the wall. A terrace in front has a small pool with a fountain and steps lead down into a small garden. Candles are lit on the terrace. Above are the silver moon and stars. The painting is set in deep red album page sprinkled with clumps of gold flowers, the whole evincing an extraordinarily vivid colour scheme. It clearly comes from a Hindu environment on account of the leftwards tying of the prince's *jama* and the Vaisnava tilak mark on his forehead. The prince's posture conforms to a standard Deccani format of a lady waiting for her lover, sometimes with the attention of a duenna (Falk and Archer no. 422, Zebrowski figs. 223 and 226).

A similar painting is in the Kankroli collection (Ebeling, 1973 pp. 106), but there the prince is fully bearded and his *jama* is tied on the right side, indicating he is meant to be a Muslim. That painting appears to be part of another *ragamala* set and is inscribed *Khambavati ragini*. A similar painting in the Archaeological Museum,

Hyderabad, is labelled *Bhairavi ragini*, while another (Maggs Bros Bulletin, no. 8) is inscribed as *Bhairava raga*. This painting is yet another version of this *ragamala* iconography but the title given it – Arana (wife) of Dipak – is obscure and does not correspond to any of the five wives of Dipak according to the Kankroli set, although *Khambavati ragini* is included among them (Ebeling, 1973 p. 200).

Another painting, Sri Raga, from our *Ragamala* series is published in Seyller, J. *Mughal and Deccani Paintings in the Eva and Konrad Seitz Collection of Indian Miniatures* Zurich 2010, cat.46. According to Seitz, five other pages of this series are in the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, a sixth page was sold at Sotheby's New York 16th September 1998, lot 209A and a seventh was published in Galloway *The Divine & the Profane* 2012, cat.27.

This *Ragamala* series may have been produced for Nazim al Mulk (r.1724–48) who was Muhammad Shah's Prime Minister, but left the chaotic Delhi court to conquer the viceroyalty of the Deccan in 1724, becoming the first of the Mughal governors who declared themselves autonomous rulers.

Provenance

Doris Wiener, New York, 1973

Robert and Bernice Dicks Collection, New York

Private collection, USA

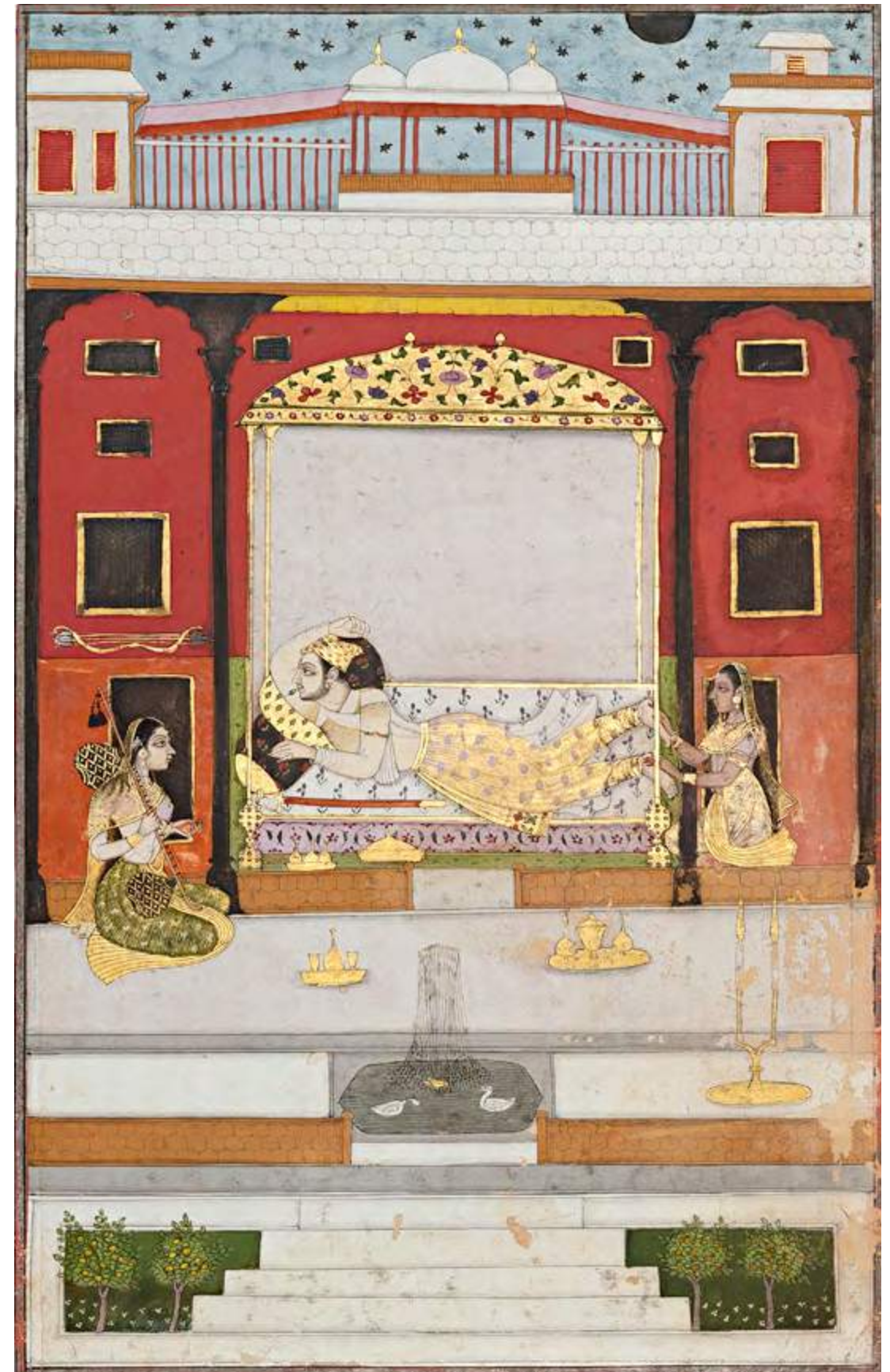
Literature

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

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

Seyller, J., *The Jaipur Painter: The Identity, Career, and Legacy of a Deccani Master*, paper given at Dakhan, An International Seminar on Indian Miniature Painting, January 2018

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



A prince and his lady watching a female troupe of entertainers

Northern Deccan, c. 1700-10, with additions in Kishangarh c. 1730-40

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

Painting 24 x 18 cm, within a blue margin with gold arabesques and a buff surround decorated with floral sprays in gold

Royal Kishangarh album page 35.4 x 26 cm

Inscribed on the verso in Persian and in Hindi in *nagari*: 'Sultan Mahmud the lord of Bijapur and lord of the Deccan, dancing girls [with] singing ... [and] fighting with swords, shields and ... The huge tomb of this Sultan is in Bijapur and can be seen from 12 kos ...'

The prince is intended to be Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah of Bijapur (reg. 1627-56) in his younger days around 1630 (compare Zebrowski 1983, figs. 92-94). He sits on a *divan* with his arm round his mistress and the two are offering each other wine cups while watching enthralled a troupe of female entertainers – dancers, musicians, mock-wrestlers with daggers and mock-soldiers with curved swords and a Deccani gauntlet sword threatening the birds flying overhead. All these entertainers wear bodice and tightly wound sari pulled between their legs in the Maharashtrian manner. A long straight Deccani sword lies in front of the Sultan. The scene is set on a terrace before a pavilion with a steely blue sky behind, against which are flying two pairs of birds. Clouds are indicated above. A young male or probably eunuch attendant wearing an ankle-length yellow *jama* and orange turban stands in the lower right corner.

The female type with short compact bodies and square heads is typical of the northern Deccan in the decades around 1700 (e.g. Losty 2015, no. 11, a composite elephant formed of women). The entertainers also wear lavish jewels of a type seen in other Deccani paintings of this

period such as the portrait from around 1675 of 'Abd al-'Aziz Miyanah of Bijapur surrounded by similar ladies in the Eva and Konrad Seitz collection (Seyller and Seitz 2010, no. 37). Apart from the ropes of pearls worn by all, the ladies wear magnificent earrings, either pierced at top and bottom of the ear as with the chief lady, or suspended by a loop of pearls round the ear, or the upper one draped over the ear so that it hangs at back and front as well as a lower earring. Roundels surrounded by pearls are worn in the hair and as forehead ornaments, linked by chains of pearls to the hair and to the earrings. On the wrists are worn bejewelled gold arm-clasps with large pompoms attached, as worn by the famous *yogini* in Dublin (Zebrowski 1983, pl. XII), and *bazubands* on the upper arms. The gauntlet sword is typical of the northern Deccan in the 17th and 18th centuries (Alexander 2015, pp. 188-89), while the T-shaped hilts of the two daggers also suggest that they are Deccani in origin (*ibid.*, pp. 208-09). Several of the figures including the principal lady and the eunuch attendant have the upcurving eye typical of early 18th century Kishangarh painting. The three women waving swords and a lance have also more Kishangarh-type faces. Further

research and tests will be conducted to try to establish why there is a homogenous quality to this painting that features two different styles.

According to Navina Haidar, this genre of painting became popular under Mughal, Rajput and also Deccani patronage. In the northern Deccan Mughals, Deccanis and Rajputs all mixed for a good 20 years or more, in service of the Mughal army and Aurangzeb's bid to conquer the Deccan. Kishangarh rulers were also part of this mix, particularly Man Singh (d.1706). His sister, Amrita Bai Sahiba was married in 1661 to Sultan Mu'azzam, the future emperor Bahadur Shah (reg. 1707-12), and as was usual with such marriages, her male relatives were advanced in status in the Mughal service. Her brother Man Singh served in eastern India and also in the Deccan and would have had many opportunities to obtain Deccani paintings.

Mughal and Deccani portraits of Mughal emperors and princes were collected at Kishangarh and sometimes added to and inscribed on the reverse in both Hindi and Persian (see for instance the Francesca Galloway 2008 catalogue no. 31 of Aurangzeb and no. 13 of Bahadur Shah).





Provenance

Kishangarh state collections
Private collection, UK since the 1970s

Literature

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Galloway, F., *Paintings from the Royal Courts of India*, Francesca Galloway sale catalogue, London, 2008
Haidar, N., and Sardar, M., eds., *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323–1687*, Metropolitan Museum, New York, 2011
Losty, J.P., *Indian Painting 1590–1880*, Oliver Forge & Brendan Lynch, sale catalogue, London, 2015
Seyller, J., and Seitz, K., *Mughal and Deccani Paintings*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 2010
Zebrowski, M., *Deccani Painting*, Sotheby Publications, University of California Press, London and Los Angeles, 1983



Prince Amar Singh of Mewar with ladies

Udaipur, c. 1695

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

40 × 27 cm

Kunwar Amar Singh fell out with his father Rana Jai Singh of Mewar (reg. 1680–98) around 1690 and retreated to Bundi, his mother's home, but a reconciliation was effected which saw Amar Singh set up a separate establishment at Rajnagar on the great lake of the Raj Samand to the north of Udaipur. There he held court until his father's death in 1698. A number of artists were attracted to the young prince's household, where he seems to have encouraged them to explore portraiture in greater depth and detail than had been previously attempted in Mewar. A number of portraits are known from this period including this one (Topsfield 2002, figs. 86–94), while on his mounting the *gaddi* in 1698 this interest in portraiture was further encouraged during his relatively brief reign (1698–1712).

The young prince is shown standing dressed in a diaphanous *jama* over white *paijama* holding a long sword upright before him. He is engaged in conversation with the group of seven ladies who stand facing him, some of them making eloquent gestures with their hands. Another group of four female attendants stands behind the prince with *chowries* and sunshade, while one has a large white satchel slung over her shoulder from which she is about to produce something, perhaps presents for the ladies. The arrangement of all these women seen overlapping each other and receding from

the front is a new development in Mewar painting, where traditionally they would have been shown strung out horizontally (e.g. Jai Singh with ladies c. 1691, Topsfield 2002, fig. 85) as were their male counterparts (*ibid.*, figs. 78, 79). Also new is the background colour, the ubiquitous green ground of Mughal portraiture rather than the traditional red background of Mewar.

Published

Topsfield, A., *Court Painting at Udaipur: Art under the Patronage of the Maharanas of Mewar*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2002, fig. 88





A Rathor nobleman on horseback

Jodhpur, c. 1720–30

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

29.5 × 24.6 cm

A Rathor nobleman is here depicted riding a rather short-backed bay horse and smoking a hookah, accompanied on foot by a hookah-bearer and another attendant with a staff. The rather abraded condition of the painting should not distract attention from the refinement and delicacy of the line and the details of some of the painting such as the nobleman's turban cloth.

His rather plump features resemble in appearance Maharaja Abhai Singh of Jodhpur but it is not likely that it is him, while the hookah-bearer would seem to be a portrait from life. The 'designer stubble' sideburn with a backwards curl was fashionable in Jodhpur in the early 18th century for young men before they grew their full moustaches, e.g. as seen on the five sons of Ajit Singh in a painting from 1721 now in Harvard (Crill 2000, fig. 34).

The delicacy of the painting is in accordance with Jodhpur painting at this time when the Mughal artist Dalchand reached Jodhpur from Kishangarh sometime before 1724 (*ibid.*, figs. 37–42). Even so the somewhat archaic composition without a recognisable ground rather resembles the equestrian portrait of Sonag Champawat of Pali in the late Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh's collection, which Crill dates to c. 1710–20 (*ibid.*, fig. 33).

Literature

Crill, R., *Marwar Painting: a History of the Jodhpur Style*, India Book House Ltd., Bombay, 2000



Meeting of lovers by seeing the beloved's portrait

Page from a *Rasikapriya* series

Bundi, late 17th century

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

Painting 28.9 × 17.9 cm (slightly cropped at bottom)

Folio 29.5 × 24.2 cm

Inscribed above in Hindi in well written *nagari* with a verse from the *Rasikapriya* of Keshavdas entitled 'The manifest meeting of Radha and Krishna through a portrait' (trans. Bahadur 1972, pp. 63–64; Dehejia 2013, p. 65, IV, 9). Labelled chapter IV, 6, and verse 56

The *sakhi* is addressing Radha who gazes in rapture at a portrait of Krishna, telling her to give up gazing at Krishna's portrait and go out and meet the real man. Radha sits enthroned within a carpeted courtyard complete with central fountain surrounded by arcades and pavilions on various levels and crowned by a domed pavilion, all with various beds and couches ready and waiting for the lovers. The architecture is rendered with the love of diagonals and perspective views usual in Bundi painting. As always in this set the two women are carefully modelled, large eyed and intense.

The known folios of this large and beautiful set have been reconstructed by Joachim Bautze (1992, pp. 137–45), who illustrates two folios from the Metzger collection (nos. 53–54). Thought by Archer to be dated from around 1715 (1959, figs. 13–15; Heeramanek 1984, pl. 58), it has since been moved back into the late 17th century around 1680 (Sharma 1974, pl. 53, cat. 40, and Bautze).

Literature

Archer, W.G., *Indian Painting in Bundi and Kotah*, HMSO, London, 1959

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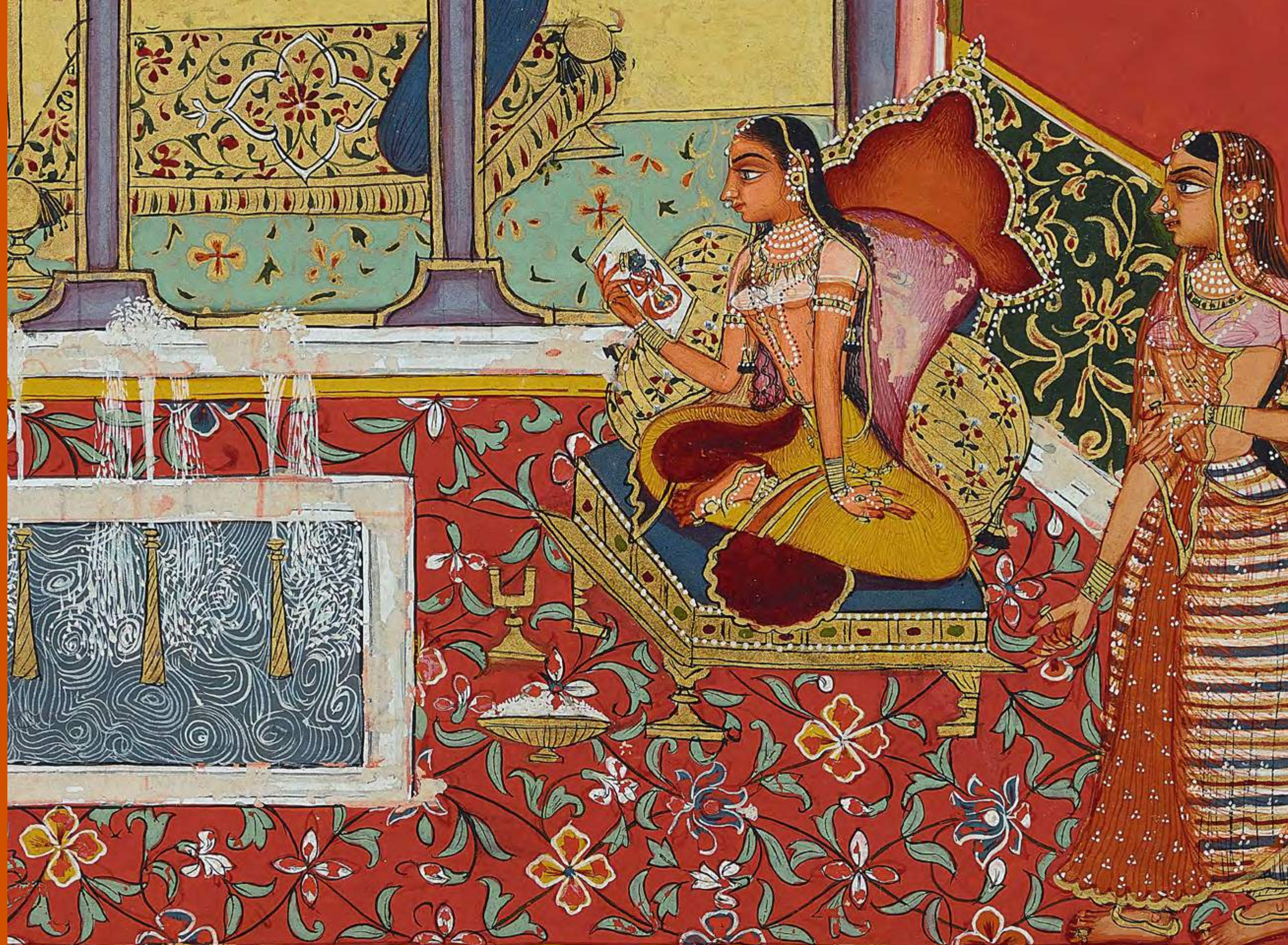
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Heeramanek, A., *Masterpieces of Indian Painting formerly in the Nasli M. Heeramanek Collection*, Alice M. Heeramanek, Verona printed, 1984

Sharma, O.P., *Indian Miniature Painting: Exhibition Compiled from the Collection of the National Museum, New Delhi*, Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels, 1974





A double-sided album page from the Kota-Jaipur Album

Verso: Krishna and Radha enjoying wine

Kota, attributable to painter C, c. 1720–40

Recto: a noblewoman visits a shivalingam shrine at night

Lucknow, c. 1760

Opaque pigments with gold on paper, both sides decorated with coloured borders with gold foliate scrolls

Verso painting 14.8 × 9.9 cm

Recto painting 19 × 14.8 cm

Folio: 27.5 × 23.1 cm

On the verso side Krishna and Radha stand facing each other, he dressed in his usual yellow dhoti and peacock-finialed crown, she in an orange skirt, gold bodice and a delicate gold filigree *orhni*. Both are laden with jewels. They each carry two wine flasks, hers in front of her body, his in his outstretched hands. His left hand holds that flask upside down, emptying it or perhaps indicating it is empty. They are standing on a white mat covered with orange, yellow and aubergine bolsters laid over a green carpet. A decorative orange band at the base and an eau-de-nil background merging into the blue sky at the top complete the scene.

While the enjoyment of wine for its own sake is not part of the Krishna-Radha cycle, it does nonetheless appear in the Gitagovinda metaphorically in the refrain of the verses in Canto 10 spoken by Krishna as Radha finally comes to him: “Radha, cherished love, abandon your baseless pride! Love’s fire burns my heart – Bring wine in your lotus mouth!” and again in the closing verse of the canto: “Your eyes are lazy with wine ...” (Miller 1977, pp. 111–14). Our painting would seem to be referring to these verses as suggestive of the first coming together of

Krishna and Radha in the intoxication of young love. Krishna had no need of any wine left in the flask when Radha finally came to him.

The painting would seem to be the work of the Kota artist dubbed Artist C in Beach’s analysis of painting in Kota in the early 18th century (2011) and is particularly close to a painting in a private collection illustrated there (fig. 18) showing Krishna and Radha in a bower from c. 1720. The correspondence can be seen particularly in the not exactly subtle outlining combined with an immensely vigorous application of paint, the details of the dress of the figures, the heavy dark outlining of eyes with projecting lashes and the fondness for sooty shading of Krishna’s face and chest.

These two paintings share similar borders in Jaipur taste and both must come from the famous album in Jaipur in the early 19th century. Five other Kota paintings with similar borders are published in Spink 1987, nos. 18–21, while others are listed by Beach p. 478, n. 20. The albums combine Kota paintings with later work from either Jaipur itself or from Lucknow, as is the case here. The Kota paintings are



mostly on Krishna themes based round either the *Bhagavata Purana* or the *Gitagovinda* and would seem to be the result of an intensification of devotion to Krishna and to his idol at Kota Shri Brijnathji during the reigns of Bhim Singh and especially of Arjun Singh, who is sometimes represented as Shri Brijnathji himself (Welch et al. 1997, nos. 19–20).

The painting on the recto of this folio shows a group of Hindu women coming to worship at a small *shivalingam* shrine. One kneels in front of it doing reverence while the women behind her carry flowers and garlands and chatter among themselves. The shrine is draped with garlands and lotuses and has an arrangement of a water pot on a tripod above it for continuous lustration. Three yogis wearing orange robes and discs in their ears serve the shrine outside their hut beneath a large tree. The scene is set at night under a moonlit and starry sky which lights up the distant town set on a hill. Such scenes of night-time devotion were widely used in Awadh painting from the 1740s by artists such as Mir Kalan Khan in the 1760s (e.g. Markel and Gude 2010, no. 15, p. 164).

Literature

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The Bard Nathuram shooting an arrow at a target

Signed by Pyar Chand, Sitamau, dated 1835–36

Opaque pigments heightened with gold and silver on paper

Folio 32.2 × 42.8 cm

Identifications in *devanagari* script on recto, *vyasaji sri Nathuramji* ('the bard Nathuram ji'), *goro kumait nam* ('the horse named Kumait'), *ora Kaccha ka* ('[the groom] somebody from Kutch') signed and dated on recto at upper right in *devanagari* script *Musavar Pyar Chand samvat 1892* ('the artist Pyar Chand 1835–6'), On the reverse are eleven lines of verses in Hindi in *devanagari* script written by Barahat Lacchman ji dated Samvat 1894 [1837] in praise of the Maharaja Kunwar or prince

Sitamau, on the borders of Malwa, Mewar and Kota, was the place of production of a number of large and impressive processional scenes and other works in the 1830s and 1840s. Robert Skelton first identified the Sitamau school, where the artist Swarup Ram had practised earlier in his career (see Ehn bom 1985, p.172). The style flourished in the reign of Maharaja Raj Singh (reg. 1802–67) in the 1830s and 1840s. His son the Maharaj Kunwar Ratan Singh predeceased him and he was succeeded by his grandson Bhawani Singh (reg. 1867–85).

The principal and most accomplished artist of the second quarter of the nineteenth century was Pyar Chand, who himself appears in a painting dated 1847 showing him sketching the ruler of Sitamau (Ehn bom 1985, p.172). Inscriptions on other paintings indicate that Pyar Chand came from the ancient city of Mandasor, near to Sitamau. Ehn bom comments: "The painter Pyara Canda of Mandasor avoided European influence to produce pictures that continue to embody the brilliant color and abstract statement of traditional Indian styles." (ibid).

For further information and illustrations of works by Pyar Chand see Spink and Son 1976–II, pp.25–27, nos.108–112; Topsfield 1981, pp.170–1, fig.183; Ehn bom 1985, pp.172–3, nos.80–81; Sotheby's, New York, 2 June 1992, lots 151–2; Christie's, London, 23 April 1981, lot 58.

Provenance

Sven Gahlin

Literature

Ehn bom, D., *Indian Miniatures: the Ehrenfeld Collection*, American Federation of Arts, New York, 1985





दोयतोनहराम

The Marriage of Shiva and Parvati, page from the Impey *Ramayana*

Provincial Murshidabad, Bengal, c. 1780

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

Painting 29 × 18.2 cm

Folio 32.5 × 22 cm

Inscribed on the front with the names of the participants in *nagari* in black ink;
stamped on the back with the seal impression of Sir Elijah Impey dated 1775

Parvati was the daughter of the mountain Himavat and his wife Mena. She resolved to marry the terrible god Shiva who had retired to Mount Kailasa to devote himself to austerities after the death of his first wife Sati. She tried various wiles to attract him but in vain, until she herself undertook terrible austerities. Intrigued, Shiva visited her incognito to test her, found her determined and agreed to marry her. In the first book of the *Ramayana* in both the Sanskrit version and that by Tulsi Das, when Vishvamitra is leading the boys Rama and Lakshmana on their journey they pass by the hermitage where Shiva practised his austerities and where Parvati overcame his reluctance. This must have served as the trigger for the artists to produce this celebration of the divine marriage.

The painting is arranged in three registers. The uppermost is inhabited by eight deities including Surya, Chandra and Vishnu, sitting on a dais beneath a yellow canopy. The central register depicts Parvati, seated on the lap of her father Himavat and her mother Mena beside her, holding Shiva's hand as he kneels on a red carpet besides Brahma with Brihaspati and Shukra behind him. The lower register shows the couple about to circumambulate the sacred fire led by Mainaka, Parvati's brother, accompanied by a

retinue of ascetics, maidens and the sage Narada, while the Brahmins Bharadvaja and Kashyapa tend the fire.

The crowded composition with its rows of gaily coloured participants set against a bright blue background is typical stylistically of the Impey *Ramayana*, a set of 44 paintings from around 1780 without text from Impey's collection, that also entered the collection of Sir Thomas Phillips and is now widely dispersed. It is an example of the increasing presence of folk Bengali art in the Murshidabad style. Conventionally dated c.1770, it is difficult to reconcile the style of these paintings with anything else going on in Murshidabad painting at this time and it is preferable to date them a little later around 1780. Their dependence on the pata scrolls of Bengal with their conceptual approach of figures acting in a non-specific environment is obvious. For a recent publication, see Bonham's New York 19 March 2012, lot 1173. Other pages are in the British Library, the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, and the Los Angeles County Museum. For an overview of Murshidabad painting at this time, see Losty 2013.

Provenance

Sir Elijah Impey (1732–1809)

Literature

Losty, J.P., 'Painting at Murshidabad 1750–1820' in *Murshidabad: Forgotten Capital of Bengal*, ed. Neeta Das and Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, Marg Foundation, Mumbai, 2013, pp. 82–105



Hanuman and Vibhishana; A noble devotee

Double-sided devotional painting

Probably Tirupati, southern Andhra Pradesh, mid-18th century

Opaque pigments on cloth

21.8 × 12.3 cm

Inscribed on recto in Persian: jan and ??? ('Jinn' meaning spirit or demon)

The recto of this cloth painting is painted with heroes from the *Ramayana*: Hanuman in green and the good demon Vibhishana, Ravana's brother, in blue. Vibhishana comes over to Rama's side in Book 6 of the *Ramayana*. Vibhishana has his hands upraised while Hanuman has his joined in the devotional *anjali mudra*. They both wear a short red *dhoti* and lavish gold ornaments and their thick limbs and torsos are heavily modelled with contour shading. Hanuman's tail hangs down behind him. They are each depicted in three-quarter view, bringing their enormous bulging eyes into prominence and, in Vibhishana's case, his demonic beard and tusks. Both wear Vaishnava *namam* marks on their foreheads. They stand on a plinth beneath an arch, silhouetted against the white opening, beneath three large hanging lotus blossoms and delicate jasmine leaves.

On the verso there stands a noble devotee, his hands also joined, who wears a red and white striped *jama* and is barefoot. On his head is a hemispherical red cap with a brocaded cloth rim into which cockades, a black feather and a dangling cloth have been tucked. His forehead is adorned with a Vaishnava *namam* mark as well as a white flower pattern. He stands silhouetted against blue beneath an ogival Deccani arch from which hang lotuses and jasmine flowers, with a much-rubbed red surround.

Several of these double-sided cloth panels are now known. They would seem to have originally been joined together at the sides to form a folding set hanging from a doorway or archway to be visible from both sides, but it is not known how many sets were originally involved. Three cloth panels are in the Freer/Sackler Gallery in Washington and published by Vidya Dehejia (Lawton and Lentz 1998, pp. 96–97): these show Balarama with Shri Venkateshvara; a noble devotee similar to ours with divine sages Narada and Tumburu; and the Vamana avatar and Vishnu on the cosmic serpent. These three all have short Persian inscriptions, like ours. One more is in the Cleveland Museum (Leach 1986, no. 97, there published as Orissan) showing the Jagannath trinity of Puri on one side and Rama and Sita (not Krishna as in the catalogue) on the other. This is actually inscribed with the names of the divinities in *nagari* script. Two more appeared on the London art market in 2008 (Simon Ray, *Indian and Islamic Works of Art*, 2008, nos. 58–59). One showed a noble devotee again rather like ours on one side, wearing the same type of headgear, and the Jagannath trio on the other side. The other cloth painting showed Rama with his bow on one side and on the other the image of Vishnu as Shri Venkateshvara at the Tirumala temple on the hill outside Tirupati in southern Andhra Pradesh, one of the most famous pilgrim-

age centres in India (the deity is enshrined on the hill of Tirumala; Tirupati is the large town below the hill servicing the pilgrims). These also had *nagari* labels of identification.

The repeated presence of Shri Venkateshvara suggests a relationship with three other earlier paintings of larger size. Two are in the British Museum and show the image of the divinity enshrined under an arch with hanging lotuses and jasmine flowers and, in one case, a devotee, also with *nagari* inscriptions (Dallapiccola 2010, nos. 12.2–12.3). Another beautiful south Indian painting of Krishna and Radha in the former James Ivory collection is related to the British Museum paintings (Losty 2010, no. 54). All three can be linked to Tirupati through their resemblances to images in the painted Shri Venkateshvara shrine that had reached Halle in Germany by 1734 (Appasamy 1980, pp. 78–79, figs. 5, 28). Similar cloth paintings originally joined together like our present one but of a larger size are in the Jagdish and Kamala Mittal Museum in Hyderabad, including a *Dashavatara* series of the ten avatars of Vishnu with extra divinities, in fifteen or so panels originally joined together like an accordion. All the leaves that have been published so far from this series are of the young Krishna (Welch 1985, nos. 23a–b; Goswamy 1986, no. 68; Mittal 2007,



no. 34). Mittal (in Welch 1985) originally favoured Karnataka as a place of origin but subsequently changed his mind in favour of Tirupati.

In Jagdish Mittal's publication of a Telugu script manuscript with 93 paintings of the *Ramayana* now in the State Museum, Hyderabad (Mittal 1969), there are figures of Hanuman and Vibhishana with clear links to our two figures. Hanuman for instance is depicted as green, though this is common in the south, and in three-quarter profile. He is wearing a red *dhoti* and heavy ornaments (ibid., no. 30). Vibhishana appears at the end of the manuscript talking to Angada, Sita and Rama and though his colour is not stated, he like Hanuman is depicted in three-quarter view and with bulging eyes, fierce moustaches and beard, and tusks (ibid., nos. 46–47, 49–50). All the males in the manuscript have relatively short crowns like Vibhishana's here. The manuscript is in a slightly more refined version of the style of our painting suggesting that it was done for a local patron in the southern Andhra region round Tirupati, whereas the cloth paintings with their *nagari* and indeed Persian inscriptions were perhaps intended as souvenirs for pilgrims to take away with them.

Provenance
Paul Walter

Literature
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The Goddess in her many-armed splendour confronts the armies of the demons

Two adjacent folios from a *Devi Mahatmya* manuscript in Kannada, numbered 36 and 37 in Kannada numerals

Mysore, 1825–30

Opaque pigments with gold and ink on paper

Painting 24.5 × 18.5 cm

Folio 31 × 21 cm

A) Recto: page of text in Kannada script

Verso: the Goddess on her lion with Kali

B) Recto: the armies of the demons confront the Goddess

Verso: Kali devours the demons

The Sanskrit hymn *Devi Mahatmya*, the great text summing up the creation and worship of the Goddess, is one of the most frequently illustrated of Puranic texts. Like all Puranic texts, a sage, in this instance Medhas, tells the story of the Goddess and her triumph over different demons to interested hearers, in this case two distressed travellers: Suratha the king exiled from his own country, and the merchant Samadhi, who was betrayed by his family. After telling the story of Yoganidra, the form of the Goddess who saved creation when Brahma was about to be attacked by the demons Madhu and Kaitabha, the Purana goes on to relate the Goddess's triumphs first over the Buffalo-headed demon Mahishasura and then over the demonic brothers Shumbha and Nishumbha.

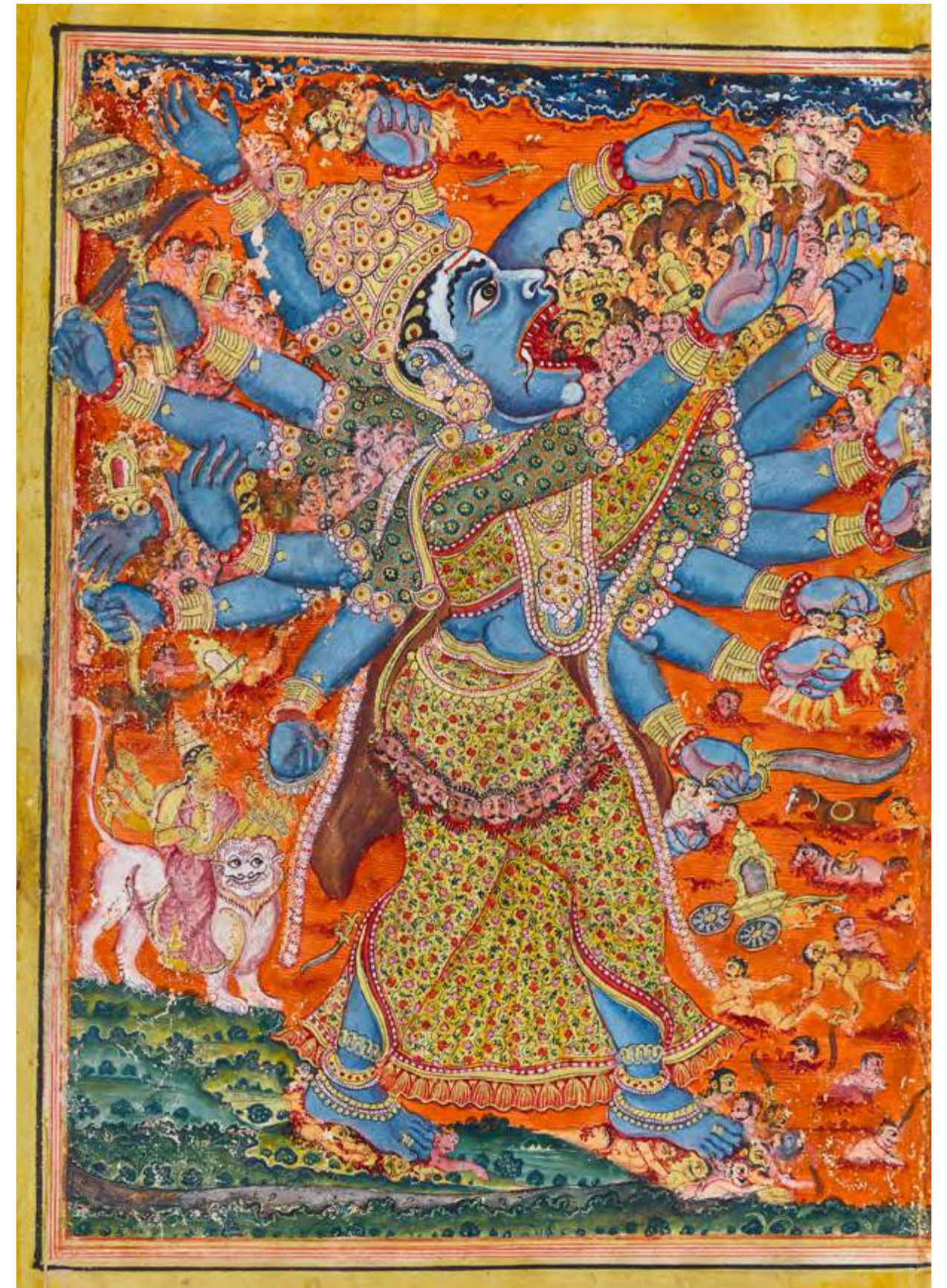
Our magnificent double folio comes from a dispersed Kannada manuscript of the Sanskrit text that Rosemary Crill argues was translated by that great patron of Mysore arts, Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeya III (r. 1799–1831), into Kannada himself (2011, p. 168). During his reign, illustrated manuscripts of the Hindu religious classics were produced under royal patronage,

such as the lavishly illustrated *Bhagavata Purana* now in the Binney collection in San Diego (Goswamy and Smith 2005, no. 115), or the *Ramayana* version in the Mittal Museum in Hyderabad (Mittal 2011), or this dispersed and fragmentary *Devi Mahatmya*, as well as manuscripts and printed texts relating to board games on which the Maharaja was an expert. All of these made use of the Kannada script whether for Kannada or for Sanskrit manuscripts

In the double page opening illustrating the beginning of chapter 7 of the text, the Goddess Ambika riding on her lion (shown twice) has just created the terrifying 18-armed Kali to deal with the army of Chanda and Munda, cohorts of Shumbha and Nishumbha. She stands ready to confront the serried rows of demons headed by Chanda and Munda as they advance on them. Winged deities both male and female in the sky approve of the oncoming battle. A few verses later in the chapter Kali becomes even more truly terrifying, and she begins to gather up hosts of the demons, their horses, their chariots and elephants and crams them

into her mouth, grinding them down with her teeth. Despite the gruesome subject, the artist has made Kali not the black skeletal creature of the Pahari imagination, but a full bodied bejewelled woman clad in a green bodice and a beautiful yellow sari decorated with floral arabesques. She seems to have grown to an immense size and taken on some of the aspects of Vishnu as Vishvaarupa as described in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

After the death of Tipu Sultan at Seringapatam in 1799, the child Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, a scion of the former royal dynasty of Mysore dispossessed by Hyder Ali, was placed on the throne of Mysore by the victorious British, aged five at the time. He was deprived of ruling power in 1831 on the grounds of maladministration, but was allowed to remain in the palace at Mysore and retained certain privileges. He spent the next thirty years continuing his engagement with cultural pursuits relating to Kannada literature, theatre, music and painting (Dallapiccola 2010, pp. 12–13). Despite the presence of the British political establishment in Mysore city and the cantonment at Bangalore, Mysore

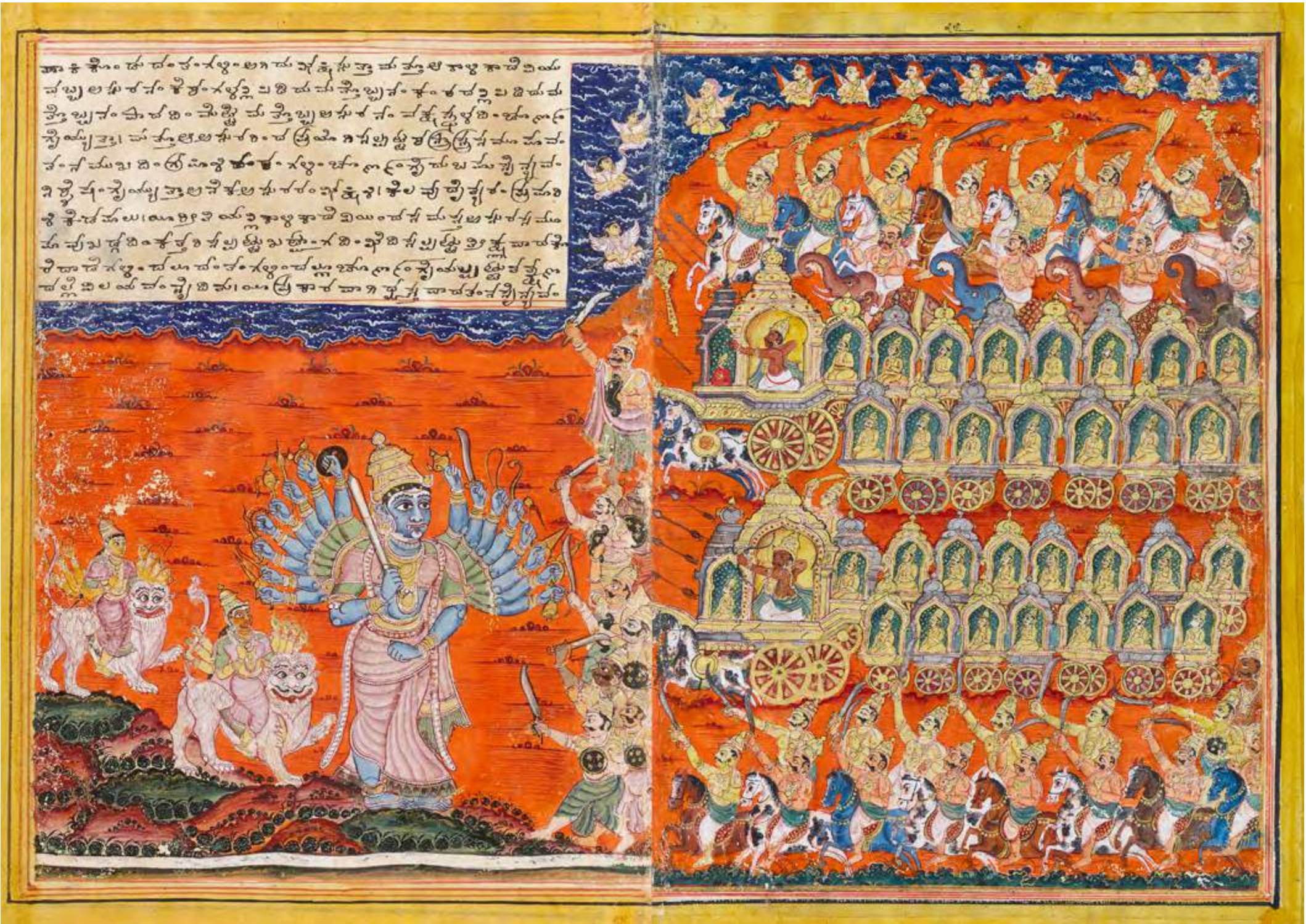




artists rarely indulged them with the sort of westernised painting that would have appealed to them. Very few pages seem to have survived from this dispersed manuscript of the *Devi Mahatmya*. Known folios are in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Dehejia 1999, no. 10), the Rietberg Museum, Zurich (Fischer 2005, no. 37), and the V&A Museum, London (Crill 2011, pp. 168–70, fig. 13). Other pages have appeared on the London art market (Galloway 2006, no. 45).

Provenance
Private collection, USA

Literature
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Mittal, J., 'A Major Court Painter of the early 19th Century' in Beach, M.C., Fischer, E., and Goswamy, B.N., *Masters of Indian Painting*, Artibus Asiae, Zurich, 2011, pp. 759–68





Krishna and Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra

Mysore, first half of the 19th century

Opaque pigments on paper laid down on wood

Folio 34.4 × 47 cm

The scene is set in the great battlefield of Kurukshetra at the climax of the war between the Pandava brothers and their cousins the Kauravas as told in the *Mahabharata*. The great warrior Arjuna is troubled by the thought of the horrible sin of having to kill his relations and decides not to fight, whereupon his charioteer Krishna counsels him, in the sermon known as the *Bhagavad Gita*, simply to keep his mind concentrated and do his duty (*dharma*) as a member of the warrior caste (*kshatriyas*) and he will not be at fault. In the course of the sermon Krishna reveals himself to Arjuna as Vishnu himself, with his four arms carrying his symbols, and it is this moment that is captured here, before Arjuna has a vision of Krishna as Vishnu Vishvarupa encompassing the entire universe. Arjuna's huge chariot is surrounded by a glowing golden nimbus caused by this intense religious experience that also distances it from the mundane martial activities around it that are painted on the red background where are depicted the chariots, horsemen and elephants of the opposing warrior forces. The chariots of Arjuna's four brothers are arrayed behind his own.

Little remains of Mysore painting before the reign of Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar who was restored to the throne of Mysore after the defeat of Tipu Sultan at Seringapatam in 1799. The Maharaja was a great patron of the arts and sciences and

was especially interested in music. He commissioned numerous illustrated manuscripts of the Hindu scriptures, such as the *Bhagavata Purana* in the Binney collection in the San Diego Museum (Goswamy and Smith 2005, no. 115, pp. 268–73). For others of his manuscript commissions, see Mittal 2011. Paintings of religious images, often against a brilliant red ground as here, also flourished in this period for domestic use in Hindu homes. See Rao and Shastri 1980 and Sivapriyananda 1990 for a survey of this material. The use of traditional pigment and the absence of gilded gesso in our painting suggests a date in the first half of the 19th century, after which chemical pigments and more lavish use of gesso and gilding became the norm in Mysore painting (Dallapiccola 2010, pp. 16–17: compare here no. 12.11, a late 19th century painting of Virabhadra in the British Museum).

Provenance

Private collection, USA

Literature

Dallapiccola, A., *South Indian Paintings: a Catalogue of the British Museum Collections*, British Museum Press, London, 2010

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Mian Rajpat Dev of Bandralta smoking a hookah

Bandralta, c. 1740

Brush drawing with opaque pigments on paper

Folio 21.7 × 29.9 cm

Inscribed on the verso in *takri* script: *shri miyan rajapat ji* ('the prince Rajpat')

This drawing shows a youth of fifteen or so smoking a hookah. He is kneeling before a cushion wearing a long *jama* and a vivid red turban and holding the hilt of a sword in his right hand. His left hand holds the hookah snake. His boyish curls fall down behind his ears to his shoulders. The line is flowing and assured, an assurance only enhanced by the general lack of colour. His Shakta sectarian marks on his forehead are noticeable.

This portrait has been published as of Raja Ajmat Dev of Mankot (b. c. 1700, reg. c. 1730–c. 1760–65) at a young age. Ajmat Dev seems to have taken over the administration of Mankot around 1730 from his father Raja Tedhi Singh, who thereafter pursued a life of piety (Archer 1973, vol. I, p. 369). However all later portraits of Ajmat Dev (see especially Archer 1973, Mankot 33, 34 and 38; and Guy and Swallow 1990, no. 124) show him as a mature man with an aquiline nose, contrasting with the rather heavy and straight nose of our youth, and with Vaishnava sect marks, in accordance with the marked Vaishnava leanings of the state and the Rajas, at a time when two noticeable series of the *Bhagavata Purana* were being produced.

The inscription, however, tells a different story. Mian Rajpat was the eldest son of Raja Indra Dev of Bandralta (reg. c. 1730–c. 1760), a little state in the middle of what

is now Jammu just north of Mankot, and was an offshoot of Chamba founded in the 11th century (Archer 1973, vol. 1, p. 9). Little is known about Bandralta in the 18th century and the dates of its rulers, but Indra Dev appears to have ruled for some thirty years. Nearly all known Bandralta paintings according to Archer are of this ruler (Bandralta 1–5), which were first published by Ohri in 1969. Despite the Chamba origin of the state, the artistic links seem to be with Mankot, whose style and compositions are echoed in the Bandralta portraits, although perhaps with slightly less assurance. Portraits of Raja Indar Dev smoking (Archer 1973, Bandralta 1–2) are possibly by the same artist as our drawing. The prince's Shakta sectarian marks, however, are at odds with the Vaishnava ones of his father, although such a change is not unknown in Pahari ruling families. Rajpat Dev seems to have ruled after his father for a short period c. 1760–65, but was succeeded successively by his brothers. An inscribed painted portrait of Rajpat Dev very similar in composition and style to our drawing was formerly in the Manley collection.

Provenance

Doris Wiener Gallery, New York, 1967

Sven Gahlin

Kenneth John Hewett, London (1919–94)

Sotheby's, London, 4 April 1978, lot 322

Sotheby's, London, 15 October 1997,

lot 76

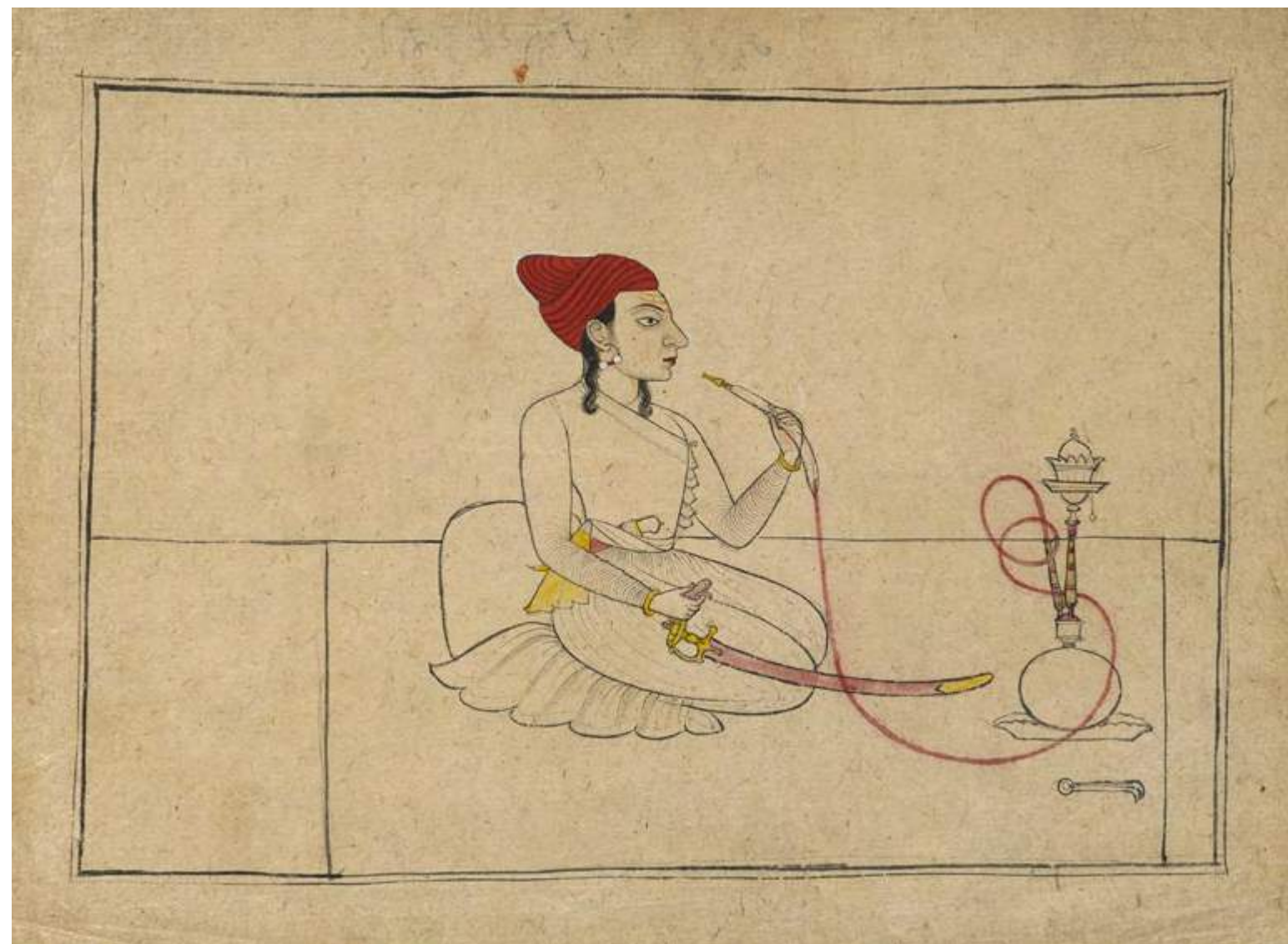
Sven Gahlin

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A Princess on a terrace smoking a hookah, with a female musician and attendants

Chamba, c. 1730

Ink with colours and gold on paper

Folio 18.9 × 28.5 cm

A princess wearing a short tunic over *paijama*, a *dupatta* wrapped round her shoulders and a frilled cap with an eagle feather sits on a rug smoking from a hookah. Her hair is loose down her back and she is drawn in three-quarter profile. Her attendant waves a *chowrie* over her and is dressed in skirt, long *patka*, bodice and *dupatta* and wears the same kind of hat as her mistress. The princess's companion sitting opposite her is dressed much the same as her save for some kind of slouch hat with a feather and is playing some kind of flute or recorder. She is looking sideways at her attendant who stands beside her with joined hands. She wears a long costume with a *dupatta* round her neck and a loose hat with a feather.

The debt to the Deccan and to Golconda in particular is clear from the faces of the two principal women, viewed in three-quarter profile with large eyes, huge dark pupils and sidelong glances, and from their clothes. One thinks of the sleeping Golconda princess in Berlin (Zebrowski 1983, no. 168) and similar late 17th century Golconda drawings and paintings, which are influenced by 17th century Persian figural painting. John Seyller has pointed out that Golconda paintings such as 'Two Princesses on a terrace' in the Fondation Custodia, Paris, had obvious parallels in early 18th century Chamba drawings such as 'A Govern-ess instructing a Princess' in the Mittal

Museum in Hyderabad (Seyller 2011, figs. 12 and 11). Slightly later Chamba drawings from c. 1740 also in the Mittal Museum (Seyller and Mittal 2013, nos. 86–87) also draw on Golconda drawings of European women, and our flute player with her strange hat seems relevant here, the hat being an attempt to render a wide-brimmed and tall-crowned European hat.

Provenance

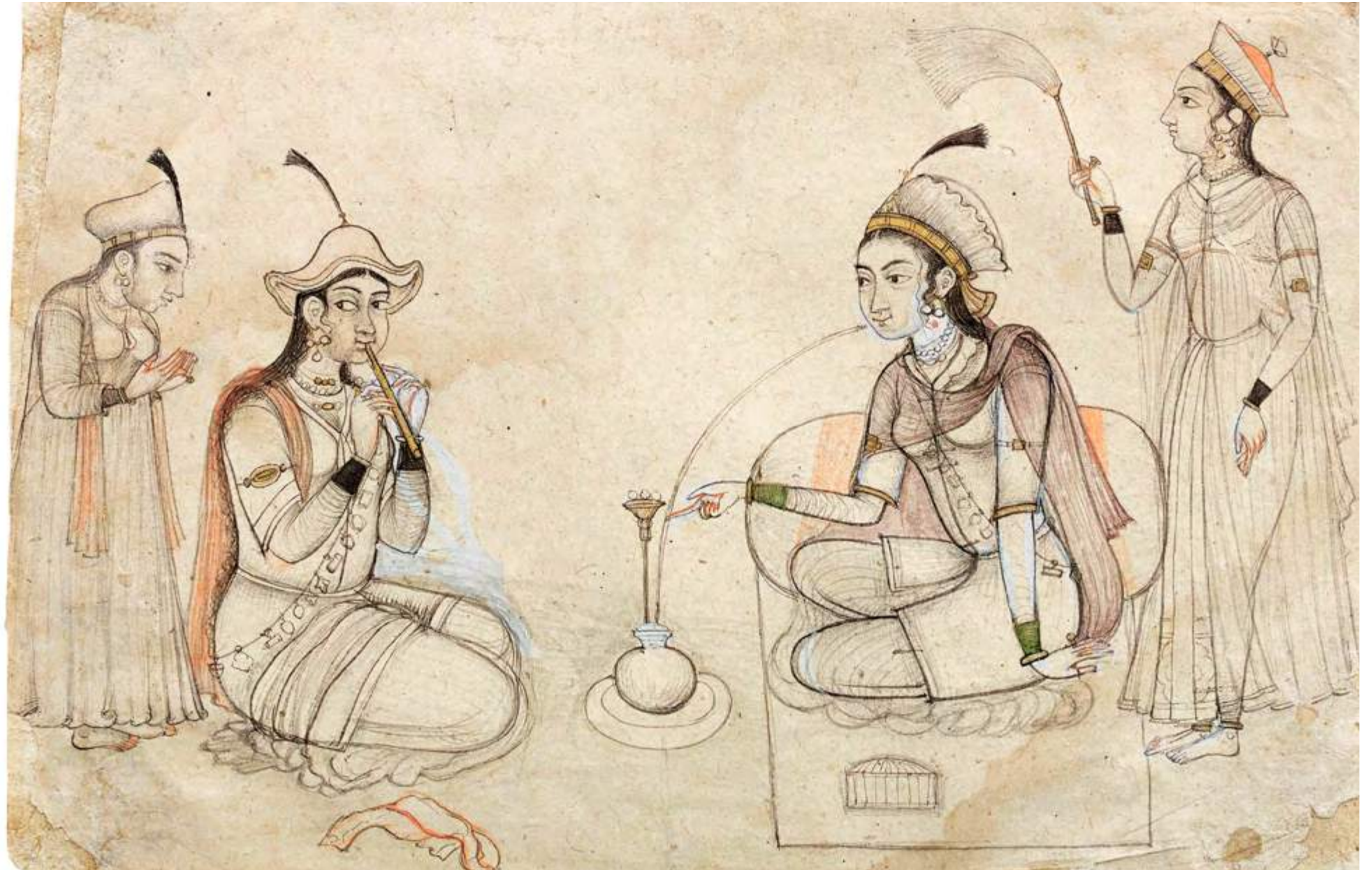
Collection of Tom Maschler, formed in the 1960s and 70s

Literature

Seyller, J., 'Deccani Elements in Early Pahari Painting' in Haidar, N., and Sardar, M., eds., *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323–1687*, Metropolitan Museum, New York, 2011, pp. 64–81

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



The monkeys search for Sita in the forest

Page from the *Kishkindha Kanda* of the *Ramayana*

By a master of Style III of the 'Shangri *Ramayana*'

Bahu or Kulu, 1700–10

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

Painting 30.4 × 18 cm

Folio 34.2 × 21.6 cm

Inscribed on the verso in *nagari*: *Kishkindha* 86, with the number again in *takri*

The monkeys led by Angada and Hanuman with their bear-king ally Jambavan have been sent by Sugriva and Rama to hunt for the abducted Sita in the southern quarter. Here they seem to have stripped the trees of their leaves as they search for her among these rocky hills rising from beside a stoney-bedded river.

The painting comes from the famous set of paintings known as the 'Shangri' *Ramayana* series that W.G. Archer thought was executed at Shangri, the find-spot of the whole series, in the eastern Punjab Hills state of Kulu, now Himachal Pradesh (Archer 1973, pp. 317–30). Archer discerned four major painting styles in the manuscript, of which this is the third. More recently, Goswamy and Fischer (1992, pp. 76–79) questioned this attribution to Kulu and assigned paintings in Archer's first two styles to Bahu near Jammu in the western group of hill states on the basis of stylistic affinities with a portrait of Raja Kripal Dev of Bahu (one that Archer thought was done by a Kulu artist linked to the Shangri series).

Style III of this dispersed series including these wonderfully humanized portraits of the monkeys is found mostly in the Book of *Kishkindha* (IV) and Book of Battles (VI). Archer comments: 'Notable are the impish treatment of the monkeys, the rioting

exuberance with which the trees are depicted and the bold gusto which is everywhere apparent' (1973, vol. I, p. 328). The vision in our painting of the defoliated trees contrasts dramatically with the more usual exuberance of the foliage and trees in this style (e.g. Archer 1976, nos. 49–50).

For discussion as to the disputed origin of the series, see among others Archer 1973, pp. 325–29; Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 76–91 (although they do not take a view on the place of origin of Styles III and IV); and Britschgi and Fischer 2008, pp. 12–14.

Provenance

Mandi royal collection

Private collection, Germany

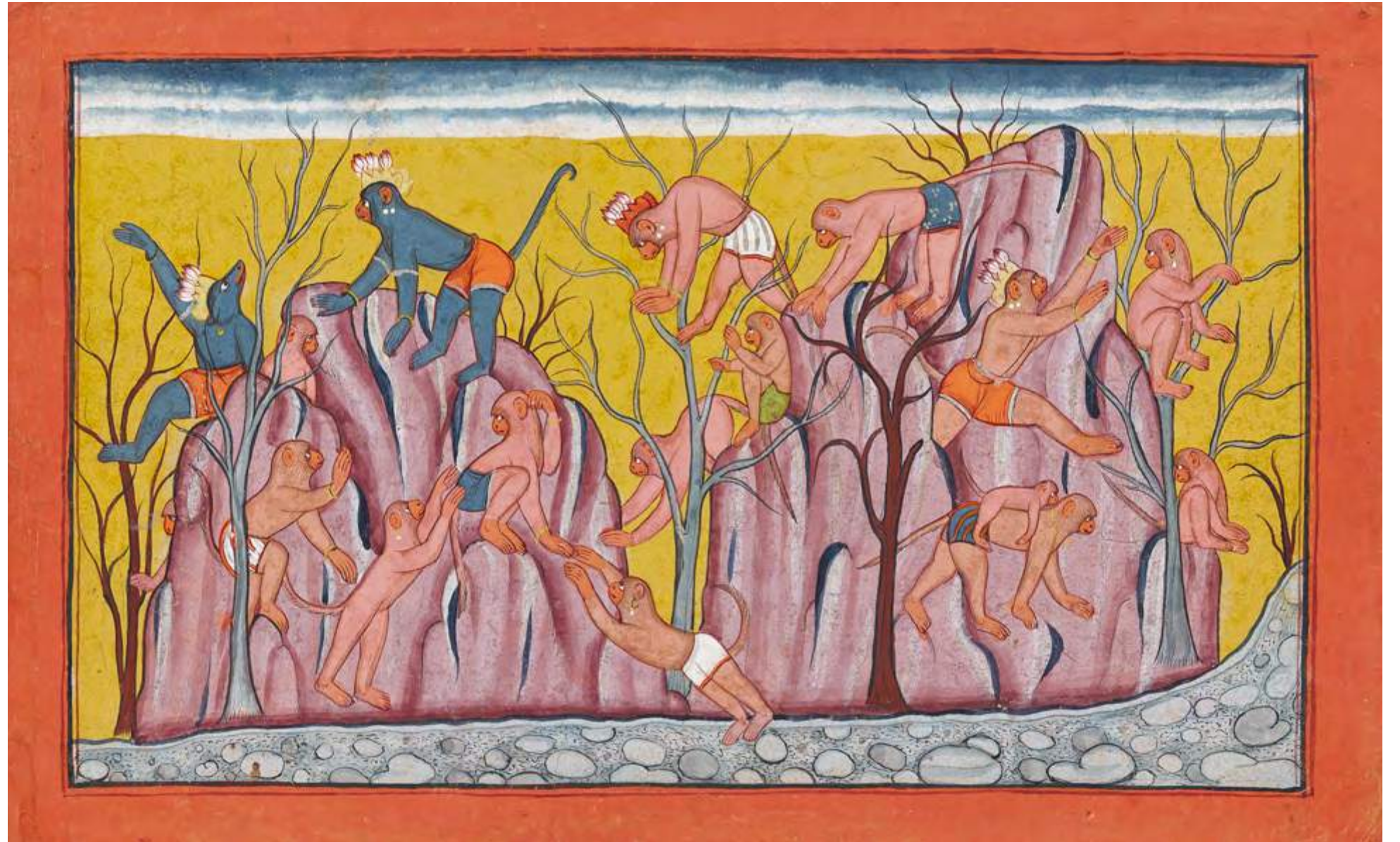
Literature

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

Archer, W.G., *Visions of Courtly India: the Archer Collection of Pahari Miniatures*, International Exhibitions Foundation, London, New York, 1976

Britschgi, J., and Fischer, E., *Rama und Sita: das Ramayana in der Malerei Indiens*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 2008

Goswamy, B.N., and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997





Two pages from a *Gitagovinda* series

Mandi, c. 1800

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

Painting 22.9 x 16cm

Folio: 30.7cm x 24cm

Mandi royal inventory stamp on cover sheets

27 Radha imagines being united with Krishna in the grove

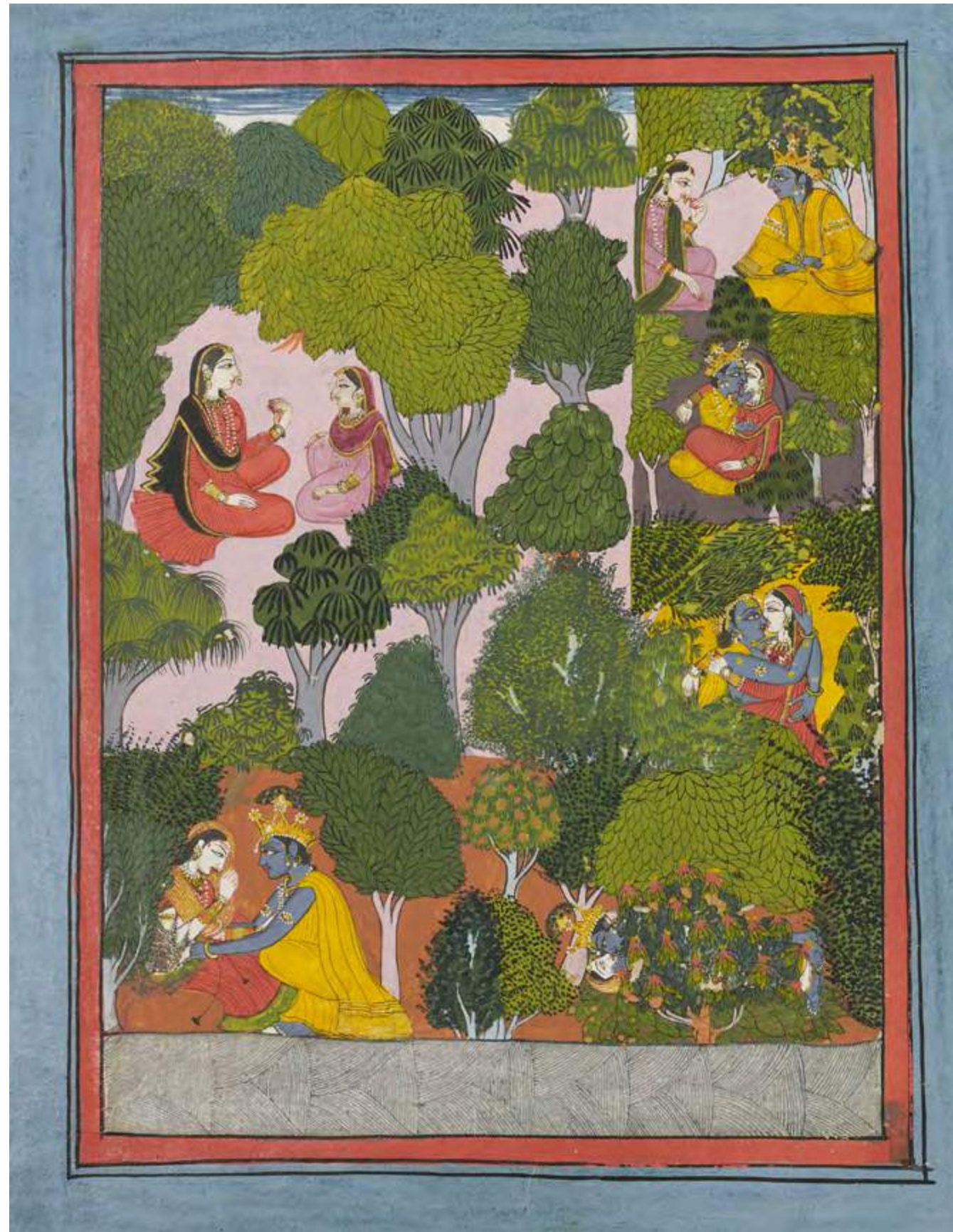
Inscribed on a cover sheet with the text of *Gitagovinda* II, 11-18, the folio number 23, and a Mandi inventory number. (For the translation of the verse, see Miller 1977, pp. 80-81)

Radha is on fire with longing for Krishna, who she thinks is constantly betraying her with other women, but nonetheless cannot contain her longing for him. Seated on the ground facing her friend, she tells her to bring Krishna to her and describes what it will be like when they meet and make love. The artist realises these fantasies in his representations of the two lovers together starting from the top right in rectangles with different back-ground colours – the same pink as the main ground, then grey, yellow and finally pinky-red. Their actual union in the bottom right he hides discreetly behind a tree. The figures are surrounded by the flowering trees of spring time, here painted in sage green and slate blue, contrasting with the vivid tones of Krishna's yellow *jama* and Radha's red gown.

28 Krishna and Radha are united in the grove

Inscribed on a cover sheet with the text of *Gitagovinda* XI, 32, the folio number 62, and a Mandi inventory number. (For the translation of the verse, see Miller 1977, p. 121)

It is night-time in the groves of Brindaban and Radha's friends have brought her to where Krishna is waiting for her. Seated on the ground facing each other, the lovers eye each other, Krishna boldly but Radha from under her lashes. They are surrounded by the flowering trees of spring time, here painted in sage green and slate blue, contrasting with the vivid tones of Krishna's yellow *jama* and Radha's red gown. This painting actually has a landscape of green grass dotted with tufts and a grey-blue sky with thunderous clouds. The verse is the penultimate one in the 11th canto, when Radha has finally brought herself to meet Krishna in the grove.





While most of the Pahari styles were transformed in the later 18th century by the sons and grandsons of Manaku and Nainsukh into versions of the Guler and Kangra styles, the same does not seem to have happened in Mandi until considerably later. Raja Isvari Sen (1788-1826) for many years (1791 or 1793 to 1805) had been kept captive at the court of Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra. There he came into contact with the latest trends in Pahari painting. He took one painter of this school named Sajnu back to Mandi with him and there he initiated a transformation in Mandi painting from about 1810 that brought in some of the more lyrical elements of the Guler/Kangra style and in particular their facial profiles.

In the meantime Mandi painting had still retained its strangely squat figures with their distinctive sharp nosed profiles. Colours such as the dull browns and slate blues survive from the earlier style which had been used mostly for portraits of the rulers, but are now joined by hot colours such as the vivid oranges, reds and yellows seen in these paintings. Since the state was strongly Shaivite and also worshipped the Devi (although formally dedicated to Krishna as Madho Rai) there was little incentive for the production of illustrated Vaishnava texts such as the *Bhagavata Purana* or *Ramayana* although a few pages are known from such manuscripts (Archer 1973, Mandi no. 27 and Archer 1968, no. 66). These *Gitagovinda* pages join the *Ramayana* pages that appeared on the London art market in 2010 from an obviously extensive series and are therefore evidence for considerable changes in attitude prior to the arrival of Sajnu in Mandi around 1808.

Provenance

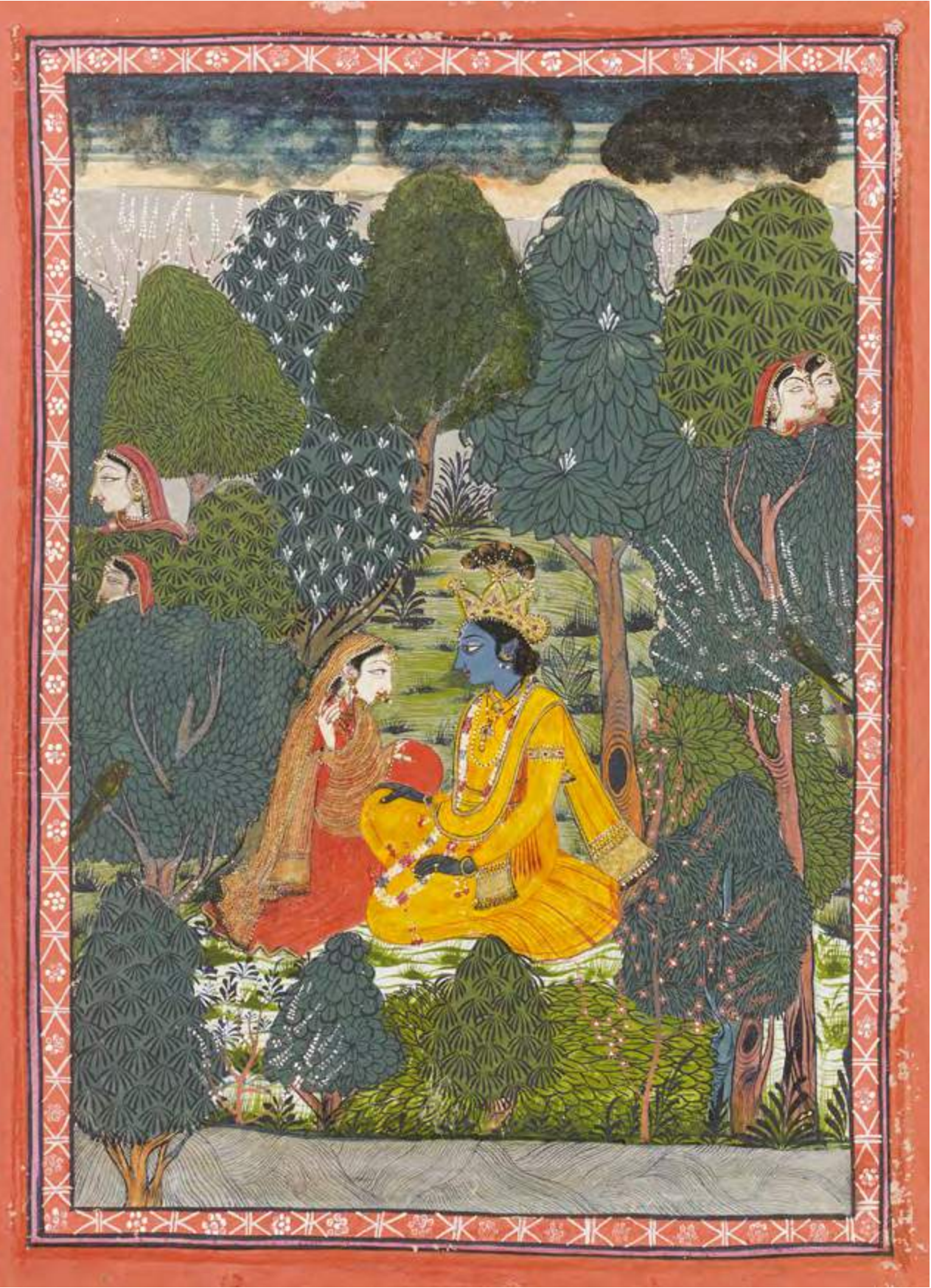
Mandi royal collection
Private collection, Germany

Literature

Archer , W.G., *Rajput Miniatures from the Collection of Edwin Binney, 3rd*, Portland Art Museum, Portland, 1968

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

Miller, B.S., *Love Song of the Dark Lord*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1977





The demons Madhu and Kaitabha attack Brahma as he emerges from Vishnu's navel

Page from a *Devi Mahatmya* series

Kangra, c. 1810-20

Opaque pigments with gold on paper

Painting 13.9 x 21.3 cm

Folio 15.69 x 23.5 cm

Mandi royal inventory stamp on cover sheet

The Sanskrit hymn *Devi Mahatmya*, the great text summing up the creation and worship of the Goddess, is one of the most frequently illustrated of Puranic texts, particularly in the Punjab Hills. Like all Puranic texts, a sage, in this instance Medhas, tells the story of the Goddess and her triumph over different demons to interested hearers, in this case two distressed travellers: Suratha the king, exiled from his own country, and the merchant Samadhi, who was betrayed by his family. The first part of the text is devoted to the moment of creation, when Brahma is emerging as here on a lotus from Vishnu's navel and the demons Madhu and Kaitabha arise to attack him. Brahma in the *Devi Mahatmya* is made to pray to the Goddess Yoganidra who resides in Vishnu's eyes, to awaken Vishnu and make him defeat the demons.

Various series of this key text were prepared in Guler, including a series divided between the Lahore Museum and Chandigarh Museum and dated 1781 (Aijazuddin 1977, pp. 29–33, illustrated Guler 41i-xxxiv). For an analysis of this key text illustrated with the 1781 series from Guler of the *Devi Mahatmya* (in the Lahore Museum) by Thomas B. Coburn, see Dehejia 1999, pp. 37-57. Other series were also made between 1780 and 1800

(Goswamy and Fischer 2011, p. 691). Each follows the same iconography, with a numbering on the recto so that the scenes are much the same in the different sets. Guler artists took preparatory drawings to other studios in the Punjab Hills including Kangra, where the same iconography was also followed, as in a complete series from about 1820, in which the painting of this creation story is very much the same as here (Losty 2016, no. 6), save for the addition of lotuses floating on the cosmic ocean in our version.

Provenance

Mandi royal collection

Private collection, Germany

Literature

Aijazuddin, F. S., *Pahari Paintings and Sikh Portraits in the Lahore Museum*, Sotheby Parke Bernet, London, 1977

Dehejia, V., *Devi the Great Goddess: Female Divinity in South Asian Art*, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 1999

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

Losty, J.P., *A Picture Book of the Devi Mahatmya*, Simon Ray, London, 2016





Shiva and Parvati on Mount Kailash

Kangra, 1820–40

Opaque pigments and gold on paper, within a blue border with a scroll of flowers and an outer surround of pink with gold and red rules

Painting 24.4 × 18.1 cm

Folio 31 × 25.5 cm

Shiva and Parvati are engaged in the mundane domestic tasks of any married couple. He sits like an ascetic, naked apart from his waistcloth and a cloth thrown over his crossed legs, which he is supposed to be mending – the needle ought to be in his raised left hand. A snake is wrapped round his neck and body, rather like a sacred thread, and the crescent moon is in his hair. Parvati sits beside him, one knee raised, the other leg extended under her blue skirt. She wears a green blouse and a diaphanous *dupatta* round her head and shoulders. She is busy threading human heads on a thread to serve as her garland, which is kept taut by being wrapped in the middle round her painted big toe. Their son Karttikeya is helping her and holds the other end of the thread. Their other son Ganesh sits by his father holding on to his snake and sharing his cloth. Their various vehicles – bull, lion, peacock and mouse – are round about them. They sit upon a white and rocky hillside, no doubt intended for Kailash, while a lake stretches out beyond, and gentle green hills dotted with trees are reflective of the Pahari hills. They lead to a gold sky heavy with white and pink clouds.

The painting is a later version of an original attributed to Nainsukh formerly in the Archer collection and now in the Eberhard and Barbara Fischer collection

in the Museum Rietberg (Archer 1976, no. 22; Gowamy 1997, no. 89). Other versions are also known including one in the V&A (Archer 1973, no. 16).

Provenance

Private collection, England

Literature

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

Archer, W.G., *Visions of Courtly India*, International Exhibitions Foundation, New York/London, 1976

Goswamy, B.N., *Nainsukh of Guler*, Museum Rietberg, Zurich, 1997, Artibus Asiae Suppl. XLI





The Demon Dundubhi and Bali the Monkey-king

Pahari, Kangra, 1830–40

Opaque pigments and gold on paper

Painting 25.8 × 38.6 cm

Folio 34 × 46.5 cm

The artist has convincingly divided the composition of his picture into two through his use of a great screen of rocks that rise across the centre of the painting. Such devices traditionally divide up not just the space but also the time in Indian continuous narrative techniques. Here in the top right Sugriva is telling Rama and Lakshmana about the prowess of his brother Bali who has usurped him as king of the monkeys. He is narrating how Dundubhi a buffalo demon challenged Bali to fight and how after Bali had won and killed the demon, he threw the corpse a hundred leagues over the mountains so that it landed in the hermitage of the sage Matanga. This was an unfortunate occurrence as the aggrieved sage cursed the perpetrator so that his head would explode if he ever set foot on Matanga's mountain. That is why Sugriva has taken refuge on that same mountain, where he is safe from his brother.

Sugriva here has with him a whole coterie of crowned monkey chiefs as well as Jambavan the king of the bears, which is a little premature in the story. Bali is enjoying sitting outside on a portable throne beside a river with his palace of Kiskindha rising on the other side. Dundubhi, the buffalo demon, is spying on Bali from behind the rocks before challenging him to fight and prove who is the strongest in the world. This was at a time when Sugriva and his brother were

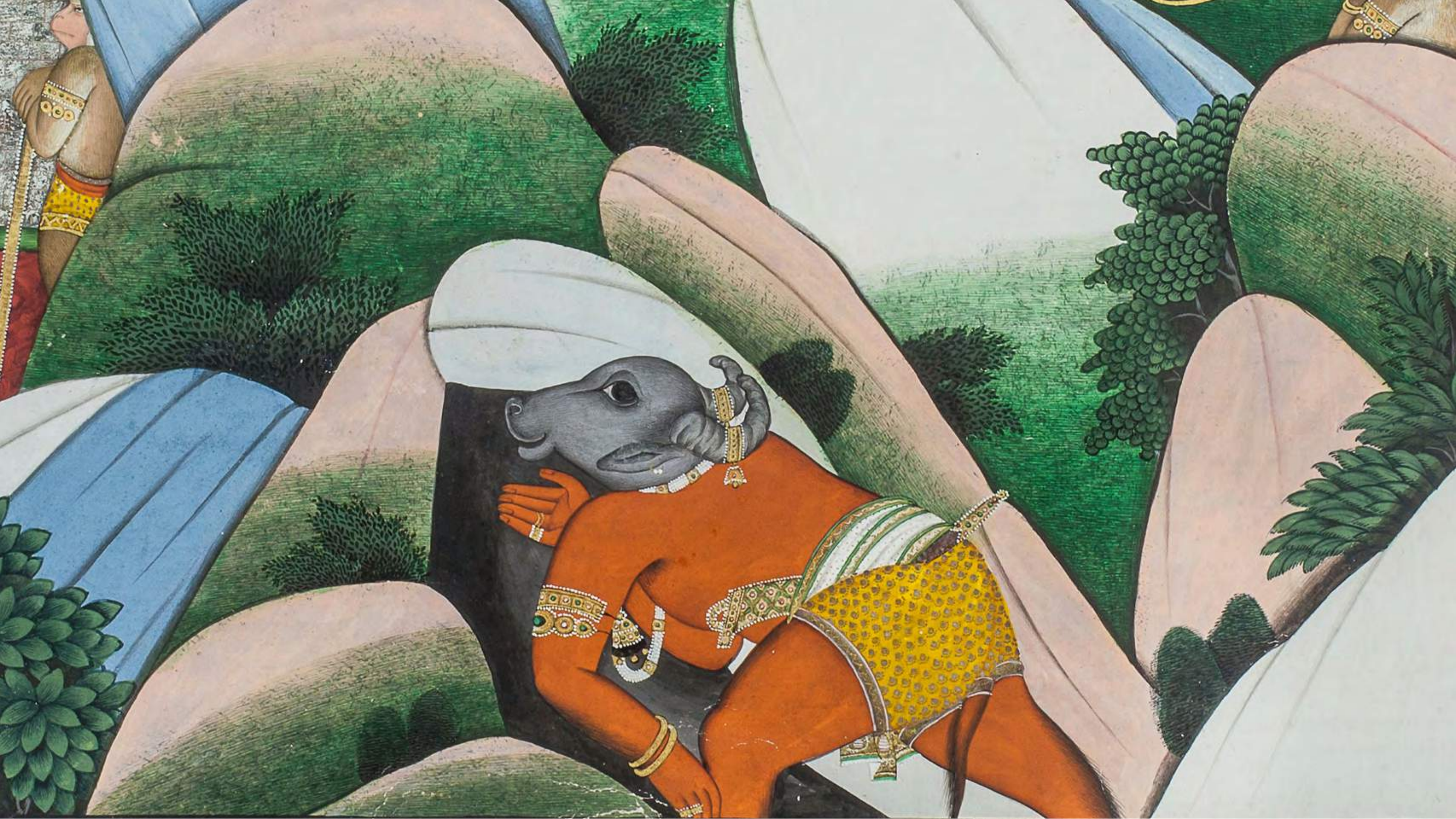
still friends and Sugriva is imploring Bali not to fight.

The artist still deploys the whole armoury of lyrical devices typical of Kangra painting. While his studies of the monkeys and the demon are very effective, the virulent green suggests a date in the mid-19th century.

Provenance

Private collection, England





The demon Ruru spies on Shiva and Parvati

A leaf from a dispersed *Shiva Purana*

Kangra, 1830–40

Opaque watercolour and gold on paper

Painting 17.5 × 25.3 cm

Folio 19.7 × 27.7 cm

The god Shiva and his consort Parvati are resting in a cave in the Himalayas. He is depicted reclining at his ease and resting his head on his upraised hand which also holds his trident, one leg fully extended, the other pulled up, with just a cheetah or leopard skin covering his nakedness. He seems deep in thought and is not looking at his consort. She on the other hand bends her tender, even quizzical gaze at him. Whatever is bothering her husband, she thinks is not too important. Siva's vehicle the bull Nandi is just visible over the rocks, his hump and back covered by a rich brocade.

The source of Shiva's thoughtfulness is presumably the demon Ruru, whose back alone we can see. He has pulled the rocks at the entrance to the cave apart and peers in, his back muscles straining with the effort. The cave is within Kailasa, whose white and grey rocks mysteriously covered with flowers rear up all around the divine couple. In the distance are lesser more rounded green and pink hills and a gold and blue sky.

Literature

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

Goswamy, B.N. and Fischer, E., *Pahari Masters: Court Painters of Northern India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1997, pp 314–16, nos 131–36

Losty, J.P. and Galloway, F., *Sringar: an Exhibition celebrating Divine and Erotic Love*, Francesca Galloway, London 2007

