

**PAINTINGS  
FOR THE PAHARI RAJAS**

Francesca Galloway





## FOREWORD

Almost fifty years have passed since I first started looking at Indian miniatures. When I think of the flow of masterworks, the major collections formed, dispersed and reformed throughout my career I realise that we have been witness to and part of a Golden Age for collecting Indian miniatures.

Unlike most areas of European art, this is a field where, since the 1950s, many great paintings and some masterpieces have come to the market. These masterpieces continue to occasionally reappear today.

The other important aspect of this area of collecting has been the advancement of scholarship and the shift in connoisseurship and taste, from quite a narrow focus – the pinnacle of Mughal painting in the 16th & 17th centuries – to a more appreciative insight into Deccani and later Mughal painting, and, especially, into Rajput painting. This phenomenon began in the 1970s, but has truly taken off since the 1990s. It is really landmark exhibitions that we have to thank for the dissemination of this knowledge and the enactment of this shift: *The Indian Heritage* at the V&A in 1982, *India: Art and Culture, 1300–1900* at the Met in 1985, *Pahari Masters* at the Rietberg in 1992 and *Masters of Indian Painting* at the Rietberg and then the Met in 2011, to name some particularly key events. Of course, there have been numerous wonderful exhibits showcasing the art of the Subcontinent or focusing on more specific topics, but these four exhibitions were ground-breaking in opening our eyes to important aspects of Indian art that had hitherto remained unexplored. They changed the direction of scholarship, and later, the market. That said, the scholarship of Indian painting, particularly Pahari painting, still has a long way to go, which offers up exciting challenges for scholars to tackle. In our catalogue introduction, J.P. Losty draws our attention to some of the central themes and puzzles offered by the study of Pahari painting, and proposes some characteristically incisive ideas.

I want to take this opportunity to thank J.P. Losty for his authoritative research, B.N. Goswamy for his continuously generous academic support and Vijay Sharma for his important translation work. As ever, Misha Anikst has created an inventive and beautiful design. Furthermore, we would like to thank Nick Barnard, Mary Galloway, Helen Loveday, Shilpa and Praful Shah, Richard Valencia, and Rosine Vuille for their invaluable help. Danielle Beilby and Christine Ramphal have worked with me on this publication from start to finish.

I would like to add that without the help, encouragement and advice I have received from Robert Skelton, Eberhard Fischer, Stuart Cary Welch, Jagdish Mittal and our other clients, we would not be here doing what we do today!

Francesca Galloway  
February 2020

Titles with \*  
indicate life-size  
illustrations

Detail cat. 15



# AN INTRODUCTION TO PAHARI PAINTING

J.P. Losty

fig. 1  
The Gods exchange their attributes  
By the Early Master at the Court of  
Mandi, 1650–75. Private collection

fig. 2  
The lady who blames the cat for  
scratches inflicted by her secret lover  
'Early' *Rasamanjari* series of  
c. 1660–1670. © Victoria and Albert  
Museum, London. I.S.20-1958

The modern Indian states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal occupy an area roughly 300 miles in length stretching from Jammu south-eastwards to Garhwal, and 100 miles in breadth between the Siwaliks abutting the plains and the eternal snows of the Himalaya. This area comprised the group of small Rajput states which possessed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the means and the genius to create some of the greatest of Indian paintings. For the Rajas who chose to spend on the patronage of painters, there is no single answer to the question of how they could afford to do so, other than to point to the trade routes from the plains up to Kashmir and to Tibet, which enabled some Rajas to collect taxes, and to the general income to be had from taxing the people's trade and agricultural profit. And, of course, there was always the traditional Rajput occupation of war, which enabled some of the states such as Jammu and Kangra at various times to collect tribute from their neighbours. Portraiture was always of importance for those who supported the arts, but so also was the illustration of manuscripts, whether of sacred texts relevant to the particular religious affiliation of the Raja and the state, or of more poetic texts that allowed the artist to express the emotions or *rasas* that underlay Indian painting.

There must always have been artists in the Punjab hills illustrating texts once paper was introduced to supplant birchbark and palm leaves as a medium for manuscripts, an innovation that made meaningful narrative painting achievable, but nothing from these hills has survived other than the Shimla Museum's *Devi Mahatmya* from the mid-sixteenth century, painted in a variant of the Early Rajput style from the plains of Rajasthan. But then, a century later, we find great creative outbursts in some of these states. In Mandi, we have a highly Mughalised style



fig. 1

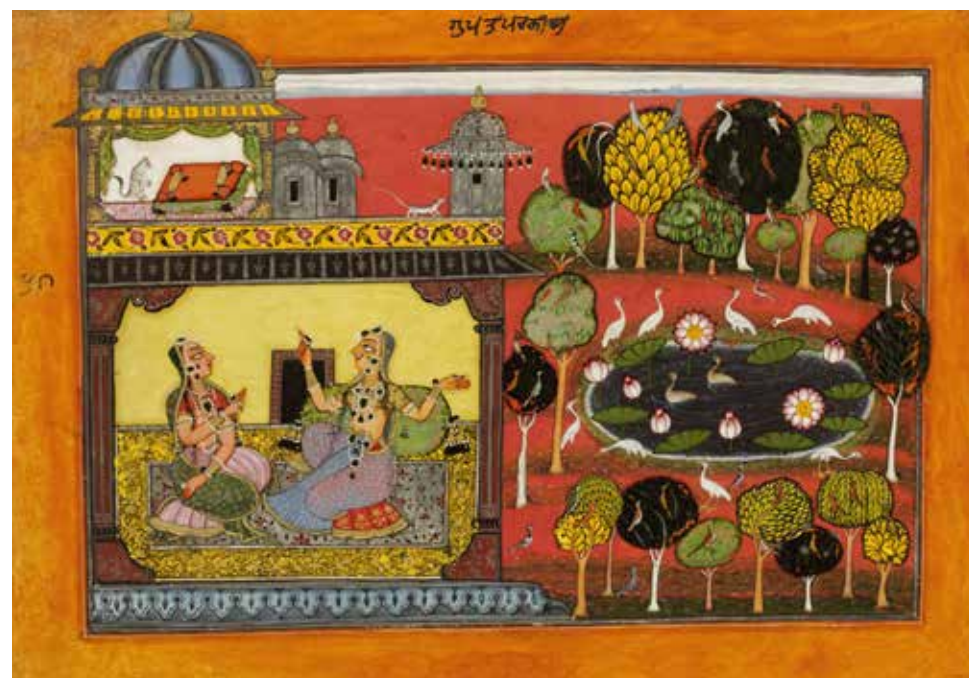


fig. 2



fig. 3

fig. 3  
*Tailangi ragini* – Folio from a *Ragamala*  
series  
By an artist working in Nurpur or  
Basohli, c. 1680–85. Tapi collection;  
formerly in the Eva & Konrad Seitz  
collection

cat. 2  
*Kumbha putra of Shri raga* – Folio from  
a *Ragamala* series  
Basohli, c. 1690–95



cat. 2

(fig. 1; Losty 2008, cat. 34) used for illustrating Hindu texts in Sanskrit, whereas in Nurpur and Basohli a brilliant, totally Rajput conceptualised style emerges, that in spirit seems to have descended straight from the Shimla *Devi Mahatmya*, and is used for imaging the *dhyanas* devoted to the esoteric forms of the *Devi*, as well as illustrating classic texts of Sanskrit poetics, such as the *Rasamanjari* of Bhanudatta (fig. 2).

All the lower hill states were incorporated into the Mughal empire and some of their rulers were required to attend court and to perform military duties, such as Raja Jagat Singh of Nurpur who was closely allied to Jahangir, so why, we wonder, did some states such as Mandi and Bilaspur produce Mughalised paintings and others including Nurpur and Mankot traditional Rajput ones? We do not have firm answers to these questions, but we can see the results later in the century.

Despite its close involvement with the Mughals, Nurpur kept stylistically aloof from the Imperial style, and its family of artists (connected with *Devidasa* of Nurpur) spread their influence to neighbouring states such as Basohli. A beautiful dispersed *Ragamala* connected with this artistic family epitomises its brilliantly coloured conceptual style, and one of its paintings has a date that allows us the rare luxury in Pahari painting of having something precise to hang a series on, in this case 1688 (fig. 3). Cat. 2 from another *Ragamala* series is a decade or so later and preserves much of the élan and ambience of the earlier set.

One of the most intractable problems presented in the study of Pahari painting is the great series known as the 'Shangri' *Ramayana* (cats. 4–5). First placed at its find spot at Shangri in Kulu by Archer in 1973, who analysed its component parts with great subtlety and discerned four separate styles in the series, it was removed to Bahu now in Jammu by Goswamy and Fischer in 1992, on the grounds of the resemblance between the portrait of Raja Dasharatha and that of Raja Kirpal Dev of Bahu. Since neither Kulu nor Bahu have any known earlier style from which the farouche extravagance of Style I of the Shangri series could have developed, it is clearly the work of imported artists from Basohli or Nurpur. Once in their new studio, these



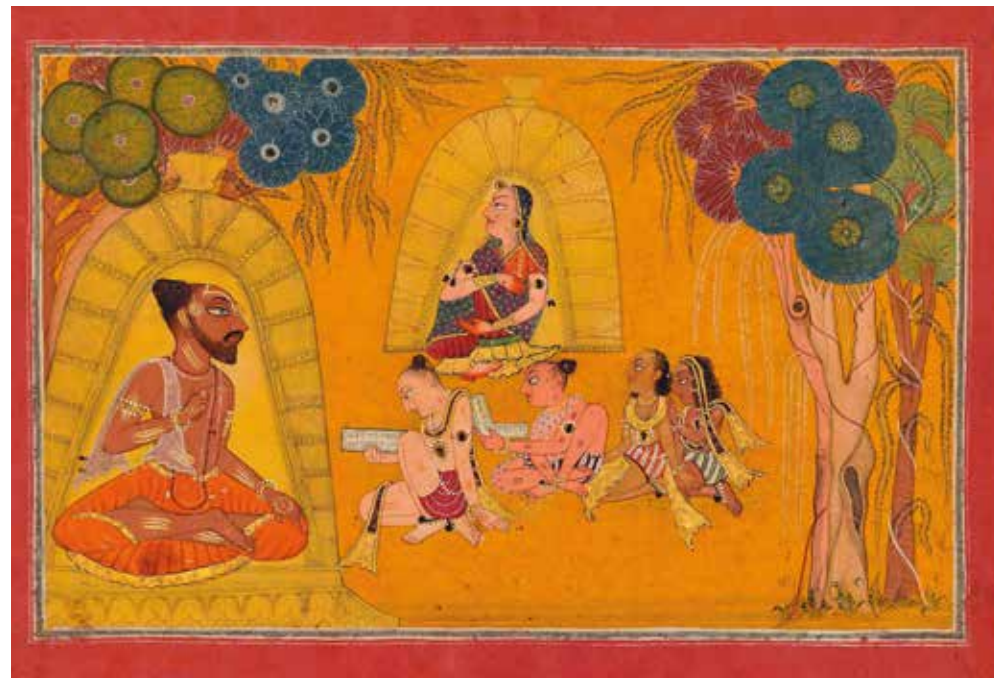


fig. 4

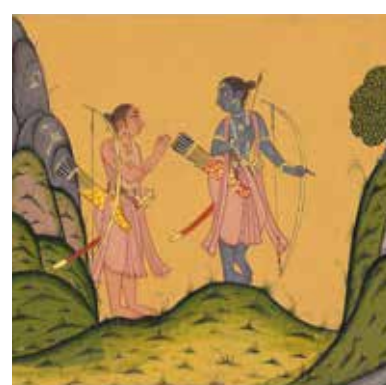
fig. 4  
Sita, Lava and Kusha in the hermitage  
of Valmiki – Folio from Book VII of a  
Ramayana series  
By the Master of Style I of the ‘Shangri’  
Ramayana, 1670–8. Eva and Konrad Seitz  
collection

artists gave way to some of their wilder impulses. The artists of styles I (fig. 4) and II (cat. 4) of the Shangri series both have a wild sense of spatial organisation in their compositions, sometimes creating believable settings for their characters and sometimes dispensing with spatial realism, and showing both traits on the same page. Their work displays vivid characterisation and an intensely expressive use of colour. The artists of what Archer termed Style IV (cat. 5), in the later books of this Ramayana series, were also ‘imported’ from other states such as Bilaspur. The paintings within this Style IV series obviously differ slightly, some giving more importance to landscape elements, with others ignoring them in the traditional way. The artist of cat. 5 is a particularly fine one, giving real expression to his characters and setting them in believable but still conceptual landscapes.

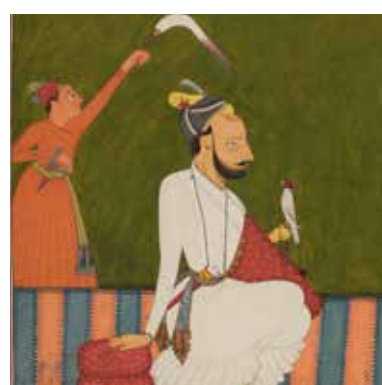
Various portraits of the Jammu (now Bahu) Rajas have now been identified, some of which are contemporary with Style I of the ‘Shangri’ Ramayana, while others are later. A fine addition to this corpus is a portrait of Mian Ghansar Dev, a prince of Jammu (1720–30) (cat. 1), in which elements of Style I and II of the Shangri series still linger.



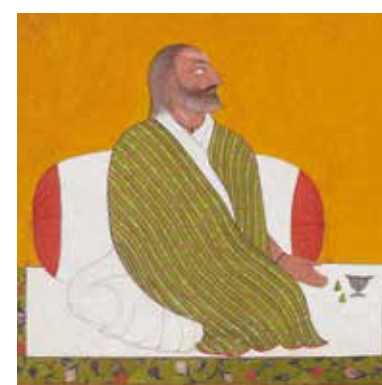
cat. 4



cat. 5



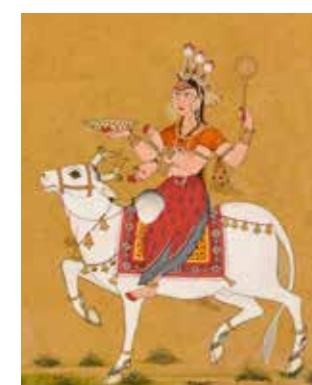
cat. 1



cat. 3



cat. 7



cat. 10



cat. 9

These fairly wild and conceptual styles of the early 18th century continued in several other states such as Chamba, which specialised in Dashavatara sets of the ten avatars of Vishnu, and Mankot. The artist given the sobriquet ‘Master at the Court of Mankot, possibly Meju’ by Goswamy and Fischer in 1992 set the style at that court for three generations of artists. He and his workshop produced brilliantly conceptual portraits (cats. 3 and 7), iconographic studies (cat. 10) and also turned their hands to the illustration of equally magnificent versions of the Bhagavata Purana. A Bhagavata Purana with large landscape shaped pages from around 1700 is endowed with confident, ‘swaggering elation’ as Archer put it. The same artist re-imagined the text a decade or so later in a vertical format as here (cat. 9), often tightening the compositions to their considerable benefit. The Mankot studio then turned its hand to a Ramayana of which only Book IV seems to have survived (cat. 8) from 1720–30. Opinion is divided as to whether it is from Mankot or Nurpur, but regardless of its provenance, it is one of the great Pahari series, both beautiful and full of energy, as the monkeys confront the various problems which beset them in their search for the missing Sita.

After the 1720s, however, artists began to control such extravagances in the interests of producing calmer and subtler works of art and we can sense a growing influence of the Mughal style from the court of the Emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1719–1748) on the styles of the hills, in particular that of Guler, a small state that hitherto seems to have had no noticeable artistic tradition. It is here that one of the most important artistic family dynasties in the Pahari region emerges. Goswamy and Fischer in 1992 demonstrated an unbreakable artistic and familial connection between Pandit Seu of Guler in the 1720s, his sons Manaku and Nainsukh in the period 1730–60, and their six sons in the next generation, whom they have termed the ‘First generation after Manaku and Nainsukh’.

Whether or not Pandit Seu and his sons Manaku and Nainsukh had visited Delhi, all three artists incorporated Mughal features into their work, particularly of course in the case of the two sons. Manaku was a highly gifted and respected artist, though more conservative than his brother Nainsukh, and he was





fig. 5

fig. 5  
Two spies disguised as monkeys approach the army of Rama – Folio from the large-formatted *Siege of Lanka* series  
Manaku of Guler, around 1725.  
Permanent loan from Eberhard and Barbara Fischer, Museum Rietberg Zurich © Rainer Wolfsberger, Museum Rietberg



fig. 6

fig. 6  
The pregnant Diti contemplating her sorrow – Page from the 'Small Guler' *Bhagavata Purana* series  
Attributed to the Guler artist Manaku, c. 1750. Eva and Konrad Seitz collection

responsible for the monumental '*Siege of Lanka*' series c. 1725 (fig. 5), the *Gitagovinda* of 1730, and the '*Small*' *Bhagavata Purana* series of c. 1740 (fig. 6).

His work possesses great dignity and intensity but only towards the very end of his life does his style begin to reflect the new naturalistic trends that come from Mughal painting, as in '*Hide-and Seek: Krishna Playing a Game with the Gopas (Cowherds)*' in the Kronos collection (McInerney 2016, no 76), with the total and expressive freedom seen in the boys' stances and the naturalistic landscape. It may be compared in composition with a painting in the Habighorst collection (cat. 13), which deals perhaps only slightly later c. 1765 with the same episode of the cowherd boys and Krishna playing at night.

It was Manaku's younger brother Nainsukh who became the foremost and most innovative painter of his time. The luminous qualities of his work and the influence he wielded over the next generations, not only over his own family workshop but throughout the entire region, make him the most remarkable of the Pahari painters. Nainsukh was more interested than Manaku in Mughal portraiture and able to incorporate many of its idioms, naturalism and immediacy into his own work after he took service with Raja Balwant Singh in Jasrota, who was to become his great patron (fig. 7). Much of the work he made for this Raja bears witness to idiosyncratic, keenly observed intimate moments within court life depicted with extraordinary insight and sympathy.



cat. 13

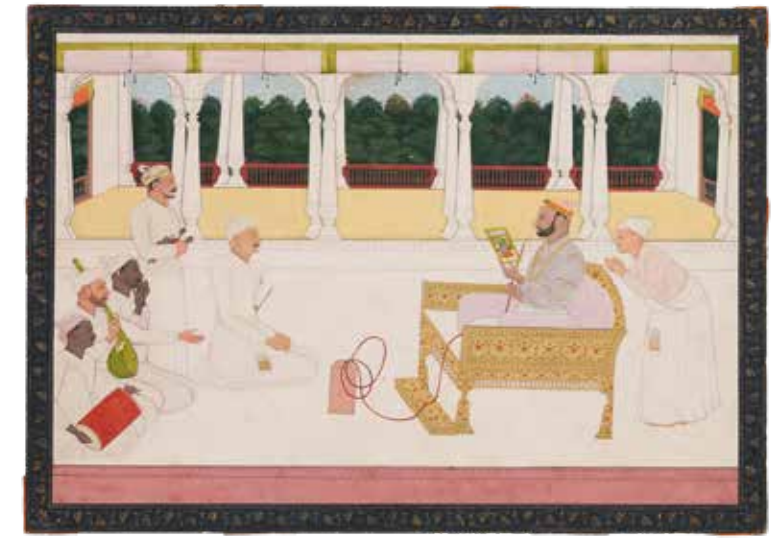


fig. 7

fig. 7  
Raja Balwant Singh of Jasrota contemplating a painting  
Attributed to Nainsukh of Guler, c. 1748. Gift of Balthasar and Nanni Reinhart, Eberhard and Barbara Fischer, Museum Rietberg Zurich © Rainer Wolfsberger, Museum Rietberg

Balwant Singh was forced to leave Jasrota sometime in the 1750s in circumstances that are far from clear and took up residence in Guler. Nainsukh obviously went with him since he was still producing portraits of his patron right up to the latter's death in 1763 and he was among those who went to Haridwar that year with the ashes of Balwant Singh. It was during these years that he and his brother Manaku saw more of each other and their respective nephews, and so it was then and in the years following that Nainsukh was in a position to influence the younger generation in their artistic development, as we will further elucidate below.

After Balwant Singh's death, Nainsukh took service with his late patron's nephew, Raja Amrit Pal of Basohli, and seems to have remained there until his own death in 1778. Here we come to one of the great cruxes of Pahari painting. What was Nainsukh doing during the fifteen years he worked for Amrit Pal from 1763-1778? Fewer than a dozen paintings have been identified as coming from this period. And what was his connection exactly with the next wave of Guler/Basohli innovation, the great manuscript series of the *Gitagovinda*, *Bhagavata Purana* and *Ramayana*, which have been conventionally dated 1775-80? The two problems are of course connected.

Nainsukh was involved with the design of the compositions of the *Gitagovinda* seemingly from 1765, for the sanguine underdrawings are thought to be in his hand (cat. 14), which suggests that he began this work while working for Amrit Pal of Basohli. This was the ruler who accompanied his uncle Balwant Singh's ashes to the Ganges at Haridwar in 1763 along with Nainsukh and either then or later the same year set off on a pilgrimage to Puri, on the eastern seaboard of Orissa, taking the artist with him. The god's temple of Jagannath at Puri was the most important Krishna temple in the whole of India, and there Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* had been sung and danced to every day since the year 1499. It is possibly the religious fervour instilled or awakened by such a sight that might have prompted Amrit Pal to commission an illustrated manuscript of the text from his artist Nainsukh. Being unused to illustrating religious or poetic texts, Nainsukh set about the task after his return from Puri in about 1765, originating the concept and design with his red sanguine drawings. These were then worked on and painted by his sons and





cat. 15

cat. 15  
The sakhi points out to Radha that Krishna is waiting for her – Folio from the 'Second Guler' or 'Tehri-Garhwal' *Gitagovinda* By a Master of the first Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh of Guler, 1765–70



fig. 8

fig. 8  
The wives of the serpent-king beg a triumphant Krishna to spare their husband Kaliya – Folio from the 'Modi' *Bhagavata Purana* series By a Master of the first Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh of Guler, c.1770. Private collection; formerly in the Ludwig Habighorst collection

fig. 9  
Preparation for the Exile – Folio from Book II of a *Ramayana* series, The 'Second Guler' *Ramayana* First Part By a Master of the first Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh of Guler, c. 1770–75. Museum Rietberg A7, promised gift of Eva and Konrad Seitz

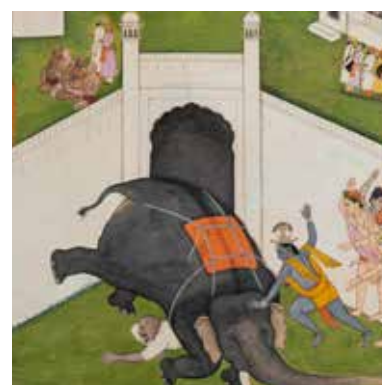
nephews – the so-called 'First Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh'. Cat. 15, one of the finest paintings from the finished series, embodies all the great charm and elegance of the new style, with its beautiful and elegant women and lovely receding landscape, while cat. 16, a rare scene of action from this series, is slightly eccentric in its composition involving architecture, and is original in its very high viewpoint.

Now that we have distanced ourselves from Archer's 1973 theory connecting all three Vaishnava manuscripts to the preparations for the marriage of Sansar Chand in Kangra in 1781 (see Losty 2017, 'Introduction' pp. 28–9), why, we wonder, must we wait until 1775 before work began on this *Gitagovinda*, when Nainsukh's underdrawings are being dated 1765? And likewise for the other two series. It is for this reason that we are dating these three series 1765–75, and we see Nainsukh's imagination at work in all of them: first the *Gitagovinda* 1765–70, then the *Bhagavata Purana* c. 1770 (fig. 8) and finally the *Ramayana* 1770–75 (fig. 9).

Although there are no paintings by Manaku or Nainsukh in this catalogue, Manaku's influence can be seen in the 'Large Guler-Basohli' *Bhagavata Purana* (cat. 11), ascribed to his son Fattu, while cats. 12–17 show more of Nainsukh's influence. Cats. 12 & 13 are two of the most important paintings in the Habighorst collection, both presaging in style as well as subject matter the paintings of the three great manuscript series.



cat. 14



cat. 16



fig. 9

When considering the third of this literary group, the *Ramayana*, the whole series is remarkable for its imaginative reconstruction of the world of the epic. Unlike the contemporary *Gitagovinda* and *Bhagavata Purana*, the artists of the *Ramayana* take a less involved and more detached view, preferring to draw their relatively small figures from a high viewpoint (fig. 9).

This gives the series an epic sweep that is absent from the more detailed and involved erotic imagery needed for the other two series and also adds to the pathos of the story, since it is even more obvious that Rama and his wife and brother are children still as they wander in the forest. The *Ramayana* was prepared in two campaigns. A second campaign involved Books V and VI, the *Sundara-* and *Yuddha-*kandas, which were completed somewhat later than the first three books, apparently over a longer period 1790–1810 (cats. 18–19).

Whether these manuscripts were prepared in Basohli for Amrit Pal by a team under the supervision of Nainsukh or whether his sons and nephews visited him from Guler and elsewhere to obtain guidance in the designs, it is impossible at the moment to say. The great patron Govardhan Chand of Guler was alive until 1773 and could have been involved in commissioning them along with his relative Amrit Pal. There are also the other series to consider done in this new style, the *Ragamala*, *Baramasa*, *Satsai* of Bihari, which is generally thought to be by Fattu (cat. 17), all of



cat. 11



cat. 12



which we are dating here 1775–85. Other series such as the *Sudama-charita*, *Usha-Aniruddha* and the *Rukminiharana* seem linked to Chamba and to the presence of the third of Nainsukh's sons, Nikka, at that court. Then there is the large series of *Nala-Damayanti* paintings and drawings. Even when advancing the date of the three great Vaishnava series by a decade, this still amounts to a huge body of work physically impossible for an artist's immediate family to achieve by itself, and the involvement of studios of assistants seems highly probable.

The six sons of Manaku and Nainsukh and their own sons spread the family style over the Hills from Jammu to Garhwal so the style that they all championed became the dominant artistic expression, with scarcely any variant voices heard. The vast majority of surviving Pahari paintings fall into this post-1790 period. Bhagvan in Kulu is an exception to the prevailing style and so in his own way is Purkhu in Kangra. In the many religious and poetic works he painted for Sansar Chand of Kangra, we can see that Purkhu is less interested in say, the psychological insight we might expect of a portrait by Nainsukh, and more in the specific character and atmosphere of a particular scene, event, procession, festival, or the like. Goswamy and Fischer write of his unusual relationship with perspective, almost building his paintings 'from the bottom up, in terms of scale, towards the most important figure, which is generally placed in the centre and rendered the largest', so that almost a 'reversed or inverted perspective' is created (2011, p. 725). Seemingly unconnected architectural elements are used as elements of design, while in his 'Lambagaon' *Gitagovinda* architecture is transplanted by lush forest, and nature celebrated with a rare and opulent abandon. Cat. 24 from the *Kedara Kalpa* series attributed to Purkhu and his workshop shows both this architectural exuberance and his talent for animated, colourful group scenes that stretch the eye from corner to corner.

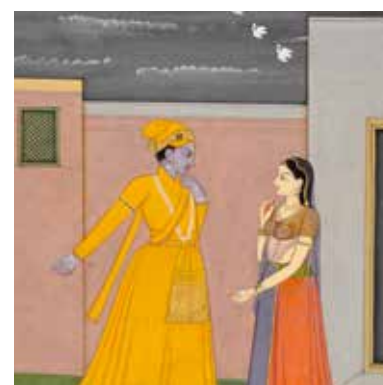
We have discussed some of the cruxes and significant developments in Pahari painting in the eighteenth century, but of course it was not downhill all the way after 1800. It is certainly true that patronage changed: instead of individual Rajas in independent or nearly independent little kingdoms, there were first the ruinous Gurkhas in occupation of



cat. 18



cat. 19



cat. 17



cat. 24

cat. 24  
The five Siddhas meditate in a golden city – Folio from a *Kedara Kalpa* series Kangra, attributed to the Purkhu family workshop, c. 1820–25

much of the hills from 1805 until driven out by the Sikhs from the central and western hills in 1809, and then from the eastern hills by the British in 1814. Many states, which previously had been tributary to the larger states such as Jammu or Kangra which were still to some extent ruled by kindred spirits, now found themselves paying homage at the Sikh court at Lahore (cat. 20), or else only partly restored to their ancestral dominions by the British who took half of their kingdoms. Both were very different kinds of masters. Artistic patronage needs money and many Rajas now had little to spare. Still, Sansar Chand even in his diminished state managed to patronise the creation of a whole group of large religious texts under the direction of Purkhu, some of which had scarcely been illustrated before. Painting flourished for some decades at Mandi under Raja Ishvari Sen and his artist Sajnu was able to produce some magical new effects with light.

We may bemoan the fact that artists were no longer interested in, or more probably no longer capable of creating, the wonderful naturalism and the painterly effects of Nainsukh and his sons and nephews, but this is true of other periods of Indian painting too. Such classic periods flourished for only a short time as did the Mughal style under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and then artists changed style to something harder and more mannerist as they did under Aurangzeb. A number of superb paintings in this catalogue, many collected by Ludwig Habighorst, bear witness to this high point in Indian art.



## MIAN GHANSAR DEV, PRINCE OF JAMMU

Jammu, 1720–30  
 Opaque pigments heightened with  
 tooled gold and silver on paper,  
 within a white margin and red  
 surround, reverse with old collection  
 label '22c' and further label 'H.  
 Kevorkian Collection 1368'  
 Folio 17.8 × 24 cm; Painting 15.9 × 22.2 cm  
 Inscribed in white above on the recto, in  
 Takri script: *Sri miye sri ghansar de  
 jamoe da sehajada* ('Sri Mia[n] Sri  
 Ghansar De[v], the prince of Jammu')  
 [with thanks to Vijay Sharma]

Provenance  
 Sven Gahlin collection  
 Sotheby's, London, 7 April 1975, lot 178  
 Hagop Kevorkian Fund  
 Hagop Kevorkian, New York (1872–1962)

Published  
 Kossak 2014, fig. 8

A prince is seated on a pink and blue striped *durrie* holding a hawk. His gloved left arm holds a hooded hawk and is supported by a large crimson bolster, while his right arm falls down and his hand rests on two small crimson cushions. He is dressed all in white save for his blue *patka* and blue and yellow turban which holds an aigrette of a white feather and what seems to be a maple leaf. The prince has a carefully trimmed beard and moustache and hair curling out from under the back of his turban which has a blue cloth wound round a yellow high crown. His features are striking – a high domed forehead wearing a Shakta tilak, a long nose, full lips slightly protruding, and an eye that the artist depicts in the somewhat old-fashioned fishlike way with a small pupil and slanting downwards suggestive perhaps of introspection or melancholy. An attendant behind in a terracotta *jama*, depicted standing behind the *durrie* as if behind a wall, waves a *chowrie* over the prince, while another before him in a yellow *jama* holds a wrapped sword and a cloth, but is actually standing on the *durrie*. The background is an unbroken dark green.

We note with pleasure some of the little painterly details added by the artist. The prince's blue waistcloth is carefully tied with a crimson-sheathed dagger thrust through the knot, while the ends of the *patka* carefully trace the outline of the hip. The hairs on his neck below his beard and those above are carefully noted. A line of colour in lappets, *patka* and its *pallu*, and dagger sheath connect the two passages of crimson cushion covers in a gentle double curve across the white *jama*. The lovely contrast of terracotta-pink and blue in the *durrie* along with the deeper pink and the yellow of the attendants' gowns and the deeply coloured background are all relatively subdued in tonality serving to throw more

into prominence the central figure in white and his crimson supports. The prince's white *jama* falls in pleasing folds below his legs and ends in delicate calligraphic scrolls and swirls. Somewhat unusual for the period, as noted in Kossak's publication, is the way the central figure has been placed to the fore by the artist, almost up against the picture plane, through removing the little carpet that Rajas normally sit on in Pahari portraits (e.g. that of Raja Anand Dev formerly in the Bachofen von Echt collection, Goswamy and Fischer 1992, no. 29).

The heavy jowls and blockish faces of the two attendants recall those of the figures in Styles I and II of the 'Shangri' *Ramayana*, which led to the painting's earlier publication as a portrait of Raja Anand Dev of Bahu (1690–1715), in the sale of Sven Gahlin's collection in 2015 (see reference above), but there seems no particular reason to doubt the inscription describing the prince as Mian Ghansar Dev of Jammu. The style represented by the First Bahu Master would seem to have continued for several decades in Jammu. Ghansar Dev (born according to Archer c. 1715) was the second son of Raja Dhrub Dev of Jammu (1703–25), under whom for reasons as yet unclear the earlier division of Jammu between a Bahu state and a Jammu state on either side of the Tawi river came to an end, when Anand Dev surrendered Bahu to the Jammu branch. Ghansar Chand was the brother of Raja Ranjit Dev (1725–81), the eldest son of Dhrub Dev, who was imprisoned for twelve years in Lahore 1735–47 when suspected of disloyalty by the Mughal governor of the hills. Ghansar Chand served as Regent during this period. A similar inscription is found on a painting of a bearded prince with the same turban with high crown in procession in the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Collection in Ahmadabad (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, p. 81, figs. 28–29), while Kossak suggests a prince out hawking in the N.C. Mehta collection in



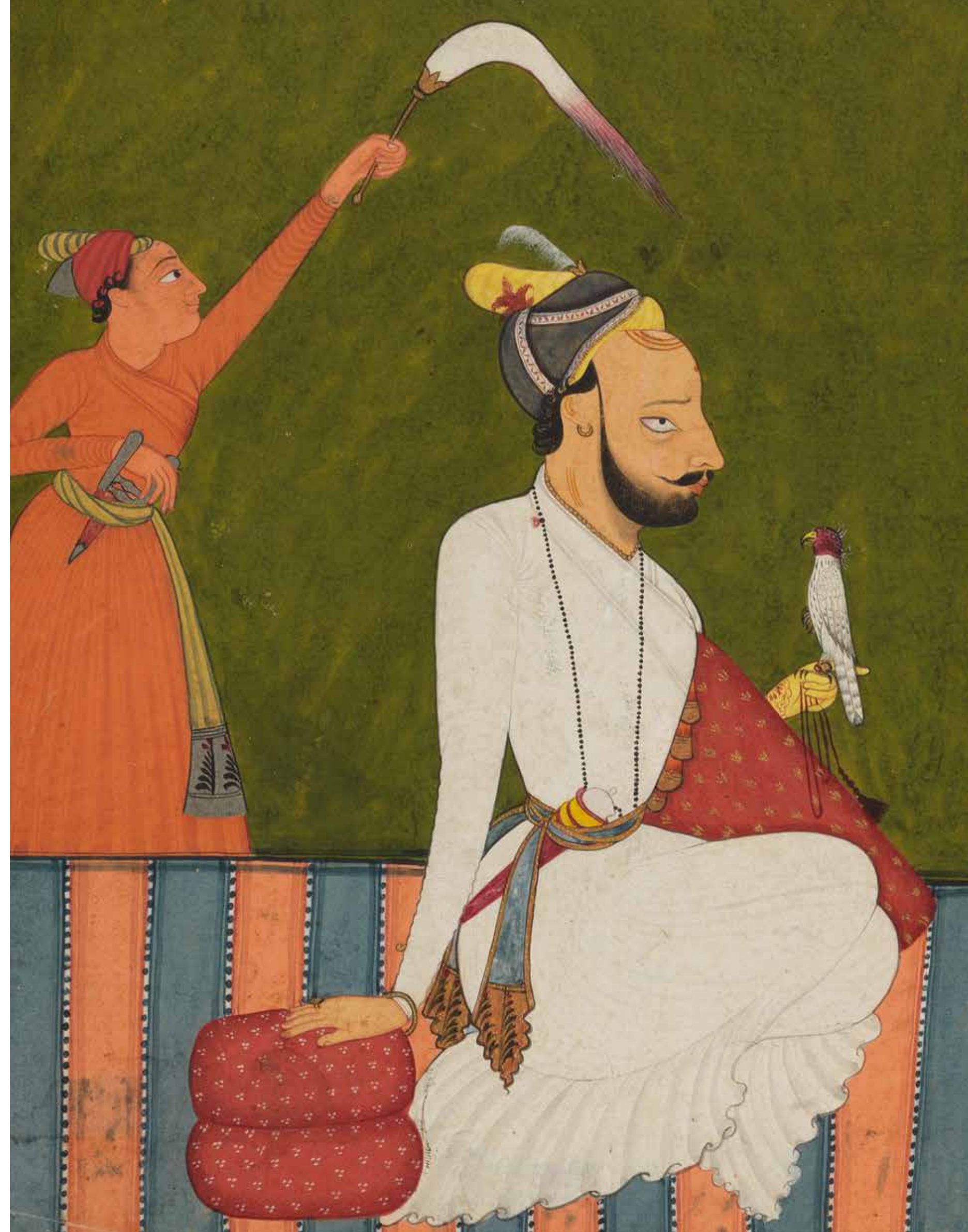


Ahmedabad (ibid., fig. 27; Kossak 2014, fig. 8) may also be the same man, although he wears a very different type of turban. The prince in our picture would clearly rather be out riding or hawking.

This important painting has been attributed to an artist dubbed the Master of the Swirling Skies c. 1735–50 by Steven Kossak in his 2014 publication. While some of the paintings attributed to this artist by Kossak are certainly linked by certain common features, others such as our painting seem rather divorced from that common style. The heavy contour modelling for instance seen in *Krishna and Gopas huddle in the Rain* (Kossak 2014, fig. 13; McInerney 2016, no. 65) is certainly not found in our painting, while the sky with swirling clouds of course is completely absent. For the moment it seems best to attribute our painting to an unknown artist who in common with the Swirling Skies master inherited much of his style from the First Bahu Master.

One of the difficulties of accepting this attribution is that the painting is so old-fashioned in both composition and style for the date range suggested by Kossak. The prince seated on a rug between two standing attendants is found in many Pahari royal portraits from the late 17th century up to the first two decades of the 18th but to find it as late as the date suggested by Kossak for this painting, is somewhat surprising. Also it is surprising to find the thick necks and heavy jowls associated with the First Bahu Master's work so long-continued. Perhaps a way out of these difficulties is firstly to recognise that our dates for the births and regnal years of Pahari rajas are very far from perfect, and that while Ghansar Dev's regency 1735–47 is beyond question he may have been born somewhat earlier than the c.1715 as has been supposed. Secondly we may call in evidence

another portrait in this old-fashioned style, that of Raja Ajmat Dev of Mankot (born c. 1700, c. 1730 – c. 1760), whose portrait in the former Latifi collection was published by Archer as Kulu c. 1730 (1973, Kulu 25, but as c. 1720 in his plates volume). This is very much in the style of the portrait of Raja Kirpal Dev of Bahu whose resemblance to that of Dasharatha in the 'Shangri' *Ramayana* caused Goswamy and Fischer in 1992 to transfer the style and the whole series to Bahu. The inscription above Raja Ajmat Dev, white on red, is very much in the same manner as our inscription and reads: *sri miye sri Ajmat Mankote da tikka* ('Prince Ajmat heir-apparent of Mankot'). If we are to accept the *shahzada* of our inscription in its literal meaning as no more than Prince rather than Regent then that is another way out of our difficulty and we can date it earlier, say to 1720–30. Since it is on this picture that Kossak relies for his dating of all the paintings that he attributes to the Master of the Swirling Skies, this would have the concomitant effect of the possibility of dating them earlier also.





KUMBHA PUTRA OF SHRI RAGA, A GIRL AT A WELL DRAWS  
A POT OF WATER FOR HER ADMIRER

Folio from a Ragamala series  
Basohli, c. 1690–95  
Opaque pigments on paper within  
black and orange rules and a yellow  
surround, collection label affixed to  
reverse  
Folio 20.1 x 20.3 cm  
Inscribed above on the recto, in Takri  
script: Raga Kumbha Shri raga de putra  
(‘Raga Kumbha [‘Pot’] son of Shri  
raga’)

Provenance  
Sven Gahlén collection, acquired  
in 1967  
Alice Boney, New York & Tokyo

A Ragamala was conceived normally in the Plains Rajput areas as consisting of thirty-six verses and paintings, formed by six main ragas each with five raginis or wives. In the Ragamala sets in the Pahari tradition, we find instead a number of eighty-six piece sets based on the system of Kshemakarna, that in addition to the six main ragas and their five wives gives each main raga eight sons (*ragaputras*). This makes eight-four but Kshemakarna gives Shri raga two additional sons making eighty-six in all. Kshemakarna first gives each raga or ragini a personality and then describes the music in terms of the sounds of nature or of everyday household activities. Pahari artists established their own iconographies for Kshemakarna’s verses normally based on both of his interpretations as well as word play on the names of the ragas themselves.

Kshemakarna defines the iconography of Kumbha raga as a man in a white garment wearing a crown and holding a pot being fanned by chowries and likens its sound to that of water streaming from a jug (Ebeling 1973, p. 76). In our painting the pot filled with water is being raised up from a well by a bold Hills girl, who stares straight at her admirer standing on the other side of the well. This young curly-haired gallant, his beard and moustache just starting to grow, holds out a small flower to the girl, as he pulls back his right elbow at a sharp angle possibly to reveal to her the katar thrust into his waistband, presumably that he is a soldier and that he is thirsty. He is otherwise quite still and the folds of his olive-green *jama* fall neatly into place at the hem. Her agitation at being addressed as she works on the other hand is revealed through the irregularly flowing hem of her lilac skirt and the fluttering out behind her of her *odhani* which otherwise falls mostly down her back. Her raised right foot is traditionally placed on the retaining wall of the well, but instead the artist shows the well opening and its circular stone surround in plan. A burnt orange ground, a strip of cloudy

indigo blue sky above, and a single dark green tree breaking into the margin behind the gallant complete the unusual and evocative colour scheme of the picture.

The story behind the raga is said to be based on a folk song about an accidental meeting of a husband and a wife, famous in the Hills region. The husband, who is a soldier by profession, marries a young girl and then goes away on military service for several long years. On his return he goes to fetch his wife. He meets a young woman at a well and asks for water. He also praises her beauty and at this she rebukes him sternly and rushes back home. On her arrival at home, her mother asks her to put on her best clothes and ornaments as her husband had come. She puts on the best of her finery and goes to meet her husband. To her amazement, she finds that he is the same person who met her at the well. Feeling guilty of the harsh words she had spoken to him at the well, she attempts reconciliation and soon all misunderstandings are dissolved and they live happily afterwards as a loving couple.

This painting seems to be from the same dispersed and rare Ragamala series from Basohli as two paintings formerly in the Archer collection of Dipaka and Panchama raga (1973, Basohli 14i and 14ii; Archer 1976, no. 7). Certainly our gallant seems to be the same as the prince in Archer’s Panchama raga with his curly hair, incipient beard and moustache, swept-back profile and turban perched towards the back of his head. We admire the delicate depiction of the prince’s hands in both paintings, contrasting it with the somewhat ponderous hands and arms of the girl in our painting, which seem to be done in the same manner as those on the girl in Archer’s Dipaka raga. Two artists would seem to have been involved in the preparation of this series. To cite Archer in 1976: ‘It was the use of free poetic distortions, the glowing vitality of sparkling backgrounds and the power with which component parts were welded into a rhythmical unity that gives early painting



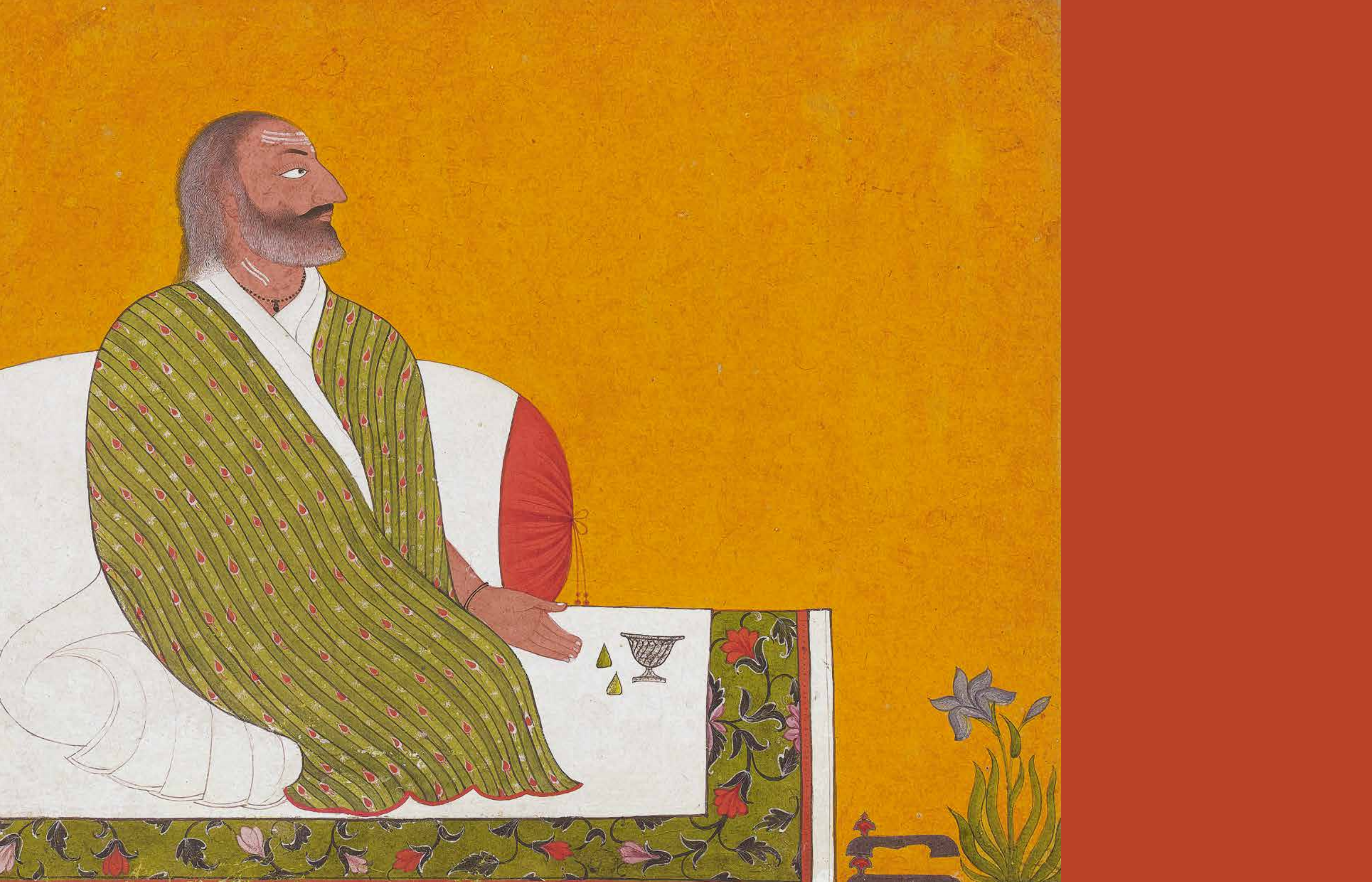


in Basohli its supreme air of calm authority’.

A slightly earlier version of this *raga* from Basohli or Nurpur c. 1680 in the Howard Hodgkin collection (Topsfield 2012, no. 57) shows the scene in mirror reverse, but the girl is looking demurely down into the well rather than staring at her admirer. He seems to have come armed from military duty and holds out his hand to request a drink. This demurer version is also found in the Kulu/Bahu Ragamala series in an example in the V&A (Archer 1973, Kulu 13xxvii). Our artist seems to be aware of the erotic overtones from the story and introduces them into his version.









## A MAN OF COMMANDING PRESENCE

Attributed to the Master at the Court of Mankot, c. 1720–30  
 Opaque pigments on paper; red border with black inner rule and white inner and outer rules  
 Folio 20.3 × 28.4 cm; Painting 17.8 × 25.8 cm

Provenance  
 Private collection, USA

In this fine and unusual portrait of an unknown man of commanding presence, he is depicted with bare head, wearing a large green striped Kashmir shawl draped over most of his body that covers his white cotton gown. He is seated cross-legged on a white cotton mat over a Mughal style scrolling floral carpet in green and leans against a large red bolster with delicate ties at the end, with the central section in white. He wears a Shaiva horizontal tilak-mark on his forehead and chap marks on the body, indicating that he is a devotee of Shiva, unlike many of the royal figures in paintings from the Mankot workshop who were Vaishnavas. Two *paan* are placed on the white mat next to a small silver beaker. His wooden clogs are placed neatly at the edge of the carpet, next to a single blue flowering iris plant. Similar flowering plants can also be found on a Mankot portrait from the same atelier of Raja Mahipat Dev of Mankot, now in the Sidhu collection (Glynn 2004, fig. 9), based ultimately of course on Mughal exemplars such as in the Dara Shikoh Album from the 1630s (Losty and Roy 2012, figs. 84–85).

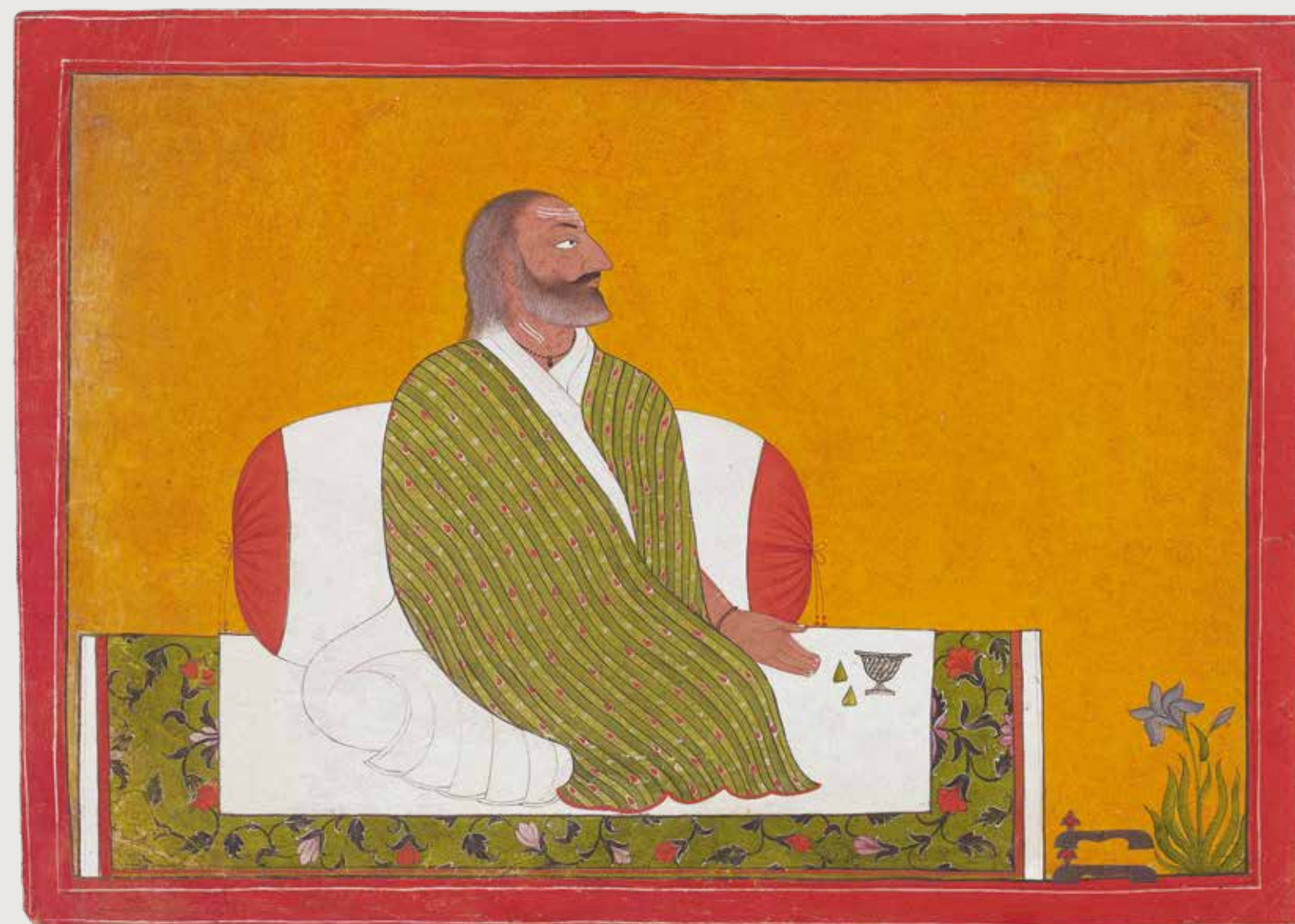
The Mankot Rajas in the later 17th and early 18th centuries were keen on portraits, of themselves and of the neighbouring princes, and they had a master artist and brilliant portraitist at their disposal, who is known today as the Master at the Court of Mankot, possibly named Meju. Meju is the name written on a portrait referring to the sitter or possibly the artist of one of his portraits (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 96–122, and 2011 ‘Mankot’). This master and his workshop (as in no. 7) produced splendid portraits not only of princes but of more ordinary men also, members of the court at Mankot, as well of course as the two series of *Bhagavata Purana* (see no. 8). These portraits of often single characters – Rajas and of others less exalted – are among the greatest portraits in Pahari art and show a masterful insight into characters.

A portrait of Gosain Hari Ramji from around 1720–30 in the Kronos collection (McInerney 2016,

no. 56) is a case in point in how this artist’s sitters often fill the picture space with their powerful personalities. Our sitter is to date unidentified, but his powerful presence is suggested by the poise of his head, his aquiline profile and his penetrating gaze. His head is bare and his hair and beard are most artfully streaked with white suggesting he has to be at least in his 50s. Other than a small string of beads round his neck he wears no ornaments at all. This stripped-down appearance might of course suggest he is preparing for prayer or worship, but such subjects in Mankot painting normally show the object of the sitter’s devotions as well (e.g. Archer 1973, Mankot 40–41).

The green shawl wrapped around the sitter’s person is the dominant feature and centre of a composition of almost geometrical severity, forming as it were an inverted T-shape with the green carpet. It also almost obscures the fact that the sitter is sitting cross-legged and has his body facing the viewer, as can be seen in the lovely curves forming the folds of the white *jama* over his right knee. This in turn is balanced by the one hand, the left one, protruding from under the shawl and reaching for the *paan*. The white theme continues into the centre of the red bolster behind the sitter. The background is a solid mustard yellow. These colours – green, red, white – also dominate the portrait of Gosaim Hari Ramji who is depicted against a solid *peori* yellow background.

The Master at the Court of Mankot was also responsible in the first two decades of the 18th century for two series of paintings of the *Bhagavata Purana* (Goswamy and Fischer 1992 nos. 42–51) endowed with confident, ‘swaggering elation’, the earlier in the traditional *pothi* format of large landscape shaped pages, while the later one is in a vertical format (see no. 8). The same compositions were reused, but simplified to fit into the new format and thereby tightened, sometimes to considerable benefit.





THE SAGE VASISHTHA INSTRUCTS RAMA AND SITA TO FAST  
PRIOR TO HIS INSTALLATION AS KING

Folio from the *Ayodhya kanda* or Book of  
Ayodhya of the *Ramayana*  
By the Master of Style II of the 'Shangri'  
*Ramayana*  
Bahu (Jammu) or Kulu, c. 1690–1710  
Opaque pigments on paper within a  
buff surround  
Folio 21.1 × 32.7 cm  
Inscribed above in Takri Ragho  
(i.e. Rama) and 12 and below Sita

Provenance  
European private collection, acquired  
in France in the early 1970s

This illustration is from the *Ayodhya kanda*, the second book of the epic *Ramayana*. The family priest Vasistha has come to see Rama and Sita after being told of his father Dasharatha's intention to install Rama as King and he tells them they should undergo a fast preparatory to his installation the following morning. Other priests accompany him as he talks to the prince and his consort in their palace. Rama and Sita with their hands raised in respectful *anjali mudra* acknowledge the priest's suggestion. Outside the excited populace aware of the coming installation interrogate the doorkeeper.

The scene is set in a palace chamber. Beyond the palace is a separate green ground and, unusually, a band of blue sky in which a crescent moon is showing. A strong diagonal of a violet wall separates the interior of the palace from the agitated populace outside. There is no text to the series of paintings and the sequence has to be pieced together from the numbering. The *Ramayana* text is closely illustrated, with at least one painting per chapter. For Rama's preparing for his coronation with sacrifices, in Style I, see Kossak 2011 fig. 3, and for his leaving his palace for his installation, see Goswamy and Fischer 1992, no. 33.

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

creating believable settings for their characters and sometimes not bothering, and showing both traits on the same page. Their work displays vivid characterisation and an intensely expressive use of colour, as here in the vibrantly coloured interior of the palace and the more muted colours outside. In most of the pages there are no horizons and the characters float in front of solid blocks of colour, whose juxtaposition creates a harmonious backdrop for the vibrant characterisation of the story-telling.

The provenance of the series is disputed. Goswamy and Fischer (1992, pp. 76–79) questioned Archer's 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 in the Seattle Art Museum (one that Archer thought was done by a Kulu artist linked to the Shangri series). Steven Kossak in his essay on the 'First Bahu Master' (2011) writes on the chronological difficulties in dating the work of the First Bahu Master and the artist of Style II. The former is clearly the master artist of the court, yet his work is mostly found in the second book of the *Ramayana*, while the work of our artist is found in both the first and second books interspersed with the other one. His work is thus unlikely to be slightly later than that of the first master, as opined by Archer as well as Goswamy and Fischer, and the reason for the slightly unfinished state of his paintings is difficult of explanation. J.P. Losty has questioned the whole reattribution to Bahu of Styles I and II and prefers to keep the provenance in Kulu (2017, pp. 88–90).

Pages from the 'Shangri' *Ramayana* are in important public collections worldwide, including the National Museum, New Delhi, the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum, London, the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, as well as in many private collections.









LAKSHMANA EXPRESSES HIS FOREBODING TO RAMA  
OUTSIDE THE CAVE OF AYOMUKHI

Folio from the *Aranya Kanda* or Forest  
Book of the *Ramayana*

By a Master of Style IV of the 'Shangri'  
*Ramayana*

By an artist probably from Bilaspur,  
c. 1710–1740

Opaque pigments and gold on paper  
within a black rule and red surround

Folio 21.2 × 31 cm

Inscribed on the border in Takri: 101. ta  
age ande parbata ki bana ki dekhde hoye  
ehan tahan sita ki dhundhde chale.

Ta Lakshmane ki bolde hoye je is parbate  
bich guha bahot hen.... (?) bahot hen.

Eh boli kari sara parbat dhundhya.

'101. Proceeding ahead in the  
mountains and forests, they [Rama  
and Lakshmana] looked all around  
for Sita. [Rama then] said to

Lakshmana that this mountain has  
so many caves. Thus, they searched  
for the entire mountain.' And on the  
reverse in Devanagari: *Aranya* 101 and  
101 in Takri

Provenance

Milo Cleveland Beach collection

Rama turns in mid-stride to look at his brother as Lakshmana tells him how he is filled with foreboding. Having learnt from the dying vulture Jatayu that Sita has been abducted by Ravana, the wicked king of Lanka, and taken towards the south, Rama and Lakshmana continue their journey southwards through the forest. They come to a cave in a mountain, the dwelling of the demoness Ayomukhi, and having dealt with her Lakshmana confesses to his brother with joined palms how he is filled with apprehension at what might appear next to thwart them in their search. In fact the giant demon Kabandha is the next demon to appear (as can be seen in Archer 1973, Kulu no. 51, in the National Museum, New Delhi).

The artist has admirably caught Lakshmana's apprehension and Rama's questioning look as the two brothers stand poised between two mountain peaks. This particular artist (there seem to have been several involved in this series) is more decorative than some, as can be seen in the fairly lavish use of gold on the brothers' jewellery, bows and decoration on their quivers, as well as in the tufted gold plants on the mountain peaks. Landscape elements are normally minimal in this book of the 'Shangri' *Ramayana* so that the artist again is unusual in including so much. He is the same artist who painted the two brothers sitting on the Rishyamuka mountain, formerly in the Eva and Konrad Seitz collection (Losty 2017, no. 17), which shows the same command of expression and the same decorative detail. He also possibly painted two paintings now in the Museum Rietberg, Zurich, showing trees, streams etc. (Britschgi and Fischer 2008, nos. 26 and 33), although these are not so decorative. Whereas most of paintings in the series show the ground and the background as one monochromatic sheet of

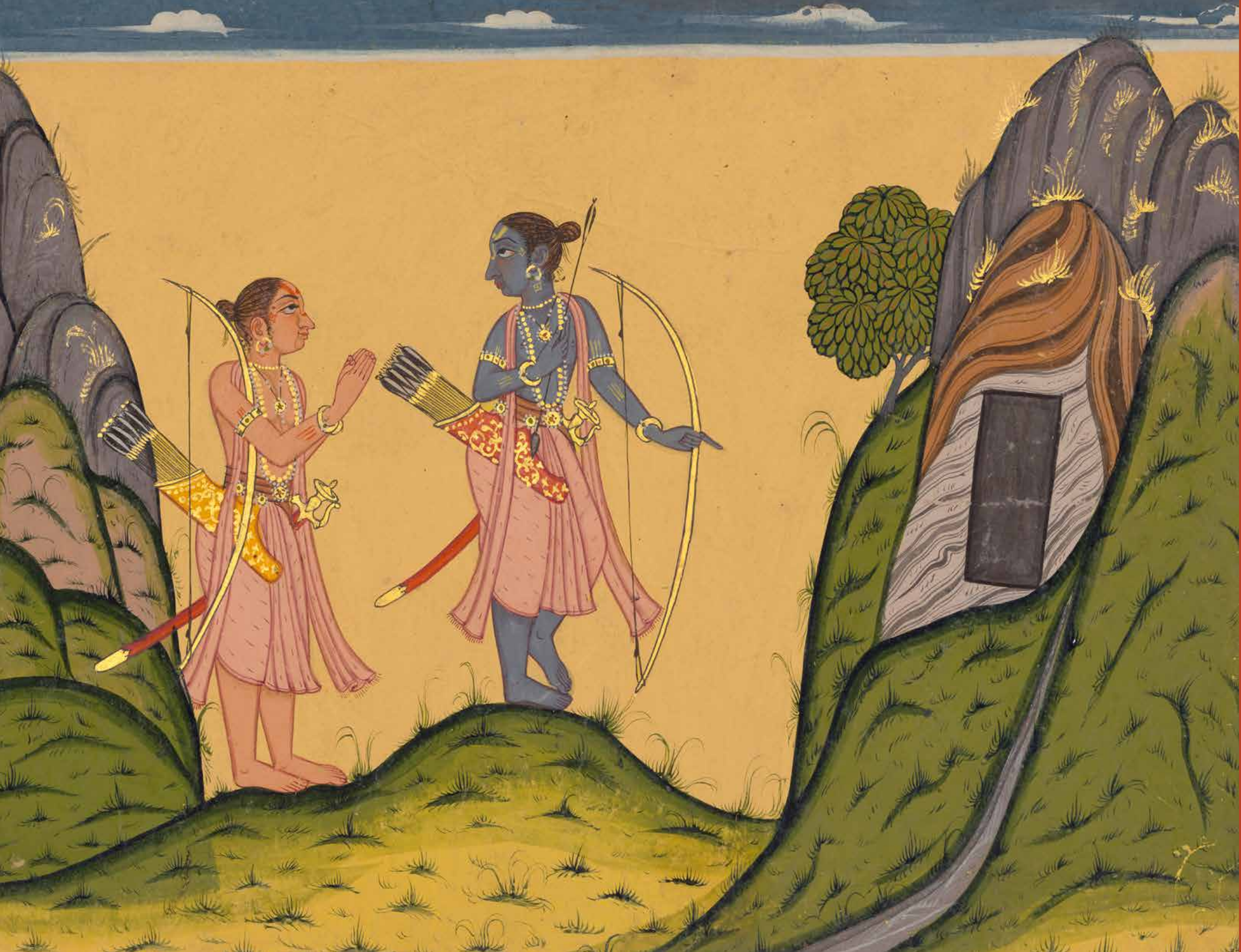
yellow, with a blue band of sky above, this artist has obviously thought enough about the problems raised by this ancient practice to include a separate ground as here, or else little tufts of grass on the part that is supposed to be the ground (ibid., no. 26).

The famous set of paintings known as the 'Shangri' *Ramayana* series, one of the most important of all the Pahari series, was found in the eastern Punjab Hills state of Kulu, of which Shangri was once part, and was thought originally to have come from that state (Archer 1973, vol. 1, pp. 317–30). Four major painting styles are discernible in the series, which spans a 50 year period (c. 1680–1740). It was placed originally in Kulu since this seemed appropriate on account of its find spot and of the state of Kulu being dedicated to Shri Raghunathji. Subsequent scholars perceived various difficulties in this provenance and removed the first two styles at least to Bahu in Jammu, on the basis of the resemblance between Dasharatha in the epic and portraits of Raja Kripal Dev of Bahu (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 76–79; McInerney 2017, pp. 134–37). There are however also various arguments against this provenance (Losty 2017, pp. 20, 88–100).

Paintings in Style IV are found mostly in Books III–IV, the Forest and Kishkindha books, and are often inscribed in the margins of the recto with a description of the subjects of the paintings in a Pahari dialect written in a Takri script that has been thought a speciality of Mandi. The various authorities disagree as to the artistic provenance of styles III and IV; among the competing opinions influence from Bilaspur seems most reasonable on Style IV (Archer 1973, vol. 1, pp. 325–29). Mandi and Nurpur have also been proposed. Despite the script being thought a speciality of Mandi, there is practically no Mandi narrative art at this time to serve as a precursor.









Folio from a Ragamala  
Kulu or Bahu (Jammu), c. 1700–10  
Opaque pigments on paper, within  
mustard yellow margins, laid down  
on stout paper  
Folio 21 x 21 cm  
Inscribed above in Takri script *Suhavi*  
*ragini meghadi bharaja* ('Suhavi ragini  
wife of Megha')

Provenance  
Sven Gahlin collection, acquired in 1967  
Maggs Bros. Ltd., London  
Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1877–1947)

Ragamala ('Garland of Ragas') subjects were among the most popular from the earliest times in Rajput painting. In the Punjab Hills, artists followed mostly the system of Kshemakarna with its 86 ragas, their wives or *raginis*, and their sons or *ragaputras* (see cat. 2 above). *Suhavi* is one of the wives of *Megha raga* according to Kshemakarna's system and its sound is likened to sweeping or scrubbing and its appearance to a dark-skinned woman in a yellow sari, with much jewellery, her breasts painted yellow and fanned by a yak whisk (Ebeling 1973, p. 76). Our lady is seated in a domed pavilion and appears to be holding a snake, although if this black-outlined grey wiggly line is indeed a snake it closely resembles the hems of the lady's garments. In a *Suhavi ragini* from Basohli or Nurpur c. 1685 from the Eva and Konrad Seitz collection (Losty 2017, no. 58), the seated lady is alone apart from what appears to be a rabbit that she is holding. In the *Pahari Ragamala* drawings series in Berlin, *Suhavi ragini* is a lady seated on a throne being fanned with a cloth (Ebeling 1973, fig. 345). The creature in our painting is replicated in the New Delhi Guler *Ragamala* series in *Suhi ragini*, who is a fair skinned lady seated on a terrace fondling an indeterminate creature (Randhawa 1971, no. 68, p. 80).

This *Ragamala* illustration is from an important and well-known series produced in the early years of the eighteenth century. Thirty-two illustrations are in the Victoria and Albert Museum, six in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and further examples in private and other institutional collections. The V&A examples were published by W.G. Archer as from Kulu in the eastern Pahari region (1973, Kulu 131–xxxii). A large part of the extant group (including the present miniature) were brought to the West by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy in about 1920. It was said of some of them that while Coomaraswamy was staying with friends in north-west England he befriended their gardener

and gave him several miniatures on his departure (see Falk in Sotheby's, London, 29 April 1992, lot 16).

The style of the series is related to the 'Shangri Ramayana' series and if that series is relocated to Bahu, the earlier and senior portion of the Jammu state (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 74–93), then our series must follow them. It seems to have been done a decade or so later than the paintings of Style II of that series, possibly 1700–10. It is certainly somewhat looser in execution than the *Ramayana* series, as can be seen here in the farouche juxtapositions of colours – oranges, reds, lime green, yellows and dull blues – although more than one artist was involved. The two paintings from the series published by Goswamy and Fischer in 1992 (nos. 34–35) are more precise in execution. See also Kossak 2011, pp. 491–500, who distinguishes between the artist dubbed by him 'the First Bahu Master' and other masters painting in a closely related style a few years later.

For illustrations of many of the examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum (described under the Kulu school) see Archer 1973, Kulu131–13xxxii. For other pages from the same set, see Coomaraswamy 1926, pp. 96–99, nos. LXVII–LXXII, pls. XXXII–XXXIII; Binney and Archer 1968, no.59; Kramrisch 1986, no.100; Goswamy and Fischer 1992, nos. 34–35; Topsfield ed. 2004, no.168; Sotheby's, London, 7 December 1971, lot 185; 15 October 1984, lots 120–1; 29 April 1992 (Bachofen von Echt Collection), lot 16; Sotheby's, New York, 26 March 1998, lot 15.

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy was an art historian of enormous importance in introducing Indian art to the West and promoting its appreciation and study. Born in Colombo in 1877, he moved to England in 1879, before returning to Colombo in 1902. Within a few years he returned to England fully engaged in his new artistic career. He moved to the United States in 1917 to take up the post of the first Keeper of Indian Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. He wrote many books on Indian art, philosophy and aesthetics. He died in 1947.





## COURTIER AT THE MANKOT COURT\*

Workshop of the Master at the Court of Mankot, c. 1700

Opaque pigments and gold and silver on paper, within a black margin and wide red surround with white and black rules

Folio 27 × 15.2 cm; Painting 23.5 × 12.1 cm

Inscribed above in Takri: *raje Jomala Kripala Deo* ('Raja Kripal Dev of Jammu')

Provenance

Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Sotheby's New York, 6 October 1990,  
lot 45

William K. Ehrenfeld collection  
Alma Latifi collection

Published

Ehnbom 1985, no. 98  
Habighorst 2011, fig. 101

Exhibited

Hamburg, 2013  
Zurich, 2016

The Mankot Rajas in the later 17th century were keen on portraits, of themselves and of the neighbouring princes, and they had a master artist and brilliant portraitist at their disposal, who is known today as the Master at the Court of Mankot, possibly named Meju. Meju is the name written on a portrait referring to the sitter or possibly the artist of one of his portraits (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 96–122). This master produced splendid portraits not only of princes but of more ordinary men as well, members of the court at Mankot, as well of course as the two series of *Bhagavata Purana* (see no. 8).

Despite the inscription naming the subject and its previous publication as of Raja Kirpal Dev, who ruled over half of the old Jammu state from his base at Bahu from c.1660–c.1690, this does seem an unlikely identification as B.N. Goswamy has pointed out. The subject does not greatly resemble other portraits of that Raja (Archer 1973, Mankot no. 4; Kulu no. 7), and Rajas do not generally hold such long staffs. These are held by high officials at the Mughal court, such as the Mir Bakhshi, but ours also has a cowherd's crook. Nonetheless the

subject is showcased on the lines of a Mughal grandee and he is also as something of a dandy, standing upright and smelling a rose, and holding his long staff banded in many different colours. His *jama* is pure white, with a gold fringe to the ends of its lappets, and the folds of its wide skirt are carefully delineated, while his striped trousers are arranged in neatly gathered folds round his ankles. He wears an orange *patka* of silver brocade with floral ends. On his head is a tall red tie-dyed turban, with a black feather and an aigrette. The sectarian mark on his forehead shows him to be a Vaishnava. He stands on a speckled green mound against a solid golden yellow background. The compositional influence of late 17th century portraiture from the Mughal studio is obvious. The elaborate turban and feather need not in itself confirm this is a royal portrait, although of course it could be of a brother to the Raja, since lesser personages also in Mankot could wear such finery (see Goswamy and Fischer 1992, nos. 36 and 38). For other portraits by the Mankot master and his workshop see Archer 1973, Mankot 1–23.





SAMPATI ANNOUNCES HIS PRESENCE  
TO THE FASTING MONKEYS

Folio from the 'Small Mankot'  
Ramayana  
Mankot, 1720–30  
Opaque pigments, gold and silver on  
paper, within a black margin and  
a red border with a red rule  
Folio 20.7 × 31.3 cm; Painting 16.7 × 28 cm  
Inscribed on the verso in nagari with  
the folio number 48 and the  
condensed text of the Ramayana,  
Kishkindha kanda canto 56 and  
a colophon calling it 'Sampati comes  
to tell of Sita's travail'

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Dr Herbert Härtel (1921–2005) collection

Being unable to find the abducted Sita, the party of monkeys sent to the south, headed by Hanuman, Bali's son Angada and Jambavan (the king of the bears), have resolved to fast to death, in imitation of Jatayu. Jatayu embraced death in Rama's service by attempting to rescue Sita from Ravana's clutches, rather than return to Rama and Sugriva unaware of her fate. Sampati, the old king of the vultures, perched on his mountain top, hears them talk of his brother Jatayu, and asks for help to descend the mountain, since he can no longer fly having scorched his wings, so that they can tell him about his brother and he can tell them about Sita. The searchers are crouched down under the trees, fearful of the vulture king lest he should decide to eat them, opposite the mountain on which Sampati resides.

Sampati's mountain composed of pink fingers, here to one side, is balanced by the trees on the other side under which the monkeys are crouching. The curving branches of the trees above are echoed by the elegantly curved tails of the monkeys. The scene is set against a green ground. Two pages in the Seitz and Fischer collections in the Museum Rietberg show the next in the series, as first two monkeys help Sampati down from the mountain while the chiefs of the search party wait below, and then Sampati tells them what he has seen of Sita's abduction (Britschgi and Fischer 2008, nos. 49–50).

The series from which this page comes first emerged in the early 1970s and its forty or so pages from the Kishkindha kanda are now widely dispersed. It was first thought to come from Mankot 1700–10 and as a product of influence from Basohli, characterised by 'its swirling rhythms, strong and sturdy forms, avoidance of rich or intricate details and gay anarchic spirit'

(Archer 1976, nos. 65 & 66). It has since been called the 'Small Mankot' Ramayana and dated to 1710–25 (Britschgi and Fischer 2008, no. 43). Other scholars place it in Nurpur c. 1720 (Leach 1986, pp. 312–14, and Seyller and Mittal 2014, no. 10). It is returned to Mankot in Losty 2017 (no. 19), where it is thought to carry on stylistically from the 'vertical' Bhagavata Purana series from Mankot from c. 1720. Whether from Nurpur or Mankot, it is one of the great Pahari series, both beautiful and full of energy. Notable features of the style include a concentration on essentials: the mountains formed of vertically striated deep pink fingers of rock edged with vegetation, a few trees with divided trunks and thick dark canopies of leaves, and tall, slender heroes. The chiefs among the pink monkeys wear splendid large crowns and many jewels and have access to fine brocade patkas to wrap round their waists to keep their small drawers in place. The scenes are set against a deep-coloured ground below a blue sky and tangled or streaky white clouds.

The series can never have been intended as a full manuscript of the Ramayana, since the texts on the reverse are verses condensed from the individual chapters. Indeed, one of the three splendid pages from the Habighorst collection, the first of the series, makes this clear: it has a heading calling the series a 'picture book' (Losty 2018, no. 3). The then known pages from the series mostly in sale catalogues are listed in Leach 1986, p. 312, when discussing the single page in the Cleveland Museum; another six pages are published in Britschgi and Fischer 2008 (nos. 40, 43, 45, 48–50). Two pages are now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and others are in various private collections including the Kronos collection (McInerney 2016, no. 62).









Folio from the 'Vertical' Bhagavata Purana series  
 Attributed to the Master of the Court of Mankot, c. 1720  
 Opaque pigments and gold on paper, within white and dark blue margins and a wide red surround with white and crimson rules  
 Folio 28 x 19.5 cm; Painting 22.6 x 14.8 cm  
 Inscribed above in Takri script Bakasur marea ('the death of the crane demon') and below left with the number 17

Provenance  
 Ludwig Habighorst collection

Published  
 Habighorst 2011, fig. 59  
 Habighorst 2014, fig. 2

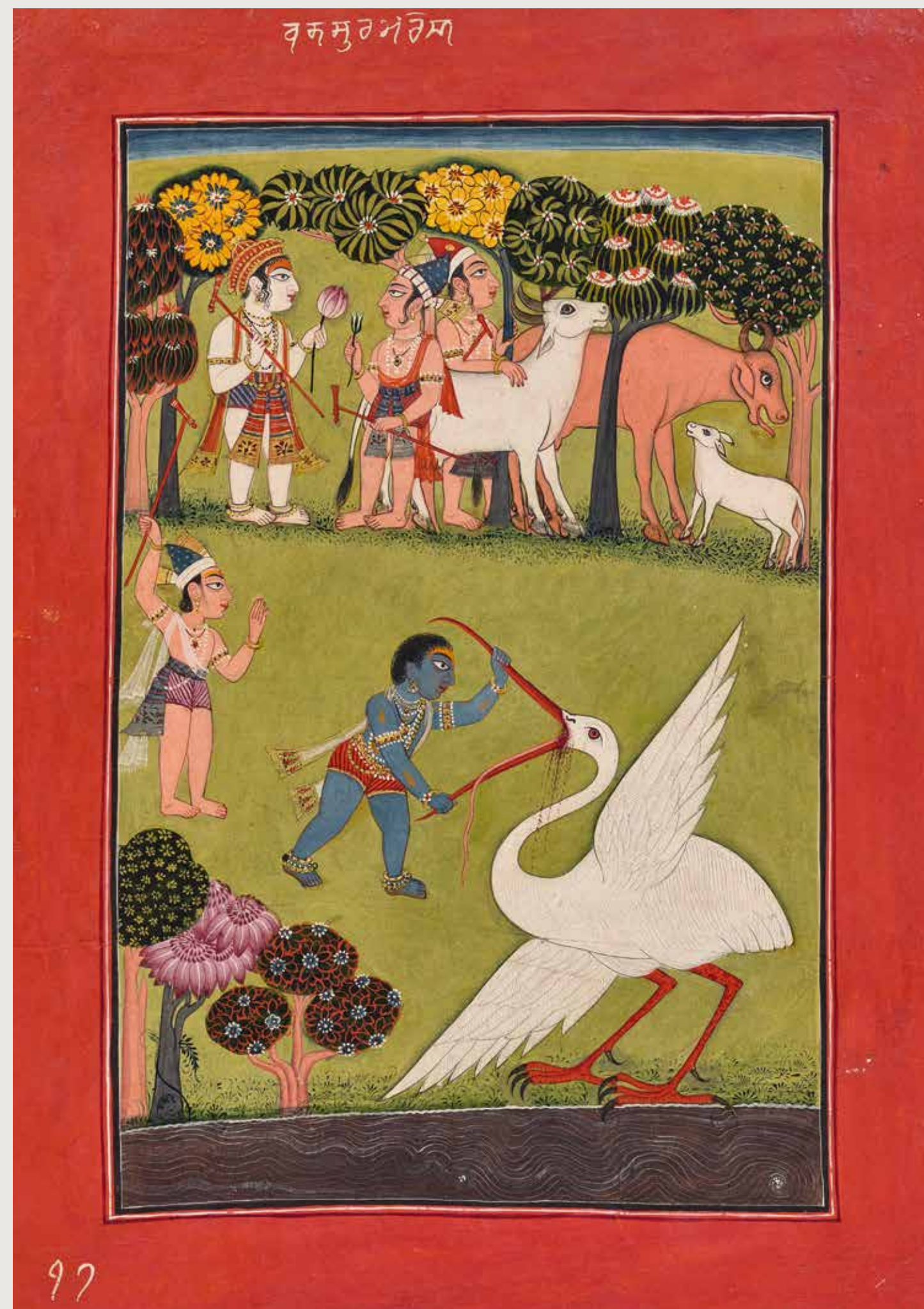
Exhibited  
 Hamburg, 2013  
 Koblenz, 2014

In canto 11 of the Tenth Book of the Bhagavata Purana, Nanda and the boys and all the inhabitants of Gokul moved to Brindaban where they hoped to be free of Kamsa's malevolence and the attacks of demons. No sooner had they moved than the demons struck again, first in the shape of a calf demon, easily disposed of by Krishna, and then in the shape of a giant crane. In vv. 46–54 the giant crane swallowed both boys, but Krishna burned it so badly inside its throat that it had to release him. Once he was out Krishna grabbed the giant bird by its beak in both hands and split it apart. Balarama emerged unharmed. Our artist shows the newly regurgitated Krishna grabbing the bird's beak in his hands and ripping it asunder as blood pours from its mouth, watched by one of his friends who stands ready to assist with his cowherd's stick raised. Above we see Balarama, white in colour and holding a lotus as well as his stick, now free from his ordeal in the bird's gullet and talking about his experience to the other young cowherds. The boys' gaily coloured drawers, cummerbunds, scarves and hats are matched in their exuberance by the wonderfully coloured and patterned trees. The gruesome scene below is balanced by a tender moment above, as a cow licks her calf.

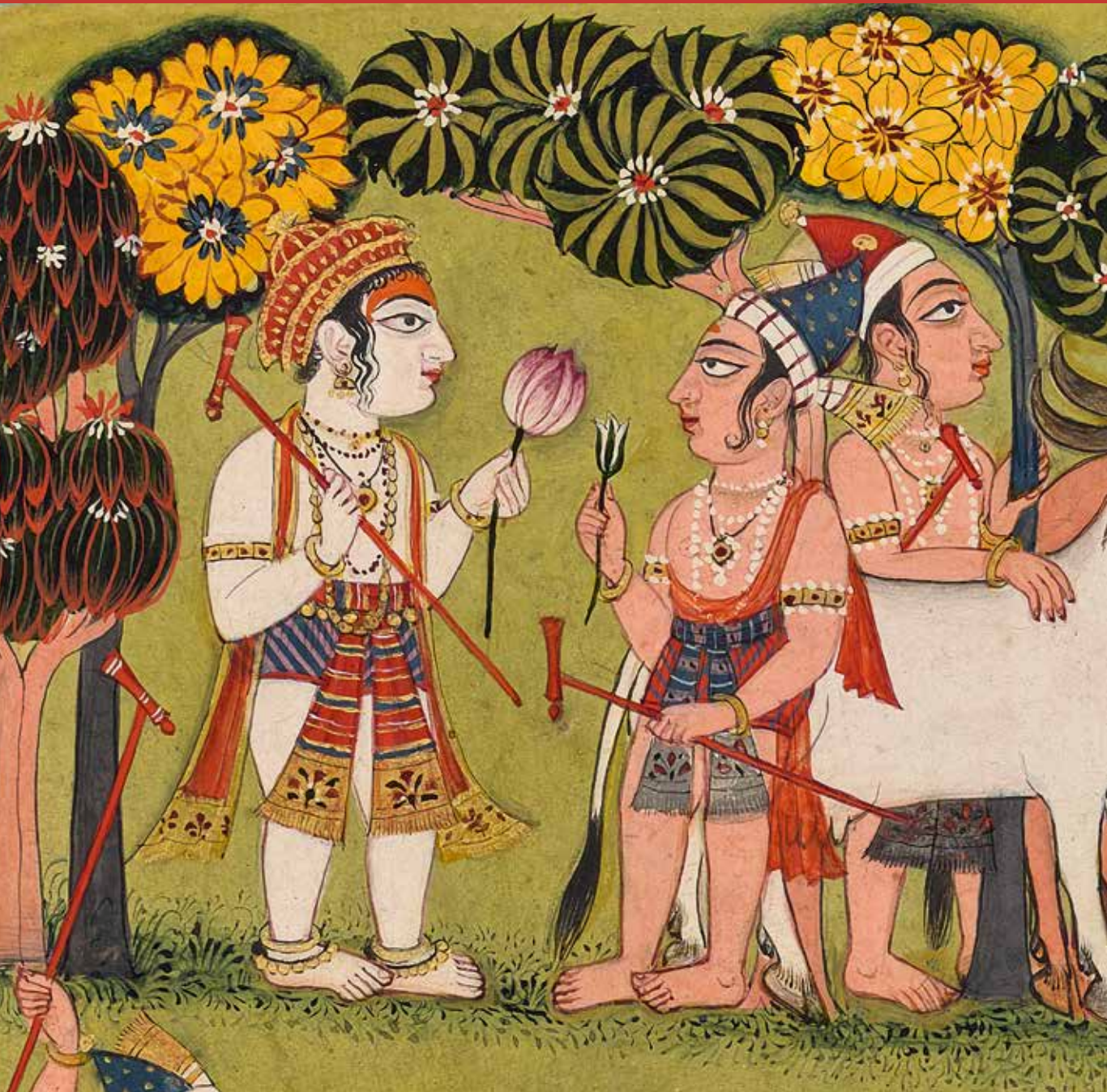
The series from which this page comes is known as the 'Vertical' Bhagavata Purana from Mankot and is slightly later than the

'Horizontal' Bhagavata Purana with its large landscape-shaped pages painted a decade or two earlier and by the same artist, endowed with confident, 'swaggering elation' as Archer put it (Archer 1973, vol. 1, pp. 376–77). That series was re-imagined a decade or so later by the same artist and his workshop, in a vertical format as here. The same compositions were reused, but simplified to fit into the new format and thereby tightened, sometimes to considerable benefit, resulting in 'simply stated, starkly powerful vertical compositions' (Ehnbom 1985, p. 204).

The series originally belonged to the Lambragraon family of Kangra, unlike the earlier series which came directly from Mankot. Like the earlier series it originally had about one hundred paintings apparently numbered the same. Now widely dispersed, most of the pages but not all have a numbering system in the lower left and an inscription in white Takri across the top. For important pages from the series, see Randhawa 1959, pls. 8–11; Archer 1973, Mankot 36, i–iii, with a list of the then published pages; Ehnbom 1985, nos. 99–101; Goswamy and Fischer 1992, no. 47; Goswamy and Bhatia 1999, nos. 169–173; Goswamy and Fischer 2011 'Mankot', figs. 3–5; McInerney 2016, nos. 51–52; Losty 2017, no. 2; and Goswamy and Fischer 2017, no. 6. Although all seem the same size there are slight differences in the inner margins, while McInerney's no. 52 has a yellow outer border.









Workshop of the Master of the Court  
of Mankot, c. 1700–20  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within a black margin and a red  
surround with white and crimson  
rules  
Folio 28.2 x 21.2 cm; Painting 22.3 x 15.3 cm  
Inscribed above in white Takri  
Anapurna

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Sotheby's, 8 April 1975, lot 166

Published  
Habighorst 2011, fig. 86

Annapurna, a form of the goddess Parvati, is particularly concerned with food and nourishment. She is described as a youthful goddess having a red complexion with a face round like the full moon, three eyes, high breasts and four hands. Here two of her hands hold her usual attributes, a bowl full of food and a ladle to dish it out. Her other two hands seem to be in more generalised motion than representing particular *mudras*, but one at least could be interpreted as the *abhaya mudra* ('have no fear'). She is depicted with golden jewellery and a flowered gold crown with the crescent moon on her forehead. She is wearing a crimson dhoti and orange bodice with a diaphanous *dupatta* and Shakta tilaks on her forehead (red wing-like stripes either side of the third eye). She rides on Shiva's bull Nandi decorated with gold ornaments and bells. Nandi is picking his way delicately through tufts of grass on a solid ochre ground that extends behind the pair, while above is a strip of sky with rolling red-tinged clouds.

Colour and general layout conform to the work done by the Master at the Court of Mankot, possibly Meju and to his portrait series in particular (see no. 7). A Shakta goddess in a Mankot painting is relatively rare, as the state was otherwise strongly Vaishnava, judging by the two *Bhagavata Purana* series and the tilak marks on the foreheads of rulers and others (Archer 1973, p. 368). There are of course a few exceptions. Goswamy and Fischer believed that a rare Shiva Ardhanarishvara in the Binney collection in the San Diego Museum (2011 'Mankot' fig. 8) may be part of a large *Ragamala* series. Our painting may be part of a series of divinities in the same format, including a Shaivite one, Parvati and Nandi sleeping while Shiva keeps watch at night, in a private collection in Philadelphia (Kramrisch 1986, no. 111). There Shiva too is given the same egg-shaped face, three staring eyes and neat, broad, wing-like stripes normally denoting a Shakta affiliation on his forehead. A slightly later Mankot Devi is in the Boner collection in the Museum Rietberg (Boner, Fischer & Goswamy 1994, pl. 17) from 1720–30.





KRISHNA AND BALARAMA PURSUE SHATADHANVA WHO HAS STOLEN THE SYAMANTAKA JEWEL

Folio from the 'Large Guler-Basohli' Bhagavata Purana series  
 Attributed to the Guler artist Fattu and workshop, 1760–65  
 Opaque pigments heightened with gold on paper  
 Folio 30 x 40.6 cm; Painting 27.5 x 38.3 cm  
 Inscribed on the verso in Sanskrit in Devanagari with the verse Bh. P. X, 57, 20 ('In a garden outside Mithila, the horse Shatadhanva was riding collapsed. Terrified, he abandoned the horse and began to flee on foot, with Kṣa in angry pursuit')

Provenance  
 Maggs Bros., London, 3 August 1982, cat. 39  
 Sotheby & Co., London, 1 February 1960, lots 1–63, each lot between 2–4 paintings of this series  
 Mrs F.C. Smith collection

The story of the Syamantaka jewel is told in the Bhagavata Purana Book X, cantos 56–57. This great jewel was owned by Satrajit, a devotee of the Sun-god, who arrived at Krishna's court in Dwarka wearing the jewel. There the jewel was borrowed by his brother Prasena who went off hunting wearing it. He was killed by a lion and the jewel taken, but then the lion was killed by Jambavan the king of the bears, who gave the jewel to his daughter to play with. To obviate rumours that he had stolen the jewel, Krishna went off in search of it and found it in the bear's cave. He had to fight the bear king for 20 days and nights before the bear recognised who he was dealing with and presented him with the jewel and his daughter Jambavati. Satrajit meanwhile who had spread the rumours that Krishna had stolen the jewel repented of his behaviour and presented Krishna with the jewel and his daughter Satyabhama. Krishna refused the jewel but kept the daughter. The jewel was in turn stolen by the wicked Shatadhanva, who killed Satrajit for it and then fled fearing Krishna's wrath, leaving the jewel with Akrura. Krishna and his brother Balarama pursued Shatadhanva who had fled on horseback and then when his horse collapsed, onwards on foot. But the furious Krishna decapitated him with his discus. The jewel of course was not found on his person but on his return to Dwarka, Akrura owned up to his having been given it, and was allowed by Krishna to keep it.

The terrified Shatadhanva is depicted fleeing on foot, his horse collapsed behind him with blood flowing from its muzzle and ears. The furious Krishna with Balarama beside him follow in a four-horse chariot. As Shatadhanva wearing a striking jama of purple and red stripes flees towards the apparent safety of a grove of plantain trees, the grimly determined Krishna

prepares his bow and an arrow to bring him down. The chariot is still outside the grove depicted against a green landscape which flows into the clouded sky above.

The earlier, vigorous style typical of Manaku in his *Gitagovinda* done for the Lady Malini in 1730 had been softened somewhat in the 'Small Guler' Bhagavata Purana datable 1740–50 (Goswamy 2017, nos. B1–166). Now, though, he succumbs even further to the charms of a softer, Mughal-type of painting style, no doubt influenced by his brother Nainsukh after his return to Guler from Jasrota c. 1750–55 with the exiled Balwant Singh (Goswamy and Fischer 2011 'Nainsukh', p. 659). The series is concerned solely with the tenth book of the Bhagavata Purana dealing with the exploits of Krishna and follows on naturally from the earlier 'Small' series which illustrates the earlier books and which seems to have been abandoned unfinished. The arrangement of the abbreviated text on the reverse, the use of alternate black and red aksharas in colophons, certainly suggests the same scriptorium. If Manaku is regarded as the presiding genius of that earlier set, then his footprints are all over this new series too, but in a slightly diluted form. It would seem logical therefore to regard some of the work as being guided by Manaku before his death, which is widely held to be around 1760, and carried on by his elder son Fattu either at Guler or Basohli.

The landscape in this second Guler series of Bhagavata Purana paintings has been developed from the very basic conventions of the earlier set, differentiating between the ground and the clouded sky, although the figures are still depicted as in a frieze. Additionally, the naturalism of the trees is far more advanced, no doubt under Manaku's direction, so that we realise that the guilty fugitive is heading into a grove and possible safety.









THE MONKEYS START TO BUILD THE BRIDGE  
ACROSS THE SEA TO LANKA

Folio from a *Ramayana* series  
Guler, 1760–70  
Opaque pigments on paper, within  
a blue margin and an (added) mauve  
surround  
Folio 21 x 27.7 cm; Painting 16.8 x 23.9 cm  
Inscribed on the verso with a Sanskrit  
verse on the monkey army praising  
Rama and a brief Takri inscription

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Abdur Rahman Chughtai (1894–1975)  
collection

Published  
Valmiki 2011, vol. VI, pp. 56–57  
Sharma 2010, p. 72

Near the beginning of the sixth book of the *Ramayana*, the monkeys have started building the bridge to cross the ocean to Lanka, which is visible with its palaces gleaming on the distant shore opposite. With great effort monkeys and bears are carrying the huge stones out to the ocean teeming with strange fish and hurling them into the still turbulent water. One rock falls with a great splash into the water to the surprise of a nearby horse-headed sea creature. On the shore, Rama is in conclave with the monkey chiefs as he listens sternly to Vibhishana seated before him. He has already loosened innumerable arrows on the Ocean that have caused the waters to boil in turmoil. Lakshmana sits beside Rama listening quietly, as always the devoted younger brother ready to support him. Both have their bows strung and ready for action, Rama's being held across his knees. The monkey chiefs sit around listening, as do rows of their followers, some blowing trumpets and horns.

The verse tells us that the monkeys are heaving their great stones into the ocean and then begin to cross over the causeway they have built, recounting the greatness of the son of Dasharatha. It is not however to be found in the *Yuddha Kanda* of the *Ramayana*, as might be expected here, but from a presently unknown text that seems to be a summary of the *Ramayana*. The verse is numbered 1 and there is no folio number showing it to be part of a series.

The painting seems to be coming from an abbreviated version of the *Ramayana*, since if the seated man is indeed Ravana's brother Vibhishana newly come from Lanka, then the first thing he suggests Rama do is to summon Sagara, the Ocean, to appear before him. Only when Rama has spent three days willing the Ocean to appear and then loosened his arrows upon it does the Ocean appear and agree to bear a bridge upon his waters to convey the army safely to Lanka. Only then do the monkeys and bears begin to heave great trees and rocks in the Ocean to build the bridge. The painting omits the summoning of the Ocean entirely.

This is a painting that combines furious energy with calm authority, and is one of the most remarkable and most finely painted of all the paintings from the Ludwig Habighorst collection. Our Rama and Lakshmana are very close with their leaf hats and leaf skirts and of course in their persons to how they appear in their exile in the first part of the 'Second Guler' *Ramayana* (Britschgi and Fischer 2008, nos. 14, 23, 28, 31–32, 39). The earnest face of Vibhishana reminds one of the eloquently anguished face of Vasishtha in that series, as the newly exiled children suffer Kaikeyi's spiteful dressing of Sita in robes of bark (Losty 2017, no. 19).









KRISHNA AND HIS FRIENDS  
PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK BY NIGHT\*

Guler, c. 1765  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within a black margin and a pink  
border  
Folio 26.3 x 22 cm; Painting 21.2 x 17.7 cm

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Abdur Rahman Chughtai (1894–1975)  
collection

Published  
Sharma 2010, p. 141  
Habighorst 2011, fig. 16  
Habighorst 2014, fig. 5

Exhibited  
Hamburg, 2013  
Koblenz, 2014

In canto 11 of the Tenth Book of the *Bhagavata Purana*, Nanda and the boys Krishna and Balarama and all the inhabitants of Gokul have moved to Brindaban where they hoped to be free of Kamsa's malevolence and the attacks of demons. It was not to be, however, for no sooner had they moved, then the demons struck again in the shape of Vatasura, the Calf-demon and

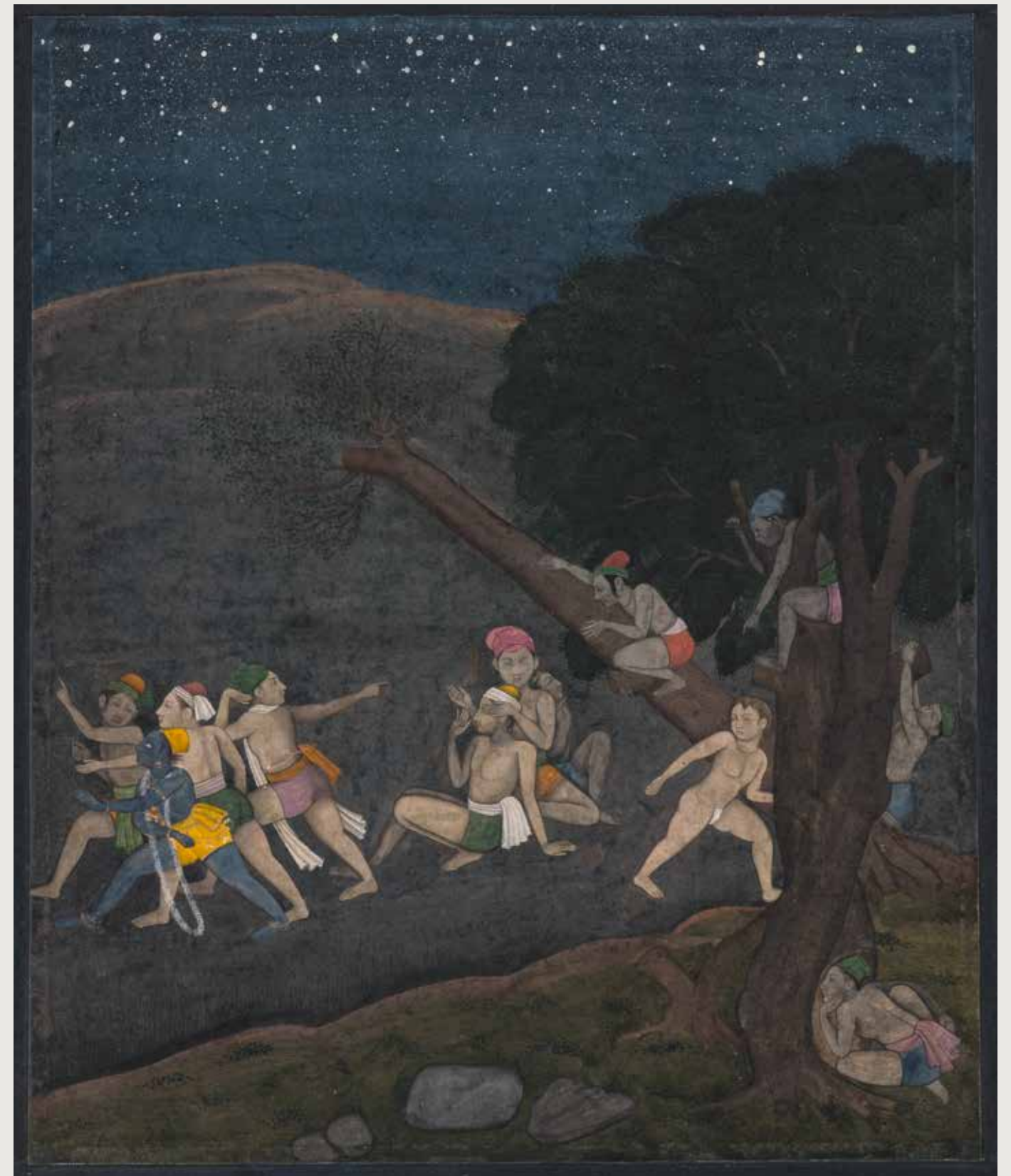


Bakasura, the Crane-demon, both quickly disposed of by Krishna and Balarama. The canto ends peaceably with a verse (x, 11, 59) extolling the childhood games that the two boys and their friends were able to play, including hide-and-seek (*nilayana*), dam-building (*setubandha*) and 'jumping around like monkeys' (*markatoplavana*). Again in canto 18, we read of the similar games played by the cowherd boys as they minded the cows, when they were attacked by the demon Pralamba; this time it ends with Balarama slaying the demon.

Hide-and-seek or blindman's buff as played by the boys had been the subject of an earlier famous painting from Guler and attributed to Manaku, now in the Kronos collection in New York (McInerney 2016, no. 76), in which Krishna is

the one who has his eyes covered while his friends scatter. Although in that painting the moon and stars are in the sky, rather strangely the cows are still out in the woods instead of safely at home locked up against marauders, and of course the scene is brightly lit. In this Guler version from probably a few years later, it really is night, the cows are safely back in their stockade, and there is no moon; the only light is that provided by the stars. The trees amidst which the boys are playing are dark, and the boys' subtly modelled bodies and supple limbs (no longer heavy as in the version attributed to Manaku) glimmer under the starlight against the dark hillside. Only their brightly coloured drawers, caps and scarves stand out, as well as Krishna's gold ornaments. The central group, the crouching boy with his eyes being covered by another standing behind him, with a third hiding behind him, their hands all most delicately depicted, is more or less a version of the earlier painting, although it is not Krishna who is having his eyes covered. Instead he and another three boys are rushing off into the night. Another group of four are using the tree for shelter, either climbing it or hiding behind it, and the artist makes use of the tree's shade to ensure that this group are also more shadowed than the ones in the open, except for the one nearly naked younger boy who is still in the open as he heads for the tree. Even among the boys in the open there is subtle shading differentiating them: those nearer the picture plane are more brightly lit than those further back who are under the shadow of a large, partly uprooted tree that slants right across the picture. Such concerns for the correct lighting were brought into Pahari painting by Nainsukh and passed on to the next generation of sons and nephews.

This is a most remarkable painting from the Habighorst collection. Wonderfully painted, it also consolidates some of the innovations introduced by Nainsukh a few years earlier.





Hitherto in Pahari painting, though the moon and stars might be in the sky, the scene is still usually brightly lit as in Manaku's 'Blindman's buff'. Darkness rendered as truly dark is a new development. Nainsukh's 'Villagers round a fire' in the Indian Museum, Kolkata (Goswamy 1997, no. 91), first explored darkness in this realistic manner, where the fire is the only source of light, brightly illuminating the front of those sitting behind the fire from the viewer's viewpoint and casting into deepest shadow the backs of those sitting in front of it. There is no such internal source of light in our painting, but for the overall effect of starlight from above. Tree and hillside loom up against the dark sky and the overall dim light from above allows the boys out in the open to be more visible to the viewer than those cast into shadow under the tree. The facial types: the serious, determined faces, small-eyed, with relatively large noses and sloping foreheads, are not Nainsukh's nor Manaku's, nor for that matter are they seen in the work of their sons (see for example the nearly naked boys playing the same game in a painting from the Bihari Satsai attributed to Fattu (McInerney 2016, no. 90)), but Nainsukh surely must have been in an advisory role for our artist.





Drawing from a set of preparatory drawings for the 'Second Guler' or 'Tehri-Garhwal' *GitaGovinda*. Original outlines attributed to Nainsukh, c. 1765, with additions by his sons and nephews. Brush drawing in red sanguine and dark brown with pink-yellow wash. Folio 19 x 28 cm. Inscribed on the reverse in Devanagari with the Sanskrit text of Jayadeva's *GitaGovinda* I, 25, and a Pahari paraphrase, and the folio number 24 above and another number 21 below.

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection

Published  
Habighorst 2014, fig. 13

Exhibited  
Koblenz, 2014

Although the couple engaged in a passionate embrace would seem to be Krishna and Radha, the verse that this erotic coupling illustrates is in fact from the first canto of Jayadeva's *GitaGovinda*, the last verse of a paean to Vishnu as the preserver of the world:

"As he rests in Shri's embrace, on the soft slope of her breast,  
The saffroned chest of Madhu's killer is stained with red marks of passion  
And sweat from fatigue of tumultuous loving,  
May his broad chest bring you pleasure too!"  
(translation Miller 1977/1984, p. 73)

The god's crown without the peacock finial always worn by Krishna in this series, also absent in the finished painting, serves to tell us that this is in fact Vishnu not Krishna. The drawing does not quite correspond to the text, for it is Vishnu who is supporting Shri in their post-coital embrace, with one hand behind her back and the other holding her wrist as she clings to his shoulder. Her other hand is pulling back her *ornhi* from her forehead the better to gaze into his eyes in this moment of tender intimacy. The drawing is from a set of preparatory drawings for the 'Second Guler' *GitaGovinda*, now dispersed. They all have the Sanskrit text of the poem on the reverse together with a commentary/paraphrase in a Pahari dialect. Here the text is obviously relevant to the drawing on the other side, although that is not universally so in this set of drawings. The finished painting for this drawing is in the Kronos collection in New York (McInerney 2016, no. 81).

Two earlier pages of sketches apparently noting down Nainsukh's first thoughts on how Radha should appear in this set have survived, in the Museum Rietberg and the National Museum, New Delhi (Goswamy 1997, nos. 98 and 99). Each has three or four drawings of Radha in various postures, while the beginning of the Sanskrit

verse of the *GitaGovinda* relevant to the drawing is written on the other side. In the next stage in the preparation of the set, i.e. the stage represented by our drawing, Nainsukh worked out the rough outline of the contents of each painting. A very free preliminary broad outline of the subject in red sanguine was done, noting the position of the loving couple and the broad outline of the landscape. Next came the addition of a light yellow wash over the underdrawing of the figures, intended as a ground for the finer drawing of outlines in deep brown achieved with firmer and more precise drawing with a much finer brush. The bed of leaves on which they are sitting was also put in at this stage. In the various drawings in the set, some of this stage is very fine, some less so. It is extremely finely done in our example, Vishnu being the very epitome of manly grace and Shri of womanly devotion as they gaze tenderly at each other.

It is a moot point whether and to what extent Nainsukh was involved at this stage or whether this was done by one or other of the sons and nephews, while he thought about his next project. Certainly the short-nosed high-foreheaded profiles of Vishnu and Shri match those in paintings attributed to Nainsukh of Krishna and Radha enthroned (Goswamy 1997, figs. 44 and 90).

The number of each sheet was usually put at the top and repeated on the reverse. Finally a rectangle of firm black lines was ruled round the drawing intended to represent no doubt the area to be painted in full, but later generally ignored. For Nainsukh's involvement in the preparation of this set, see Goswamy 1997, pp. 246–51, and for an analysis of the drawings as a set see Losty 2017, pp. 147–63.

The drawings are working drawings often showing changes of mind. Vishnu's left hand was first positioned a little higher up on Shri's back, but then lowered a little to be at a more natural angle following the line of the shoulder and the upper arm. In the finished painting the hand has been lowered a little more and the wrist has disappeared. In the drawing the position of Vishnu's right leg has also changed, being originally higher up the page.





## 15 & 16

### TWO FOLIOS FROM THE 'SECOND GULER' OR 'TEHRI-GARHWAL' GITAGOVINDA

The series from which these pages come is one of the most beautiful and important of all the Pahari series. It is often referred to as the 'Tehri Garhwal' *Gitagovinda* after its find spot, or the 'Early Kangra' *Gitagovinda*, as it was long considered along with the *Bhagavata Purana* and *Ramayana* in similar style as being the first fruits of the newly emerging school of Kangra artists under Guler influence; and very probably prepared for the celebration of the marriage of Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra, which took place in 1781 (Archer 1973, vol. 1, pp. 292–93). Other scholars can find no evidence linking Kangra with the place of production of this series and think of it as the work of Guler artists, called the 'First Generation after Manaku and Nainsukh',

which at some stage found its way into the Kangra royal collections (Goswamy and Fischer 1992, nos. 130–37, and 2011 'First Generation').

Once divorced from the speculations linking it and the other series to Kangra in 1781, it can be seen that the dating is too late, since Nainsukh's influence spreads over all three series and other works in similar style (see introduction). The *Gitagovinda* is now widely dispersed in India, the USA and Europe, in both public and private collections. See in particular Randhawa 1963, *passim*; Archer 1973, Kangra 33(i–vii); Goswamy and Fischer 1992, nos. 130–37; Mason 2001, nos. 82–83; McNerney 2016, nos. 77–85; Goswamy and Fischer 2017, nos. 19–20; Losty 2017, nos. 25–26; and Widmer 2019.





THE SAKHI POINTS OUT TO RADHA  
THAT KRISHNA IS WAITING FOR HER

By a Guler artist, 1765–70  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within a blue margin with pink  
border  
Folio 175 × 27.2 cm; Painting 15.2 × 25.3 cm  
Inscribed on the reverse with the  
Sanskrit text of Jayadeva's  
*Gita Govinda*, V, vv. 8–10, and a Pahari  
paraphrase in Devanagari script,  
with the folio number 61 on the cover  
sheet

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Sotheby's New York, 6 October 1990,  
lot 116  
Tehri-Garhwal Royal collection

Published  
Deheija 2008, p. 35  
Habighorst 2011, fig. 21  
Habighorst 2014, fig. 12

Exhibited  
Hamburg, 2013  
Koblenz, 2014

Sitting on the bank of the Yamuna river the  
lovelorn Krishna plays his flute, eagerly waiting  
for Radha to come to him. His yellow *dupatta* is  
here draped around him as a kind of shawl.  
Radha is separated from him by a stand of trees,  
seated in a beautiful riverine landscape with  
clumps of lilies and other flowers growing along  
the water's edge. Radha's companion points him  
out to her and urges her that it is finally time for  
her to swallow her wounded pride and go to her  
beloved. Radha with one hand gesturing  
indecisively towards her mouth is still perplexed  
as to what to do, but the sakhi is determined to  
get her to go to her lover, as indicated by her  
stance above her friend and her emphatic,  
almost command-like, gesture towards him.

“He ventures in secret to savour your passion,  
dressed for love's delight.

Radha, don't let full hips idle! Follow the lord  
of your heart!

In woods on windswept Jumna bank, Krishna  
waits in wildflower garlands.

He plays your name to call you on his sweet  
reed flute.

He cherishes breeze-blown pollen that  
touched your fragile body.

In woods on windswept Jumna banks ...

When a bird father falls or a leaf stirs, he  
imagines your coming.

He makes the bed of love; he eyes your pathway  
anxiously.

In woods on windswept Jumna banks ...”

(translation B.S. Miller 1977/1984, p. 92)

But despite the sakhi's passionate urging,  
it was not to be, or not yet, for Radha is still  
hesitant while Krishna suffers for his earlier  
indiscretions. As the verse suggests, Krishna  
looks eagerly towards the trees that separate him  
from Radha whenever a noise startles him, but  
in the painting it is only the birds in the trees  
that are moving. His smaller size relative to the  
two women indicates that he is in fact some  
distance away, while the effect of depth in the  
landscape is also conveyed by the smaller distant  
trees near the top of the hill. Concerns with the  
conveying of spatial depth were now coming to  
the fore in Guler painting.









By a Guler artist, 1765–70  
 Opaque pigments on paper, within a  
 dark blue margin and a pink  
 surround  
 Folio 18.1 x 27.7 cm; Painting 15.3 x 25.7 cm  
 Inscribed on the reverse with the  
 Sanskrit text of Jayadeva's  
*GitaGovinda*, X, v. 15, and a Pahari  
 paraphrase in Devanagari script

Provenance  
 Ludwig Habighorst collection  
 Doris Wiener Gallery, before 1981  
 Tehri-Garhwal Royal collection

Published  
 Pal 1981, fig. 22  
 Sharma 2010, p. 139  
 Habighorst 2014, fig. 8

Exhibited  
 Koblenz, 2014

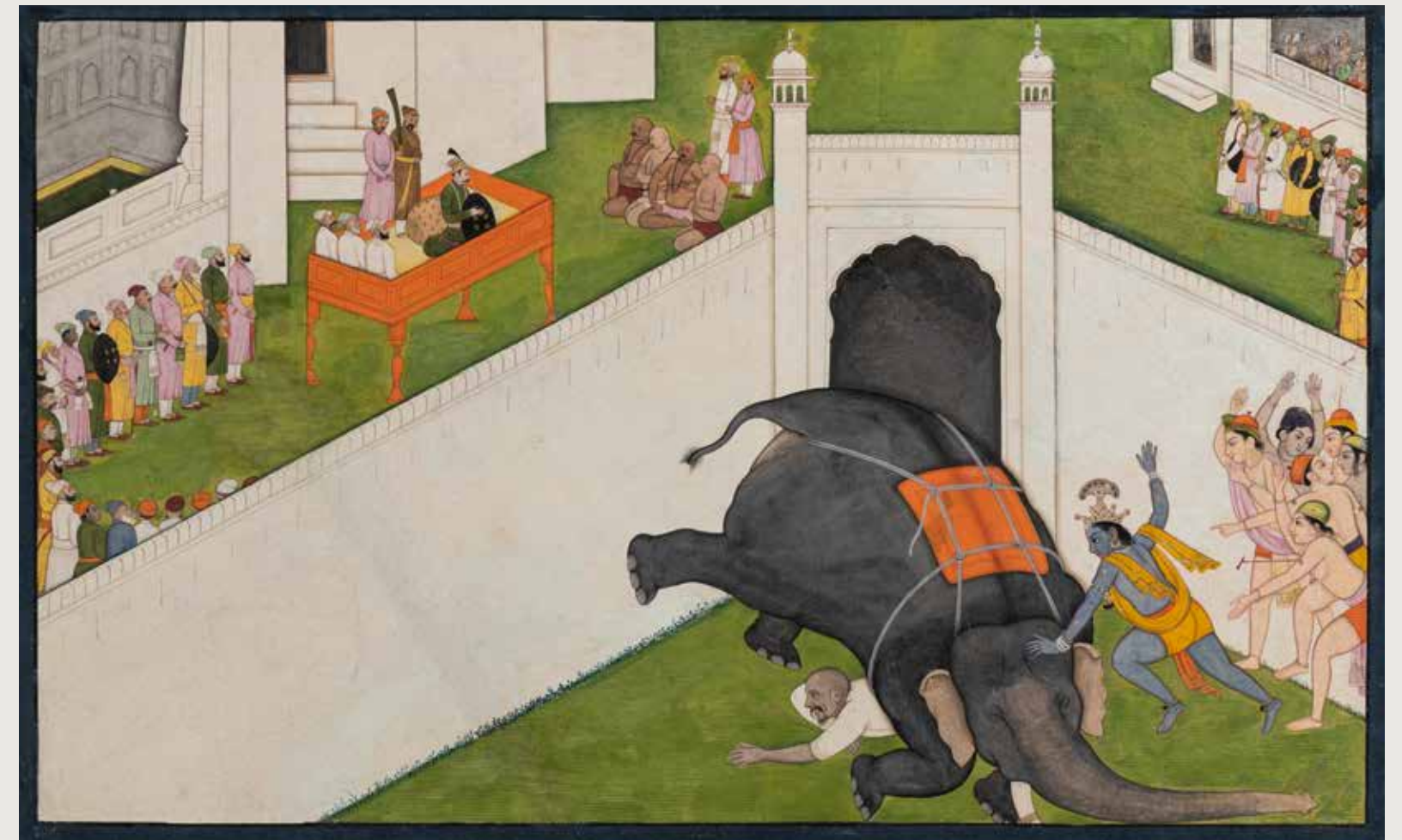
The verse on the back is somewhat unexpectedly placed in Jayadeva's *GitaGovinda* at the end of Canto X, which is otherwise totally concerned with Krishna's passionate wooing of Radha, but the verse is found only in some manuscripts and editions.

“Let Hari spread joy –  
 When he made contact with Kamsa's mount in  
 lusty battle  
 The elephant's swollen temples made him  
 recall Radha's full breasts,  
 So he broke into a sweat and shut his eyes for a  
 second –  
 Immediately, in the confusion of seeing him  
 thus, Kamsa's roar sounded  
 ‘It is won!’ ‘It is won!’ ‘It is won!’” (translation  
 B.S. Miller 1977/1984, p. 201)

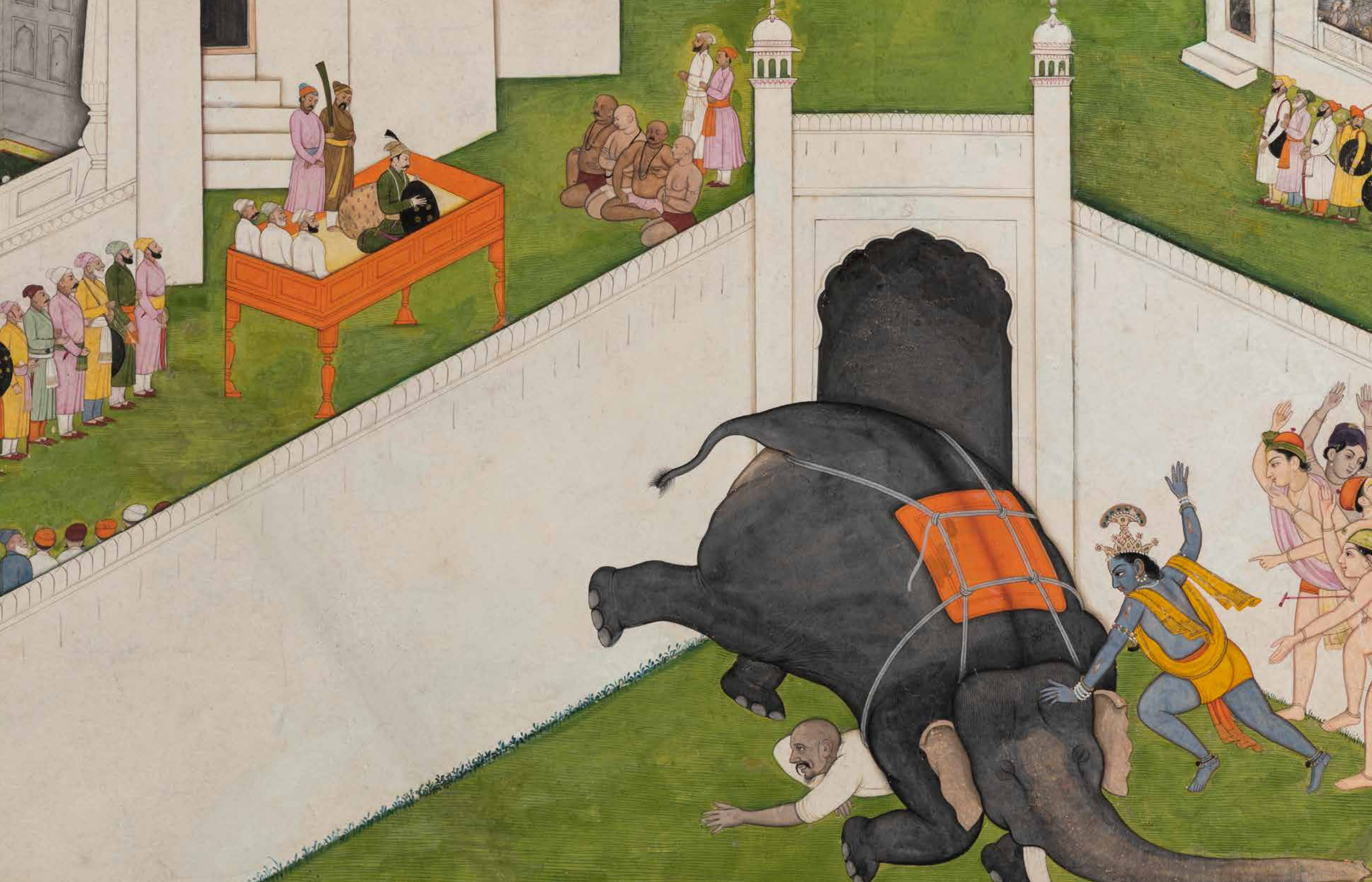
As Krishna went to the wrestling ground in Mathura for his final confrontation with Kamsa, he was confronted by the enormous elephant Kuvalayapida and its keeper, who would not let him pass the gate. Krishna was able to overcome the elephant and yank out one of its tusks, with which he killed the elephant and its riders (*Bhagavata Purana*, X, 43, 1–14). This fight is taking place outside the gate of the city, where Krishna now a lusty teenager egged on by his gang of boys has forced the elephant down onto the

ground, thereby squashing its rider. Although the elephant now has only the one tusk, the other is nowhere to be seen. The high viewpoint of the composition allows a view over the walls of the city, within which Kamsa sits on an elevated throne-platform. From this seat Kamsa in turn can see his approaching nemesis. His four champion wrestlers sit on the ground beside him. Attendants stand around respectfully waiting for the match and drums and trumpets sound in the distant *naqqar-khana*. After Krishna enters the wrestling ground the fearful Kamsa pits his champion wrestlers Chanura and Mustika against the two boys and after sparring with them for a while, Krishna and Balarama are able to kill them both (*ibid.*, X, 44, 1–30).

Unlike the pages from this manuscript that concentrate on Krishna and Radha in close-up, the artist here takes a high elevated viewpoint so that he can bring in what is happening behind the city walls. The figures there are much smaller than the group before the walls, who are in turn somewhat smaller than Radha and Krishna in the scenes illustrating their estrangement and final reconciliation. The energetic activity in the foreground contrasts with the static, *darbar*-like scene behind the walls, where Kamsa awaits his long-foretold doom. For the subsequent scene, see Widmer (Widmer 2019, fig. 43, pp. 116–117).









## 'STAY WITH ME, MY LOVE'

Folio from the 'First Guler' Satsai of Bihari  
 Attributed to the Guler artist Fattu, c. 1775  
 Opaque pigments and gold on paper  
 Folio 19.8 x 14.2 cm; Painting oval 18.1 x 10.1 cm, within a white oval margin and blue spandrels decorated with palmettes and arabesques, a yellow margin around all and a pink splashed border (cut down)  
 Inscribed on the cover sheet in Devanagari in Hindi with two verses of the Satsai of Bihari, the first unnumbered, the second 49

Provenance  
 Ludwig Habighorst collection  
 Gloria Katz and Willard Huyck collection  
 Tehri-Garhwal Royal collection

Published  
 Randhawa 1966, pl. IV  
 Archer 1973, Kangra 39 (iv)  
 Liebeskunst 2002, fig. 137  
 Sharma 2010, p. 64  
 Habighorst 2014, fig. 23

Exhibited  
 Zurich, 2002  
 Hamburg, 2013

Krishna and Radha are standing in animated discussion in a courtyard under dark rolling clouds suggesting the monsoon is upon them, as the cranes fly up to meet the clouds. Krishna is gesturing with his right arm that he must leave, but Radha is clearly unhappy that he wants to leave her in the rainy season, the traditional time for men to remain at home and for love-making, and shows it both with her hand gestures and her questioning look. Radha is firm in her resolve that he should stay and is not shy in telling him so, judging by her determined expression. Krishna as can be seen from the position of his left hand raised towards his chin is undecided and having second thoughts. Their expressions correspond to the two verses inscribed on the cover sheet:

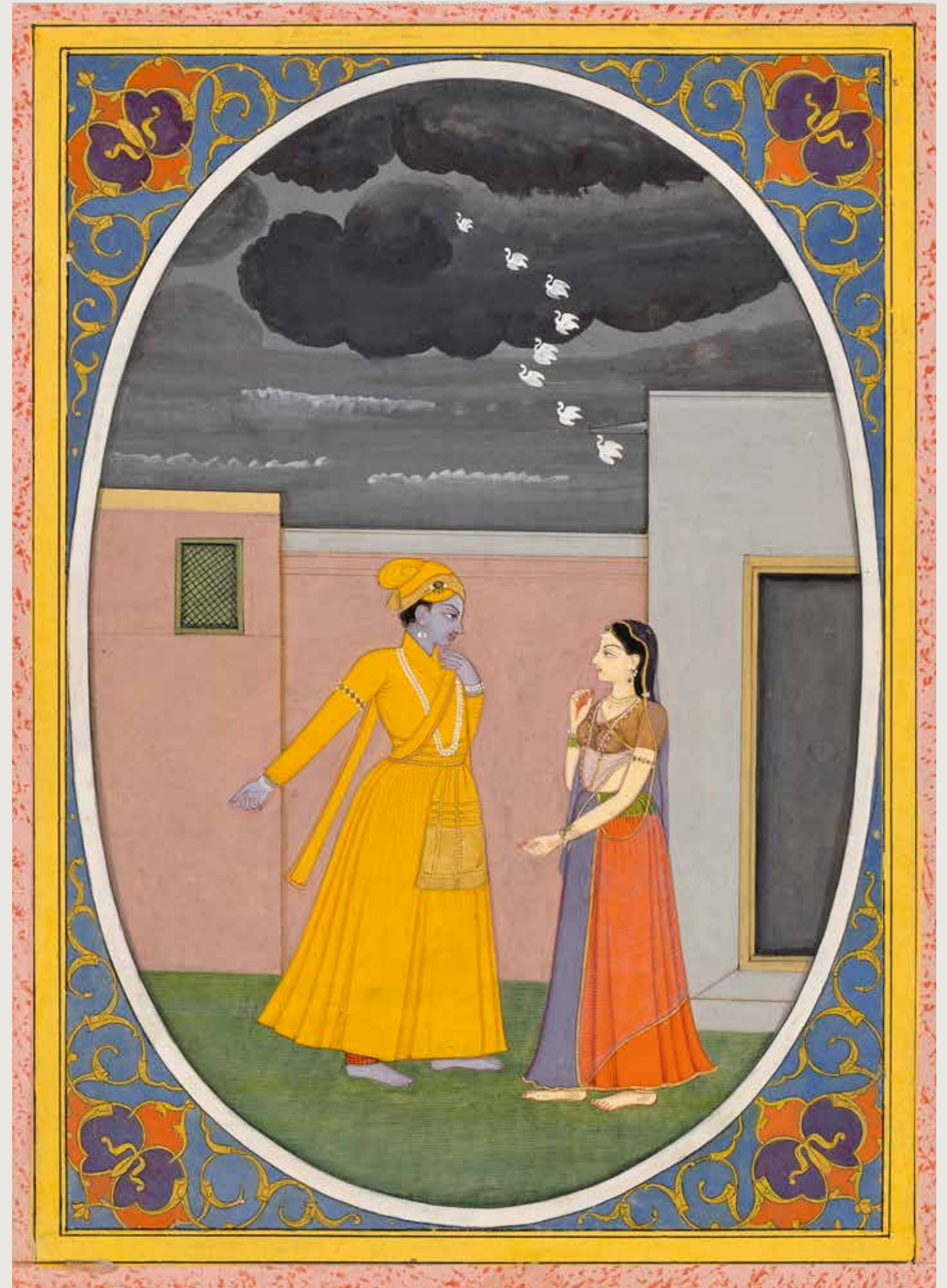
"Don't call me your 'beloved': call me instead a shrew.  
 Going away to a far-off land in the month of rains,  
 You should be ashamed of calling me your sweet-heart" (translation M.S. Randhawa 1966, p. 52)  
 "The auspicious time for him to go was in the morning, but he could not tear himself away from his beloved,  
 And he stopped to bid her farewell again and again until the day passed ere he reached his doorstep" (translation K.P. Bahadur 1990, no. 453)

The painting has none of the elaborate decorative details seen in later versions of such scenes: hero and heroine stand posed in front of Radha's house, the door of which is open invitingly, but the building is severely plain and it is only their clothes – Krishna in his usual bright yellow *jama*, *dupatta* and turban and

Radha in plain red skirt, violet bodice and diaphanous blue *orhni* – that add much colour to the scene. The two of them are painted with the greatest delicacy and refinement.

The Satsai ('700 [verses]') of the seventeenth century poet Bihari Lal, court poet of Raja Jai Singh of Amber (reg. 1621–67), consists of over 700 fairly brief verses in the Riti or literary style of Hindi poetry, dealing principally with the erotic *rasa*, *sringara*, in all its aspects. The verses are spoken by the *nayaka* and *nayika* (hero and heroine) and their confidants, who are interpreted in the artistic tradition as Krishna and his beloved Radha and their friends. According to M. S. Randhawa: "The verses of the Sat Sai are rich in poetic flavour, elegance, subtlety of feeling and sensuous delight" (1966, p. 16).

This 'First Guler' series is fully in the Guler idiom established by the family workshops of Nainsukh and Manaku for the *Gitagovinda*, *Bhagavata Purana* and *Ramayana* in the 1760s and 1770s. This seems the earliest major series to adopt the elongated oval format, which seems peculiarly suited to this concise and elliptical text with its descriptions viewed as it were through a window. The original series contains some forty paintings, with some twenty more existing as unfinished sketches now in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi. The series is now widely dispersed in public and private collections. For other pages, see Randhawa 1966; Archer 1973, Kangra 39(i–iv); Bautze 1991, nos. 74–76; Goswamy and Fischer 1992, no. 150; Jain-Neubauer 1998, figs. 14–15; Goswamy and Fischer 2011 'First generation', figs. 19–21; McInerney 2016, nos. 89–91; Losty 2017, nos. 76–77. Drawings after the finished series are in the National Museum and the IGNCA, New Delhi, one with a later scribbled ascription to Fattu, Manaku's son, which suggests he may have been responsible for the entire series (see Jain-Neubauer 1998).





## 18–19

### TWO FOLIOS FROM THE SECOND PART OF THE 'SECOND GULER' RAMAYANA

This 'Second Guler' *Ramayana* (the first being that of Pandit Seu 1720–30) was begun by artists from Guler 1770–75 just after the other two great manuscripts of the *Gitagovinda* and the *Bhagavata Purana*. These three great series are widely attributed to various of the sons of Manaku and Nainsukh at this time. The *Ramayana* was prepared in two campaigns. A second campaign involved Books V and VI, the *Sundara-* and *Yuddha-kandas*, which were completed somewhat later, apparently over a longer period 1790–1810. The later part is of the same size as the earlier one but instead of a plain blue inner border, it is decorated with floral scrolls as here. A page in the Mittal Museum in Hyderabad as well as several others in other collections by the artist of that page suggest that work continued for some time after 1800, as demonstrated there in the rather loose manner in which the landscape is painted (Seyller and Mittal 2014, no. 99). Where human faces are visible, here those of Rama and Lakshmana, they are depicted still with the rather angular profile of Guler and the sharp noses which seem derived ultimately from Nainsukh. This suggests that this second part of the series was also possibly prepared at Guler in the last years of Raja Bhup Singh's independence of the Sikhs, but perhaps finished off in Kangra.

The series is widely dispersed. For other folios from this second part of the series, for which some drawings are also known, see Britschgi and Fischer 2008, nos. 54 (a drawing), 56, 58, 78; Goswamy and Fischer 'First generation' 2011, figs. 14–15; and Valmiki 2011, vols. IV–VI, *passim*.





HANUMAN JUMPS BACK ACROSS THE OCEAN FROM LANKA  
TO MOUNT MAHENDRA

Folio from the second part of the  
'Second Guler' *Ramāyana*  
By a Guler artist, c. 1800–10  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within a blue margin with gold  
scrolling foliage and a wide pink  
outer border  
Folio 25 x 35.5 cm; Painting 20 x 30.2 cm

Provenance  
Eva & Konrad Seitz collection

Published  
Valmiki 2011, vol. V, p. 141  
Losty 2017, cat. 21, pp. 120–121

In the *Sundarakanda* or Book V of the *Ramāyana*, Hanuman makes his mighty leap across the ocean.

He has found Sita, wreaked havoc on Lanka and now jumps back across the ocean to rejoin Jambavan, Angada and the other monkey leaders who were anxiously awaiting his return on Mount Mahendra. The ocean here is treated rather like a mighty river hurtling down between the two landmasses and teeming with fish and strange sea creatures. Lanka is depicted as a series of conical hills dotted with trees, from the top of one of which the relatively diminutive figure of Hanuman has leapt. He now approaches the gentler hills of the Indian coast, which recede, diminishing in size into the distance. Hanuman is depicted again as he is welcomed back by Jambavan, Angada and the other monkey leaders, who pat him approvingly while he basks in their attention. The five figures are then depicted once more and much smaller as they depart to bring the good tidings of Sita's discovery back to Rama.

The earlier master of the *Aranyakanda*, with his depiction of the mighty Ganges as the exiles are ferried across it in a diminutive boat between landmasses from top left to bottom right, has clearly influenced our artist's rendering of the ocean and its shores (Britschgi and Fischer 2008, no. 13; Goswamy and Fischer 2011 'First generation', fig. 12). In this work by the earlier master, small conical hills painted in light brown or green mark the far shore of the Ganges, whereas the nearside is a close-up view of the

plants on the edge of the river. Our painting has the same idea of the conical hills in the distance, here painted green with dotted trees on the nearer hills, but only bigger trees in the ridges between them. The near side of the ocean shows all the larger hills covered in small trees and blossoming plants. The artist carefully interprets the text, for as the mighty monkey climbed the tallest of the mountains, Mount Arishta, he caused avalanches to fall down the mountain side, and as he leapt 'pressed under foot by that monkey, the mountain giant re-echoing to the cries of countless denizens sank into the bosom of the earth ... that mighty hill, measuring forty miles in extent and thirty in height, was levelled to the earth with its trees and lofty summits' (Valmiki 1952–59, vol. 2, pp. 471–72). Here Mount Arishta is sinking into a large black pit, to the surprise of one tiger, and the mountain is already smaller than its neighbours.

Noticeable here are the relatively thin washes of paint depicting the hills which, combined with the almost military precision of the placing of the trees, suggest the painting is somewhat later than the earlier series. It also seems later than the painting showing Hanuman crossing the ocean to Lanka earlier in the book, which is one of the most powerful in the second part of the series, showing Hanuman leaping from craggy mountains on the left and touching briefly on Mount Mainaka before sailing on as it were into infinity out of the back of the picture, diminishing in size each time (Losty 2008, no. 37).





THE DEATH OF THE DEMONS MAHODARA, DEVANTAKA  
AND TRISHIRAS

Folio from the second part of the  
'Second Guler' *Ramāyana*  
By a Guler artist, c. 1790  
Opaque pigments and gold and silver  
on paper, within a blue margin with  
gold and silver floral arabesque and a  
pink outer border with a red rule  
Folio 24.9 x 35.3 cm; Painting 20 x 30.2 cm

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection

Published  
Sharma 2010, p. 73  
Valmiki 2011, vol. VI, p. 173

Rama and Lakshmana watch as their monkey  
and bear allies launch an assault on the demons'  
Lanka. In chapter 70 of the *Yuddha Kanda*, several  
of the leaders of the demons are killed (Valmiki  
1952–59, vol. III, pp. 197–201). In this energetically  
depicted battle scene, the white Angada, Bali's  
son, has hurled a mighty tree at Devantaka, and  
then rushed upon the elephant ridden by  
Mahodara to strike it down with the palm of his

hand and to tear off one of its tusks to use as  
a weapon. The dark Nila is hurling a mountain peak  
into the fray and with it finally kills Mahodara.  
Hanuman wearing the pointed cap first of all has  
finished off Devantaka and then, being attacked  
by the three-headed Trishiras, cuts off all three of  
his heads at once. The other monkey leaders and  
Jambavan the bear king bring further rocks and  
trees to the fray. The scene is one of frantic activity,  
but concisely and beautifully painted.









## KRISHNA AND RADHA ON THE BED WAKING UP TO MUSIC

Guler, c. 1800, possibly by Ranjha  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within a dark blue margin with gold  
and silver scroll and an outer border  
of pink with red streaks  
Folio 35,5 x 28,4 cm; Painting 27,6 x 21,3 cm

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Abdur Rahman Chughtai (1894–1975)  
collection

Published  
Sharma 2010, p. 84  
Habighorst 2011, fig. 37  
Dehejia 2013, p. 160  
Habighorst 2014, fig. 19

Exhibited  
Hamburg, 2013  
Koblenz, 2014  
Zurich, 2019

As the sun rises over the distant horizon, Krishna sits up on the bed and stretches his arms over his head, at the same time looking down, still longingly, at Radha as she sits up in her turn. She modestly turns her face away from his ardent gaze, as she pulls her *ornhi* over her exposed breasts. After a night of passion, the night clothes they have been wearing are naturally dishevelled – orange drawers, a nightcap and a yellow cover for him, purple *pajama* and a pink and orange *ornhi* for her. His garland is broken, some of it still strung round his neck, the rest on the bed below their feet, along with part of her broken jewelled necklace and her broken bangles. A basket of his saffron garments topped by his turban sits on his side of the bed and a *chauki* with *pan*, wine and other delicacies on her side. Extinguished candles under their covers signal the coming of morning, along with a ewer, basin and two flasks of water heating on little braziers for refreshing themselves, which have been left in the courtyard below the pavilion where they have slept.

Four white cranes in the courtyard are an unusual addition to the morning visitation of birds, along with a peacock and doves on the roof above. In a building alongside the lovers' pavilion a woman is making her morning toilet with the help of a mirror. The lovers' pavilion is quite high up in a palace, for below their level stretches a

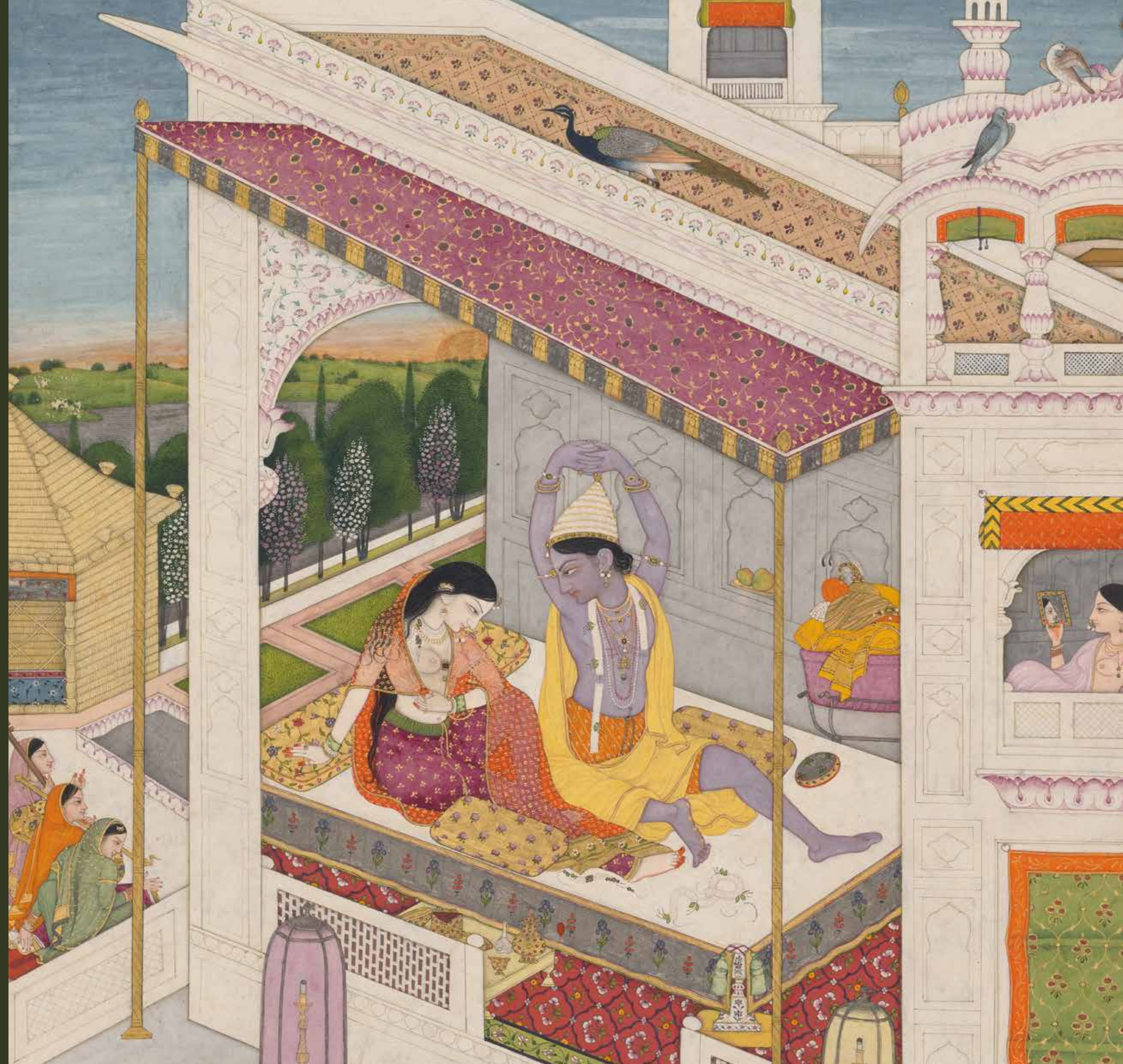
terrace with a summer gazebo of straw and a formal parterre bounded by a row of trees alternating rounded trees with cypresses and flowering bushes in typical Guler style. Three musicians on the terrace playing *vina*, *tambura* and *mridangam* have woken the loving pair in the morning. Beyond is a lake and rolling hills to the horizon. The details in this painting are exquisite – the jewelled golden utensils, the sprays of flowers on the silver valence, the marble leg of the bed with its *pietra dura* inlay, the carpets and other textiles.

This composition often has no text (e.g. a Garhwal painting published in Archer 1976, no. 21), but it is clearly a situation which is dealt with in the *Rasikapriya*. Verse 44, from chapter 3, comes to mind, describing *suratanta*, at the end of lovemaking, in terms of the things that emerged from the churning of the ocean:

“The two together are an ocean of beauty.  
The painted feet and the betel-stained mouth  
look like the red fire of the ocean. The nail marks  
on the chest are like the second day of the moon.  
The sandalwood paste is like nectar. The  
corrylium on the eyes is like the poison. And  
the scattered beads from her garland are like  
the jewels. The lazy eyes are like wine that  
intoxicates them. Thus it is that after love sports  
the couple look like the ocean” (translation  
Dehejia 2013, p. 160).









## NARADA WATCHES KRISHNA WITH HIS WOMENFOLK

Guler, 1790–1800  
 Opaque pigments on paper, within  
 a dark blue margin and a splashed  
 pink surround  
 Folio 21.1 × 28.2 cm; Painting 19.2 × 26.4 cm

Provenance  
 Ludwig Habighorst collection

Published  
 Habighorst 2014, fig. 27  
 Sharma 2010, p. 30

The scene takes place in one of Krishna's palaces in Dwarka, the city by the ocean built for him by Vishvakarma, the architect of the gods. The crowned Krishna sits patiently on a throne in a *zenana* with womenfolk. He seems to have something wrong with one of his eyes, since a woman is tenderly wiping it with the corner of her *ornhi*, while one of his wives looks on anxiously. Outside the palace building a man watches in amazement.

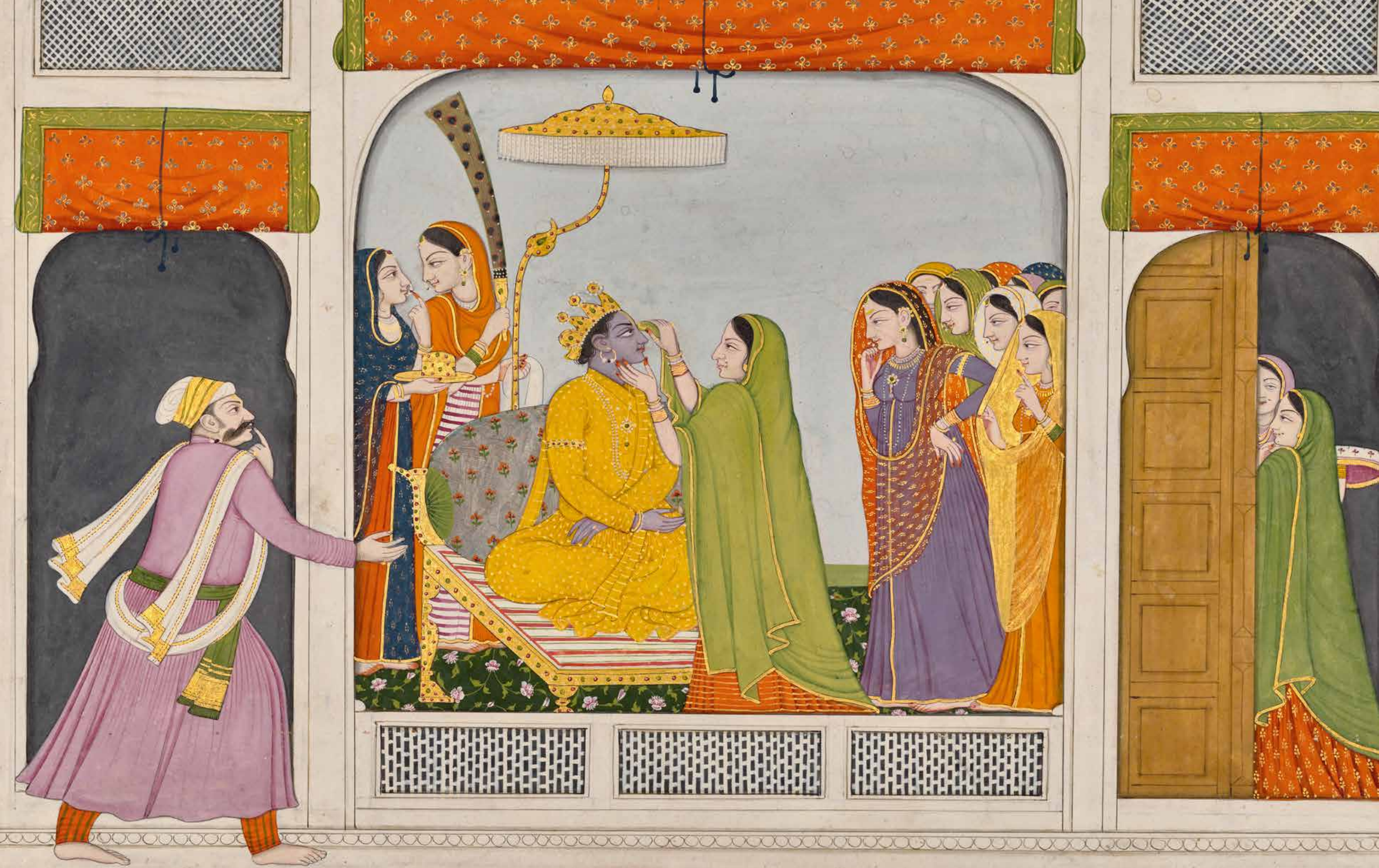
In canto 69 of the *Bhagavata Purana* Book x we read that after Krishna had slain Narakasura he married all 16,000 of the fallen demon's wives and brought them back to Dwarka. There they and his other wives each had their own palace and through his powers of *yogamaya* (mystical yoga) Krishna was able to give each one of his

wives his undivided attention. The divine sage Narada had heard of this extraordinary power of illusion and came down from heaven to witness it for himself. Here we see him starting in amazement outside one of the *zenana* buildings, as no matter where Narada went among the thousands of palaces and other places in Dwarka, there was Krishna performing his duty as a husband, father or ruler.

In this beautifully balanced painting, Krishna and his womenfolk are seen within a pavilion with an open arched front and an arched opening to either side. Narada is framed by one of the openings while other women may be glimpsed through the other. Such symmetrical compositions were favoured especially by Nainsukh's youngest son Ranjha.









A PRINCE AND HIS FAVOURITE LADY  
ENJOY MUSIC ON A COLD NIGHT

Guler, c. 1815, attributed to Gursahai  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within an indigo blue margin and an  
uncoloured border  
Folio 29.8 × 40.8 cm; Painting 21.2 × 32.4 cm  
Inscribed above with the number 13

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Svetoslav Nikolaevich Roerich  
collection

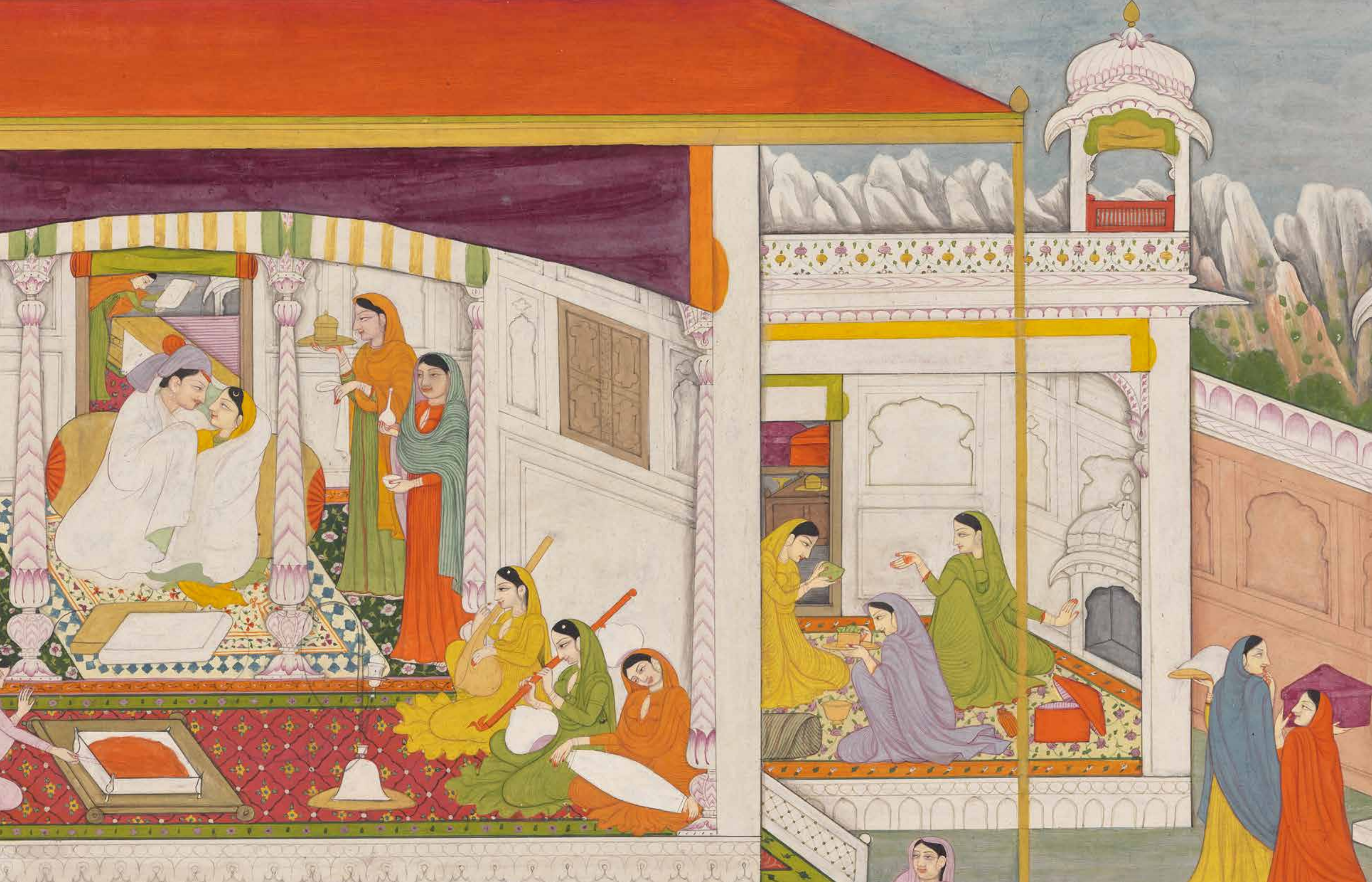
Published  
Paul 1998, fig. 7  
Habighorst et al. 2007, fig. 42  
Sharma 2010, p. 34

It is cold in the mountain palace depicted in this painting. A prince and his beloved have retired to a pavilion where wrapped in a blanket they gaze ardently into each other's eyes. All the women who attend on them wear heavy garments wrapped around themselves. Two stand ready with a covered dish and a flask, while three musicians play a *vina*, *tambura* and *mridangam*. A hookah stands ready before the couple with another to the side so that they can both indulge later. A woman pokes with a tongs at a tray of burning coal, while a real fire burns in a hearth set into the wall of the pavilion. In an adjacent pavilion two women prepare *pan*, and a third holds her hand out to a hearth. Outside in the courtyard other women fetch and carry. The main pavilion has a heavy purple awning that can be let down to keep out the chill, while another striped one hangs over the inner pavilion where the prince and his beloved sit. Behind them an opening leads into a bedchamber which another woman is preparing for use. The palace is perched above a wood with a view of the jagged peaks of the mountains beyond under a pale blue sky.

The prince would seem to be an idealised one based on earlier portraits of Raja Bhup Singh of Guler (r. 1790–1826) (he grew a beard by 1810 or so, Archer 1973, Guler 62, 64), who would seem to have led a life dominated by his various women (he had twelve Ranis) as depicted in the various paintings from his reign (Archer 1973, Guler 57–59, 62). Several paintings are known that are part of a numbered series including this one showing a *nayaka* based on this princely figure engaged in various pastimes in his palace with his women. Two numbered 10 and 23 are in the Mittal Museum in Hyderabad (Seyller and Mittal 2014, nos. 90–91; see also Paul 1998). Another slightly earlier painting showing Bhup Singh with a Rani is signed by the painter Gursahai, the son of Ranjha and grandson of Nainsukh, and he seems to have been Bhup Singh's principal artist during his reign (Government Museum, Chandigarh, see Paul 1998, fig. 2). We can assume that this later series is his work too. Our painting seems slightly unfinished – the hookahs are not decorated, all the garments and the main hanging over the pavilion are left plain, and, unless the lady in green in the smaller pavilion is gesturing for more warmth, one assumes the fire in the hearth was yet to be painted in.









Folio from a *Kedara Kalpa* series  
Kangra, attributed to the Purkhu  
family workshop, c. 1820–25  
Opaque pigments and gold on paper,  
within a blue margin and red border  
with white rules  
Folio 30.8 × 45.6 cm; Painting 28.1 × 41.5 cm

Provenance  
Ludwig Habighorst collection  
Sotheby's New York, 1 December 1993,  
lot 163  
Svetoslav Nikolaevich Roerich  
collection

Published  
Habighorst 2011, fig. 99

Exhibited  
Hamburg, 2013

This sumptuous page comes from the *Kedara Kalpa*, a dispersed series identified by B.N. Goswamy (1999, no. 216). The story of *Kedara Kalpa* revolves around the glory of Shiva. It extols the great merits of pilgrimage to those regions of the Himalayas that are associated with him, principally Kedara and Kailasa. The story is narrated by Shiva to his consort Parvati and their son Karttikeya in the form of a series of tales (Mason 2001, no. 86, shows the narrative beginning). One of the tales is about five *siddhas* or sages, who seem to be the protagonists of nearly all the known pages, who go “on a pilgrimage to the land of Shiva through snow-clad mountains, past the domains of the moon, and encountering on the way not only the greatest of difficulties, but also the most wondrous of sights. Golden cities, *apsaras* singing and dancing, young maidens hanging from trees like fruit, roads paved and rocks studded with rubies and emeralds come their way” (Goswamy 1999, p. 280). Our painting clearly realises one of those wondrous sights, since the five *siddhas* have entered a golden city. The wonders of the place derive from the constant worship of Shiva.

Three of the *siddhas* have acquired some clothing in the shape of animal skins – tiger, leopard and antelope – and all five wear hats made of some kind of animal skin and other material. Having entered the city they pass by an enormous *shivalingam* in the street to which they do reverence. They then sit in the court beside it and meditate telling their beads the while, as some of the women pay them reverence or observe from various windows, while musicians – mostly female but some *kinnaras* – play their instruments on all sides. In the gardens beyond the golden pavilions trees rise covered with flowering creepers, and further away are the white mountain peaks. Outside the city wall at the

bottom of the painting flows a stream filled with lotuses, where ascetics bathe or meditate or pray to the accompaniment of further musicians.

The blue and red borders with white rules of our set are the same on almost all the epic and puranic series produced in Purkhu's workshop in Kangra, for which see Goswamy and Fischer 1992, pp. 368–87, and Goswamy and Fischer 2011 'Purkhu'. The features of the women have changed a little from those in other series attributed to Purkhu and his workshop, such as the 'Lambagraon' *Gitagovinda* and the oval *Rasikapriya* series, and have become somewhat harder. Noticeable also is a kind of linear modelling, where lines of paint on the flesh of the *siddhas* do duty for modelling.

Other folios from this series are in a number of private and public collections including the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Mason 2001, no. 86), John Gilmore Ford collection (Pal 1971, no. 50), Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Dye 2001, no. 149), the former Ehrenfeld collection (Ehnbom 1985, no. 127), the San Diego Museum of Art (Goswamy and Smith 2005, no. 86) and the Goenka collection (Goswamy and Bhatia 1999, no. 216). The two pages in the Paul Walter collection (Pal 1978, no. 72a and b), the second of which is now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, are possibly from another series since the pages are slightly bigger. The five *siddhas* also appear much younger and less emaciated, but this of course might be a reflection of an earlier stage of their journey. Despite the highly individual style of painting and rarity of the text, there is another slightly but clearly related later version of the same series in the National Museum, New Delhi, which Archer attributed to Hindur (Archer 1973, p. 172, no. 5) and from which three more pages have been published by Dye (2001, figs. 87–89, pp. 346–48).









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## EXHIBITIONS

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- Blumen – Bäume – Göttergärten - Indische Malerei aus sechs Jahrhunderten*, Museum für Völkerkunde, Hamburg, 17 March – 27 October 2013
- Der Blaue Gott in indischen Miniaturen*, Mittelrhein Museum, Koblenz, 26 July – 5 October 2014
- Indische Gärten / Gärten der Welt*, Museum Rietberg, Zürich, 13 May – 31 October 2016
- Der Spiegel – Der Mensch im Widerschein*, Museum Rietberg, Zürich, 15 May – 22 September 2019



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