SUMMER EHXIBITION

2026

FRANCESCA GALLOWAY

cat. 13 detail

Summer Exhibition 2026

We are pleased to present here a selection of paintings, textiles, and objects from India and Persia.

This catalogue would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of John Seyller, who wrote a number of the descriptions. We are also very grateful to Richard J. Cohen for his ad hoc assistance with inscriptions. We would like to thank Timothy Greenwood, Rosemary Crill, Steven Cohen and Erin Piñon for their crucial advice with cat. 9. Our thanks also go to Will Kwiatkowski and Hallie Nell Swanson for their contributions. We thank Debra Diamond and Joachim Bautze for their help with research, and Helen Loveday, Richard Valentia, Prudence Cuming Associates, Simon Neal at DawkinsColour and Thea Buen for their work with this publication. Christine Ramphal has written some of the descriptions. She has also edited the entire text and liaised with the authors. I am indebted to her for her rigour, enthusiasm and her exacting standards. Special thanks go to Misha Anikst for his patience and for the design.

Francesca Galloway, June 2026

1

At Rama's command, Lakshmana escorts Sita into Exile – Folio from the 'Burnt Edge' *Ramayana*; probably made for the Hindu Patron Bir Singh Deo Bundela, Ruler of Orchha (r. 1605–27)
Mughal, attributed to Jagjivan, c. 1605
Opaque pigments and gold on paper with burnt edges
28.3 × 19.6 cm

Provenance
Private European collection; acquired in July 1993 from Robert Ellsworth (1929–2014), New York

Published
Valmiki, Okada, A. (ed.), *Rāmāyana de Valmiki illustré par les miniatures indiennes du xvi^e^ au xix^e^ siècle,* Diane de Selliers, 2011, Vol VII, pp. 106–08

One of the most emotionally wrenching episodes of the Ramayana arises as Rama, newly installed on the throne of Ayodhya, is made aware of persistent malicious gossip about Sita's virtue because she had long been held captive by the demon-king Ravana. Rama dispassionately concludes that he cannot allow even a whiff of scandal to taint his rule and orders his brother Lakshmana to take Sita into exile under the guise of a visit to the hermitage of the sage Valmiki on the banks of the Ganges. Sita is unaware of Rama's decision and its tacit reprobation and initially seems to relish the opportunity to visit the dwellings of great rishis. Rama directs Lakshmana to prepare a well-appointed chariot drawn by a team of swift horses and driven by the trusted charioteer Sumantra. An excited Sita dresses in fine raiment and jewels and looks forward to gifting them to the wives of the ascetics. They set out on their fateful journey. A heavy-hearted Lakshmana does his best to maintain an upbeat outward demeanour, but Sita perceives his inner turmoil and her heart gradually fills with apprehension. She urges Lakshmana not to tarry, but to take her directly to the sacred Ganges, where she intends to cross the river quickly, spend the night amongst the rishis and pay homage to them, bestow her finery upon the women there, and return expeditiously to Ayodhya. Instead, Lakshmana informs Sita that he must leave her permanently in the care of Valmiki. At the hermitage, she gives birth to the twin boys with which she is secretly pregnant. These are Lava and Kusha, who as adolescents ultimately recite Valmiki's poem of the *Ramayana* to Rama himself.

In this illustrated episode, which has no corresponding scene in the other three Persian-language Mughal *Ramayana* manuscripts, the bare-chested and crowned figure of Lakshmana himself takes the reins of the chariot, leaving Sumantra and another retainer to race before the vehicle to help chart the way through the rocky wilderness. Sita, a vision of loveliness, shows no sign of distress as the chariot speeds along. The Ganges remains a distant and unseen destination, with the only water visible being a stretch of a narrow stream that wends its way between massive outcrops in the lower right.

This painting belongs to a *Ramayana* series distinguished by three features: the loose-leaf format of the book, the selected Sanskrit verses and brief Hindi gloss (reportedly in a Bundeli dialect) written on the verso, and the damage caused to the corners of most folios by fire. The last of these features has resulted in some paintings that are quite compelling in their irregular shapes and has led scholars to designate the series as the 'Burnt *Ramayana*' or 'Burnt Edge' *Ramayana*. Likewise, the text in Sanskrit rather than Persian, the language of the Mughal court, is strong evidence that the series was made for a Hindu patron, who was initially identified by Terence McInerney as Bir Singh Deo Bundela, a prominent Mughal vassal who ruled Orchha 1605–27. Bolstered by the presence of the Datia Library stamp on the reverse of some folios, that connection to Bir Singh Deo is now widely accepted. Since its initial publication by Pramod Chandra ('A Series of *Ramayana* Paintings of the Popular Mughal School' (*Prince of Wales Museum Bulletin* 6 (1957–59), pp. 64–70), the series attracted considerable scholarly attention because of its pivotal historical importance and innovative, hybrid style. Paintings from it are in various public and private collections, including four in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Forty pages, including the present example (vol VII, pp. 106–108), are reproduced in *Rāmāyana de Valmiki illustré par les miniatures indiennes du xvi^e^ au xix^e^ siècle*.

A key addition to the scholarly literature on this *Ramayana* series was made by John Seyller in Mason, D. et al., *Intimate Worlds: Indian Paintings from the Alvin O. Bellak Collection*, cat. no. 16, pp. 62–63. This catalogue entry accounted for the highly Mughalised style of the illustrations, venturing the names of five middling artists who were part of a mass exodus from the imperial atelier about 1600 in search of new patronage. One of these artists was Jagjivan, an accomplished imperial artist with a substantial oeuvre (Verma 1994, pp. 193–95.) His latest imperial work, an illustration from the dispersed 1598–1600 *Razmnama*, compares very closely to a page from the 'Burnt Edge' *Ramayana*. Seyller lists several other *Ramayana* paintings that can also be attributed to Jagjivan (Seyller in Mason et al. 2001, p. 63, n. 4),

and elsewhere publishes the two paintings that support those attributions (Seyller in Seyller, Sardar, and Truschke 2020, figs. 11–12, pp. 40, 42–43). The present work is amongst the paintings he attributes to Jagjivan. Noteworthy features here are the distinctive profiles and almond-shaped eyes, the sophisticated modelling employed in Lakshmana's *dhoti*, the complex and darkly outlined outcrops, the inspired variety of foliage on the many trees, and the dark, brooding palette.
JS

2

Silk Lampas with confronting Mystical Animals
India, 15th–16th century
Silk lampas with its left selvedge intact
92 × 56 cm

Provenance
Private collection, Switzerland; acquired from Spink & Son in 1989

Published
Galloway, F., and Simcox, J., *The Art of Textiles*, Spink & Son Ltd, 1989, pp. 68 and 163, cat. 89

This lampas has a red ground and a yellow lattice pattern of ogival panels edged with dots and leaves, each containing two pairs of confronting creatures clustered around a white stylised flower. Alternating rows feature either finely drawn makara-headed creatures in shades of blue and green or winged felines in yellow wearing bracelets.

The textile has been dated to 15th–16th (see two examples in the AEDTA Collection, published in Riboud 1998, pp. 70–75). In 2009, we published six drawloom silks accompanied by a short essay by Rahul Jain (Global India 2009, pp. 6–19). The group included a more fragmentary lampas with an identical design to the present example (cat. 4). The entire group was discovered in Tibet, and Jain states that the patterns of these silks suggest that they were designed and woven for export to Tibet or specific destinations in Sultanate India (Jain 2009, pp. 6 and 12). These textiles are important for the understanding of early silk weaving in pre-Mughal India.

Two further examples of the same design are published in Riboud 1998 (similar size example on pp. 70–71, pl. 7 and a much smaller fragment on pp. 74–75, pl. 8). The large piece has both its selvedges and we can therefore deduct that our textile would have been originally 66 cm in width.
A further example is in the Abegg Stiftung, Riggisberg (inv. 3930).

3

Lady bathing attended by her Handmaiden
Mughal, 18th century
Brush drawing on paper in gold and coloured pigments, laid down on a larger gold-flecked page within a series of borders in gold, blue, red, black
Album page 33.6 × 26.9 cm; drawing 15 × 9 cm

This delicate Mughal drawing depicts a lady and her handmaiden in an intimate setting. While the lady removes her bath clogs, her handmaiden bends over various jars, preparing and decanting ointments. Otherwise, the composition is minimal, with only the sky painted in blue and gold pigments.

Intimate portrayals of Mughal ladies during their baths were popular at the Mughal court during the 18th century. They perhaps allowed male viewers a glimpse of daily life in the *zenana*.

Our drawing illustrates the refined bathing habits and rituals of the Mughal court. Bath facilities with hot and cold running water were advanced in Agra, Delhi and the fortress at Lahore. After bathing, the ladies would be massaged with scented oils before dressing in layers of gossamer-thin fabrics.

4

A Princess seated on a Palace Balcony surrounded by her female Attendants
Mughal, Murshidabad, c. 1750–55
Opaque watercolour with gold on paper
Album page 40.3 × 28.4 cm; painting 31 × 21.4 cm

Provenance
Private collection, New York, acquired from H.P. Kraus in 1984
H.P. Kraus Rare Books and Manuscripts
William Fraser collection (1784–1835); according to H.P. Kraus cataloguing information.

Seated on a palace balcony is a radiant princess endowed with a solid gold nimbus, an attribute rarely accorded women in such formal gatherings. She is the focal point of the cleverly balanced grid of golden and silverish forms in this elegant court scene. The most emphatic framing element is a pair of unobstructed raised-goldwork columns of a projecting loggia whose three-dimensional brackets and network of rafters are seen from below. A golden bolster behind the princess extends her body laterally, whilst a golden textile tooled with a chevron design, draped over a low balustrade, has a similar effect vertically. Augmenting that vertical axis is the silvery opening of the doorway immediately behind her that terminates in a loosely rolled-up cloth *pardah* (curtain), here rendered in gold and embellished with the same chevron pattern. More unexpected is the burbling *chadar* (marble water chute) that issues from an opening in the white wall just below her, its lightly streaked sheet of water spilling into the rectangular pool in the courtyard below. There, five pairs of stippled cypress trees rise from the lush green mass of fruit trees to serve as complementary vertical accents. One consequential but easily overlooked decorative detail is the lovely lavender/pink band that spans the white palace wall. This element links together seven recessed niches with scalloped openings that display ornamental cups and bottles rendered with delicate red or blue shading, even as it picks up the colour of the lavender and mauve stripes of the attendants' *paijamas*. A series of thinly painted looping clouds caps the thin strip of blue-grey sky at the top of the composition.

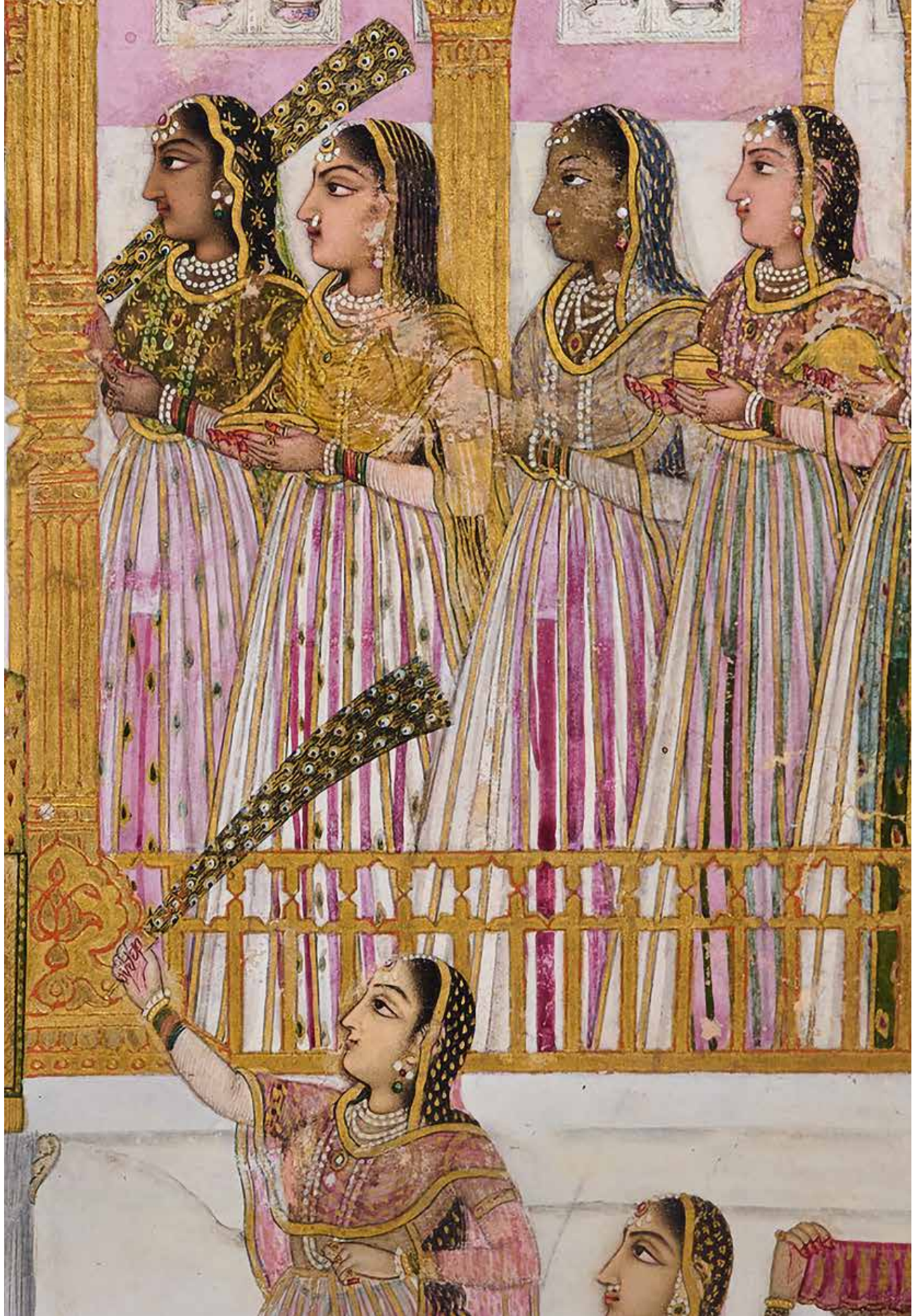
The artist carries through his penchant for symmetry into the figural groupings. He places on either side of the princess on the balcony five

maidens whose regular spacing and nearly identical raiment – a sheer *peshwaz* with gilt ribbing over green-and-lavender-striped *paijamas* – are tempered by the bowing pose of one who presents her mistress with a nosegay, the upright stance of her counterpart who waits dutifully with a peacock-feather *morchhal* (flywhisk) on her shoulder, and subtle variations in complexion. Reaching up from below are two symmetrically disposed attendants plying *morchhals*, each heading a trio of maids who bear refreshments or hold a slender staff.

Indeed, the composition's symmetry is broken only by the appearance of a small-scale maid shown in three-quarter view below two covered windows shaded by a discreet golden awning.

The painting is executed in the distinctive style practiced by a small group of anonymous artists at Murshidabad, an affluent semi-independent Mughal court in Bengal ruled successively by Nawab 'Alivardi Khan (1740–56) and his grandson Siraj al-Dawla (1756–57). The decisive defeat of this regional power by British forces at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 ushered in a period of diminished political authority and arguably less inspired patronage of art under the rule of Mir Qasim and Mir Ja'far (1760–63). Although the faces of no two women here are identical, they all are characterised by a kohl-darkened, leaf-shaped eye, a high arching eyebrow, a soft hairline, pursed lips, and a jaw that is more squarish than pointed. More important, it is the faces' refined finish – a velvety contour, nuanced modelling, and palpable fleshiness – that elevates this fine work to the first rank of the Murshidabad style.

JS



5

Section of a Canopy depicting Animals amongst flowering Plants
India, Southern Coromandel Coast for the Indonesian market, 1700–1720
Cotton, block printed and painted mordant and resist dye
102 × 239 cm

This large, highly unusual canopy fragment features a central field inhabited by birds and flowering plants. It is painted in reds and blues on an undyed background. This is surrounded by a decorative narrow border, followed by a wide indigo-blue border featuring charming groups of diminutive elephants interspersed with majestic mythical lions and *hamsas*. This combination of mythical and real animals creates a vibrant textile full of whimsy and energy.

Painted textiles such as ours were traded to Southeast Asia and Indonesia, where they were used by local traders as a form of currency and for ritual purposes. These Indian textiles usually featured floral and animal motifs and sometimes narrative designs.

Our example from the Southern Coromandel Coast dates from the early 18th century. The slight bizarre feel of the centerfield floral motifs places it just beyond 1700. The lively drawn *hamsa* and the slight cross-eyed elephants are distinct and confirm a southern Indian production.

6

Large embroidered Floorspread or Coverlet
Gujarat for the European market, mid-18th century
Cotton embroidered in silk chain stitch
332.7 × 274.4 cm

The composition of this embroidery derives from the classic Mughal arrangement of a central medallion and four corner elements, surrounded by a wide border. However, this composition has been adapted to suit a European market by incorporating 18th-century European strapwork designs as a frame for its central and four corner medallions. The floorspread consists of two loom widths sewn together down its centre and the design of the field as well as the borders are in mirror-image. There is a whimsical quality to its free-flowing, scrolling design of delicate tendrils with exotic and imaginary flowers embroidered in brilliantly coloured silks – reds, pinks, blues, greens and yellow.

Gujarat had long been internationally famous for its outstanding chain stitch embroidery, well before the establishment of the East India Company in 1600. Cambay embroideries remained desirable throughout the 17th and 18th century. In 1725, Alexander Hamilton reports that the people of Cambay 'embroider the best of any people in India, and perhaps in the world' (Crill 2005, p. 246).

European trading companies sent patterns (or *musters*) to Indian chintz artisans along the Coromandel Coast as early as the 17th century. This must have also occurred in Gujarat where European *musters* would have been interpreted by Gujarati embroiderers resulting in a cultural hybrid such as our embroidery.

In Europe, these embroidered floorspreads or summer carpets would have been used as bedcovers, tablecovers or even hangings. The yellow and white silk fringe, as well as the fine linen lining, are contemporary 18th-century European additions.

7

Palampore or Canopy
Coastal Southeast India, for the domestic market, 1775–1800
Cotton, hand-drawn, mordant-dyed, resist-dyed
211 × 177 cm

This highly unusual chintz consists of two pieces of fabric, each the width of the loom, sewn together along the centre. The square field features a wild pattern of real and imaginary flowers in shades of red, green and touches of pale yellow against an undyed background. The flowers emanate from stylised, thick, red branches covered in a scalloped design. These branches grow from the four corners of the field towards the central, elongated cartouche. The detailing within the flowers and branches is very fine, created by using the resist technique.

The square centre is surrounded by a narrow red border with a pointed, stylised leaf design reminiscent of early 18th-century chintz intended for the Japanese market (see Crill 2004, fig. 8). This, in turn, is framed by a wider border consisting of alternate square and oblong compartments enclosing cartouches and floral designs which, in our opinion, harks back to mid-17th-century chintzes from Golconda (Crill 2015, p. 128, cat. 133).

At one end, the outer border consists of a row of flowering plants interspersed with stylised cypress trees on a pale olive background. Originally, this border would also have been present at the other end, but not along the sides. This band also references border decoration on mid-17th-century Qanat panels from Golconda, examples of which are in the Rhode Island School of Design (inv. 37.010), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (inv. L.69.24.284), and the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (inv. 1952-111-1).

Two other Deccani kalamkaris whose structures are precursors to our chintz are the famous 17th-century floorspread (Le Tapis Moghol) probably made for the Golconda court in the Musée de L'Impression sur Etoffes, Mulhouse (inv. 9856.50.1) and an early 18th-century palampore from in the Wereld Museum, Rotterdam (inv. 27974). Both are illustrated in Crill 2004, p. 203–12.

We are grateful to Rosemary Crill for her help in dating this textile.

8

Fine Silk embroidered Cotton Length
India, Gujarat, for export to Europe, c. 1760
Cotton twill weave with silk thread in chain stitch
Length: 136 cm; width 92 cm (selvedge to selvedge); rapport 26 cm

This unused length of pristine silk embroidered cotton dress yardage has an all-over floral design with a rapport of 14 cm. The design consists of meandering wide bands of imaginary, multi-coloured flowers forming cartouches in which delicate bouquets (approx. 14 cm high) are placed. The floral bands (approx. 4 cm wide) consist of non-directional flowers with foliage. The directional bouquets are composed of various stylised flowers, of which only a carnation has been identified so far. These flowers are held together either by a yellow and orange leaf or by a ribbon. Some of the bouquets are repeated (with minor variations) and some appear to be one off on this length of fabric. The beauty of this very dense and minute silk chain-stitch embroidery lies in the fact that at first glance the design appears to have been painted rather than embroidered.

The popularity of embroideries made in Gujarat for use as soft furnishings and dress fabrics in Britain lasted for nearly two hundred years. From the early 17th century until the 19th century, they were among the most lucrative commodities handled by the East India Company (Edwards 2011, p. 161). Chain-stitch embroideries for export were probably made in several centres in Gujarat, but they are particularly associated with Cambay, the port from which they began their sea voyage to Europe (Crill 1999, p. 8).

By the late 17th century patterns or even finished embroideries were being sent out to India to be copied. Our design certainly suggests a strong European influence. The meandering bands and the sprigs and bouquets of flowers recall Spitalfields silks. However, the rendering of our flowers is much more stylised and not as naturalistic as one observes in Spitalfields examples.

The extremely fine cotton twill, which retains its original glaze (it is unused and unwashed), indicates that this length of fabric was intended for dress making. According to Ebeltje Hartkamp-Jonxis during this period ‘silk gowns were in great demand among the European upper class not only because of their luxurious appearance, but also for the rustling sound the silk made at the slightest movement. Dresses made of Gujarati silk embroidery did not rustle because of the cotton ground fabric; and this may explain why so

few cotton gowns with Gujarati silk embroidery have been preserved' (Hartkamp-Jonxis 2022, p. 92). A rare example from 1775 is preserved at LACMA (inv. M.66.31a–b). A length of dress fabric also dated to the mid- to late 18th century from Gujarat is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. 1970.185.2), and a length of fabric with a more naturalistic and looser design is in the Tapi collection (Hartkamp-Jonxis 2022, p. 93).
CR

Woman's Dress and Petticoat (*Robe à l'anglaise*) c. 1775 / Los Angeles County Museum (inv. M.66.31a-b)

9

Block printed *P‘orurar* (*Epitrachelion*) with an Armenian Inscription and Date
India or Iran, possibly as early as 1766 CE
Block-printed and painted cotton
137 × 41.5 cm

This textile, a *p‘orurar* (*epitrachelion*), is a liturgical stole worn by priests and bishops around the neck. Its dimensions correspond with those of a well-known *p‘orurar* made for Armenian patrons in India, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (inv. IS.2-1953 see also Murphy 1990, p. 166, cat. 144 and Kouymjian 2015, p. 67, cat. 4). We believe these two liturgical stoles are among the few remaining examples of their kind.

This liturgical stole with a round collar opening has a dense floral design with repeating motifs of furling leaves and blooming flowers, in green, dark purple, yellow and red on an undyed cream cotton ground. At the end of the collar opening is a large cruciform ornament, and a square with an Armenian inscription is at the bottom of the vestment. The stole is edged by a yellow band that is decorated with a sinuous flowering plant. This type of floral design is often associated with 19th-century printed cotton textiles from India and Iran – the printed date of 1766 may provide a reason to re-assess this late dating. In addition, the floral meander side borders can also be seen on 18th-century Mughal sashes.

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ՈՐԴԱՆՑՆ ♦ ԹԻՎՆ 1766

This Armenian inscription is not straightforward and there are three possible translations:

> In memory of *ǰan* Yohan Shuk‘rēnts‘ sons Mirzē and Zak‘arē and for his {their} parents and sons – Era 1766

> In memory of the sons of Yohanjan of the Shrk‘rents family, Mirzē and Zak‘arē, and for their parents and sons, in the year 1766

In memory of Mirzē and Zak‘arē, sons of Yohanjan of the Shrk‘rents family, and for their parents and sons, in the year 1766

According to Prof. Timothy Greenwood (personal correspondence) this kind of invocation, inviting prayer for the donor and his immediate family – and hence intercession for their souls – is extremely common and goes back to late Antiquity. Arguably it has a pre-Christian, Zoroastrian context. Ancestors – especially parents and children, alive and deceased – were commemorated and remembered in endowments of various kinds, of church buildings and extensions, liturgical vessels, Gospel manuscripts (of which there are many) and other church furniture. Although it is the only Armenian liturgical stole he has seen to carry an inscription, its tone and content fit with the pattern and tradition of commemoration going back many centuries.

Steven Cohen in his article (Cohen 2019, pp. 62–71) writes about the early presence of Armenian merchants in India, which were integral to the textile trade between India and Persia long before the first representatives of the European trading companies arrived on the Indian subcontinent. He stresses, that ‘the Armenians were extremely well placed to commission textiles not only for use in their own Christian churches and monasteries in Armenia but also for all their many religious establishments in India, Persia, and across the Armenian diaspora’ (Cohen 2019, p. 70).

With thanks to Prof. Timothy Greenwood, Rosemary Crill, Steven Cohen and Dr. Erin Piñon for their help with this object.

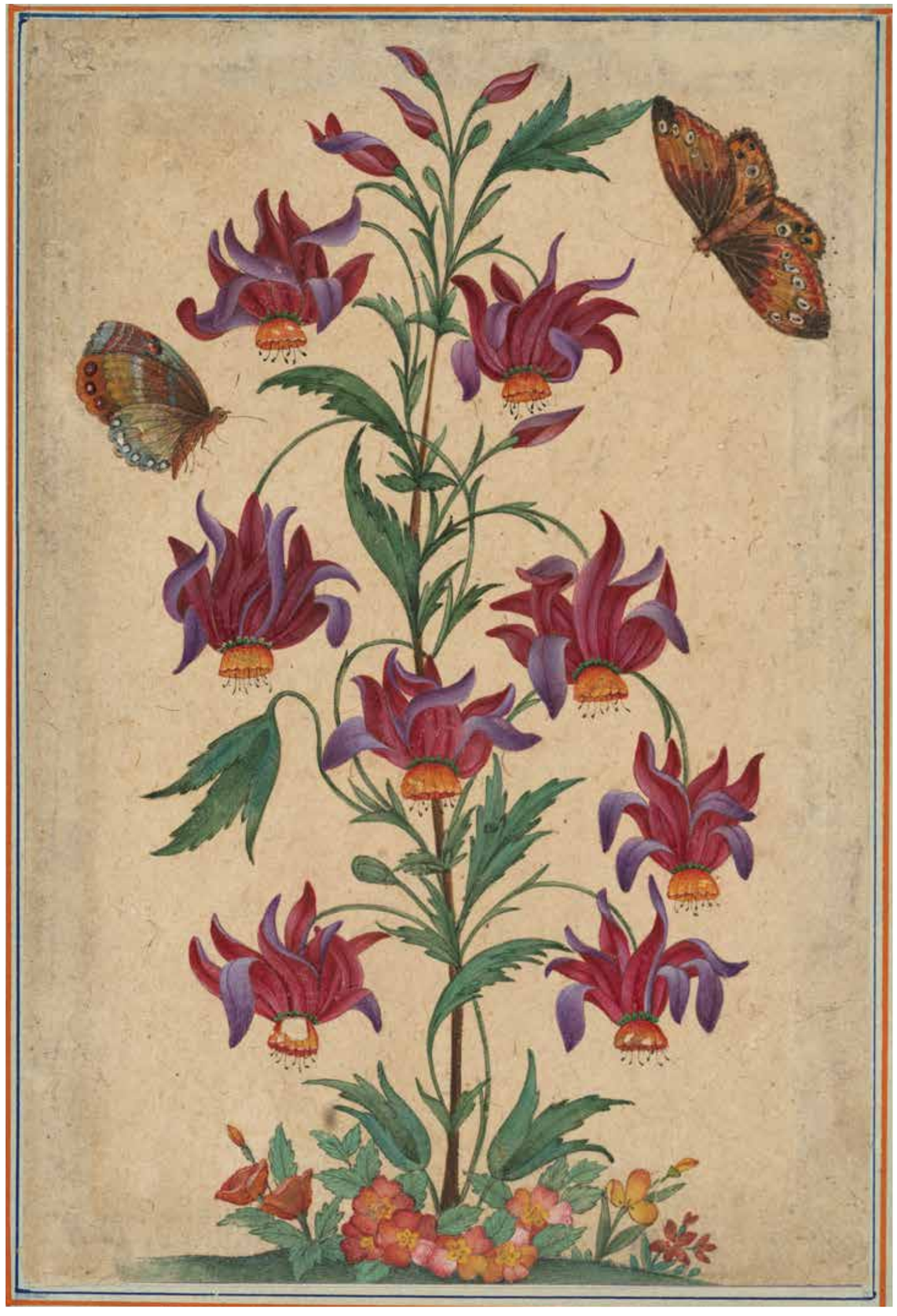
10

Exotic flowering Plant and Butterflies
Rajasthan, Kishangarh, c. 1750–60
Opaque watercolour on paper laid down on card
Folio 40.5 × 27 cm; painting 20 × 13.5 cm

The idea of depicting individual specimens of identifiable flowering plants took hold in Mughal India in response to copies of European florilegia brought to court during the reign of Jahangir (1605–27).[1] Later, the emperor was so taken by this kind of natural beauty that he recorded in his memoirs his instruction to Mansur, his premier natural history painter, to make more than a hundred flower paintings in Kashmir in 1620, many apparently using European examples as models.[2] The genre of floral paintings quickly became a vogue. Other artists were enlisted to produce images of flowering plants both as independent works and as marginal decorations in albums prepared for Jahangir, Dara Shikoh (1615–59), and Shahjahan (r. 1627–58). Their debt to European engravings is apparent in their repetition of certain conventions, namely their characteristic axial symmetry, display of multiple stages of florescence, and high degree of formal three-dimensionality. Various insects – especially butterflies – that had been a regular feature of Netherlandish herbals as a means of establishing scale and infusing a modicum of liveliness were also incorporated.

Such persuasive descriptive qualities were also applied to flowers that were either unknown in India or fantastical floral concoctions. From Mughal India, the genre of flower painting spread to the Deccan courts and Persia, flourishing in the latter from the mid-17th well into the mid-18th century, as is documented in signed works by artists such as Muhammad Zaman, Muhammad Masih, Shafi' 'Abbasi, Muhammad Hadi, and Muhammad Baqir.[3] Deccani examples generally emphasised abstract shapes whilst Persian ones favoured deracinated specimens, precise, sometimes even hyper-precise, painterly description, and the frequent addition of nightingales, a creature rich with poetic associations in Persian culture.

A lesser-known variety of floral painting emerged at Kishangarh, a small Rajput court in Rajasthan where painting flourished from the early 18th century, often transforming the naturalism of available Mughal models into artifice with unabashed expressionistic flare. The most striking example of the floral genre is ascribed to Dalchand (active c. 1710– 60), who followed his father, Bhawani Das, from the Mughal atelier into service at Kishangarh;



Bhawani Das reached Kishangarh in 1719, and Dalchand arrived there about 1726 after a short stint at Jodhpur.[4] Dalchand sets the flower, a symmetrical plant with large pink blossoms, on a stylised clump of earth, brightening the whole composition with an abstract gold ground.[5] It can be dated to c. 1730–40. Conversely, an unpublished work of c. 1820–30 with exaggerated outlines and strong ornamental tendencies has a conspicuous inscription that succinctly states that the flower painting was made by the artist Surdhaj Nanagram, son of Surajmal, at Kishangarh.[6]

Given its relatively naturalistic appearance, the present example can be situated early within the ninety-year spectrum bracketed by these two Kishangarh works, that is, c. 1750–60. The painting has an elegant, symmetrical design, filling the buff-coloured compositional field with an isolated plant with a thin stem and sinuous tendrils that terminate in seven nodding blossoms with bicoloured petals; four buds appear at the top of the plant. A clump of green serves as a partial ground line. Different flowering species are clustered innocuously around the base of the main plant, and two butterflies – one seen in top view, the other from the side – hover nearby, adding visual interest to the upper reaches of the composition. The plant itself resembles a Martagon lily (*lilium pumilum*), commonly known as a Turk's Cap lily, which is a Eurasian species that grows from Europe to Mongolia but is not native to India. Most prominent are the pink and purple petals curved backwards. The anonymous artist, however, has exercised considerable license with other botanical elements. The actual floral specimen, for example, has neither the dense yellow stigma at the centre of each blossom nor the serrate leaves depicted here. Indeed, nearly all the invented features can be traced to a Mughal example in the c. 1635 Dara Shikoh Album, which may in turn be an adaptation of a lost Mansur original (fig. 1).[7] The difference between the two versions lies mainly in the Kishangarh version's drier brushwork in the rendering of the petals and the reduced colour range of the leaves.

JS

1 The best-known of these is Florilegium by Adraien Collaeert, published by Ph. Galle in Antwerp in 1587 and 1590.

2 For an overview of this artist and phenomenon, see A. Das, *Wonders of Nature. Ustad Mansur at the Mughal Court*, Mumbai, 2012, pp. 138–149.

3 The history and principles of Indian and Persian flower paintings are discussed in I. Imbert, '*Flower Paintings in Indian and Persian Albums* (*16th–18th century*)', a cogent study published online on the author's website in 2025.

4 For this artist, see T. McInerney, 'Dalchand', in M.C. Beach, E. Fischer, and B.N. Goswamy, ed., *Masters of Indian Painting*, 1650–1900, Zurich, 2011, vol. 2, pp. 563–578.

5 The painting is published in B. Schmitz and Z.A. Desai, *Mughal and Persian Painting and Illustrated Manuscripts in The Raza Library Rampur*, New Delhi and Rampur, 2006, Leaves, Acc. no. 33 (verso), p. 72 and pl. 153.

6 Allahabad Museum 212. Surdhaj Nanagram (active 1813–73) is discussed in N. Haidar, *The Kishangarh School of Painting, c. 1680–1850*, Ph.D. thesis (unpublished), Oxford, 1995, pp. 200–05. That Surdhaj Nanagram was the grandson of Nihal Chand lends credence to the collector's statement that the three flower paintings (no. 13) in *The Flower in Mughal India & Royal Commissions from a Private Collection*, Bonhams, Hong Kong, an exhibition catalogue of 2-14 February 2018, were done by a grandson of Nihal Chand. Indeed, one of the three paintings in this group is inscribed in the same formulaic manner as 'work of Surdhaj Ram', a shortened version of Surdhaj Nanagram according to Haidar.

7 British Library, India Office Collections, Add.Or. 3129, f. 64a, published in T. Falk and M. Archer, *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library*, London, 1981, no. 68, pp. 80 and 397. See also J.P. Losty, 'Mughal flower studies and their European inspiration', British Library, Asian and African Studies blog 14 March 2014, p. 7.

Fig. 1
Folio from the Dara Shikoh Album
Mughal, c. 1635
British Library
(Inv. Add.Or.3129, f64)
https://www.imagesonline.bl.uk/asset/10785

Fig. 2
A Spray of Flowers
Ascribed to '*amal-i* Dalchand
Kishangarh, c. 1725–40
Raza Library Rampur
(inv. Acc. no. 33 verso)

11

Jādon Rajput Nobleman from Karauli listening to a Musician play the Tambura
Rajasthan, Karauli, by an artist influenced by Mughal painting, c. 1660–80
Opaque watercolour with gold on paper, laid down on buff-coloured border with inscription
Folio 17 × 16.5 cm with border; Painting 12.5 × 13 cm

Inscription on recto
sāhī jādodvārā sāhī
"A Jādodvārā Royal"

Inscription on verso
First line: "76."
Second line: un*?? Gopī ba???*
Third line: ba. (an abbreviation for "Bundi") 5

The orthography is typical of the poorly executed writing very often found on Bundi paintings; though good effort was given to record the abbreviation "B" in clear nagari script followed by the number "5." The longer line is in poorly inscribed nagari script

Provenance
Private collection, Switzerland

This painting demonstrates Mughal influence in the portrayal of its main subjects, a nobleman and a female musician playing the tambura. Their softly outlined profiles are completed with delicate, downy brushstrokes that render his beard and her hairline. Both the two main subjects and their garments are extremely detailed: her red scarf is semi-translucent, showing her arms through its folds; the gilded part of his turban has been textured with stippling. Their attendant to the back has been painted less painstakingly, though the artist has also made use of semi-translucent pigment to layer her dupatta and her flywhisk over her shoulder, ready to interrupt any creature intent on ruining the moment.

The princely state of Karauli in eastern Rajasthan, was ruled by the Jādon Rajputs from 1348 to 1949. The Karauli royal family belongs to the Jādon Rajput clan, a prominent Chandravanshi (Lunar) lineage tracing its ancestry

back to Lord Krishna. The area of the former state is associated with the cultural Braj region. The Jādon Rajputs intermarried with the Bundi Rajputs, which might account for the inscription on the verso indicating that this painting was once in the Bundi *toshakhana*.

12a & b

Two Folios from a *Ragamala*
Chamba, c.1700
Opaque pigments and gold on paper

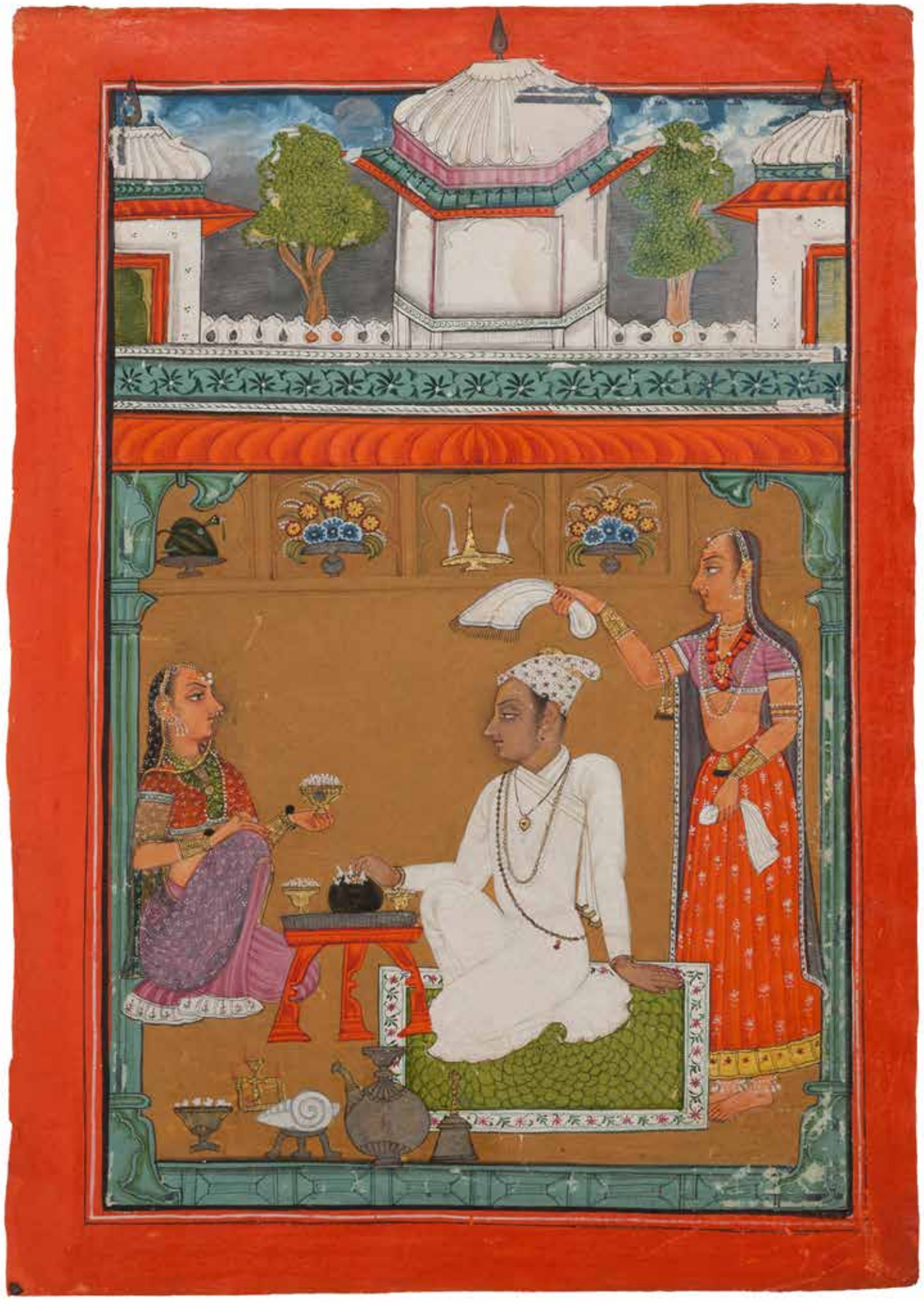
The following two paintings are from a dispersed album that was at one time in the Kangra Royal collection and subsequently in the Mandi Royal collection (Glynn 2011, pp. 35 and 37). Most of the paintings in the album were of typical Hindu/Rajput subjects such as avatars of Vishnu and other deities, as well as a complete *Ragamala* set belonging to the Pahari system of musical modes.

Though clearly the product of a single studio in the Punjab Hills, the artists of this set followed a Mughalised style of painting rather than the 'archetypal' early Pahari style (Glynn 2011, p. 34), evident in the refined treatment of the figures and their facial features. Robert Skelton noted a surprising influence from the Deccan on some of the paintings, visible in the striking but cool palette of lilac, mauve and turquoise, in addition to compositional ingenuity and a strong element of fantasy (Galloway 2005, p. 54). Many folios from this set are now in public and private collections, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. 2006.5 and 2006.33), the Museum Rietberg (inv. 2005.47 and 2005.46) and the Kronos collection (McInerney 2016, pp. 142–49, cats. 45–48). The set is extensively published, most recently in *Pahari Paintings Art and Stories* (ed. Rhie Mace et al 2026, pp. 86–88, cat. 15).

12a
Raga Mistanga, Son of Malkos – Folio from a *Ragamala*
21.5 × 15 cm including red border

Inscriptions on verso
No 91 (3517)
Takri 1 = // ? // raga mishtanga // 2 // mal //
Takri 2 = raga mistanga
Devanagri= raga mistanga malkoshoda putra

Provenance
Private collection, Germany
Mandi Royal collection until the 1960s



12a

This painting is folio 91. The scene is set inside a pavilion. A lord is attended by a woman holding a cloth to swat flies, while another woman sits opposite him, offering him a bowl of sweetmeats. The lord is seated on a floor spread with a lotus leaf design.

12b
Raga Chandra*, Son of Malkos – Folio from a *Ragamala
21.5 × 15 cm including red border

Inscriptions on verso
No 93 (3519)
Takri 1 = raga chandraka // 5// mal
Takri 2 = raga chandra malkoseda putar
Devanagari = raga chandra malkoshoda putra

Provenance
Private collection, Germany
Mandi Royal collection until the 1960s

Our painting is folio 93 from the album and is inscribed as Chandra, the fifth son of Malkos or *Malakaushika raga*. The normal Pahari iconography involves the moon or Chandra, sometimes as here a couple making a votive offering to the moon.
Against an ochre background on a starry night, a young man is offered a garland of flowers by his demure companion. Dressed in a jama with white and indigo vertical stripes, he wears an orange turban and cummerbund, and his diaphanous shawl flutters in the breeze. He holds one hand aloft in an offering to the moon. He has plucked his offering from the dish he is holding.

12b

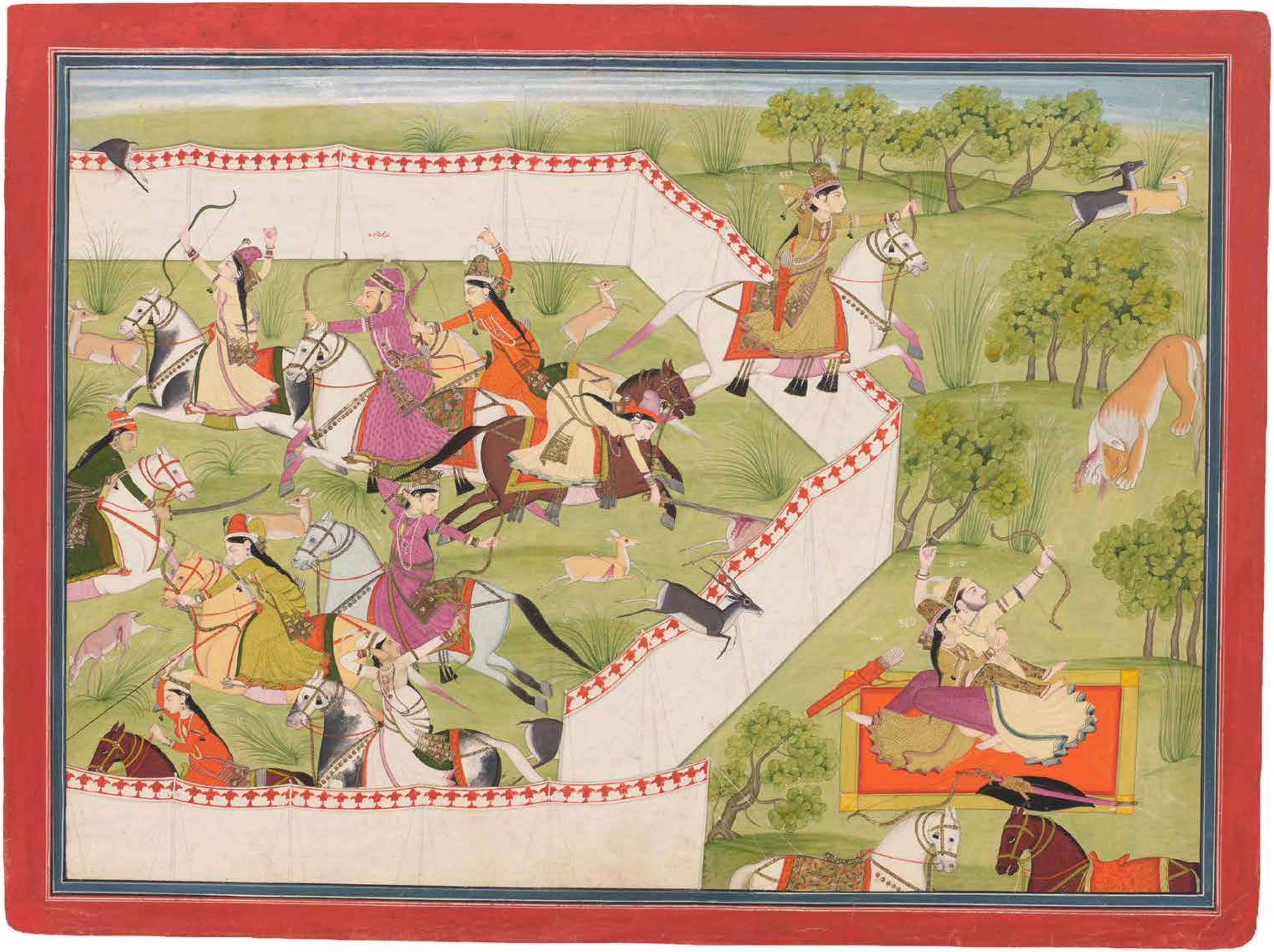
13

Alauddin hunts with Muhrathi and Mahima Mir later interrupts his Lovemaking with Muhrathi to shoot a charging Tiger – Folio from a *Hammira Hatha* Series
Punjab Hills, Mandi, attributed to Sajnu, c. 1810
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
36.8 × 50.8 cm

Provenance
Private collection, UK
Simon Ray
Private German collection

Published
Simon Ray, *Indian & Islamic Works of Art*, 2006, pp. 162–63, cat. 74

Amongst the virtues celebrated in Rajput culture, bravery and honour in the face of daunting adversity and trying circumstances are foremost. These qualities are the very heart of the story of *Hammira Hatha* (or Hamir Hath, Obstinacy of Hammira), an epic poem composed in varying iterations by several authors writing in Hindi and Sanskrit from the 14th century on.[1] Its hero, Maharaja (or Rao) Hammira, was a Chauhan prince whose formidable fort at Ranthambore in Rajasthan suffered siege and conquest in 1301 by the forces of Sultan Alauddin (or Ala' al-Din) Khalji (r. 1296–1316) of Delhi. Hammira had given asylum to one Mahima Mir (or Muhammad Shah), who had grievously transgressed against Alauddin, and adamantly refused both to go back on his word and to yield to the demand of the infidel sultan that he surrender his own daughter in marriage. For Hammira, whose epithet Hath means 'unwavering resolve', to renege on his existing offer of refuge would be to break the inviolable Rajput code of honour. After the rivals trade hubristic provocations, the enraged Alauddin made good on his threat of devastation and used mines and treachery by one of Hamir's soldiers to breach the fortress walls. Hammira counterattacked successfully, but foolishly hoisted the sultan's standards in victory, an act misconstrued by his womenfolk as a sign of defeat, thus tragically precipitating jauhar (mass self-immolation) amongst them. Shocked by this self-induced catastrophe, Hammira installed his son on the throne, cut off his own head, and ascended to heaven.



The narrative arc of *Hammira Hatha* and various illustrated copies produced in the Punjab Hills about 1800 are described in a seminal 1916 article by Hirananda Shastri and elucidated art historically by W.G. Archer in 1973.[2] The former allows us to situate the episode depicted here, which occurs at the beginning of the story. Alauddin was hunting with his harem in a hunting compound ringed by a kanat (canvas wall). One of the sultan's queens named Muhrathi (or Muhruthi) was pursuing a blackbuck who had leapt over the wall. She followed and came across a handsome and selfpossessed Mongol warrior who was guarding the entrance to the enclosure. Their attraction soon flared into lovemaking. Suddenly, a tiger charged whilst they were in flagrante delicto, whereupon the paramour coolly grabbed his bow and stopped the dangerous beast in its tracks.[3] Such unflappable behaviour impressed the lady to no end. Indeed, when she rejoined Alauddin later on and noted the boastful pride he took in shooting a large rat under similarly amorous circumstances, she could not help but skewer him with a mocking comparison of her lovers' relative prey and valour. The aggrieved Alauddin rushed to avenge this insult, but the queen had gotten word to Mahima Mir, who forestalled disaster by escaping and seeking protection from several princes in the region. Only Hammira did not refuse him.

All these details are included here. The sole male rider within the space walled off by the white kanat is identified as Alauddin (written as Alayodin) by his radiant halo and red caption. Like the unidentified zenana member directly below him, he is dressed in lavender robes, a colour stylishly repeated in his horse's dyed lower legs. He rides at full gallop in the company of two females hunting with equal aplomb, each taking aim with a bow at a buck or doe, almost all of which bleed decorously from a single wound. In one case, the prey is a blackbuck inventively struck in its rump just as it disappears over the tent wall. Other female riders surge in the opposite direction to hunt with spear and sword whilst two others turn to demonstrate their hunting skills with Parthian shots. The frenzy of the hunt finally spills over the enclosure's confines. One female rider, Muhrathi (labelled Muhuthi), jumps the wall as she pursues a pair of blackbucks fleeing across a pale green landscape.[4] Then, she reappears in the lower right, her body now entwined intimately with that of her newfound paramour, labelled Mahima, whose own scarlet-clad legs are positioned in anatomically implausible ways. With their mounts tethered in the foreground and his weapons laid aside on a bright orange carpet, Mahima twists about to fire a second arrow at the grimacing tiger, a beast with a stylised ear and mane seen in a moderately foreshortened view.

This *Hammira Hath* series, the most highly regarded of the five known illustrated copies of this text, was assigned to Mandi about 1810 and attributed to Sajnu (active 1790–1830), a conclusion based on colophon information paraphrased orally to Shastri in 1910–11. Shastri relates that the series of twenty-one paintings was presented to Ishvari Sen (1788–1826), Raja of Mandi, by Sajnu, a 'well-known painter of Kangra', on the 16th of Magha vikrama samvat 1867, equivalent to January–February 1810 CE. Although this information has never been documented officially, it led Archer to declare the series a 'landmark of Mandi painting', auguring a second, refined phase of painting in that state. The connection between Sajnu and Mandi is corroborated by a portrait of Ishvari Sen dated 1808.[5] Archer makes the case for Sajnu's prior connection to Guler rather than Kangra and argues that the story of *Hammira Hatha* would have been anathema in Kangra because of its ready analogy to the Kangra ruler Sansar Chand.[6] Additional information about Sajnu and his descendants is provided by Goswamy and Fischer. [7]

No systematic reconstruction of the various *Hammira Hath* series has been undertaken to date, but the five series may be distinguished generally by size and border, as well as by the prevalence of finely rendered faces, exemplified here in the lovers in the lower right. Archer reproduces two pages from this *Hammira Hath* series and lists several formal traits characteristic of Sajnu's work. [8]
JS

Four-line verse on verso translated by Prof. Richard Cohen available on request.

1 According to Richard Cohen (personal communication), the incident that occurred in 1301 CE involving Alauddin Khalji (Delhi Sultan), Muhammad Shah (aka Mahima Mīr Mongol) a leader of his Mongol unit, and the Chauhan Maharaja Hammīra of Ranthambore has been memorialised in several literary texts, beginning with the near contemporary Rajasthani/Braj Bhasha Hammīra Rāso of Sarangdhar (14 th century), the Sanskrit poem Hammīra Mahākāvya by Nayachandra Suri (15th century), a Braj Bhasha poem Hammīra Hath by Chandrashekhar Vajpeyi (1745 CE) and another Braj Bhasha poem Hammīra Rāso by Jodharaja (latter half of the 18th century). He believes that the inscription on the verso is a short adumbration of the section in the Hammīra Hath of Chandrashekhar Vajpeyi (1745 CE).

2 Shastri, Hirananda, '*The "Hamir-Hath," or the Obduracy of Hamir, the Chauhan Prince of Ranthambor*', The Journal of Indian Art and Industry XVII, no. 132 (October 1916), pp. 35–40; W.G. Archer, *Indian Painting from the Punjab Hills*, London and New York, 1973, vol. 1, pp. 360–62; vol. 2, fig. 42(i, ii), p. 273.

3 The inscription on the reverse presents a slightly different account of these events. In Richard Cohen's translation, the inscription (indicated by line number in brackets) reads:
Now, Hammīra Hath|| Chapai [Metre]||
One day, Alauddin, the hunter, arrived; in the morning, taking bow and arrow, he entered [the cordoned off] forest; going wherever, for the purpose of searching out many deer. Mahimā Mīr Mangol espied Muhraṭhi (sic: Maraṭṭhi) somewhere. [1] A very flirtatious young girl – in his heart [he felt] 'I am passionately attracted to you'. [2] He confronted her – "Don't say 'no', I am full of passion for you." Mahimā Mīr Mongol was unable to embrace her. Observing an angry lion behind, he took a bow in hand, [3] killed the lion [and] prevented [Muhraṭhi] from getting up. Mahimā said to the woman, "Listen! By no means get up!" [4]

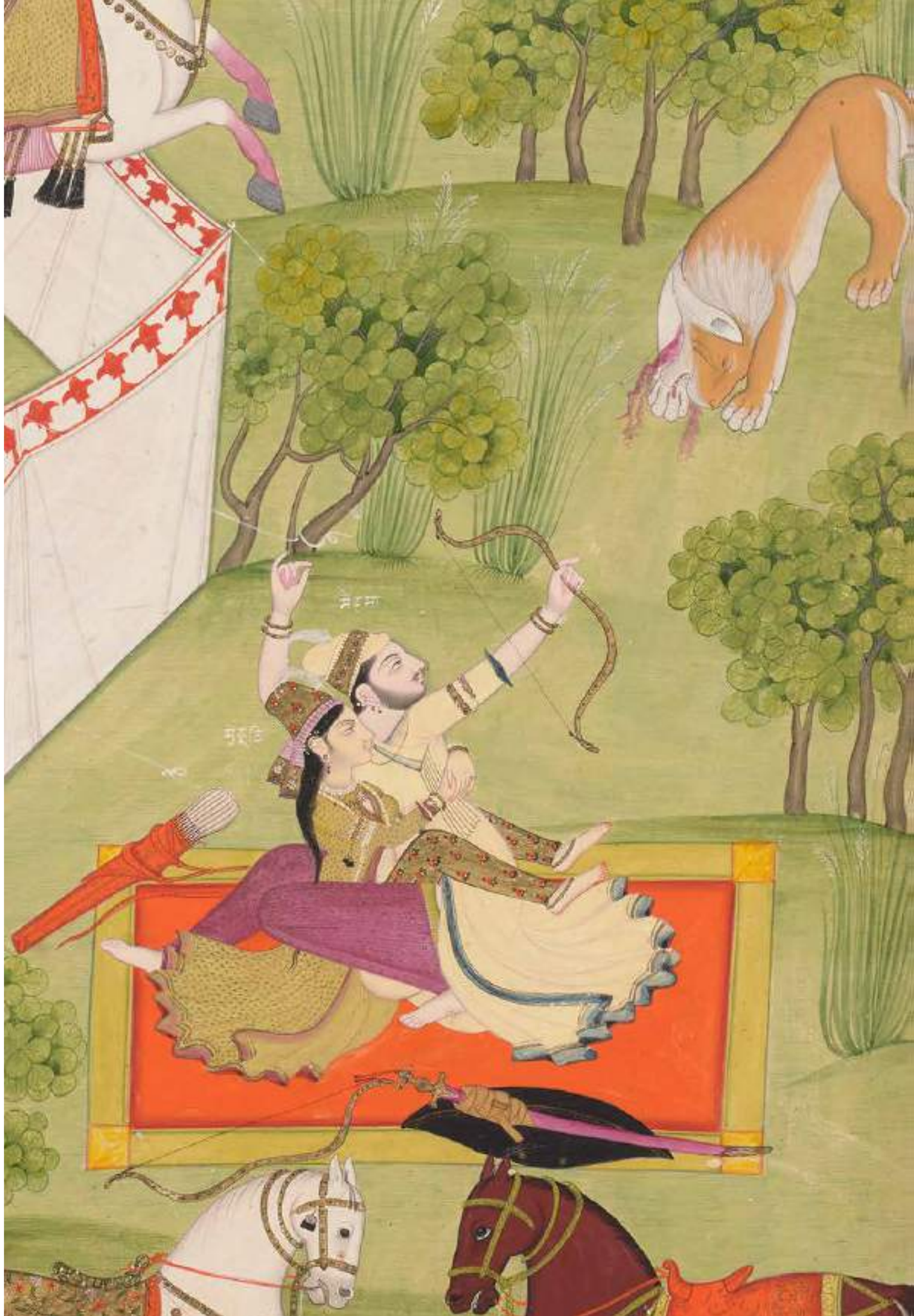
4 Cohen glosses her name in this way: Alauddin returned from one campaign with a Maratha woman, who became known as 'Maratthi' in the harem.

5 See Archer 1973, vol. 1, Mandi, no. 46, pp. 362–63; vol. 2, no. 46, p. 275.

6 Archer 1973, vol. 1, pp. 361–62.

7 B.N. Goswamy and E. Fischer, *Pahari Masters, Court Painters of Northern India*, Zurich, 1992, pp. 311–12.

8 Archer 1973, vol. 1, Mandi, no. 42(i, ii), pp. 361–362, vol. 2, Mandi, no. 42 (i, ii), p. 273.



14

Dev Singh of Indargarh on an Elephant
Kotah or possibly Indargarh, 18th century
Coloured drawing on paper and laid down on card
22.5 × 28 cm

Inscription on recto
māhārājā dev sīṃghjī
||iṃdragaṛhvālo 24
"Mahārājā Dev Singhjī of Indragaṛh" 24

In this dynamic coloured drawing, we see an elegantly dressed nobleman astride a caparisoned elephant. The artist uses dense single brushstrokes on the elephant, from the fan of eyelashes around the eye to the cross-hatching on his tail, down to the jet of urine that breaks for the bracelet around the elephant's leg. The same technique accentuates Dev Singh's beard and the feather in his turban, while a delicate wash of red heightens his lips, his ruby earring, and his bloodshot eye. A limited palette of orange, blue, red and pink, consistent with examples from Bundi and Kotah, rounds out the composition.

The drawing bears an inscription mentioning Indargaṛh. This small state, 75 km northeast of Bundi, was founded in 1632 by Kunwar Indar Sal Singh of Bundi, who named the new dynasty after himself. However Kotah, after separating from Bundi in 1631 at the behest of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, was larger than Bundi and ultimately became more powerful; thus Indargarh paid its annual tribute to Kotah and not Bundi.

Our protagonist, Dev Singh, was the son of the fifth thakur of Indargaṛh, Maharaja Chattar Singh (b. 1699). Dev Singh appears to have lived in the early 18th century and was killed with his father Chattar Singh.

१९ महाराजा देवसींघ
रो इंद्रगढ़ वालो २५

15

Folio from the *Satsai* of Bihari Lal
Mewar, Jagannath (scribe), c. 1719
Opaque pigments and gold and silver on paper
23.5 × 20 cm including red border

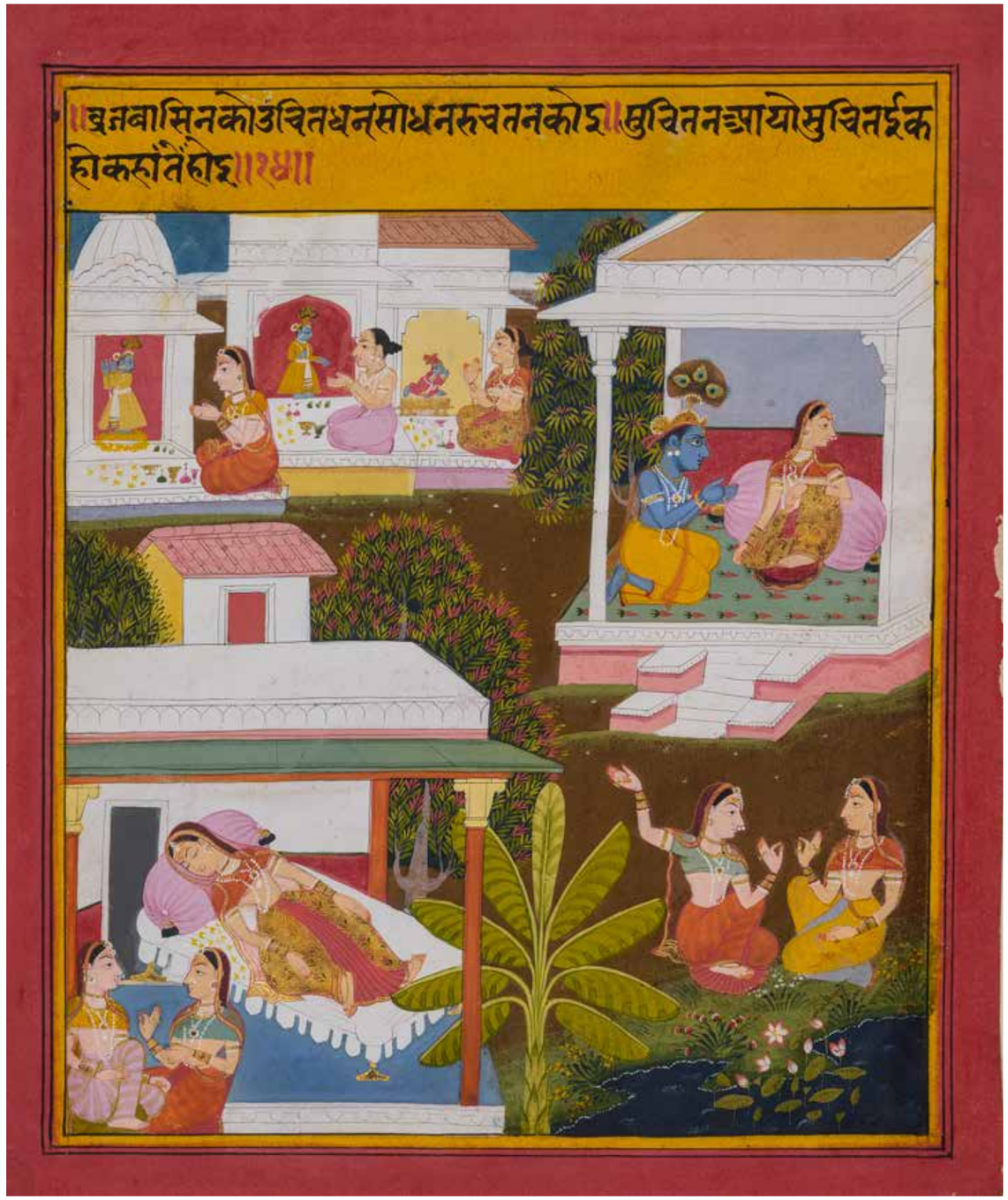
Inscription on recto in a dialect of Hindi called Braj Bhasha
Brajabāsin ko ucita dhana so dhana rūcata na koi | sucita na āyo sucitaī kaho kaha te hoi | 16
The wealth appropriate to the residents of Braj, they have no desire for that wealth
Without purity in your mind [lit. purity did not come], tell me, where will ease of mind come from?

Provenance
Private collection, UK
Peter Cochrane collection, acquired from Kasmin 19 March 1969

This is a folio from the first-ever illustrated manuscript of Bihari's *Satsai*, commissioned as part of a flurry of activity of court artists under Maharana Sangram Singh II of Mewar (r. 1710–34). It ran to 643 paintings in total, overseen by the scribe Kaviraja Jagannath and illustrated by several hands (Topsfield 2001, p. 143).

Each of the paintings illustrates one verse from the *Satsai* (Seven Hundred Poems), a Brajbhasha work composed in the mid-17th century under Jai Singh of Amber, Rajasthan. Bihari's seven hundred couplets weave aphorisms together out of a complex web of images and allusions drawn from the world of *nayikas*, archetypal heroines in love.

Faced with a notoriously elliptical text, the artists had to decide how best to depict each verse. Although only about a tenth of Bihari's text directly concerns Krishna and Radha, their love story hovers over the entire text, and the Mewar court artists illustrating this manuscript further developed the Krishna-Radha imagery they had used for the *Gita Govinda* and *Rasikpriya* earlier in Maharana Sangram Singh II's reign (Topsfield 2001, p. 143). Arranged in an innovative square format, as opposed to the workshop's earlier album format, the folios often divide the composition into further internal "compartments" through architectural forms, as here; this came to be a distinguishing feature of Mewar painting (*Rajput Miniatures* 1968, pp. 19–23).



The manuscript invites the viewer to refer back and forth between the couplet and the image, decoding the folio like a puzzle (Nandini Thilak, 'Visions of Love and Longing'). In this verse, from early in the poem[1], Bihari finds himself in a didactic mode, asking:

The wealth appropriate to the residents of Braj, they have no desire for that wealth

Without purity in your mind [lit. purity did not come], tell me, where will ease of mind come from?

The couplet addresses itself to the "inhabitants of Braj," the sacred landscape associated with the Krishna *lila* or "dance of divine love," where Krishna plays with Radha and the *gopis*. Rather than focus on the Braj residents' pangs of love as elsewhere in the text, here the poet emphasises their strong spiritual credentials, as they prioritise purity of heart over material wealth. These pure of mind Braj denizens appear in the top left quadrant of the painting, as a *gopi*, a Vaishnavite devotee, and Radha herself all present offerings to Krishna in his varying poses.

At the bottom right, two women talk; one gestures towards the devotees, with her other hand mirroring her companion's in the *gyan mudra* or gesture of wisdom. They seem to be endorsing this devoted behaviour.

Elsewhere in the painting, the scene returns to the Krishna-Radha drama. At the top right, Krishna beseeches Radha, but she turns her head away from him as she leans back against her pink bolster. At the bottom left, Radha sleeps on a bed in a pavilion. The same woman who gestured towards the devotees is now talking to another attendant, once again gesturing in *gyan mudra*. It appears they are discussing Radha, but the message is ambiguous: is this an endorsement of her refusal, or an indictment? At any rate, she will not hold out too long. Another painting in the series, 'Krishna's Tryst with Radha' from the Kenneth Robbins collection, features the same attendant in purple, this time gesturing at Krishna and Radha's eventual amorous embrace.

The bulk of the original manuscript, including the colophon, is at the Sarasvati Bhavan Library, Udaipur; other folios from the same manuscript are housed in other collections including the Yale University Art Gallery (inv. 2001.138.29), Art Institute of Chicago (inv. 1977.150), Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (inv. 2023.779), Harvard Art Museums (invs. 1973.153 to 1973.155), the Brooklyn Museum (inv. 2010.48.19), the Kenneth Robbins Collection, and the Gopi Krishna Kanoria Collection, Patna. A work seemingly by the same artist is held in the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art (inv. F1986.13), where it is attributed to the "Master of the Jagged Water's Edge"; the same "jagged water," articulated with delicate stippling at the edge, is found in the present painting.

This painting was formerly owned by Peter Cochrane (1913–2004), an important British art dealer instrumental in bringing American Abstract Expressionism to London in the 1950s. Always a collector by instinct, Cochrane started collecting and dealing in Indian miniatures in the 1960s, and curated exhibitions of Rajput painting at the Redfern gallery and Arthur Tooth & Sons in the 1970s, together with Howard Hodgkin and his fellow dealer Kasmin.

HNS

1 This verse is recorded as being part of Bihari's *Satsai* in two compilations, though the verse numbers differ from each other and from the verse number (16) recorded on this folio. See Braj Madhuri Sar, p. 263; Satsai Saptak p. 204. The verse is not in the critical edition which forms the basis of English translations of the Satsai.

16

Maharaja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur (r. 1707 – 1724) with female Musicians
Jodhpur, by a Bikaner or Kishangarh-trained artist, first half of the 18th century
Opaque pigments with gold on card, unfinished
31.9 × 23.1 cm

Provenance
Toby Falk collection

This highly refined, albeit unfinished, painting of Maharaja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur with female musicians depicts him as an imposing figure in the centre of a courtyard. Beyond the marble balustrade is a deep flowerbed with rows of neatly arranged pale pink and orange red flower heads. Deeper into the painting is a line of different types of trees against a foreboding sky.

The maharaja's distinctive profile is topped by a delicately gilded Jodhpur-style turban. Facing him are female musicians playing the *sitar*, castanets, *veena* and *pakhawaj*. The artist appears to be in the process of deciding how to populate the painting: the drum player to the bottom right has had the position of her face slightly adjusted from the pencil profile; it is clear that he has moved her from a more upright position to one leaning slightly further back, gazing upwards at the maharaja (presumably, filling in her veil would have covered this change). On the left, two figures have been sketched out, but not filled in. Perhaps the artist intended to cover them when the rest of the architecture was finished. Ajit Singh's garments await the sumptuous gilding treatment afforded to his bolsters, while the central tree which grounds the painting lacks the stippled detail of the trees that surround it.

This painting was chosen for its quality and for how different it is from other Jodhpur portraits. The artist's delicate style, for example the treatment of the musicians, is reminiscent of elements seen in Bikaner and Kishangarh paintings, both schools influenced by Mughal painting.

Unfinished courtly scenes from Jodhpur are not an unusual phenomenon; for example, the well-known *darbar* scene with Maharaja Jaswant Singh (c. 1640–42) in the British Museum (inv. 1948-10-9-1025).

With thanks to Debra Diamond for her help with this painting; if there are inaccuracies they are all ours.

17

Maharana Jagat Singh II of Mewar (r. 1734–51) and his Son, seated with six *Sadhus*
Udaipur, c. 1736–40
Watercolour and pigment on paper
32.3 × 22.7 cm

Inscription on verso
Maharana jī srī jagat sī[n]gh jī rī [tas?]biro pāno

Provenance
Private collection, UK
Simon Ray
Mewar Royal Collection, inventory number /13

Maharana Jagat Singh II of Mewar (r. 1734–51) is known for his patronage of *tamasha* paintings, which documented his enthusiastic patronage of state processions, feasts, hunts, plays of Krishna and the *gopis*, and boating excursions by his lake palace, Jagniwas. This painting finds him in a quieter moment, seated in a green ground landscape before six *sadhus*. He is accompanied by his son. The two have laid down their shields to clasp their hands in reverence to the holy men, while a retinue of attendants in the foreground waits to take them away on a palanquin decorated with elephants.

18

Maharana Bhim Singh receives Sir Charles Metcalfe in *Darbar*
Udaipur, dated 1927–28 signed Pannalal Parasuram Gaur
Opaque pigments and gold on paper
65.5 × 46.5 cm

Inscription
Kalamī cītrakār pannālāl parasrām goḍ. Pūracīn tasbīrsu nakalkarī San [numerals] ka

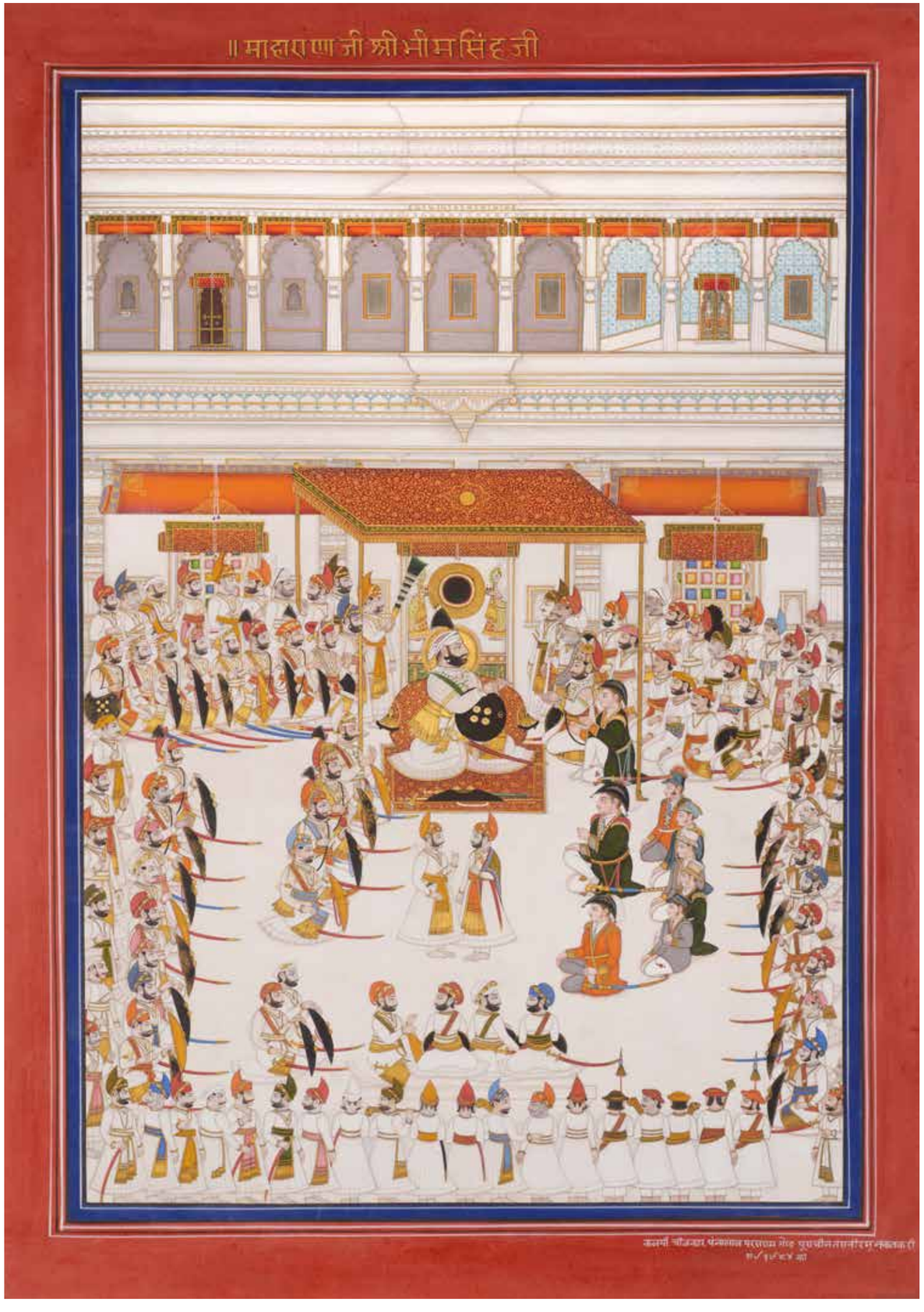
Provenance
Private collection, UK

This painting's inscription identifies the painter as Pannalal Parasuram Gaur, and the painting as a 1927–8 copy (*nakalkari)* of an old picture (*purachin tasbir*). The title at the top identifies the subject as Maharana Bhim Singh of Mewar and Udaipur (r. 1768–1828). The original is a c.1826 painting, *Maharana Bhim Singh receives Sir Charles Metcalfe in Durbar*, attributed to Ghasi, held at the City Palace Museum, Udaipur. (Topsfield 2001, p. 237; Topsfield 1990, p. 73).

Based on the eight British officers depicted in the scene, Topsfield proposes that the occasion recorded is the visit of Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Delhi Resident, to Udaipur in 1826. The painting frames the hierarchical arrangements of the assembly in the architecture of the Surya Mahal of the City Palace, where Tod had described his own reception several years earlier. Immediately behind the maharana, paralleling the gold nimbus radiating around his head, is the Sisodia clan's sun emblem, which decorated the courtyard of the Surya Mahal. Three bays on the right of the upper level of the courtyard are decorated with Chinese blue and white tiles.

The courtiers are seated in order of importance, with the British officials in diplomatic dress on the right. Whereas Tod noted that "the court formed three sides of a square," the painting closes the loop with a row of attendants clutching spears and tiger-headed clubs.

Pannalal has rendered the earlier painting in exact detail, with strong outlines and a carefully reproduced colour palette. Only small differences are visible in his choice of decorative textile pattern on the cushion and carpet that constitute the maharana's throne (*gaddi*).



Clearly, this detailed testimony of the *darbar* protocol of a hundred years ago continued to be important to the Udaipur rulers well into the twentieth century, as it was copied at least twice and displayed prominently in the City Palace. The courtyard where the *darbar* scene takes place later became known as the Mor Chowk, after the row of glass mosaic decorative peacocks added to its walls. Another version of the same scene by Pannalal, dated 1923, was displayed in the Mor Chowk itself as of 1987 (Topsfield 1990, p. 73 fn1, records this info as being in Nath and Warcziag eds 1987, illus p. 163).

Pannalal headed the royal painting workshop under Maharana Fateh Singh of Mewar (r. 1884–1929) and later Maharana Bhupal Singh (r. 1930–48). He was part of a line of Udaipur court painters: his father, Parasuram, had also served as a court painter under Maharana Sarup Singh (r. 1842–61) and Sajjan Singh (r. 1864–84). Pannalal was a dominant figure in what Topsfield calls "the final phase of traditional court painting" (Topsfield 2001, p. 295), together with his son Chaganlal. The two worked individually and collaboratively, with Chaganlal often reworking his father's compositions. Alongside *shikar* scenes of Fateh Singh, whose one indulgence was hunting, they also produced contemporary durbar scenes increasingly influenced by photography. Both father and son worked at the royal studio until its dissolution after 1948. It was Pannalal, faithful re-inscriber of Bhim Singh's *darbar*, who painted the investiture of Bhupal Singh in 1930, held at the City Palace Museum, Udaipur, the very last in a centuries-long tradition of Udaipur *darbar* paintings. (Topsfield 2001, p. 300).

Although the present example of Panalal's work is a copy, he was also an innovative figure in the final phase of Udaipur court painting. He oversaw the overall design of the City Palace under Bhupal Singh,[1] and developed new ways of working with photographs, also serving as a court photographer. His hand-painted black and white photographs have been exhibited at the Science Museum (*Illuminating India: Photography 1857–2017*, 2017) and the Brunei Gallery (*Painted photographs: Coloured portraiture in India*, 2008); painted photograph portraits by Pannalal and Chugganlal are held in the Royal Ontario Museum and the Alkazi Collection of Photography.
HNS

1 *The Art of Realism Painted photographs from India*, in Rahaab Allana, *Painted Photographs: Coloured Portraiture in India, The Alkazi Collection of Photography and Mapin*, SOAS, 2008

19

The Maharao of Kotah's Artillery
Kotah, c 1840
Pen and ink over graphite with watercolour
55 × 150 cm

Indian drawing has been called the most naked of the visual arts. A good drawing expresses in a completely spontaneous way an artist's first ideas. It is the closest we get to witnessing the wide scope of his imagination and this spontaneity can have strong impact. The Kotah school of painting was famous for giving priority to the art of drawing which was often regarded as finished works of art rather than just preparatory sketches.

The artillery of the Maharao of Kotah's state forces is marching across this wide pair of pages preceded by his camel corps. Both camels and horses are shown pulling the guns. The soldiers of the camel corps wear blue *jamas*

and red turbans and no doubt the rest of the artillerymen would have worn the same uniform. The artillerymen riding the horses pulling the guns are shown wielding their ramrods rather like lances. Further up are some of his cavalry and foot-soldiers. They are passing by an apparition of what appears to be Ardhanarisvara on the hillock, half-Siva half-Durga, although unusually the Siva half is coloured blue.

Processions, hunts, durbars as well as more intimate portraits form the staple production of the artists of Kotah during Maharao Ram Singh's long reign (1827–66). The curves of the camel's necks are echoed by those of the prancing horses lending the procession a most unmilitary air.

Kotah came under British protection in 1817 during the reign of Kishor Singh (1819–27), Ram Singh's uncle. The tribute formerly payable to the Marathas was now paid to the British Government and the state was to furnish troops when required according to its means. The state had been governed for many years by the regent Zalim Singh and it was the new ruler's attempt to wrest the government back into his own hands that resulted in the British coming to the aid of Zalim Singh and the death of Ram Singh's father Prithvi Singh at the battle of Mangrol in 1821. It was not until 1834 that Ram Singh was able to get control of the government of his state. A British auxiliary force (the Kotah Contingent, wearing normal sepoy uniforms) was stationed in Kotah at the Maharao's expense from 1838. Clearly the Maharao had no difficulty in getting hold of British cannon for his state troops, although the insouciance with which they are being driven would not have passed muster at Woolwich. Both the Kotah Contingent and the state troops mutinied in 1857. The latter murdered the Political Agent Major Burton and bombarded the Maharao in his palace. Both the Kotah Contingent and the Kotah State troops are visible in a painting showing Ram Singh arriving for his wedding at Jaisalmer in 1843 (Welch 1997, no. 66).

20

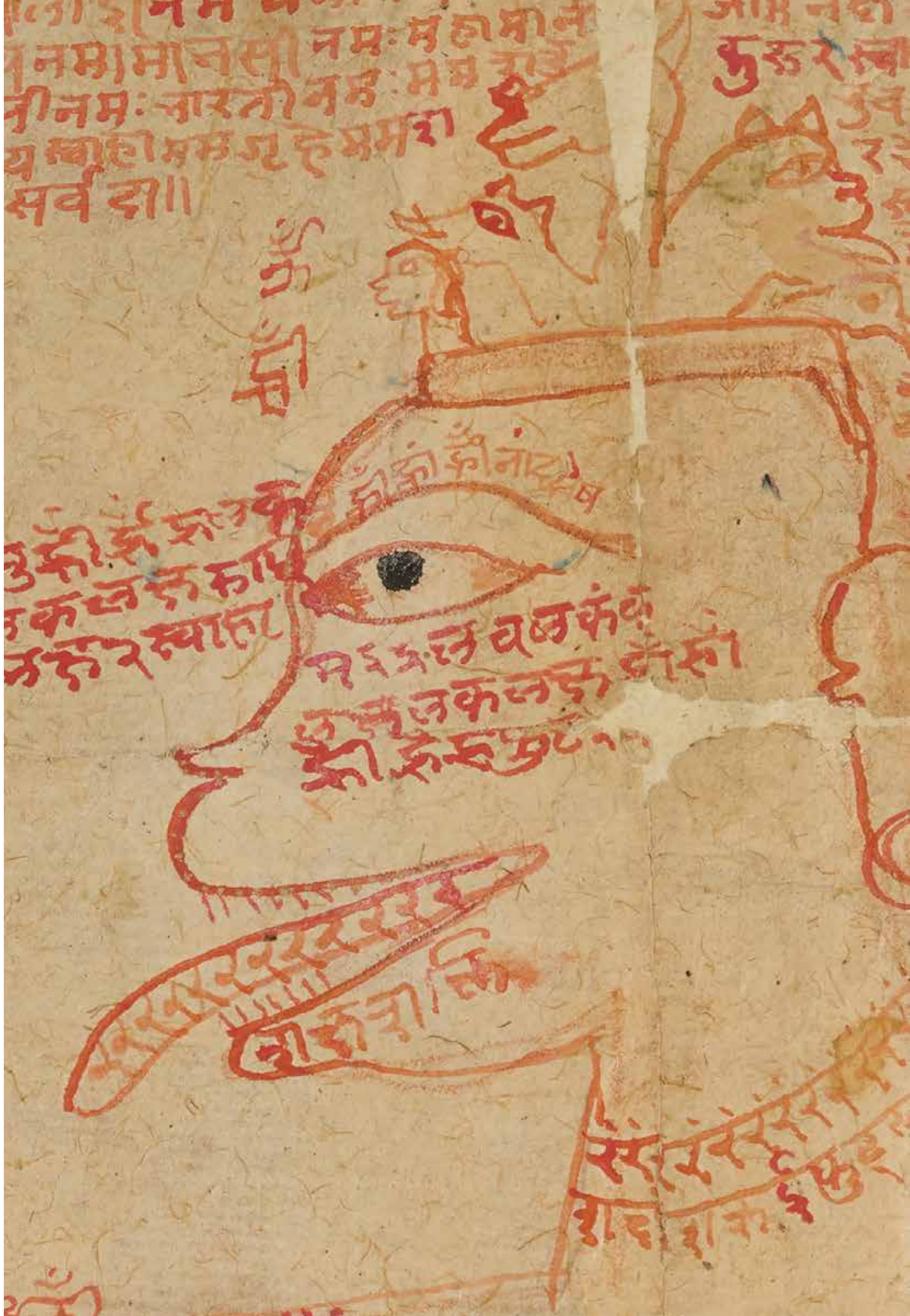
A Fragment of a devotional Image of Hanuman (*Pataka*)
Rajasthan, 19th century
Ink on paper
34 × 38.5 cm

Provenance
Stuart Cary Welch collection

On Museum loan
On temporary loan to the Harvard University Art Museums (accession no. 402.1983)

This ink drawing on paper was once in the collection of Stuart Cary Welch. On the verso of his frame he wrote in pencil:

Fragment of a devotional image of Hanuman (pataka), five headed and twelve armed, drawn with meditation diagrams (yantras), Rama's name and other mantras, and other invocations inscribed mostly in Sanskrit
Rajasthan 19th century
Ink on paper



21

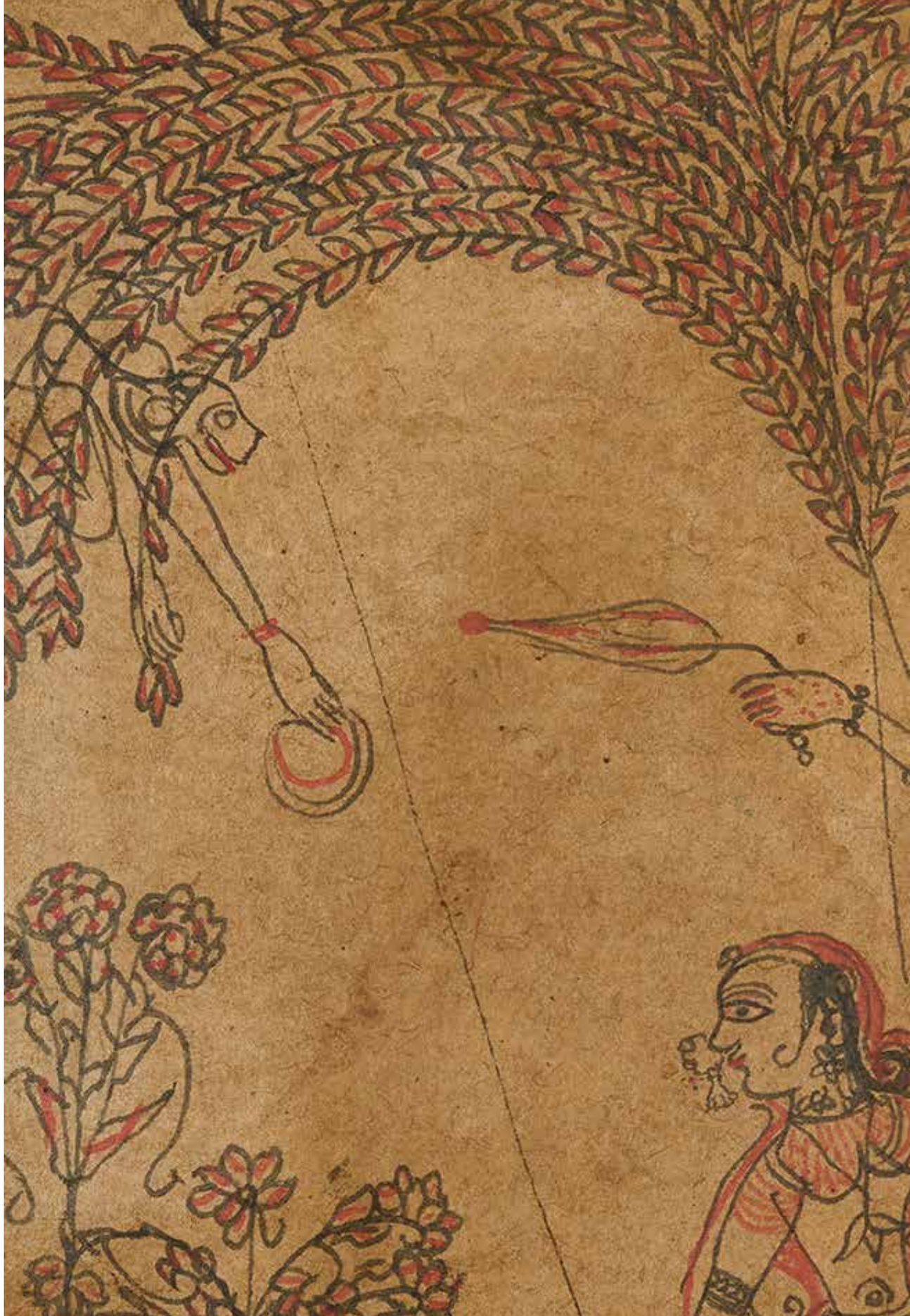
Two Pages from a Manuscript illustrating Scenes from the *Ramayana*
Rajasthan or Central India, c. 1725–50
Transparent and opaque water-based pigments on paper
Left 20 × 14.5 cm
Right 21 × 14.5 cm

Provenance
Stuart Cary Welch collection

On Museum loan
On temporary loan to the Harvard University Art Museums (accession no. 233.1983 and 232.1983)

These two drawings were once in the collection of Stuart Cary Welch. On the verso of his frame he wrote in pencil:

Two pages from a manuscript illustrating the Ramayana
Left: Rama pursues the golden deer while Ravana approaches Sita
Right: Hanuman spies Sita in Ashoka Grove



22

A Group of 22 Clay Figurines depicting the Peoples of India
Polychrome unfired clay (*terracruda*), textiles and metal
Krishnangar, attributed to Jadunath Pal, c. 1880–90
Between 14 and 28 cm high

The art of sculpture in unfired, air-dried clay (*terracruda*) evolved in South Asia over millennia. The fragility of unfired clay allowed it to play a role in sacred rituals, where *terracruda* idols might be submerged in water or deliberately left to disintegrate. From the 18th century, *terracruda* figurines became popular in a wider secular context, as artists who had been trained

in sculpting for devotional purposes adapted their methods to a new colonial market. Eventually, Western museum displays and exhibitions would use their products as a representation of Indian life (Macgregor 2023, p. 769).

This group of 22 clay figurines is part of this long tradition: each of the 20 men and two women has been meticulously modelled in clay over a metal wire frame, placing them in a unique position or gesture. They have then been painted in naturalistic colours and varnished, lending them a realistic appearance. The artist has also added hair made of wool or jute, dressed the miniature figures in textiles, and given them props. All these elements help to signal their occupation to the viewer.

With increasing colonial presence in Bengal came a market for artwork that catalogued the peoples of India for a European audience. The series' anthropological interest in recording occupation-based stereotypes invites comparisons with other genres that catalogued the peoples of India for a European audience, including albums like James Skinner's commission the *Tashrih al aqwam* (*An account of origins and occupations of some of the sects, castes, and tribes of India*). These catalogues organised India's population into representative 'types' based on religion and occupational caste, much like an illustrated gazetteer or census. *Terracruda* figurines, too, were employed for this purpose.

In the 19th century, *terracruda* sculptors found new markets for their work in the form of souvenirs representing the people to be encountered in India, ranging from 15–30cm high. The artists developed new skills in depicting human figures, informed by a new taste for realism and access to works of European naturalism. Various centres of production evolved to cater to the colonial cities.

While this set shares its *dramatis personae* with other examples from Poona, Lucknow and Gokak–water carriers, holy men, village women–the quality of these figurines, with their strikingly detailed naturalistic facial features, along with the use of textiles such as wool and jute, confirm that they are products of Krishnanagar, West Bengal, the epicentre of realist *terracruda* sculpture from the turn of the 19th century.

Krishnanagar was well-positioned for its access to clays found along the Jalangi River that were ideal for working by hand. Maharaja Krishnachandra Roy (1728–83) of Krishnanagar encouraged potters to settle in Krishnanagar to produce religious idols and figurines. Mohun Pal (c. 1736–90) was reputedly the first sculptor to settle in Krishnanagar, inaugurating a century-long lineage (Bean 2026, p. 152).

In the 19th century, Krishnanagar's sculptors became renowned for their assimilation of naturalistic elements of Western sculpture coupled with what Susan Bean calls "a sense of living presence" (Bean 2026, p. 145) important to sculptures in colonial Bengal's increasingly elaborate *puja* festivals, where *terracruda* sculptures (*shong*s) of figures divine and mortal were often processed through the city.

In the second half of the 19th century, a new use emerged for these collections of "peoples of India" figurines: colonial exhibitions, which spotlighted the purported benefits of empire through displays of engineering and technology alongside indigenous fine crafts. Usually lacking representation from actual "natives," these exhibitions were instead populated with their portrayals in sculpture. The first of these was the 1851 Great Exhibition in London, which featured hundreds of such *terracruda* sculptures from Krishnanagar and Lucknow. Sriram Pal of Krishnanagar (1818–85), great-grandson of Mohun Pal, was awarded a bronze medal at the 1851 Exhibition for "illustrating the various trades and castes of the Hindoos." Visitors could purchase the scenes: The Krishnanagar clay figures at the 1880 Glasgow International Exhibition ranged in price from R1,200 for a Tea Garden scene to R9 to R12 a dozen for individual miniature figures (Mukharji 1888, pp. 68–69).

As the century wore on, the spectacle of colonial exhibitions became more and more elaborate, and miniature *terracruda* sculptures were accompanied by life-size examples (MacGregor 2023, p. 771). Some of these life-size figures spectacularly survive at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. At the 1882 Amsterdam International Exhibition, the figures populated a model row of shops, apparently a very popular display. The practice reached its peak at the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition, timed for Queen Victoria's golden jubilee. Dozens were displayed in the Imperial and Economic Court, divided into "ethnological" vignettes in which the

figures were surrounded by objects associated with them (Bean 2026, p. 172).

Pivotal in this moment was Jadunath Pal (1838–1924), descendant of the Krishnanagar lineage discussed above and the most successful *terracruda* artist at the turn of the century (Bean 2026, p. 164). Pal was commissioned to provide *terracruda* sculptures for no less than six colonial exhibitions, eventually becoming known as "the Government modeler" (Bean 2026, p. 196). Other known examples by Jadunath Pal, including two c. 1890 examples held at the British Library (inv. F1040) and Museums Victoria, Australia (inv. ST 40409–40414), confirm the present group as a product of his work: all the figures share the same meticulous detail, miniature dimensions, polished finish, and small platform on which each figure is mounted.

The 22 figurines in the group represent a lively collection of characters, each carefully modelled and offered accompanying clothing and props. While some figures seem to be based on the same facial type template, all have been painted in different colours and decorated with minute brush-strokes to articulate their eyes and facial hair, rendering each one distinct and lifelike. The commitment to minutely recording the tools of their trade extends to the blue and white earthenware of the potter and the wisps of cotton placed in a pot atop the cook's stove, meant to represent steam. The group offers a portal into how people dressed, worked, and lived in India of the late 19th century.

22a

This figurine depicts a young woman balancing an earthenware pot on her head. She is dressed in a simple, earth–toned sari with a red border that covers her head, under which her loose hair is visible. She wears a pair of metallic *bazuband* on her upper arms and chunky bracelets on both wrists. The material suggests that this jewellery is made of silver. Faint tattoos adorn her arms, left hand, and chest; these are reminiscent of the Southern Indian practice of tattooing women's hands and arms with patterns derived from *kolum*, the geometric or curvilinear patterns adorning the entrance to a house in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (Rao 2021, p. 104)

Further study of these tattoos might reveal additional information about this woman.

22b

This is possibly a miniature rendition of the extensive series of life-size sculptures of indigenous people which Jadunath Pal produced for the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition (Bean 2026, pp. 194, 197). He also produced life-size sculptures of indigenous people for the Glasgow International Exhibition, where they were advertised at 40 rupees each. While the life-size versions do not survive, contemporary illustrations of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands display demonstrate correspondences with the figure in his facial features and how his loincloth drapes around his chest and over his shoulder. Whereas the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition display spotlights bayonets, this figure carries a simple pickaxe.

Jadunath Pal, like other hereditary artists working in the Krishnanagar terracruda tradition, was often uncredited for his work, considered a modeller or an artisan rather than a sculptor. It is thanks to T. N. Mukharji, a high-ranking Bengali civil servant and writer charged with organising colonial exhibitions, that Pal was recognised for his contributions. Against the charge that adding cloth and hair to the sculptures rendered them akin to toys, Mukharji (Mukharji 1888, p. 59) wrote "There is considerable delicacy and fineness in their work; the figures are instinct with life and expression, and their pose and action are excellent."

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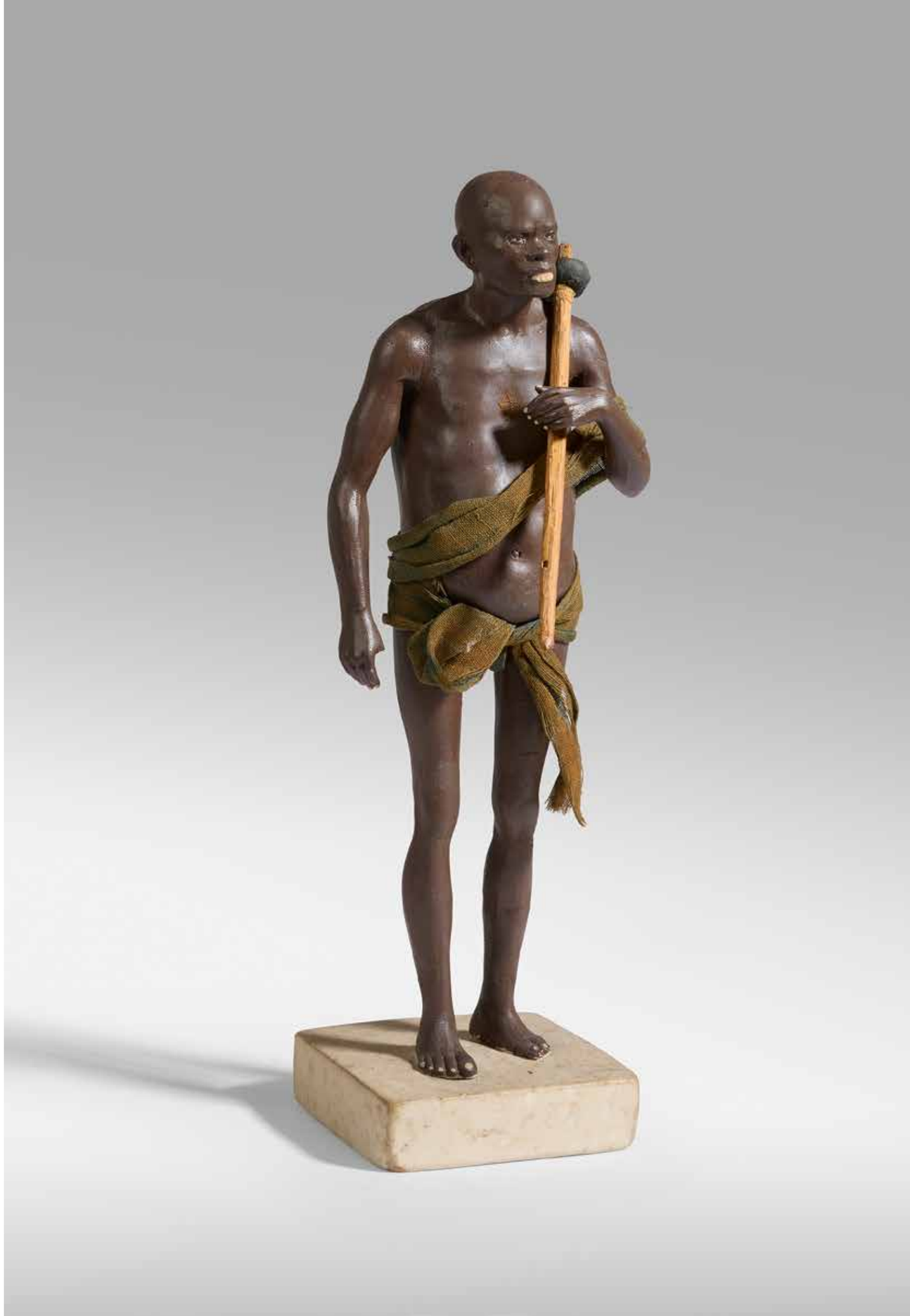


23

Six separate Studies assembled on an Album Sheet
Folio from the Parlby Album
Bengal, Murshidabad, assembled by Louisa Parlby, c. 1795 – 1803
Opaque watercolour on English paper mounted on to a large sheet of paper
Folio 50 × 77 cm

a Akali Sikh ascetic with quoits and crutch (numbered 19); 27 × 20 cm
b Dancing lady after a Lucknow artist's version of a lost painting by Tilly Kettle (numbered 17); 26 × 19 cm
c Vaishnava ascetic with floor length hair (numbered 18); 27 × 19.5 cm
d Standard bearer at the Muharram (BL Wellesley Add.Or.1158); 23 × 18 cm
e Two women with baskets on their head; 22.5 × 18 cm
f Warrior with sword and katar; 22 × 19 cm

Louisa Parlby (1772–1808) assembled this album between 1795 and 1803. She was the wife of James (1762-1826) an East India Company Engineer, living in the residential enclave of Maidapur, on the banks of the Bhagarathi river, between Murshidabad and Calcutta. James Parlby was responsible for many of the grand houses built in Maidapur and depicted in this Album. Inscriptions in Louisa's hand on the back of most of the watercolours allows us to identify and date the drawings quite precisely.

Though Louisa inhabited a social strata less distinguished than that of Lady Impey or the Marquess of Wellesley, the paintings she assembled are an interesting and accurate record of East India Company life and interests in Bengal at the end of the 18th century. Many of the drawings in her album have parallels in two large collections now in the British Library – the Wellesley Album (ADD.Or.1098-1235) and the Hyde Collection (Add.Or.3188-3274). Having lost one child in 1800, Louisa Parlby left for Britain shortly after the birth of her last child in 1801.

The present group is illustrated in JP Losty *Imperial Past –India 1600–1800*, 2011 (pp. 66 – 67). Other publications on this album include *The Allure of India,* 2017, also by JP Losty, *The Parlby Album* by Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, 2017 and *Painters Ports and Profits – Artists and the East India Company* 1750–1850, ed. Laurel O Peterson and Holley Shaffer at Yale Center for British Art 2026 (pp. 116–17, pl. 31 and pp. 119-20, pl. 32). The Parlby Album is dispersed between private and museum collections.

24

Gateway to Emperor Akbar's Tomb at Sikandra
Agra, for a British patron, early 19th century
Pen and black ink, grey wash and watercolour, heightened with white on Whatman paper
28.8 × 51.2 cm

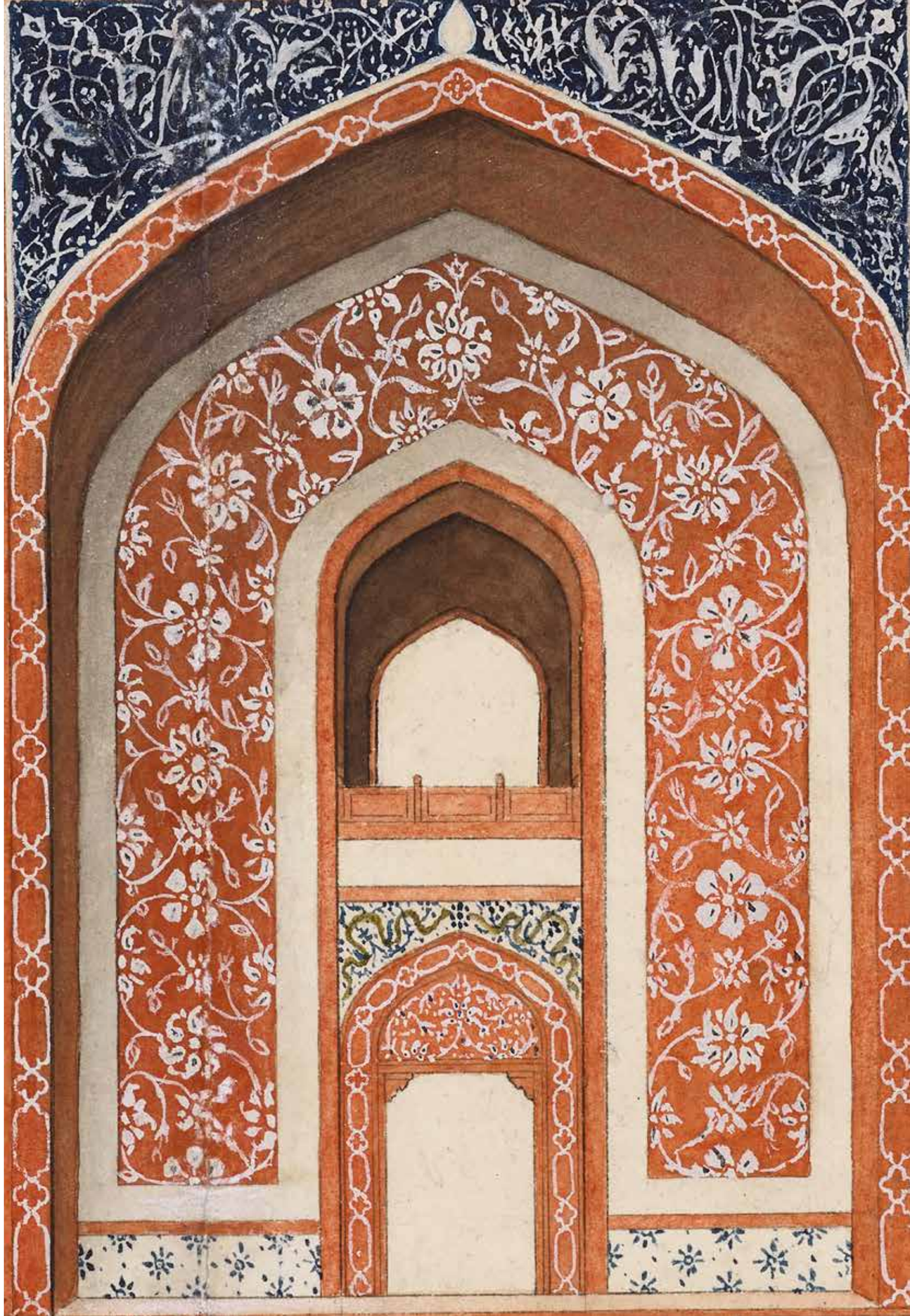
Provenance
Private collection, UK
Simon Ray
Maggs, London
John Fowler

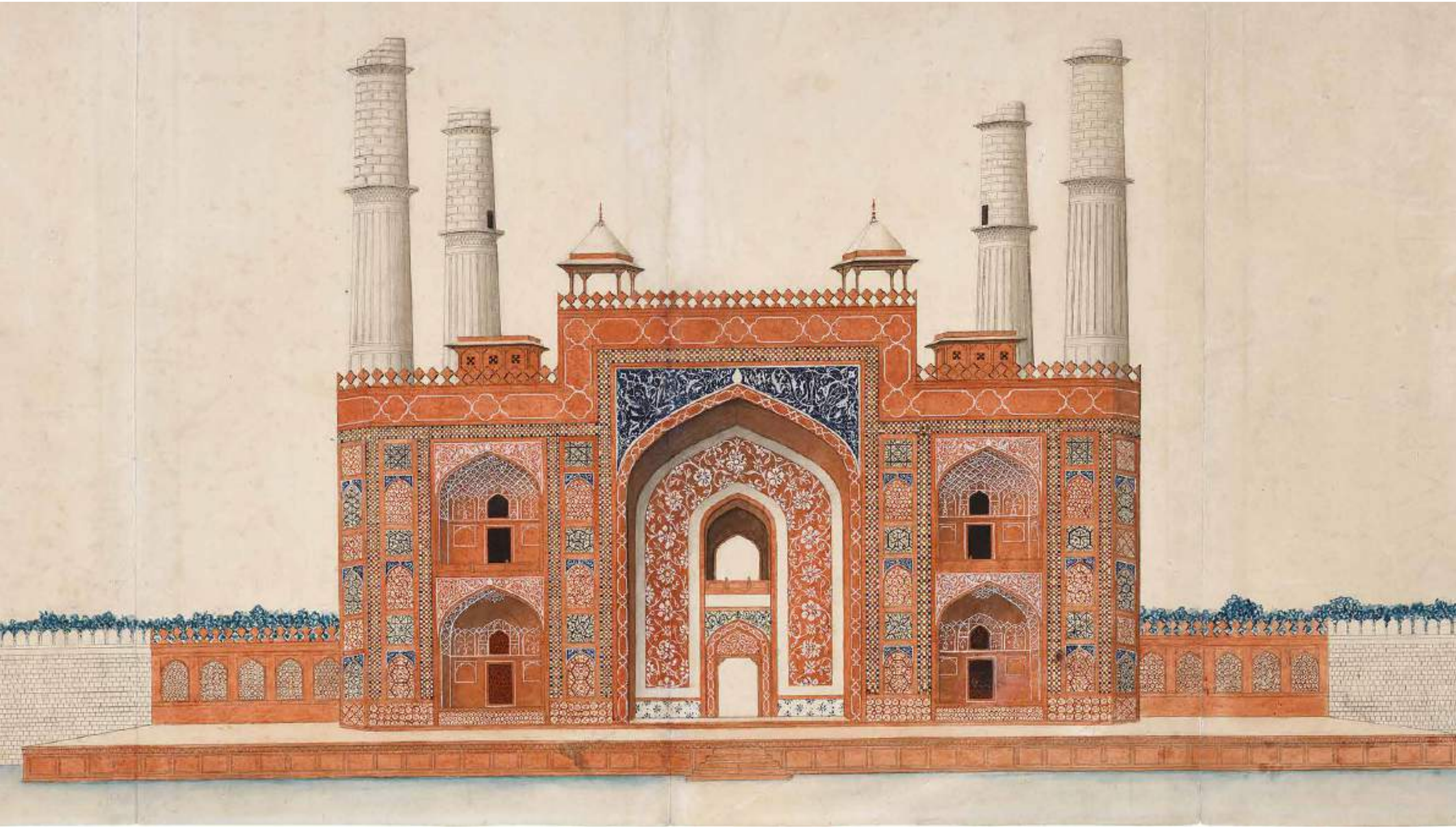
Published
Simon Ray, 2007, pp. 166–69, cat. 67

The tomb of the Emperor Akbar (r.1556–1605) at Sikandra, near Agra, is of Akbar's tomb, including this gateway, was built by his son, Jahangir (r. 1605–27), and completed in 1612/13.

This monumental structure comes from a long tradition of grand Mughal gateways and is similar to and predates the gateways of the Taj Mahal. The design has its roots in the Sultanate architecture of Delhi (Koch 2006, p. 126). This example is remarkable for its elegant architectural ornament, displaying a myriad of geometric and arabesque designs. The sandstone structure is balanced by the intricate marble inlay. Our artist has successfully conveyed the delicacy of this surface decoration which is quintessential to Jahangir's style. The tops of the minarets were destroyed in the 18th century and only rebuilt in the early 20th century. In our painting, this damage is apparent but not obvious.

The Mughal monuments of Agra and its vicinity were already greatly admired when the British established themselves in Agra in the years after the capture of the city from the Marathas in 1803. Drawings by Agra draughtsmen of the great Mughal buildings and of details of their marble and inlay decoration form a regular part of the many albums and sets of drawings made in the period 1803–40. These drawings were necessitated partly as a consequence of the need to conserve the Mughal monuments such as the Taj Mahal and Akbar's tomb at Sikandra (Losty 2011, p. 13).





25

Portrait of a Young Prince wearing the Royal Gaekwad Turban associated with the Ruling Family of Baroda
Gujarat, Baroda c. 1870–1900
15.5 × 10.5 cm
Opaque watercolour and gold on ivory

Provenance
From Bell Hall, a grade I listed building, in Naburn, in the rural southern part of the city of York. In the 1870s the Baines family consisting of William Mortimer and Mary Ann Baines and their children lived at Bell Hall. Two of their children went to live in India: Rosa Augusta Baines became a nurse in India and the eldest son, Hewley Mortimer Baines, was an engineer in the public works department in India. It is entirely feasible that one of them sent our portrait back to Bell Hall.

In the late 19th century, Indian portraiture not only adopted the external trappings of European painting, but also the poise of studio photographs. This portrait of a young prince is a prime example of the genre. A European-style chair on a terrace is occupied by an unidentified nobleman. The floor is covered with an ornate, floral carpet, and a gilded, Empire-style, tripod table stands next to him. He wears a blue *angarkha* (comparable to an example in white in the Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. 5875(IS)). Our sitter is portrayed in a relaxed manner, with his right foot resting on his left knee and one shoe casually on the floor. The artist has captured the sitter's personality as he gazes at the viewer, as though he were seated in a studio facing the camera lens. He appears to be wearing a white cotton *lungi* edged with a gold and silk *Paithani* tapestry band. In his lap he holds a *talwar*. Around his neck, he wears two pearl necklaces, each made up of multiple strands. He wears a royal turban with a large *sarpech* with a cluster of pearls hanging from the side.

This particular type of turban is associated with the Gaekwad, the Maratha rulers from Baroda in Gujarat (Paul 2006, p. 90, see portrait of Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekwad), but variations can sometimes also be seen on members of the Holkar family, the rulers of Indore. An early depiction of this turban style is worn by Madhu Rao Narayan, the Maratha Peshwa seated with Nana Fadnavis painted by James Wales in 1792, now in the Royal Asiatic Society in London (Llewellyn Jones 2008, fig. 15).

26

The Battle of Toprak Kale
Qajar Iran, c. 1840–60
Opaque pigments and gold on paper, backed by the newspaper *Perevodchik-Terjiman*, dated 21 May 1893
39 × 52 cm

At the top of the painting in *nasta'liq*:

جنک روم نواب نایب السلطنه با چوبان اغلی

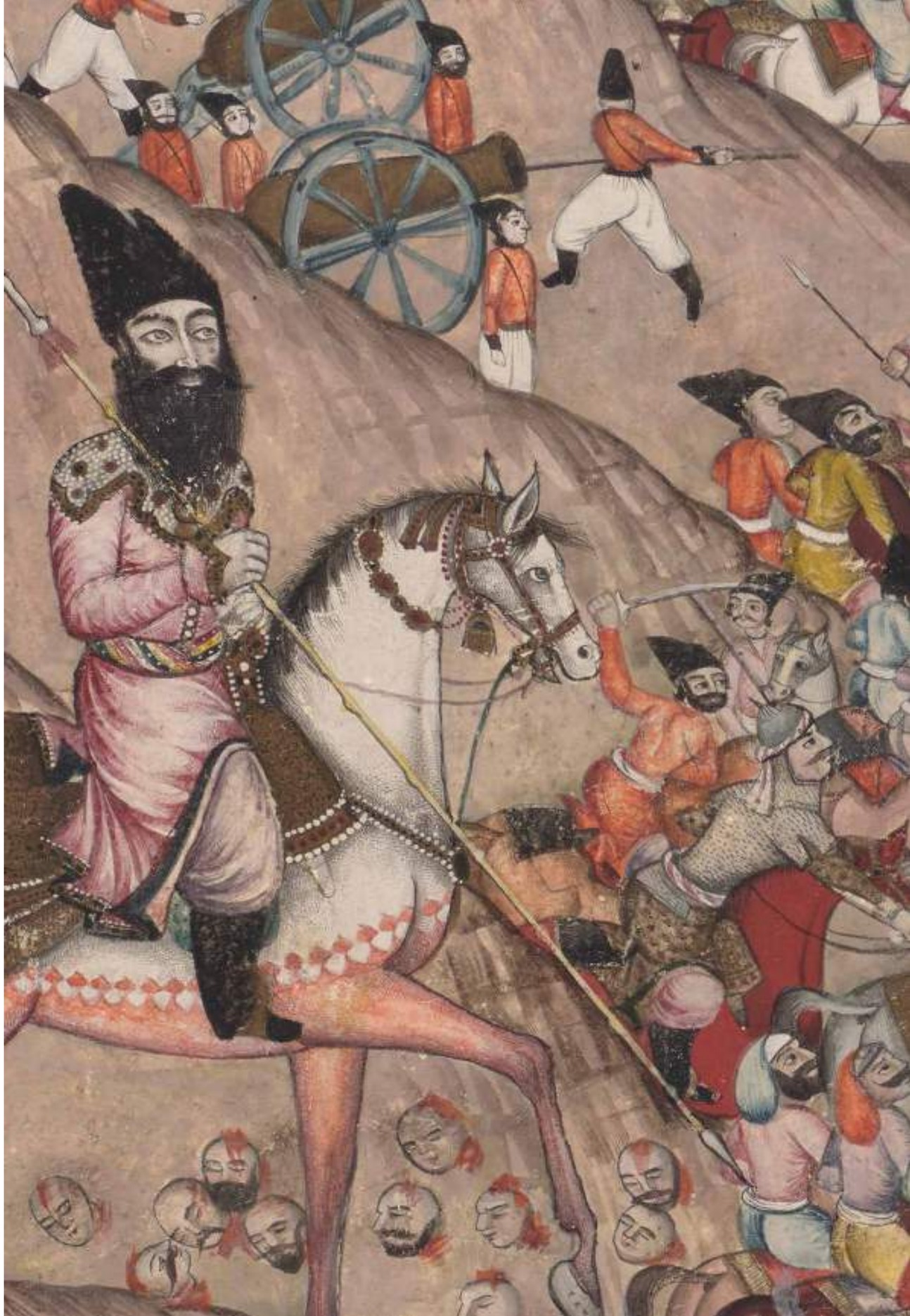
Nawwab Na'ib al-Saltana's battle in Rum with Chupan Ughli.

The inscription on this painting helps us identify the scene as the Battle of Toprak Kale (Eleşkirt in modern-day Türkiye) that took place in May 1822 between an Iranian army under the command of the crown prince and vice-regent (*na'ib al-saltana*) 'Abbas Mirza and an Ottoman army commanded by, among others, Mehmed Celaleddin Pasha of the Çapanoğlu dynasty, referred to derogatorily as "Chapan Ughli (Shepherd's Son)" in Persians sources.

The battle was one of the events in the Qajar-Ottoman war of 1821–23, which started when 'Abbas Mirza, who was also governor of the province of Azerbayjan, launched an attack on the Ottoman Empire. After 'Abbas Mirza withdrew to Tabriz following a successful campaign, a Turkish army attempted to retake the strategically important castle of Toprak Kale which was in the hands of a Persian garrison under the command of Husayn Khan, the Qajar governor of Erivan. A relieving Persian army, led by 'Abbas Mirza and including a company of Russian deserters, was able to defeat the numerically superior Turkish army (Williamson 2008, pp. 95–97).

A companion piece to this painting, in the same format and clearly executed by the same artist, showing 'Abbas Mirza leading the Qajar army against the Russians in Erivan, was sold in Christie's, 1 May 2025, lot 55. The subject and horizontal format of both paintings may suggest they were inspired by the large oil-paintings depicting Qajar military victories, that are mentioned by foreign visitors as hanging in Qajar royal palaces (Robinson 1993, pp. 185–87).

Large paintings on canvas of 'Abbas Mirza's successes against both the Russians and the Turks are known to have hung in buildings associated with



جنگ دوم نواب نایب السلطنه با چوبان اغلی

'Abbas Mirza in or near Tabriz; a battle between 'Abbas Mirza and Russian troops is one of two paintings in the Hermitage known to have been taken from 'Abbas Mirza's palace in Ujan near Tabriz to St. Petersburg in 1828 (Adamova 1998–99, pp. 66, 70–72; Diba 1998–99, cats. 51, 52). Likewise, the scholar, statesman, diarist and cousin of Nasir al-Din Shah, Husayn-Quli Mirza Salur 'Imad al-Saltana, wrote in his entry for 11 Dhu'l-Hijja 1324 (26 January 1907) that he saw two paintings on canvas by the artist Allahvirdi Afshar, one of 'Abbas Mirza's defeat of Chupan Ughli, the other of the subsequent route of the Ottoman army, in the government warehouses in Tabriz (Afshar 1390).

Despite the evident thematic links with paintings known to have been commissioned by 'Abbas Mirza, neither this painting nor its companion piece is in the naturalistic style of the paintings associated with the artists working for 'Abbas Mirza in Tabriz (Adamova 1998–99, p. 72). Here, rather, 'Abbas Mirza is depicted in conformity with early Qajar pictorial conventions as much larger than the other figures and on a finely caparisoned horse. Nor, however, do the paintings wholly conform to more conventional early Qajar styles. The battles are viewed from a high point that allows the depiction of receding rows of infantrymen far in the distance; while it is hard to find examples of the use of perspective in early Qajar painting, it was used frequently for the depiction of battles scenes executed during the reign of Muhammad Shah, including the well-known painting of Muhammad Shah's siege of Herat on a lacquer casket in Bern dated 1282/1865 (see Diba 1998–99, cat. 72). Here it is employed awkwardly but rather charmingly, and one wonders whether the painting represents an "updated" version of an earlier model, mixing earlier pictorial styles with a new vogue for battle scenes viewed from lofty perspectives.

Intriguingly, the back of the painting has been strengthened with newspaper cuttings from an issue of the bilingual Russian-Turkish newspaper, *Perevodchik-Terjiman*, dated 21 May 1893. Published in the Crimea between 1883 and 1918 the newspaper was printed both in Russian and "common Turkic", which was envisaged as a common literary language for Russia's Muslims (Tikhonova 2021).

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27

Interior View of the Central Octagonal Chamber of the Taj Mahal
Agra, for a British patron, c. 1816–20
Watercolour on wove paper. Watermark: J. Whatman [and below] Rous & Turner dated 1815
66.7 × 42.5 cm

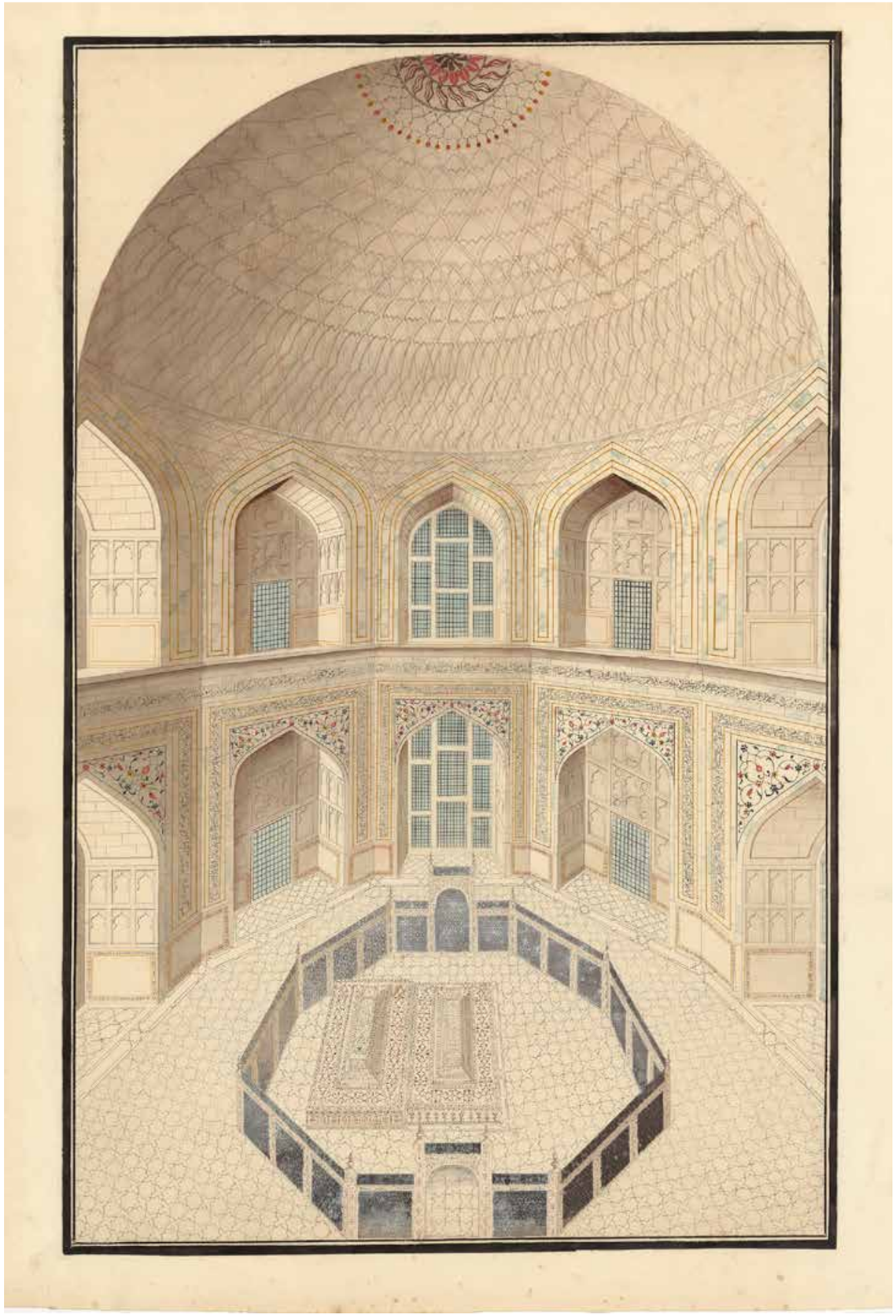
Provenance
Private collection, USA

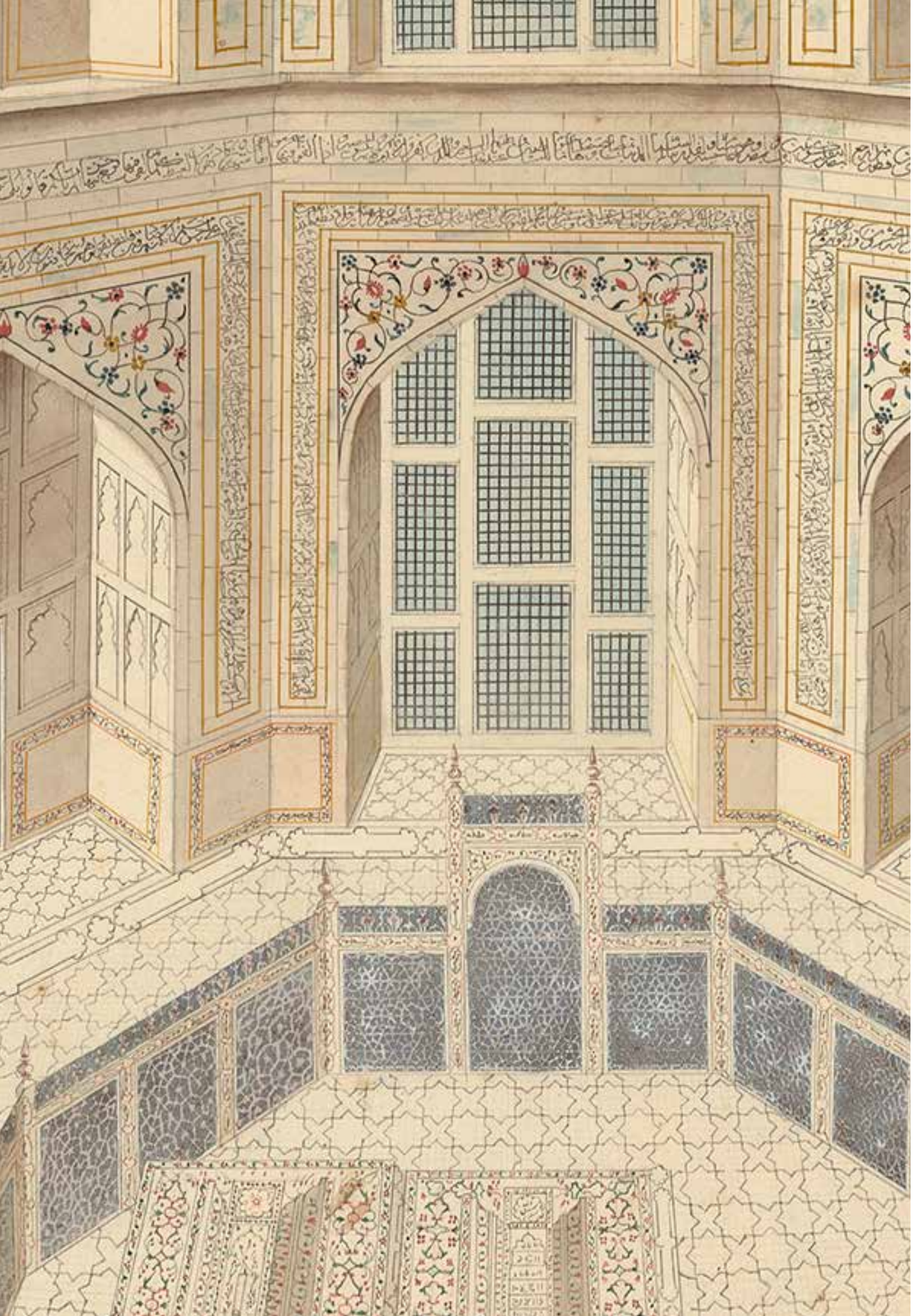
This unusual view of the inside of the Taj Mahal is taken from the south, from the upper storey of the central octagonal chamber. It is clearly meant to be made in the evening since light is entering strongly from the left or west side.

The cenotaph of Mumtaz Mahal occupies the exact centre of the chamber underneath the apex of the dome and aligned north-south as is usual with Muslim burials. She seems to have been buried below and her cenotaph finished and in position by 1632 (Koch 2006, pp. 98-100). Her husband, Shah Jahan, who was deposed by his third son Aurangzeb in 1658 and kept in captivity in the Agra fort, was laid to rest beside her in the crypt in 1666 and another cenotaph was positioned above exactly over the tomb. The cenotaphs and the screen mark the absolute apogee of the achievements of Mughal pietra dura artists.

This rare schematic view of the interior chamber that cleverly suggests the dome while removing those parts of it that would have caused these artists insuperable perspective difficulties was first painted in about 1810 (Archer 1972, p. 174). The dark background for the screen is usual in these drawings to make the marble *jali* panels stand out against the marble flooring. For a comparable drawing in the Victoria & Albert Museum (I.S.249-1961), see Koch 2006, fig. 228. For similar, more standard, drawings viewed from the floor rather than from on high, see Archer 1992, p. 143, and Pal 1989, fig. 52, and also Bautze 1998, no. 54.

For information on the use and popularity of these designs and other Mughal architecture in Agra, see Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, cat. 24.





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