that Vedic rituals contained sexual allusions, the general Vedic dislike of sexual cults is revealed in their contempt for the phallic gods of the non-Aryans.\textsuperscript{39}

The mother cult continued at folk level in the worship of small terracotta figurines. However, her influence can be seen on the margins of temple art, in the decorative 'monsters', makara, kirttimukha, and eva (the last a rampant leonine monster), described as different masks of the pre-Aryan goddess.\textsuperscript{39} The feminine principle re-emerged with explosive force early in the first millennium in connection with the rise of the Siva-Sakti cult, which might have been prefigured in the Indus civilization. It is quite remarkable that while women had an inferior status in Hindu society, on the level of belief they played a dominant role. The supremacy of the Goddess is expounded in different myths. In the myth of Durga, the gods, when they felt powerless against the Buffalo Demon, relinquished their weapons to her in a symbolic castration. The Great Goddess is paradoxically a virgin mother. Her companions are the horrific seven mothers (saptamatrika), central to Tantric thought.\textsuperscript{39}

Neumann describes the mother as the 'Freudian' unconscious, but there could be a more subversive role for the Goddess: challenging Aryan, male rationality. The Goddess is the mother who nourishes, but is terrifying if her anger is aroused. Nothing expresses the antithesis of the male construct of rationality better than the elemental figure of Kali, the dread goddess. When she goes on the rampage, she literally lets her hair down, her 'unbound' hair signifying cosmic chaos, as she becomes unstoppable in her pure nakedness.\textsuperscript{39} Married women in India are admonished to tie their hair, for loose hair is a sign of inauspiciousness, in other words a threat to the social order. Finally, in the symbolic opposition between the right and the left in the collective thinking of many cultures, the right hand represents maleness, speech, intellect, and, above all, the sacred. Conversely, the left (sinistra in Latin) stands for the sinister, night, death, the chthonic, the profane, and threatening aspects of sexuality. In Sanskrit too samu not only means left but also a woman, and finally the Goddess. It makes perfect sense that the Kaula Kapālika Tantric practice is described as left-handed in relation to established rituals.\textsuperscript{39} In short, it is in these subversive aspects of Indian thought that we may seek to uncover the 'enigma' of Hindu erotic art.
The Turko-Afghan Sultanate of Delhi (1206–1526 CE)

The arrival of Islam forced a crisis of conscience in Hindu and Buddhist civilizations, bringing to an end the first chapter of Indian history. The rise of the Arabs under Islam in the seventh century profoundly altered power relations in the vast land mass stretching from Spain in the West to the borders of China in the East. The Arabs, and the Turks and the Mongols after them, founded cosmopolitan empires, virtually cutting off Europe from world trade along the lucrative Silk Route and the Mediterranean. The monotheistic Islamic civilization, essentially extraterritorial and a blend of diverse pre-Islamic elements—Greek philosophy, Roman architecture, Hindu mathematics, and the Persian concept of empire—deeply affected the societies it came to rule. The Arabs had arrived in Sind (in modern-day Pakistan) by 712 CE but little remains of their brief occupation. The common assumption that Islamic mosques were built in India only after the Turkish conquest in the twelfth century has been challenged by recent research. Not only were mosques built in the eighth century by the Arabs in Sind, but pre-conquest mosques existed in the wealthy Gujarati port of Bhadreswar—the local Jain rulers, trade partners of the Arabs, had allowed the resident Ismaili merchants to build mosques in the area.

From the tenth century, the northern plains of India were convulsed by the raids of the neighbouring Turks and Afghans, who were lured by the legendary wealth of the temples and won control in 1206 CE. The regions that stood in the path of the Islamic war machine suffered most. Buddhist and Hindu monuments disappeared almost overnight, the first mosques being built with their debris. The Turks and Afghans were the latest in the waves of invaders that had been entering India since antiquity. However, the crucial difference was the new phenomenon, Islamic monotheism, which brought an egalitarian ideology that struck at the very roots of the Hindu caste hierarchy. The oppressed lower castes flocked to the crescent banner, which promised
them personal dignity and social equality. Essentially pragmatic, the young Sultanate of Delhi soon forged a working relationship with the indigenous population. In general, the country enjoyed stability under the Sultanate. The pilgrim tax and poll tax (jaziya), imposed on Hindus and Jains, were the only reminders of their subordinate status.

A new architecture

The sultans were prolific builders. Islam introduced the mosque (masjid), the mausoleum (mausoleum), the centre of learning (madrasa), and the covered inn (caravanserai) to India. Secular architecture, in the form of palaces, fortresses, and gardens, underwent considerable modification in accordance with Sultanate requirements. These changes radically altered the skyline in northern India, where mosques of elegantly spare design, relieved by abstract ornaments, replaced temples. The Tamil south (which remains almost entirely Hindu even today) continued to build temples decorated with figure sculptures. These temples, often of soaring height, were built essentially by the ‘horizontal method’ of placing successive layers of stone one above the other. Even the ‘arches’ were based on the trabeate method of posts and lintels. A different form, the pointed arch, which spanned wide spaces with elegance and created lofty vaults, was the contribution made by Islam to Indian architecture. Islamic architecture effortlessly blended universal elements, such as the dome and the arch, with the local genius of Arabia, Iran, North Africa, Spain, Central Asia, and South and South-East Asia. The early Indian masjids looked to such famous models as the Great Mosque in Damascus and the Seljuk madrasas of Iran. Yet it is their South Asian features that gave them their unique flavour. As imported labour was costly, Indian craftsmen were hired whose use of Hindu temple mouldings in mosques reflects the ‘empathic’ response of local craftsmen to Islamic requirements. The mosque is the anchor of the faith, its origins remaining simple. The only requirement for a Muslim is to turn towards Mecca while praying (to the west in the case of the subcontinent) [55]. In 1206 CE, the founding Sultan, Qutb ud-Din Aybak, embarked on the first congregational or Friday mosque (jami masjid), the Quwwatul-Islam (‘Might of Islam’) in Delhi, which had been chosen as the seat of the Sultanate. Not only was it imperative to accommodate the sizeable Muslim congregation swollen by recent converts, but the young Sultanate was expected to impress non-Muslims in India and to rival Muslim powers abroad. The mosque’s large courtyard was marked on the west side by an arcade whose ‘unkempt’ appearance was the result of the use of disparate columns from 27 demolished Hindu temples. It was the lofty Qutb Minar, attached to the Quwwat, that emerged as the spectacular monument of the Sultanate. Its immediate inspiration...
The four diminishing storeys of the minaret are broken by projecting balconies, each differently designed wid combination of engaged columns,法定, and star patterns. The red stone acts as a foil to the ornamental bands with elegant carvings of calligraphy, scripts, and, above all, Arabic inscriptions extolling Islam's triumph over unbelievers. Interestingly, later Indian craftsmen inscribed details of their work in Devanagari (Sanscritic script) on the pillars.

The minaret was the minarets of Afghanistan, admired by Aybak, but its obvious Indian feature is its deep red sandstone surface. In Islam, minarets are ostensibly for the muezzin to call the faithful to prayer. But from Seville to Samarqand, in lands where non-Muslims predominated, these high towers became symbols of the might of Islam.

It may seem strange that such assured works could be produced within 50 years of the founding of Muslim rule. But regardless of their own religious persuasion, Indian builders were professionals whose flexible skills had already served Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain patrons. Admittedly, in the case of Islamic architecture, they had to learn an entirely new vocabulary, but they were able to adjust their skills in the light of new requirements. Indeed, the reputation of Indian builders in the Islamic world led to their conscription by sultans for work in their main cities, most famously in Samarqand. However, the continued use of the post and lintel system in Indian Muslim buildings even as late as the Mughal period, the preference for dressed stone rather than brick, and the richness of the decoration (albeit abstract now) betray the unmistakable hand of the Indian craftsman.

In the next centuries the only additions to the Quwwat were extensions of its large courtyard, while architectural energies were expended elsewhere. Sultan Ala ud-Din Khalji (1296–1316), who saw himself as a second Alexander, planned a minaret that would dwarf the Quwwat. All that is left of this grandiose project is the harmonious 18-metre-high victory gateway. In keeping with the sultan's mentality, the inscriptions sing his praises rather than the customary encomium to Allah.

Urban planning
Between 1320 and 1388, Muslim architecture became considerably indigenized, as the Tughlaq sultans standardized building practices by setting up a department of architecture and initiating bold experiments in urban planning. In Delhi, Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq (1325–52) not only expanded the citadel of Tughlaqabad but built the urban complex of Jahanpanah, he was also the first Delhi sultan to try to control the Deccan by raising an impregnable fortress capital at Daulatabad. The huge administrative citadels within cities, notably Tughlaqabad, were protected by crenellated walls of rubble masonry faced with painted stucco. The north African explorer Ibn-e-Batuta marvelled at the beautiful paintings and mosaics in Muhammad's "Palace of A Thousand Pillars." An open-minded intellectual, Muhammad sought to consolidate his empire with Hindu support, taking part in Hindu festivities and lifting the ban on the construction of temples.

Muhammad's nephew, Firuz Shah (1335–88), was more ambivalent about his relationship with the Hindus since his mother was most probably a Hindu. He raised the city of Firozabad and undertook the construction of public buildings as a pious duty, accepting the conservation and restoration of buildings and the upkeep of workshops (kankhanas), gardens, and irrigation canals as a royal responsibility. The emergence of Delhi as the intellectual capital of Sunni Muslims can be attributed to Firuz, for he built the largest madrasa of the period. Why the pious sultan commissioned a curious three-tiered pyramidal building, surmounted with an Asokan pillar, is not entirely clear. Brought to Delhi from a great distance by boat, this 'symbol of idolatry' was prominently displayed in the capital.

Mausoleum architecture
The most original Indian contribution to Islamic architecture was the royal mausoleum, a visible emblem of royal authority. And yet, by incorporating the mihrab in its design, the mausoleum never failed to remind the faithful of the ruler's piety even in death. The tomb was an image of Koranic earthly paradise, a garden watered by the four
celestial rivers. This promise of what lay beyond was made clear in an inscription in the early sultan Ilutmish's tomb. First appearing in Islamic Egypt, the design of a sepulchre set in a lake or a garden was to be taken to supreme heights in the Taj Mahal. The Sultanate mausoleums, originating in the Turk–Iranian domed square tombs, but developing into an octagon decorated with Indian motifs, were soon emulated by those of court officials, provincial governors, and sultans. The first landmark in tomb architecture was Ghiyas ud-Din Tughlaq's elegant mausoleum [57]. By contrast, the pious Firuz's tomb was a square pile of rubble and masonry crowned with a shallow dome. Somewhat forbidding, though graceful, it reflected Firuz's suspicion of ostentation.

After Firuz, building activities suffered a setback following the devastation of Delhi by Timur, except for the rise of open pavilion tombs—slender square or octagonal structures, resting on plinths and supporting kiosk domes (chhatris), set in the midst of lush parks. The mausoleum that took the octagonal tomb to its pinnacle came, fittingly, at the close of the Delhi Sultanate. This was the stately grave of Sher Shah, a brilliant soldier of fortune, who ruled briefly in Delhi after driving the Mughal emperor Humayun out of India. The sepulchre, designed by Aliwal Khan, was meant to exalt this ruler of humble origin [58].

Provincial sultanes (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries)

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as the centre lost its grip after Firuz Tughlaq's death, the provincial viceroy began asserting their independence, establishing themselves in Multan and Gujarat in the west, the Deccan in the south, Jaunpur in the north, and Bengal in the east. They initiated ambitious architectural programmes, their immediate inspiration being metropolitan Tughlaq architecture, out of which a remarkable variety of styles emerged in response to local conditions. At Jaunpur, for instance, a great cultural centre, the triumphal portal of the iwan (domed hall) in the Atal Masjid (c.1394) attained the scale of the monumental pylons of Egypt. On the other hand, the mosques of the Ahmad Shahi dynasty (1408–1517 CE) in Gujarat made full use of rich temple decorations as well as indigenous building methods, such as corbel domes resting on pillars. A Gujarati speciality was the perforated stone screen, nowhere seen in greater brilliance than in the decorative tree motif of the Sidi Sayid Mosque at Ahmedabad (1516). Deccan sultans, for example the Bahamani Sultanate (in present-day Karnataka), were unusual in drawing directly upon Iranian, Seljuk, and Timurid forms, as a way of proclaiming their independence from Delhi [59].

Secular architecture

Among secular buildings, fortresses, as key elements in defence strategy, are of major importance. There remain impressive fortifications in many parts of India. Protected by moated battlements, they usually perch on top of a ridge (frequently with a township or settlement at the bottom) that provides them with a commanding view of the surrounding terrain. Among these, the Mughal forts of the later period are well preserved, while for sheer picturesque quality few can compete with Rajasthan forts. However, the latter have gone through
so many stages that we cannot be confident as to their original forms (see chapter 7). With constant threats from hostile Hindu and rival Muslim powers, defence was a high priority for the sultans, as illustrated in the Deccan [60].

Literary evidence endorses the variety and importance of secular buildings. However, most early palaces have either perished or have been rebuilt so extensively that their original form can no longer be ascertained. A description of the arrangement of royal domestic spaces in India, which were probably grander versions of affluent households prevailing all over the East, could be found in the writings of the ancient Mauryan author Kautilya [61].

The Vijayanagara empire (1336–1564)
The two significant Hindu architectural achievements which were a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim concepts. One occurred in the cosmopolitan empire of Vijayanagara, founded in the fourteenth century by a Hindu dynasty and a remarkable example of the complex interface of Islamic and Hindu cultures. This South Indian state was the political rival of the Bahamani Sultanate, its rulers styling themselves 'sultans among Hindu kings'. The pioneering historian R. Sewell encouraged the idea that the Vijayanagara rulers were leaders of the Hindu resistance to Muslim advance in the south. Recent historians, who question this view, contend that the Vijayanagara monarchs displayed a flexible approach, adopting Islamic customs for international affairs, while preserving Brahmanic rituals for local matters. The lucrative seaborne trade covering a considerable area from the Mediterranean to the China Seas that touched the South Indian port of Bhatkal was largely in Arab hands. In an astute move to stake a claim in it, the Vijayanagara emperor Krishnadevaraya (1509–30)
adopted Islamic customs, even appearing in public in Muslim dress. He introduced firearms, imported horses, improved fortifications, and instituted efficient revenue collection. At the same time he was an active patron of Hindu religious foundations. While Vijayanagara temples followed the Dravidian tradition, especially as interpreted by the Colas, it is significant that secular buildings were modelled on Bahamani architecture, a bonding agent for this heterogeneous empire.

Secular and sacred architecture
Hampti, the capital of the empire, was a cosmopolitan commercial centre inhabited by a mixed population that included Portuguese gunners and Muslim cavalry who served in the Vijayanagara army. Muslims were allowed to build mosques within the citadel. The Portuguese traveller Domingo Paes described Hampi in the period 1520 to 1522: ‘The king has made within it a very strong city, fortified with walls and towers. Inside are broad and beautiful streets with rows of fine houses where live many merchants.’ Hampi was ringed with concentric walls and gate towers, marking two spatial zones where the sacred and the secular met, namely the temple area and the urban settlement. Within the latter was the royal precinct, which held ‘the pulse of the empire’.

The secular masonry buildings, expressing imperial ideology and cosmopolitan values, employed Bahamani-type arches, domes, and vaults and were based on square, rectangular, or octagonal plans. In their use of particular masonry techniques and fine plaster the buildings could well be mistaken for mosques at Gulbarga, the Bahamani capital. Their decoration was geometric and foliate, while the moulded bases, overhanging eaves, and pyramidal towers synthesized Dravida and Islamic forms. The multi-lobed arches, a Vijayanagara feature, were adopted as niches for Hindu deities. The most imposing structure at Hampi was the elephant stable, as befitted this royal animal. It is a long building with a row of 11 square chambers entered through arched doorways. Above them is a series of domes of different shapes arranged symmetrically.

In the sacred part of Hampi, temples dedicated to the local goddess Pampa and her consort Virabhadra represented a triangular patronage network comprising the emperor, the temple, and the chief. However, the fifteenth-century Ramachandra temple in Dravida style, situated in the royal centre, was mainly associated with the monarch, as suggested by friezes on its outer walls portraying royal processions. In the next century, temples acquired the more familiar Vijayanagara style, sporting prominent gate towers (gopura). Another Dravida feature inherited from the Cola period was the growing importance of the dance. Domingo Paes remarked that the dance poses (karanas) on temple walls were used as aids-mémoires by court dancers, a practice in line with the South Indian tradition [62].

Bengali temples (sixteenth to nineteenth centuries)
The second example of Hindu–Muslim synthesis, namely Bengal, evolved its own cultural tradition from the eighth century onwards. Bengal and Bihar, known as the eastern lands from the Gupta times, were a major centre of Buddhism. Its final flowering in India took place
in the great university monasteries of Nalanda (Bihar) and Puharpur (Bangladesh) during the Pala period (c.760–1145). This was when Buddhists lost their separate identity as they increasingly shared Tantric rituals and cults with the Hindus. Characteristic of Bengal were the unadorned early brick temples, which have not survived, but a plethora of Buddhist and Hindu cult images, from the Eastern workshops, in grey-black chlorite or metal, have.13

The Turko-Afghans who conquered Bengal in the thirteenth century built impressive mosques in a provincial style that blended Muslim and indigenous elements. The synthetic culture of Sultanate Bengal witnessed the rise of an anti-caste Bhakti movement led by the Vaisnava saint Sri Chaitanya (1486–53), which gave a new impetus to temple building. Bengali brick temples, built between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, do not fit the general canon, though elements such as Orissan sikharas were incorporated into Bengali temples. The basic rectangular shape of a Bengali temple was taken from the domestic bamboo and mud hut (bangla) with sloping thatched roofs that coped with the heavy rainfall of the region. The first temples were of the jor-bangla type, with one hut serving as the shrine while the second formed the front porch, jor-bangla being the most distinctive Bengali contribution to Indian architecture. The Bengali temples are also classified according to their curved roofs with curved cornices (chala), the simplest being those with two-roads (do-chala) and the most elaborate the eight-roofed temples. With the experience gained from Islamic buildings, the builders used arches, domes, and vaults for the superstructures of these brick temples. The second development was the ratna style, whose lower part consisted of a rectangular 'hut' structure with curved cornices, but which was crowned by multiple pinnacles, sometimes as many as 25. In a developed example the central domed chamber was enriched with multiple-domed side chambers and pinnacles, and with pillared and triple-arched entrances. Later another temple form emerged, the dalan, with a colonnaded veranda. Finally, Neoclassical temples in the shape of a rotunda made their entry during the colonial period.14

A characteristic feature of Bengali temples is the rich sculptural frieze worked in terracotta at the base or above the entrances of temples [63]. In addition to popular religious themes, from the eighteenth century the reliefs demonstrated a keen interest in secular subjects—battle scenes, boating parties, entertainments, processions, Europeans involved in various activities, and even European galley ships. In the Shyamalaya temple in Bishnupur, men are depicted riding on elephants or sitting in chairs with pet dogs, while women travel in palanquins or are seated on couches reading books or looking out of windows. These temples received the lavish support of the landed aristocracy (zamindars), such as the Mallas of Bishnupur, who by the seventeenth century were only nominally under the rule of the Mughal emperor. With the expansion of overseas trade in the eighteenth century, prosperous Bengali merchants became involved in temple building. The names of the architects, some of whom were considered to be masters of their craft, are mentioned in the temple inscriptions, as well as the patrons' power and wealth.15

Painting during the Sultanate period
The Indo-Islamic era brought changes in the practice, scale, format, organization, and genres of painting in India. Monumental sculpture as an art form declined, while wall painting was eclipsed, though not entirely replaced, by small-scale paintings illustrating texts.

Illuminated manuscripts
Around the tenth century, a new phenomenon, the illustrated book, made its appearance around the globe from Chartres through Isfahan.
Arabic, Turkish, and Persian texts for their libraries and commissioned new ones. In search of work, scholars and scribes from Baghdad, Bukhara, Samarqand, and other Islamic seats of learning came to Delhi, which acquired renown as an international centre for trade in manuscripts. Although actual paintings from the Delhi Sultanate have not been identified with certainty, we know from contemporary accounts that the sultans had picture galleries where they took their leisure, though the pious Firuz Tughlaq replaced human figures with floral paintings in his own chambers. However, other Tughlaq sultans even tolerated Hindu themes.

The only Sultanate paintings known to have survived are from the provinces. They demonstrate the process of the fusion of Persian/Near Eastern and Indian painting conventions. The most famous, those illustrating the *Ni'mat Nama (Book of Delicacies)*, were produced for Ghiyas ud-Din Khalji, sultan of Malwa (1469-1500), who, disillusioned with war, withdrew from the cares of state [65]. A sixteenth-century historian writes about this grand eccentric with his Epicurean approach to food and sex. An absolute ruler, he was able to fulfill his fantasies on an unprecedented scale, collecting 16,000 slave girls, dressing some of them in male attire, and teaching them different professions so that only women might serve him. The style of the *Ni'mat Nama* illustrates seems at first glance to be a provincial variant of Persian painting. A closer look at the treatment of faces and...
The so-called Jain painters have lately been reappraised in the light of the complex relationship between Islamic and Indian art and between Hindu/Jain and Muslim patronage. The Jain Kalakacarya Katha tells the story of how the abduction of the saint Kalaka's sister by the king of Ujjain was avenged by an ancient Sthi or Saka (Scythian) king. In ancient India, Sakas and Yavanas were the most prominent foreigners, and Yavana was the term later applied to Arabs and Turks. It is interesting that in some Jain manuscripts the painters represent the ancient Saka king in contemporary Arab costume or with the Mamluk (Islamic Egyptian) painting convention of three-quarter faces and sidelong glances. Conversely, a recently discovered illustrated Indian copy of the Persian epic Shah Name could be mistaken for a Kalakacarya Katha [67]. There is evidence that 'hybrid' painting styles such as these, and that of the Nizamat Nam, arose out of the intermix of cultures; the artists, trained in Gujarati workshops, were possibly provided with samples of Persian and Mamluk painting by their Muslim patrons. In the late fifteenth century, the Mediterranean trade was dominated by the Mamluks of Egypt who, in partnership with Gujarati merchants, were the major suppliers of cotton, opium, lac, and other Indian produce to the West. Painting on cotton as a major export from Gujarat to Egypt has been amply attested by the discovery of Gujarati textiles in graves in Fostat near Cairo. The recent identification of Mamluk elements in Jain paintings offers further visual evidence of this trading connection.

costumes reveals Indian authorship. The hands of two Indian artists, trained by a Persian master, have been identified. The more accomplished one interprets Persian elements deftly and imaginatively in the light of his own experience. (Paradoxically, the less skilled one copies Persian models more slavishly.) These works are important in that they demonstrate the process by which styles are transferred and assimilated by artists. Here the Indian artist's own conventions act as essential schemata which are modified in the light of the new style.

The two Indian artists identified as the illustrators of the Nizamat Name seem to have been part of a painting tradition that prevailed in north and north-west India during the Sultanate period, particularly between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, about which we only have sporadic information. Among these artists, the Gujarati ones mentioned earlier are best known among scholars as 'Jain painters' because of the large quantity of Jain subjects painted by them. Paper introduced from Iran and Syria allowed these artists to experiment with formats and dimensions which had not been possible in narrow, palm leaf manuscripts [66]. Jain merchants and bankers were particularly enthusiastic about commissioning illustrated manuscripts celebrating Jain saints. Many of these were produced with cheap material, their calligraphy and painting bereft of elegance. Their existence strongly suggests that patronage was no longer confined to the wealthy or to royalty but included lesser merchants and people of more modest means.
Secular painting
Illustrated texts, many of them secular, and of a quite different genre, were commissioned by the Muslim and Hindu aristocracy of the sixteenth century: ‘Even now, I remember her eyes / trembling, closed after love, / her slender body limp, / fine clothes and heavy hair loose / a wild goose / in a thicket of lotuses of passion.’ Thus rhapsodized the eighth-century Kashmiri poet Bilhana about his beloved Campavati in the Caupapancasika (Fifty Verses of a Love Thief). The gentle eroticism of Bilhana’s Caupapancasika marks a turning point in Indian culture, as the formal elegance of high Sanskrit yields to the intimate atmosphere of vernacular literature in Hindi, Bengali, and other provincial languages. Works such as the Rasika Priya of Kesav Das (1553–1617) elaborate a complex typology of ideal lovers and their mental states in which two emotions predominate: the heroine’s intense longing for the absent lover and the joy of consummation. A new canon of feminine beauty permeates literature and art, according to which women are celebrated as passionate lovers, bravine stormy nights and untold hazards to keep their rendezvous. These romantic lyrics offer a new outlet for Bhakti or devotional religion, in which the intensity of love outside marriage becomes a metaphor for the desire of the soul (Radha) for God (Krsna).

The Caupapancasika inspired a major series of paintings that became the benchmark for pre-Mughal art, not least because this set was the first to be discovered by modern scholars. Over the years many more have come to light that give us an ever clearer idea about painting in North India on the eve of Mughal conquest. A ‘transparent’ narrative device in the Caupapancasika, which tells the story by placing the aristocratic hero and heroine in an everyday architectural interior, becomes a long-lasting convention. These paintings essentially belong to the romantic world of Rajasthan that was foreign to Jain piety. Since most Hindu kingdoms were on the defensive in the sixteenth century, it is likely that they were produced in the independent Rajput kingdom of Mewar (68). This painting tradition turned for inspiration to the Bhakti poems of Jayadeva and other poets. Ostensibly religious, the paintings capture the leisurely life at the courts of the Rajput kingdoms of north-west India, especially from the seventeenth century onwards. A related genre is the Raga mala (‘garden of musical modes’) painting, perhaps the most perfect marriage of literature, music, and painting. The modes of classical Indian music are conventionally divided into six male ragas, each having six wives, the 36 raginis. Each personification of these modes evokes a particular mood related to the time of the day or the season, a number of which found expression in painting.20

Literature and painting such as this might have remained parochial without the growing rapprochement of Hindu and Muslim cultures in the fourteenth century. Initially the conquerors had kept aloof from Hindu culture; Hindus on their part considered anybody outside the caste system as beyond the pale. The first signs of synthesis are evident in the work of the Indo-Turkish poet Amir Khusraw (1253–1325). Muslim Sufis and Hindu Bhakti saints began building bridges between the two communities. Syncretic movements such as the Satya Narayana cult (a blend of the Muslim saint Satya Pir and the Hindu god Vishnu) appealed to Hindu and Muslim villagers alike, as the sayings of the Muslim mystic Kabir came to be universally quoted in India. In the fourteenth century the Sufi Maulana Daulat’s text Chandogya uses the story of the adulterous love of Laurus and Canda to inculcate the synthesis of Bhakti and Sufi doctrines (68).30

The conventions of Jain sacred painting, modified in the secular Caupapancasika paintings as well as in illustrations to Muslim texts, are now known to have affected a much larger area of northern and central India than had hitherto been assumed. The style can also be seen in wall paintings at Man Singh’s palace in Gwalior. In short, it is not correct to hold, as some do, that Jain painters influenced the paintings of Muslim Malwa and Hindu Rajasthan. These painters, perhaps the majority from western India, were professionals who adjusted their
style according to the particular needs of their clients, whether Jain, Hindu, or Muslim. The experience of these painters, who were to join the Mughal emperor Akbar’s workshop, proved to be valuable in the formation of Mughal painting.