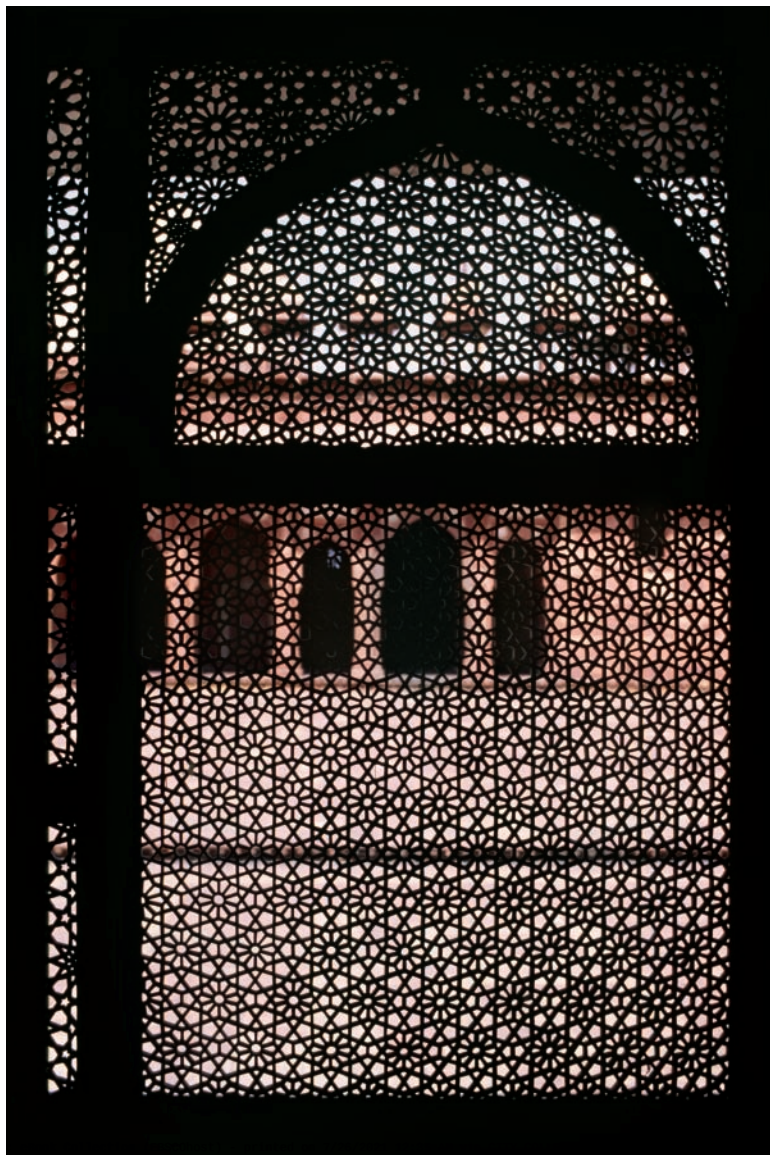






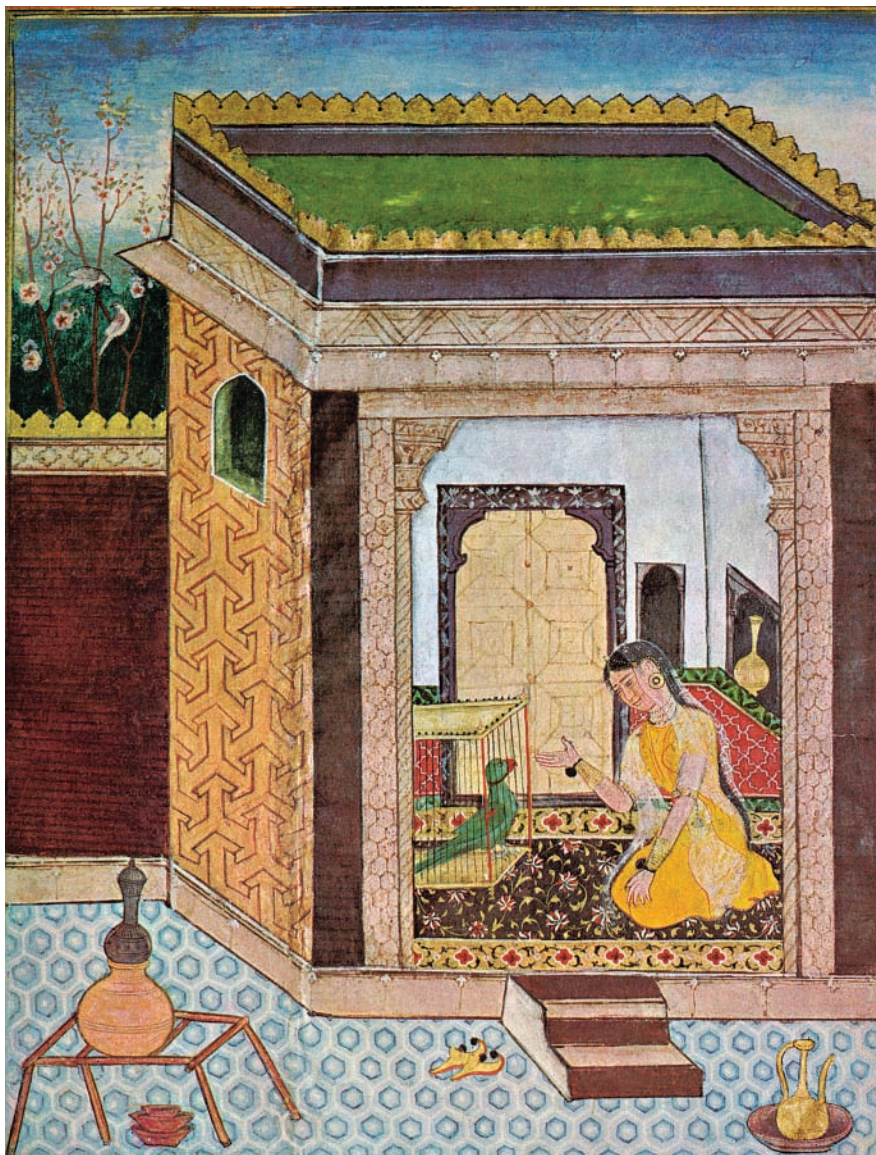
The movement is not without parallels, and the pictorial and interpretational play a great part in its exposition; there is, indeed, something of the Pre-Raphaelite about it. The materialism of today is to be checked by Indian spirituality. Arts and crafts are to flourish everywhere, centred upon the social organization of the village. India is to arise from the ashes of India. It might be claimed, therefore, that there could be no better time than the present for the publication of a survey of Indian Fine Arts,

Young girl with parrot

Page from a Manuscript of the *Tutinama*
(*Tales of a Parrot*), 1580-1585

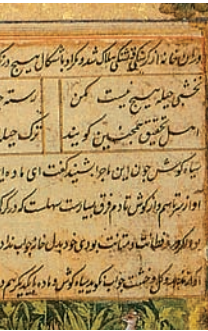
17 x 13 cm

Chester Beatty Library, Dublin





that the credit and loss of the exchange between the occidental and the oriental may be appraised. Indeed this nationalization of the subject has been set forth at length by certain authors. It is, however, in contradistinction to the spirit of true criticism and full appreciation. The opposition of Eastern spirituality to Western materialism is a generalisation without support, while the postulation of a metaphysical basis for any art is equally as sterile, and in fact as inconsequential,



Episode from the tale of *The Lynx and the Lion*

Niccolò Manucci, page from a Manuscript of the *Tutinama* (*Tales of a Parrot*), 1580, Akbar period, Gujarat, Patan
Opaque watercolour and ink, 31.9 x 22.9 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





as the postulation of the existence of eternal, immutable classical standards. Art cannot be localised, at least if the humanities upon which our culture is based have any meaning, and geographical differences should be no bar to appreciation, but rather an added attraction in these days, when for most of us our voyages of discovery do not exceed the bounds of the local time-table. It is, however, unfortunate that in the minds of many people the East has a certain

Murder in a landscape

c. 1580

Opaque watercolour and gold
orange border with gold-plated garland
margin adorned with polychrome flowers and gold
13.6 x 14.7 cm; folio, 32.5 x 29 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

نزد مردی مردی را میشد طاصح عنبر باز کرد اندکی دست میداری آن چنان





romantic but quite indefinite lure about it, which accentuates the unusual and leads to the substitution of curiosity for appreciation. Modern painting and sculpture provide a definite line of advance and logical precepts to an extent that almost makes academicians of many of the younger school. This process is directly comparable to that of the modern scientific method; modern art is indeed the result of methodical, aesthetic research. From the painting of Manet to that of Cezanne and the men of today,

Cockfight

Illustration from *'Aja 'ib al-makhlukat*
(Wonders of the creation) of Qazvinic, c. 1585
 Opaque watercolour, red border with gold chevrons
 margin with blue flowers, 10.4 x 20.1 cm
 Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





the story can only be told in terms of intellectual adventure and aesthetic discovery. The effect of the personal vision of the creators of modern art has been a widening of the circle of aesthetic interest and a revaluation of things unknown or unconsidered: Chinese painting and sculpture, Gothic sculpture, archaic Greek sculpture, African sculpture, the harmony of fine carpets, the virility of primitive design, and not least among these, Indian Art in all its branches.

Davalpa mounted on a man

Illustration from *'Aja 'ib al-makhlukat*
(Wonders of the creation) of Qazvinic, c. 1585
 Opaque watercolour and gold, border on blue paper
 margin with bouquets of colorful flowers, 20.6 x 11.6 cm
 Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris



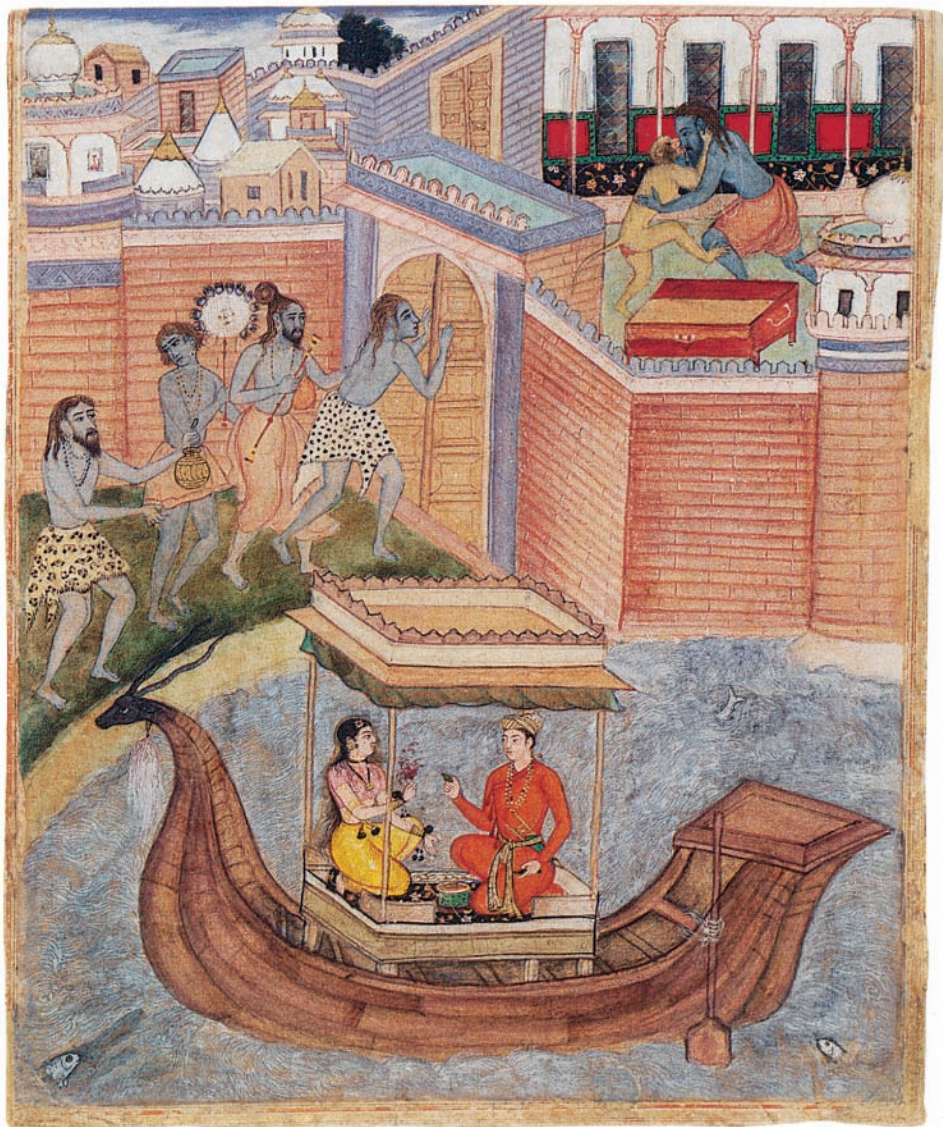


In the face of these riches, once despised and rejected, the dogmas of the past generations with all their complacency, intolerance, and ignorance seem wilful in their restriction and impoverishment of life. So vital and so well founded is this movement that I would choose, as the theme of a review of Indian Art, aesthetic discovery rather than archaeological discovery, and for support I would rely upon the word of living artists whose creative vision and



Episode from the tale of *The False Ascetic*

Page from a Manuscript of
the *Kathasaritsagara*, c. 1585-1590
Opaque watercolour and ink, 16.4 x 13.5 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





fellow appreciation provides the basis of a criticism of greater precision than archaeological logic or the ulterior ends and confused categories of evidence of those who would carry the discussion beyond the proper field of art. I cannot believe it is necessary or even desirable to prelude the vision of a work of art with many words. Nor can I accept as sound criticism a discourse which shifts the foundations of a true understanding of art from the visual into the literary or historical or metaphysical.

The arrival of Nanda and his family in Vrindavan

Page from a Manuscript of the *Harivamsha*
1586-1590

Akbar period, Gujarat, Patan
Opaque watercolour and ink, 40.8 x 30 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





I can but deplore the twisting awry of aesthetic criticism and appreciation to local and temporary ends, whatever the circumstances.

On 28 February 1910, the following declaration appeared in *The Times* above the signatures of thirteen distinguished artists and critics:

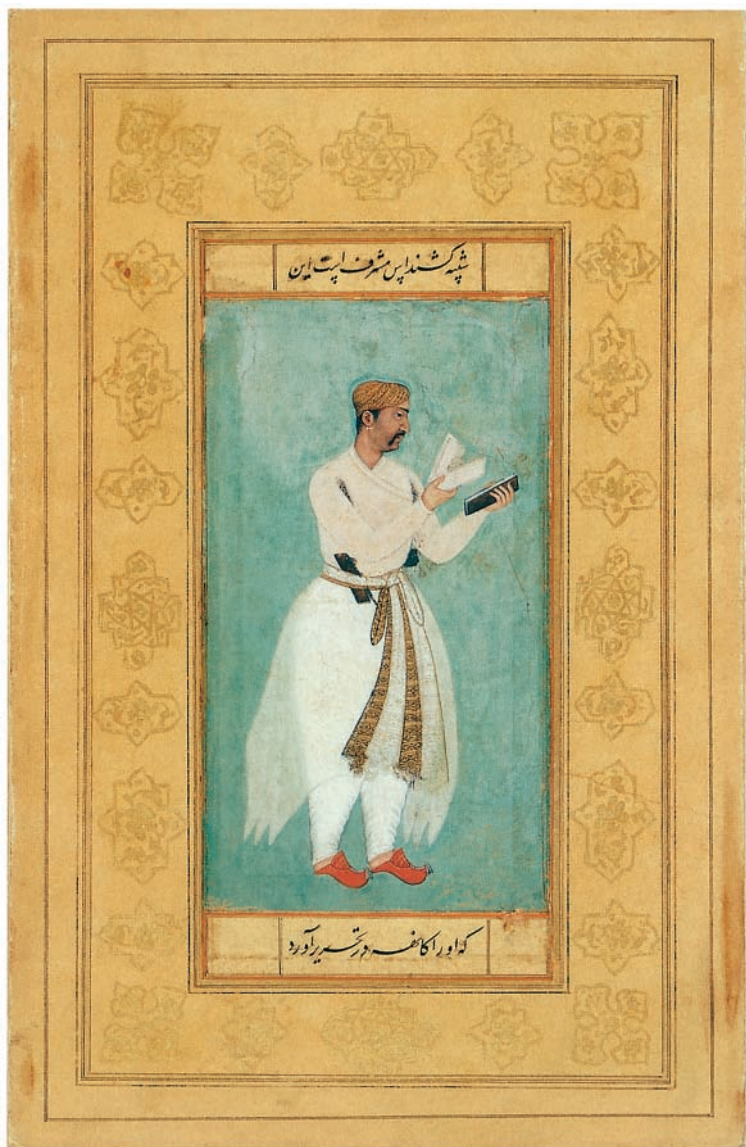


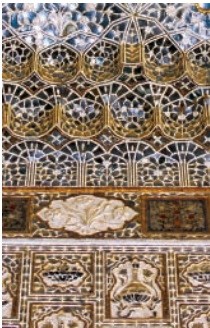
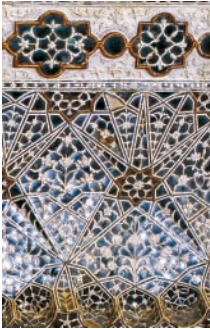
We, the undersigned artists, critics, and students of art... find in the best art of India a lofty and adequate expression of the religious emotion of the people and of their deepest thoughts on the subject of the divine. We recognize in the Buddha type of



Portrait of Kishn Das Tunwar

Kanha, page from the *Salim Album*
1590, Akbar period, Patan, Gujarat
Opaque watercolour and ink, 23.8 x 15.1 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





sacred figure one of the great artistic inspirations of the world. We hold that the existence of a distinct, a potent, and a living tradition of art is a possession of priceless value to the Indian people, and one which they, and all who admire and respect their achievements in this field, ought to guard with the utmost reverence and love. While opposed to the mechanical stereotyping of particular traditional forms, we consider that it is only in organic development from the national art of the past that the path of true progress is to be found.

Interior of the Sheesh Mahal (Hall of Mirrors)

1592, Akbar period

Minute mirror work inlaid in the ceiling
of the Winter Palace of Amer Fort, Amer





Confident that we here speak for a very large body of qualified European opinion, we wish to assure our brother craftsmen and students in India that the school of national art in that country, which is still showing its vitality and its capacity for the interpretation of Indian life and thought, will never fail to command our admiration and sympathy so long as it remains true to itself. We trust that, while not disdaining to accept whatever can be wholesomely assimilated from foreign sources,

Events during the Reign of the Abbasid Caliph al Mutasim

Page from a Manuscript of the *Traikh-i-Alfi*
1593-1594, Akbar period
Opaque watercolour and ink, 41.1 x 25.4 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond

و دعوتش بآنکه درین شبی که از نوکران صبح بخوابد و چون آن صورت را مشاهده نمود
در ساعت و ست و گردن آن بنار را بسته و کلاه و در کمرش آویخته بر سر نهاد و در وقت
تقریب نزد حاکم ارادان شخص برسد که ای بخت چرا چون حق کرده ای آن بنار که بی گناه کشت ایستاده
من را کشتن من خبر دارم اتفاقاً گذر من بآن ویرانه افتاد و او را کشته و بر من مقارن این حال
این مرد رسیده و مرا کشته بخت تو آورده ملک کشت و مرغ سبزی مردی کشته و اصل این چنین
نشان از بخت من را بی بی القصد حاکم بخت کرده و خبر نمود که این مرد را ببرد و در بازار بر او کشته
دستار می کنند که بی غرضی با او در بازار نشسته اند تا جایی که این بی گناه را بگردن کرده و بخت برسد که
بر او کشته می دهد که در آن روز که این طغی را در قلعه و در بازار کشت و کشته جوانی از نظر کارکنان
آمد که ای جلاد حیدر این صحران کمن از پیش ملک با زایم و حقیقت حال این عرض دارم که جلاد بخت
از این بی گناه داشت و آن چراغ زنده ملک آورده ملک است ایسا ملک است و بی گناه است
مردی که دوران در بازار کشته شده و قاتل این چنین است و او صدای خود را در دست مردی بخت
رسانیده ملک آن را که در بازار کشته شده و قاتل این چنین است و او صدای خود را در دست مردی بخت
و آن چراغ زنده که حقیقت حال این عرض قیام شهر با اطلاع نمود و در آنجا از آن خود پرسید که کشته
آن چراغ زنده را کشته چه کردی که کشته ای بسبب چه و در کسری از آن روز که از آنجا از آنجا رسید و در آنجا
پرسید و او را در آن روز که در آنجا رسید و او پرسید که برادرش را از دست که از آنجا
خود را در آن روز که در آنجا رسید و او پرسید که برادرش را از دست که از آنجا
بر سر بر روی من کشته و او را لعین خوانند و بخت و بخت آن کس را بی راکو بی بخت کرده و در آنجا کشته
بر سر بر روی من کشته است رسانیده



از درمات آن سرور علیه آرا این من ملک را که در آن لایع طبع است با بخت
این کارن که طبع قتل این ملک خونی که نوشید که غلامت بخورده و بر سر و بر سر و بر سر
خونی که نوشید که در آن روز که در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته
کشتن من را کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته
صدا برین طایفه را که در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته و در آنجا کشته





it will jealously preserve the individual character which is an outgrowth of the history and physical conditions of the country, as well as of those ancient and profound religious conceptions which are the glory of India and of all the Eastern world.



This declaration was directly caused by a paper read before the Royal Society of Arts by Sir George Birdwood, the chronicler of Indian industrial arts. As a matter of fact, all that was then said had already appeared in print thirty years before,



Hulagu Khan destroys the Fort at Alamut

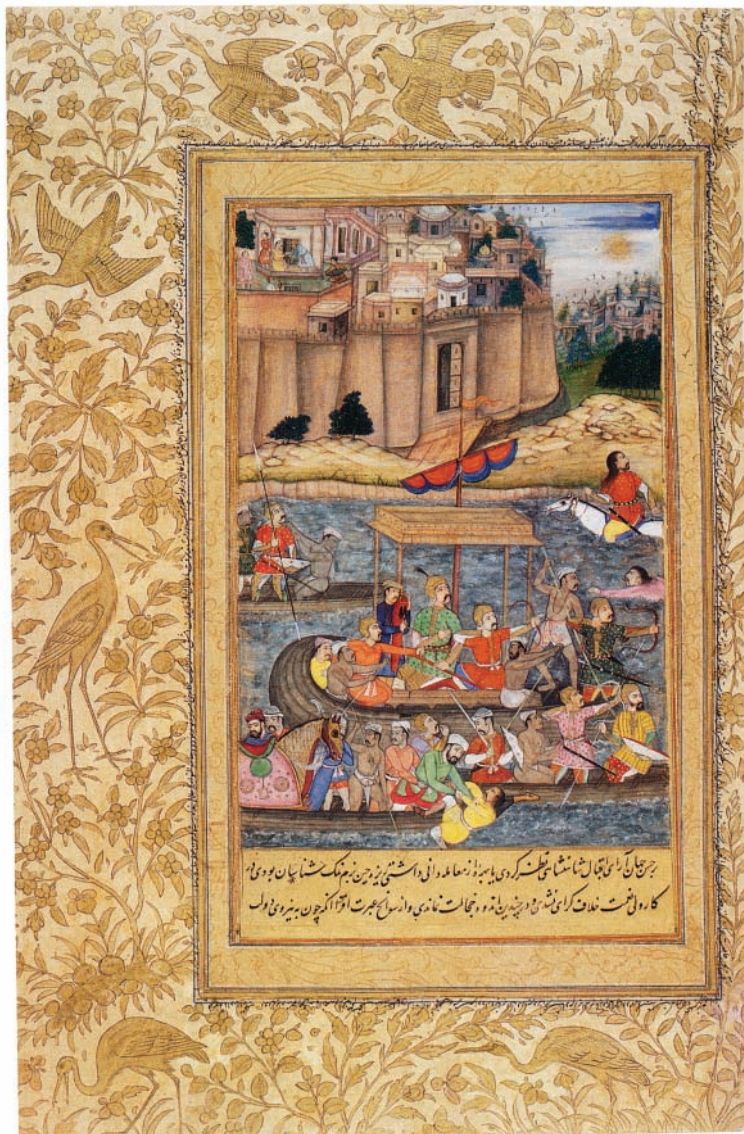
Basawan (Designer) and Nand Gwaliori (Colourist)
Page from a Manuscript of the *Chinghiznama*
1596, Akbar period
Opaque watercolour and ink, 38.4 x 24.9 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond



but the moment was not then ripe for the acceptance of the challenge. Birdwood can in no way be accused of lack of sympathy with Indian life or Indian things. A stylistic analysis of the crafts of modern India is illuminating with regard to one's attitude to the country itself, for one is forced to acknowledge the predominance of the Islamic and especially of the Persian culture of the Mughal court. Except in their everyday household form, pottery and metalwork are purely Islamic.

Muzaffar Khan quells a revolt at Hajipur

Page from a Manuscript of the *Akbarnama*
1596-1597, Akbar period
Opaque watercolour and ink, 12.7 x 19 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond



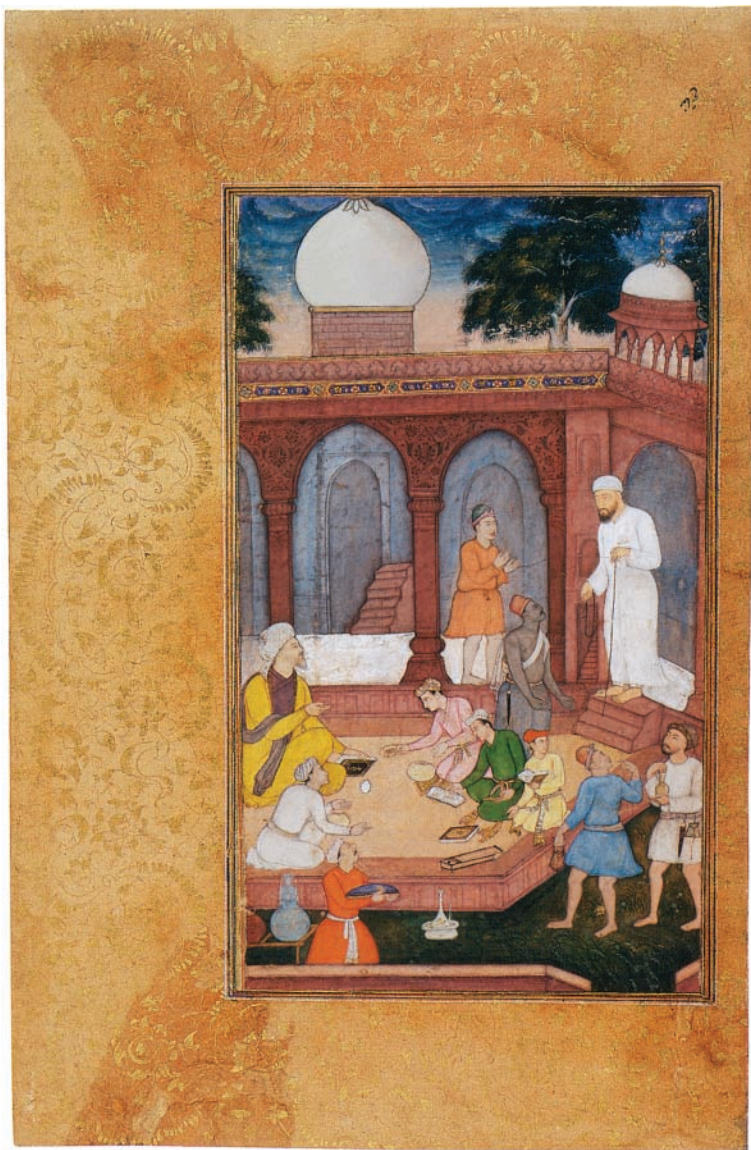


Textiles, especially prints and brocades, are very largely Persian in design, although the Indian strength of imagination and purity of colour are evident. Certain forms of textiles are, however, purely Indian, the darn-stitch Phulkaris of the northwest and certain tied-and-dyed and warp-dyed forms. Only in jewellery has the Indian tradition been wholly preserved, in the beadwork of the villages as well as in the enamels of Jaipur. Birdwood's love of all this delicate and colourful craftsmanship, and of the complex,



Visit of a Sufi to a school

1595-1600, Akbar period
Opaque watercolour, 33.3 x 21.7 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





changeable life of which it is a part, is expressed in many passages from his pen of very great beauty. The arts of Ancient and Medieval India were outside his field, and his criticism of them is not deeply considered and purely personal.

The popularization of Indian art has been mainly the work of Dr Ananda Coomaraswamy and E. B. Havell. To a certain extent their methods of exposition agree, the vein being interpretational, with a stressing of the literary.



Zaal pleads with the Simurgh to save his son Rustam

Miskin (attributed to), Illustration of the *Shahnameh*
(*Book of Kings*) by the Persian poet Firdousi
c. 1595-1605, Jahangir period
Gouache and gold, 27 x 18 cm; folio, 40.3 x 27.3 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





For Dr Coomaraswamy, “all that India can offer to the world proceeds from her philosophy”, a state of “mental concentration” (yoga) on the part of the artist and the enactment of a certain amount of ritual being postulated as the source of the “spirituality” of Indian art. The weakness of this attitude lies in its interweaving of distinct lines of criticism, form being dressed out in the purely literary with the consequent confusion of aesthetic appreciation with religious and



Emperor Humayun

17th century

Opaque watercolour and gold, gilded edges and red wash,
margin of sandblasted gold, 20.5 x 12 cm; folio, 45 x 32 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





other impulses. It is also historically ill-founded, for the sentiment and philosophy out of which the web is spun are the products of medieval India, as an examination of the texts quoted will show; many of the southern authorities quoted can only be classed as modern. The increasingly hieratic art of medieval and modern India, especially in the south, is doubtless closely knit with this literary tradition. But the literary tradition is not the source of the art, for iconography presupposes icons.

Cheik Abu Said Abil-Khair

early 17th century

Gray wash, heightened with white watercolour on stock paper
border with green garland, a gold and blue pattern
and golden foliage, margin of sandblasted gold

11.1 x 6 cm; folio, 36 x 25 cm

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





The technical formulae of the sastras resulted in a standardisation of production in spite of which genius, which knows no bonds, asserted itself. A further element is apparent in the recent discussion of Indian art. Aesthetically we are not at all concerned with the sub-continent that is known as India or its peoples, but our curiosity must be strong as to its past and future. The pageantry of Indian history is as glorious as that of any country in the world.

Qur'an

early 17th century

Cream paper and fine lacquer binding, 335 x 220 mm



Artistically it falls into two main periods, the first of which, ending with the Muslim conquest, is an epic in itself.

Traditions have died and the symbols that embodied them have died with them, but regret for the out-worn creed is ineffectual. New traditions and new symbols are surely in the making. Proteus and Triton have become empty names, but the sea remains. Nothing is lost but a dream, or rather the means of expressing a dream.



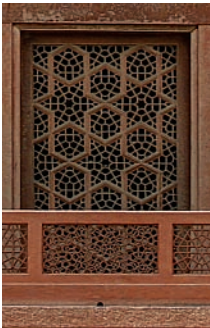
Crossing the Ganges by Akbar

Ikhlas and Madhou, c. 1600

33.4 x 20.1 cm

Victoria and Albert Museum, London





Indian religious history must be unfolded against a background of primitive conflict and superstition. The Vedas, in spite of their antiquity, cannot be accepted as the sole source of religious thought in India, or as anything but a critical and highly selective representation of this unvoiced and necessarily formless background. This relationship between Hinduism and the primitive, between the formulated philosophy of the schools and the worship and propitiation born of the vague fears and desires of masses, is present throughout the history of India,

Ornate façade of the Akbar Mausoleum (detail)

1600-1613, Akbar/Jahangir period
Black and white marble inlay, Sikandra, Agra, Uttar Pradesh





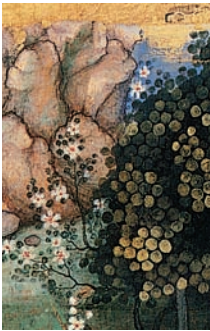
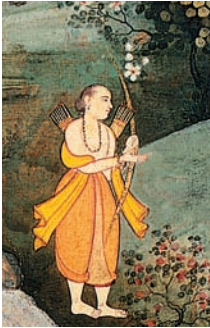
both religious and political. The Atharva Veda was not known to the early Buddhist writers but its practices and beliefs cannot be separated from the more altruistic and poetical polytheism of the less popular, more orthodox (but not more ancient) collections. In the same way the powers and manifestations of the *puranas* and epics are not necessarily modern because they do not appear in the Veda; in a sense they are more ancient, being native to the soil. Vedic thaumaturgy and

Dara Shikoh (?)

17th century

Opaque watercolour and gold, 15.4 x 8.8 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





theosophy were never the faith of India. The countless mother goddesses and village guardians of the South lie closer to the real heart of Indian religion, a numberless pantheon, superficially identified with Hinduism but radically distinct and unchanged.

Among these lesser gods that keep their place on the fringes of the orthodox are to be found spirits of the earth and of the mountain; the Four Guardians Gods of the Quarters with Vessavana-Kuvera at their head; Gandharvas,

Rama and Lakshmana Meet

Page from a Manuscript of the *Ramayana*
Mysore variant of south Indian style
1600, Akbar period, Gujarat, Patan
Opaque watercolour and ink, 27.6 x 16.5 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





heavenly musicians; Nagas, the snake-people who have their world beneath the waters of streams, but who sometimes are identified with the tree spirits; and Garudas, half men-half birds who are the deadly foes of the Nagas. These diminished godlings must be regarded as the last remnant of a whole host of forgotten powers, once mighty and to be placated, each in its own place. Strange beings of another sphere, they could not wholly be passed over either by Hindu or Buddhist.

European Scene

1600, Akbar period, Patan, Gujarat
Opaque watercolour and ink, 33.5 x 20.8 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond

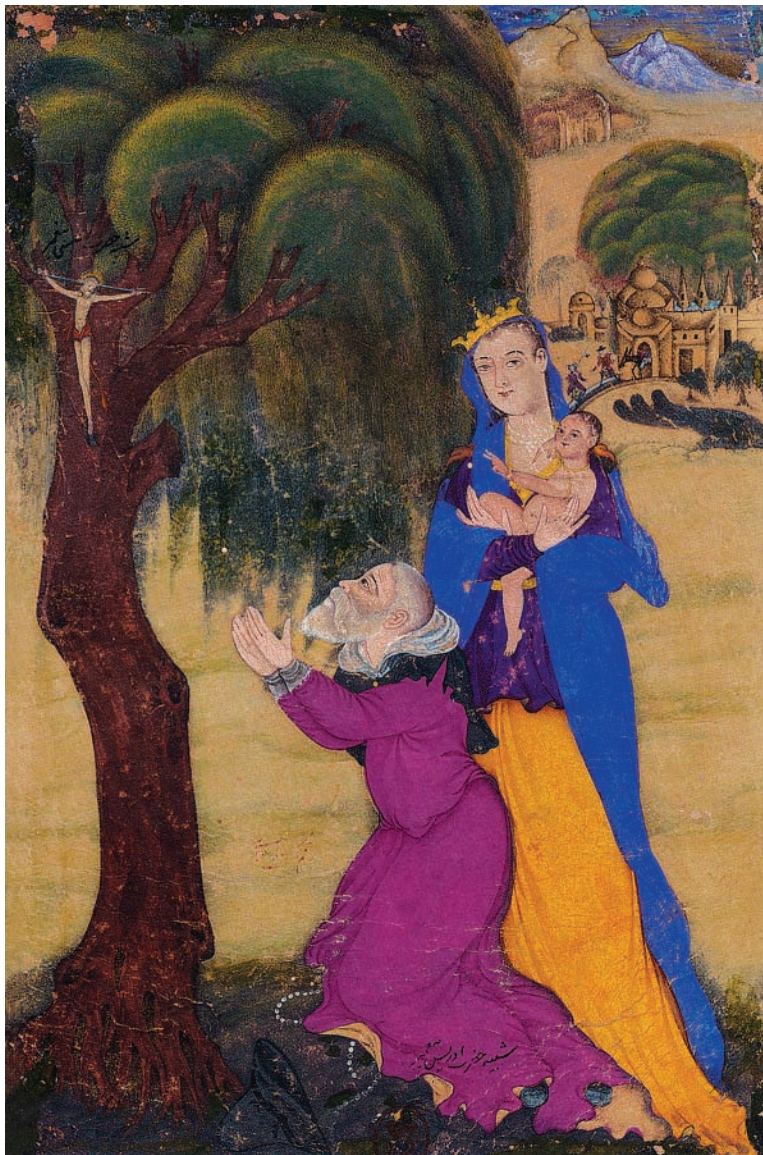




Vessavana-Kuvera appears on one of the pillars of the Bharhut railing, as does also Sirima Devata (goddess of fortune). The latter also received acknowledgement at the hands of the compilers of the Satapatha Brahmana who were forced to invent a legend to account for her existence. In the Taittiriya Upanishad she is again fitly mentioned in company with the moon and the sun and the earth. At Sanchi, she is to be recognized exactly as she is still represented in painted and gilt marble at Jaipur, seated upon lotus, lustrated by two elephants.

The Prophet Idris (Enoch)

c. 1600-1620, Akbar period
Opaque watercolour and gold, 19.5 x 12.5 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





The Maha-samaya Sutta describes a gathering of all the great gods to pay reverence to the Buddha in the Great Forest at Kapilavatthu. Dhatarattha, king of the East, Virulhaka, king of the South, Virupakkha, king of the West, and Kuvera, king of the North arrive with their Yaksha host and all their vassals. The Nagas come from Nabhasa, Vesali, Tacchaka, and Yamuna, among them Eravana. Their enemies, the twice-born Garudas, too, are there and also the Asuras,



Prince with a snack

c. 1605-1610, Allahabad

Opaque watercolour and gold on stock paper, 18 x 10.7 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





dwellers in the ocean. Fire, Earth, Air, and Water are present, and the Vedic gods, and lastly the powers of Mara (demon of temptation) who bids creation rejoice at his own defeat at the Buddha's hands.

Another list of the same description, but possibly earlier, is to be found in the Atanatiya. Both lists are, patently, the outcome of a priestly attempt to bring these hundred and one strange spirits and godlings within the sphere of Buddhist teaching,



Scholar in a garden,
surrounded by servants and musicians

1605-1610, Allahabad
Opaque watercolour and gold, 13 x 8 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





by representing them as gathered in hosts at the Buddha's feet. The group of Yakshas, Yakshinis, and Devatas carved upon the stone pillars of the *stupa* railing at Bharhut fulfil exactly the same function. They are manifestly earth-born and possess something of the delicate beauty of all forest creatures. They seem beneficent enough, but their manifestation here is admittedly chosen to serve Buddhist ends. Like all primitive powers, they are exacting in their demands and when neglected or provoked their anger is implacable and cruel.

Prince Khusrau hunting

Basawan or Manohar (?) (attributed to), c. 1606
 Opaque watercolour and gold, 11.9 x 5.5 cm
 Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





They are adorned with earthly jewels to represent the treasures they have in their gift, but are to be more closely identified with the trees under which they stand and the forest flowers they hold.

This cult of trees and tree spirits has a long history. In the sculptures of the early period (2nd-1st century BCE) the Buddhas are represented only by symbols, among which are their distinctive trees. Gautama attained enlightenment seated beneath the Asvattha or pipal tree. In the Atharvaveda it is said that the gods of the third heaven are seated

Calligraphic album page (Nasta'liq script)

Abd al-Rahim, 1606-1607, Jahangir period, Lahore, Punjab
Opaque watercolour and ink, 34 x 22.2 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





under the Asvattha and it may also be the “tree with fair foliage” of the Rigveda under which Yama and the blessed are said to pass their time. In the Upanishads, the tree spirits have definitely materialised. They, like all things, are subject to rebirth. If the spirit leaves, the tree withers and dies, but the spirit is immortal. In the Jatakas, these tree spirits play a great part, being worshipped with perfumes, flowers, and food. They dwell in many kinds of trees but the banyan seems most popular.



Kakubha ragini

c. 1610

Opaque watercolour, 15.9 x 11 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

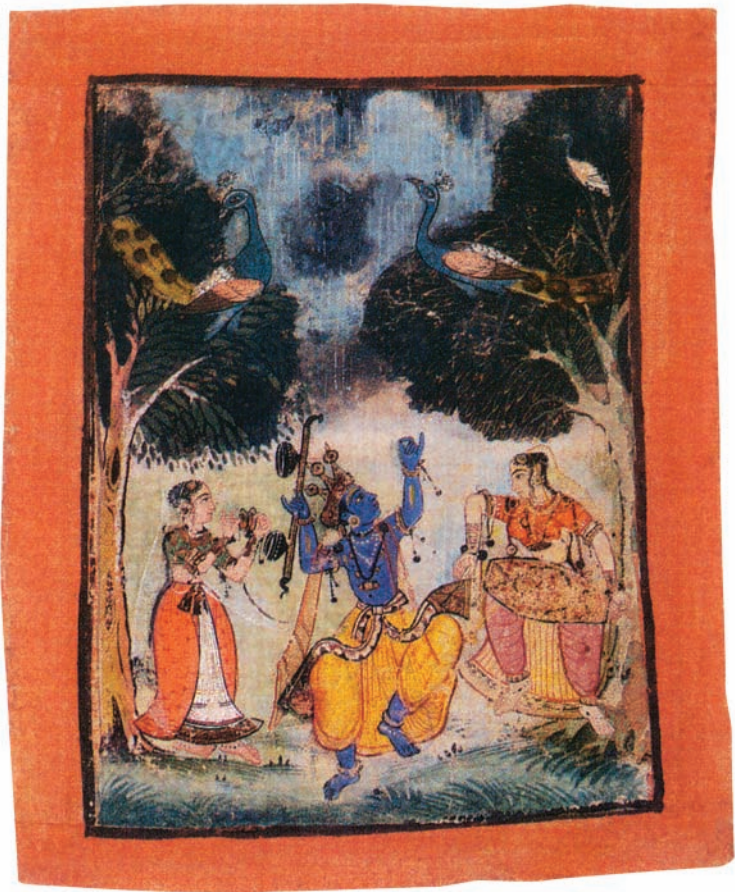




The scarlet-flowered silk-cotton tree and the sal tree as well as the pipal retain their sanctity today. The goddess of the sal is worshipped as giver of rain by the Oraons of Chota Nagpur, and in South Mirzapur the Korwas place the shrine of Dharti Mata under its branches. In the Jatakas more than once animal and even human sacrifices are spoken of in connection with tree worship. Today the slaughter of roosters and goats is added to the more usual offering of flowers and sweetmeats, in extreme cases of propitiation.

Megha Raga

Page from a *Ragamala Series*, 1610
 Opaque watercolour, 22.5 x 18.4 cm
 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





The character and functions of these deities correspond closely to those of the mother goddesses of Southern India. Among these are Mariamma, goddess of smallpox, Kaliamma, of beasts and forest demons, Huliamma, a tiger goddess, Ghantalamma, who wears bells, and Mamillamma, she who sits beneath the mango tree.



However, it is usually made plain that these are but different names for the one great goddess. In Hindu hands, this female pantheon appears as the Ashta Sakti or eight female powers.



Fight of two elephants

Farrukh Chela (attributed to), c. 1610-1615
Gray wash, 16.9 x 26.8 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





But a more primitive group is that of the Sapta Kannigais or seven virgins, tutelary deities of temple tanks. In Mysore, too, a similar group of seven sister goddesses, vaguely identified with the Shivait mythology is found. However, they and all the mother goddesses are distinguished from the true gods of Hinduism by the fact that they are acknowledged to be local in their influence, warding off or inflicting calamities of various kinds, but strictly limited in their sphere of action. Still more limited are the powers of temple tanks,

Assembly of six Muslim doctors

Manohar (attributed to), from a dispersed
Manuscript of the *Gulistan* of Saadi, c. 1610-1615
Opaque watercolour, 8 x 12 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





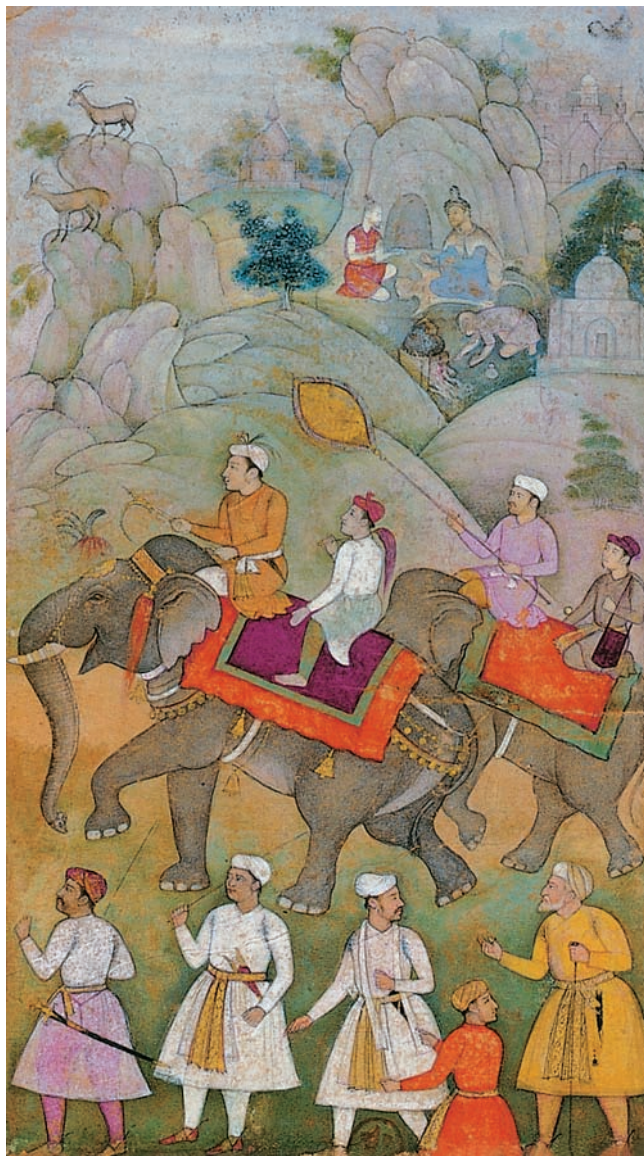
trees, and groves which periodically are alternately propitiated and exorcized, but are, as a whole, unsubstantial in personality and short lived.

It is against this complex background of creed and culture that Indian philosophy and Indian art, and all things Indian, must be viewed. Here lies philosophy, the origin of the lovely treatment of flower and fruit at the hands of Indian sculptors and painters, and also of the imagination that kindled their vision and gave such dynamic power to their designs.

Akbar goes hunting

c. 1610-1620, Jahangir period

Opaque watercolour, gold, and silver, 18.6 x 10.4 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





Indian philosophy begins with Vedic speculations, or rather questionings as to existence and the creation. The unformulated philosophy of the Upanishads sprang from these and from it the pantheistic Vedanta system was evolved. As a foil to this existed from early times the atheistic Sankhya system, upon the reasoning of which Buddhism and Jainism were founded. At the root of everything lies *adrishta* (the unseen), that is, the acceptance of metempsychosis and a cycle of existences (*samsara*)

Persian on a hunt

c. 1610-1620

Opaque watercolour, orange border with gold chevrons, margin with pink flowers, 21 x 12 cm; folio, 30 x 20 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





modified only by action (*karma*). At the root is ignorance (*avidya*). From ignorance comes desire, which leads to action, so the wheel revolves within the wheel. The Vedanta doctrine from the Upanishads taught the absolute identity of the individual soul with that of the universe: "That is the Eternal in which space is woven and which is interwoven with it... There is no other seer, no other hearer, no other thinker, no other knower..." From this identification of the mortal,

Indian dignitary, perhaps Raja Suraj Singh

c. 1615

Opaque watercolour and gold, 11 x 6 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





limited self with the eternal and universal sum of all things arose the idea of the illusion (*maya*) of the world of sensual experience. Only when the illusion of experience ceases, as in dreamless sleep, can the lesser self reunite with the universal self. This implied duality is in fact itself an illusion. Desire and action are inherent in such an illusion and the consequence is *samsara*. But knowledge disperses the illusion. Whoever knows this: 'I am Brahma',

Persian noble and musician

c. 1615-1620

Opaque watercolor and gold on stock paper, 17.6 x 15 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





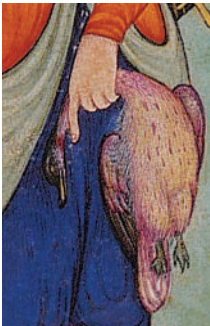
becomes the All. Even the gods are not able to prevent him from becoming it, for he becomes their Self.

The Sankhya system is atheistic and dualistic, admitting matter and the individual soul as eternal but essentially different. In the absoluteness of this division lies release. The soul, being removed from all matter, ceases to be conscious, and the bondage to pain (in which pleasure is included) is ended.

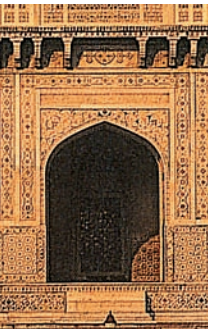
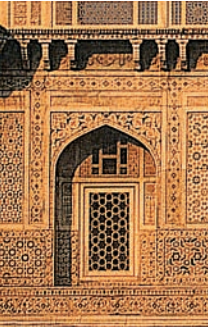
Persian falconer

c. 1620-1630

Opaque watercolour and gold, 15.3 x 7.3 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris







Both Buddhism and Jainism presuppose the existence of the Sankhya philosophy. But it is evident that the sixth century BC, when both Gautama and Vardhamana lived and taught, was a period of extensive mental activity of an extremely sophisticated kind. The Brahmajala Sutta mentions Eternalists, Non-Eternalists, Semi-Eternalists, Fortuitous originists, and Survivalists, and also certain recluses and Brahmins who, as dialecticians, are typified as “eel wrigglers”.

I'timad-ud-Daulah Mausoleum

1622-1628, Jahangir period
White marble, semi-precious stone decorations
and pietra dura inlay
Agra, Uttar Pradesh





Buddhism is as much in revolt against this mental complexity as against the ritual complexity of the Brahman priest-craft. With regard to generalities its position is agnostic. The Three Marks of Impermanence, Pain, and Lack of Individuality must be considered as a practical summary of the characteristics of life. Upon these the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths, the essence of Buddhism, is founded: suffering exists; ignorance and desire are its causes; release is possible; the means are the Eight Points of Doctrine – right knowledge,

Ornate façade of the I'timad-ud-Daulah Mausoleum

1622-1628, Jahangir period

White marble, semi-precious stone decorations
and pietra dura inlay
Agra, Uttar Pradesh





right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right living, right endeavour, right mindfulness, and right meditation. Throughout the teaching uncertain, empirical opinion (*ditthi*) is set apart from true wisdom (*panna*). Above all, the cultivation and regulation of the will is stressed in an entirely new way.

Lastly, as against the changing, foundationless illusions of the unregulated personal life in a universe that can only be described in terms of change,

Three red tulips

c. 1625-1630

Opaque watercolour, border of red and gold threads
red paper margin, 11 x 7.6 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





the Buddhist doctrine (*dharma*) is held out as being well-founded in time or rather in human experience. It is described as an ancient well-trodden path, a claim that paves the way to the conception of not one Buddha but many Buddhas. At Bharhut and Sanchi the seven Buddhas of the canon are all found, symbolized by their respective trees.

This doctrine of wise renunciation was preached by Gautama, a prince of the Sakya clan, who renounced his worldly heritage in pursuit of truth.

Couple of imperial pigeons

c. 1620-1630

Opaque watercolour and gold, 21.7 x 14.3 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





Much of the adverse criticism which Buddhism has been subjected to has been due to a misunderstanding of *nirvana*, the goal of all Indian speculation. Buddhism has had a complex history. Divided into two main sects, that of the Theravada and that of the Mahayana, and changed beyond recognition, it exists no longer in the land of its origin. The Jain faith preached by Vardhamana, a contemporary and therefore rival of Gautama, still persists in India. He, too, was of the Kshattriya caste, and renouncing his birth-right,

Two butterflies on grass

Fathullah (?)

Opaque watercolour, border with beige garland
and golden leaves, 13.7 x 9 cm

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





eventually attained Wisdom, appearing as the leader of the Nirgrantha ascetics. According to Jain tradition, Vardhamana, or Mahavira, as he came to be known, was the twenty-fourth of a series of *jinas* or conquerors of the world. Like Buddhism, the Jain faith opposes the exclusiveness of Hinduism by a claim to universality. Like Buddhism, it is founded upon the teaching and achievement of Right Faith, Right Knowledge, and Right Action. However, unlike Buddhism,

Purple and white flower

c. 1625-1630

Opaque watercolour, blue paper border, 13.8 x 8 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





asceticism is greatly stressed even to the point of voluntary death by the refusal of nourishment on the part of those who have attained the highest knowledge, the *kevala jñāna*. From an early date two Jain sects have existed, the Digambara, who regard nudity as indispensable to holiness, and the Svetambara or “white-clothed”, who do not. Besides these two bodies of ascetics, the faith is extended to a large body of laity, who are represented in the history of Indian art, by many sculptures dedicated in the Kushan era, and by the magnificent medieval temples at Mount Abu,

A Mughal Prince

1625-1630

Opaque watercolour and ink, 23.7 x 21.3 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond





Girnar, and Satrunjaya. Like the Buddhists, the Jains founded many monasteries. The worship of stupas was also included in their rites.

The cult of the Upanishads and its forest-dwelling adherents is described in the Agganna Sutta:



They making leaf-huts in woodland spots, meditated therein. Extinct for them the burning coal, vanished the smoke, fallen lies the pestle and mortar; gathering of an evening for the evening meal,



Ram

c. 1625

Opaque watercolour and gold
border with blue garland and golden leaves
orange-red margin with golden flower seedlings
13.1 x 17.6 cm; folio, 32.5 x 29 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





they go down into the village and town and royal city, seeking food. When they have gotten food back again in their leaf-huts they meditate.

But from forest life and meditation many sank to a mendicant life on the outskirts of the towns and to being mere repeaters of the sacred books. Such were the Hindus of the Buddha's day.

Modern Hinduism is divided into two main cults, Vaishnavism and Shaivism. From the point of view of Indian art the early period is almost entirely Buddhist,



Flowers of two colours, blue and red

c. 1625-1630

Opaque watercolour, border of red paper, 13.3 x 8.5 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





while the Gupta period, and the succeeding medieval period are Hindu, the sculpture of the latter period being radically based upon Hindu iconography.

Rudra, the storm god of the Vedas, is made known by many epithets. He is called Girisa (lying on a mountain), Kapardin (wearer of tangled locks), and Pasupatih (lord of cattle). When appeased he is known as Sambhu or Samkara (the benevolent), and as Shiva (the auspicious), but he remains lord of the powers of the universe and is to be feared as well as loved. Yet the element of *bhakti*, of

Two Portuguese during conversation

c. 1630

Opaque watercolour and gold, 17.6 x 10.5 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





personal adoration and willing self-surrender to the deity, is not wanting in the worship of the Great Lord as unfolded in the later Upanishads.

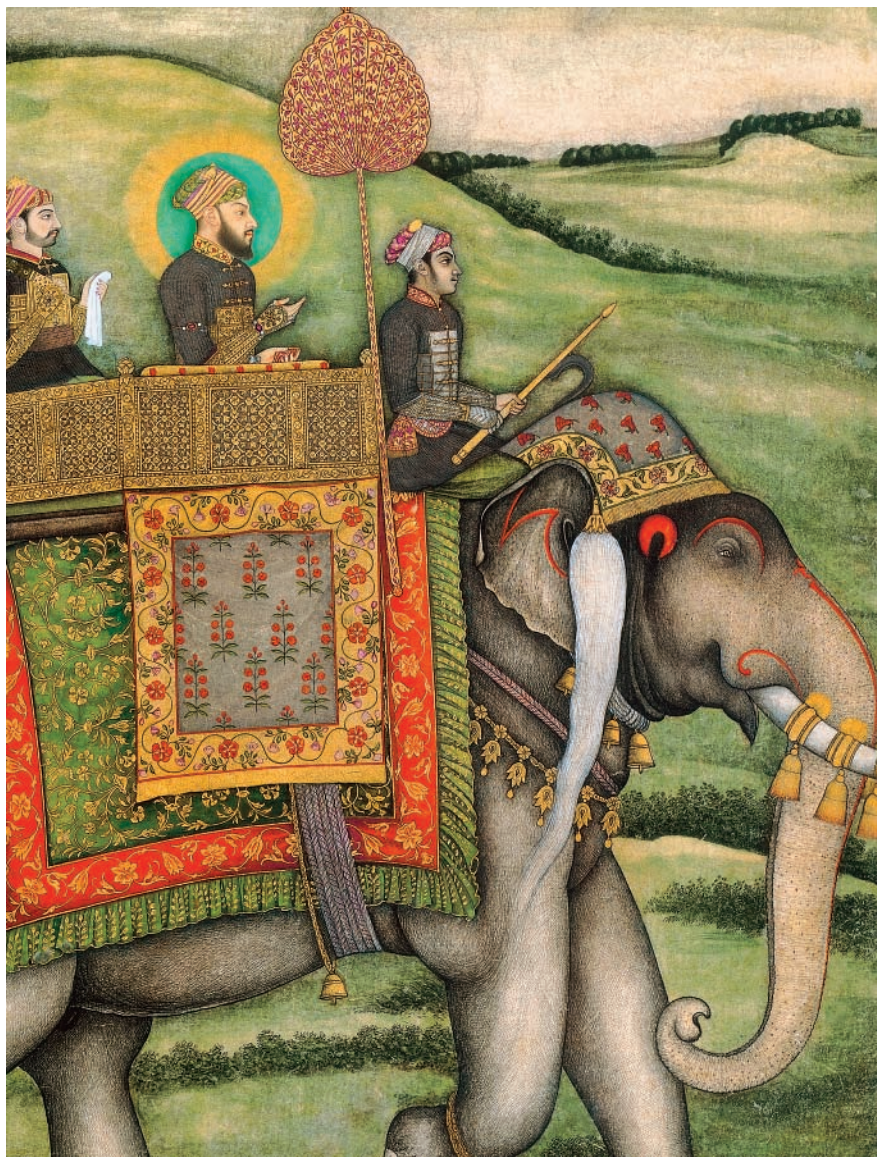
In a lesser aspect Shiva is “lord of spirits” (*bhutas*) and his rites are connected with snake worship. In his worship the central object is the phallus. The Shiva linga does not seem to have been known to Patanjali, nor does it appear on the coins of Wema-Kadphises on the reverse of which the god is represented, holding the trident,

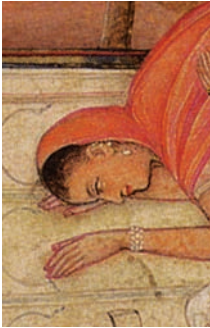


Bahadur Shah I (?) on an elephant

Detail of a page from an unknown manuscript
17th century

Opaque watercolour, 29.6 x 24 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





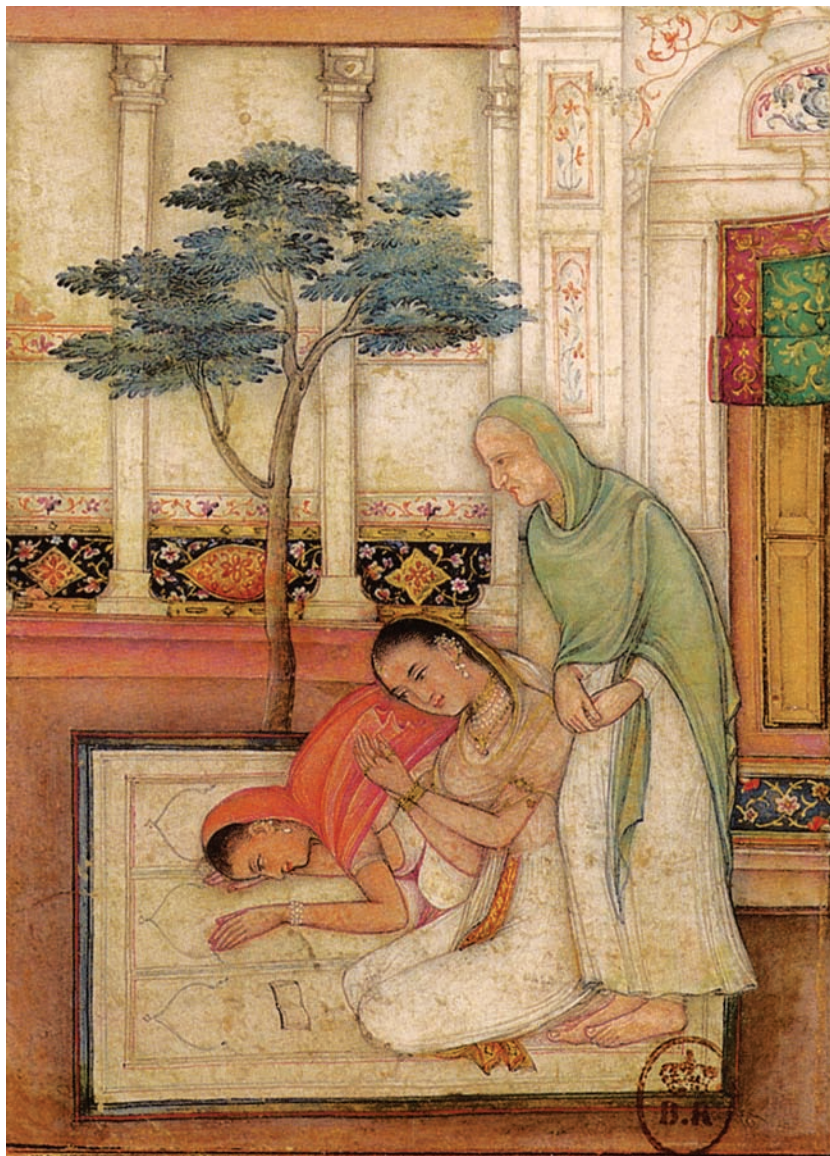
with the bull, Nandi, in the background. In the Mahabharata, Shiva is represented as dwelling in the Himalaya with his hosts. His vehicle is the bull and his consort is variously known as Uma, Parvati, Durga, and Kali. Having completed the creation, he turned yogi and the phallus became his emblem.

The earliest lingas existing do not pre-date the Kushan period. They are of the kind known as Mukha-lingas with one or more faces at the top of the member.

Muslim women in prayer

c. 1630-1640

Opaque watercolour and gold, 10.7 x 7.8 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





One of the earliest iconographical representations of the god is the Dakshinamurti (Guru-Shiva) in relief on one side of the Vishnu Temple at Deogarh which may be dated in the second half of the fifth century CE.

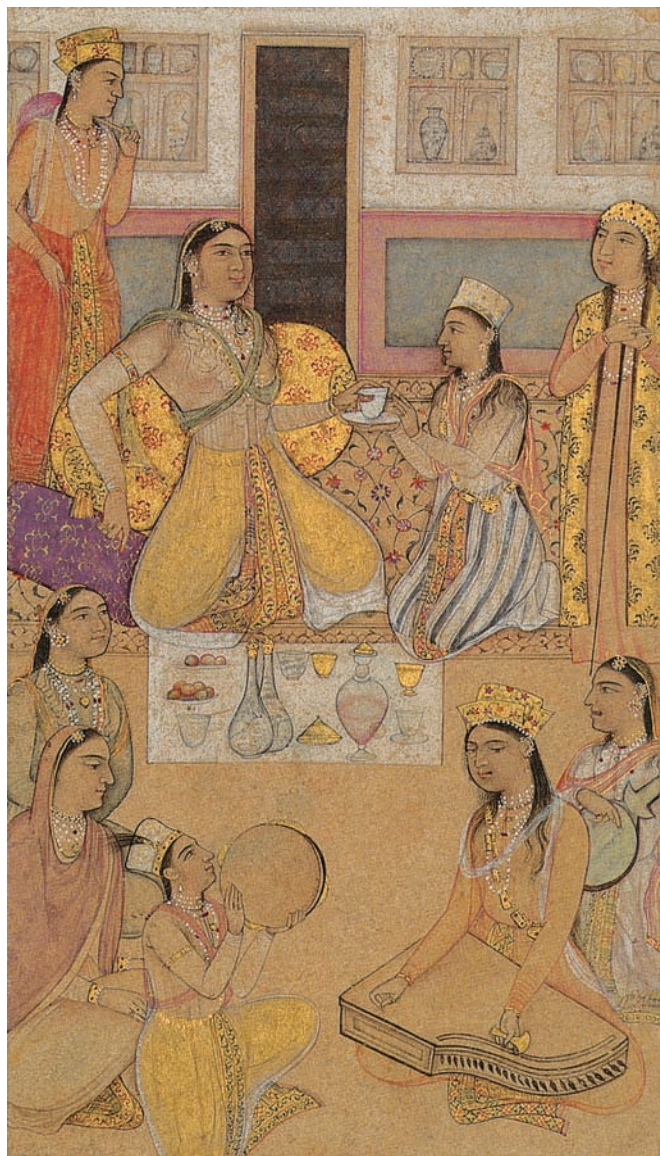


The earliest historical records of Vaishnavism are the Besnagar Heliodora inscription and the Ghosundi inscription, both of the second century BCE. The former testifies to the erection of a Garuda pillar to Vasudeva, god of gods. Heliodora, who was the son of Diya and a native of Taxila,



Indian princess surrounded
by her attendants and musicians

Bishan Das (or Bishandas) (attributed to), c. 1630-1640
Opaque watercolour and gold on stock paper, 15.2 x 8.8 cm
Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris





was ambassador from the Yavana Antialkidas to Bhagabhadra. He calls himself Bhagavata. The Ghosundi inscription witnesses to the erection of a hall of worship to Samkarshana and Vasudeva.

Vishnu is a Vedic deity and although he is represented by but few hymns, his personality is vividly portrayed. He measures all things with his three wide strides, the third passing beyond human discernment to the high places of the deity. This conception of the third step of Vishnu as the highest heaven and goal of all things, had obviously much to do with his elevation as the supreme being.

Portrait of a Mughal Lady

c. 1630, Shah Jahan dynasty, Patan, Gujarat
Opaque watercolour, 33.2 x 21 cm
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond