List of Color Plates &
Black-and-White Figures

I.
Three illustrations to the *Hamza-name* ("Tales of Hamza"), ca. 1567-82
Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna
ca. 70 x 52 cm.
Plate 1. *Hamza’s Spies Attack the City of Kianmar* (52/1 8770/25)
Plate 2. *Mirdukhi’s Escape from Dangerous Men* (52/1 8770/32)
Plate 3. *A Banquet for Two Spies at Aliknighi* (52/1 8770/39)

II.
Miniature from the *Anwar-i-Sabahi* ("The Lights of Canopus"), 1570
The School of Oriental and African Studies, London
folio 33.3 x 22.2 cm.
Plate 4. *The Ape Outsmarts Thieves*

III.
Two miniatures from the *Darabnama* ("The Tales of Darab") of Abu
Tahir ibn Hasan Mua al-Tarsusi, ca. 1585
The British Library, London
folio 35 x 22.5 cm.
Plate 5. *Shah Ardashir’s Fate*, Or. 4615, f. 3v (34 x 29 cm.)
Plate 6. *Tamarus and Shapur at the Island of Niger*, Or. 4615, f. 34r
(25 x 19 cm.)

IV.
Album Painting *A European* ca. 1590
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, I.M. 386-1914
30.0 x 18.3 cm.
Plate 7. *A European*

V.
Miniature from the *Baharistan* ("The Spring Garden") of Jami (A copy
made at Lahore by Muhammad Husayn Zarin Qalam in 1595)
The Bodleian Library, Oxford
21.5 x 14.6 cm.
Plate 8. *The Foppish Dervish Rebuked*, by Basawan, Elliot 254, f. 9r

VI.
Miniature from a dispersed *Dawas of Hafiz* (?), ca. 1590
Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington
28.1 x 15.6 cm.
Plate 9. *Noah’s Ark* (attributable to Miskin), 48.8
VII.
Miniature from a dispersed Hariwad ("Geneology of Hari"), ca. 1585-90
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Plate 10. Lord Krishna Lifts Mount Govardhan (by Miskin?) 28.65.1

VIII.
Miniature from a dispersed Ansair-i-Sahali ("The Lights of Canopus") (?) ca. 1590
The British Museum, London
27 x 19.4 cm.
Plate 11. The Raven Addressing the Assembled Animals (by Miskin?) 1920 9-17-05

IX.
Double-page miniature from an incomplete copy of the Akbarnama ("The History of Akbar") by Abu’l Fazl, ca. 1590
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Plate 12. Akbar Restrains Hauoli I.S. 2:1896 22/117. 34.5 x 21.7 cm.
Plate 13. Spectators I.S. 2:1896 21/117 34.5 x 21.6 cm. (Both designed by Basawan and painted with Chitra’s assistance)

X.
Miniature from an incomplete copy of the Akbarnama ("The History of Akbar") by Abu’l Fazl, ca. 1590
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Plate 14. Akbar Hunting in an Enclosure (Designed by Miskin, painted with Sarwan’s assistance), ca. 35 x 22 cm. I.S. 2:1896 56/117

XI.
Album painting, Akbar in Old Age (inscribed "the work of Manohar Das"), ca. 1604
Cincinnati Art Museum
24.4 x 14.7 cm. with border/18.4 x 12.1 cm. miniature only
Plate 15. Akbar in Old Age (Listening to a Courtier), 1950-289

XII.
Miniature from a dispersed copy of the Jahangir-nama ("The History of Jahangir"), ca. 1605-10
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
26.4 x 16.4 cm.
Plate 16. The Birth of a Prince (attributable to Bishandas), 17.3112

XIII.
Miniature from a dispersed copy of the Jahangir-nama ("The History of Jahangir"), ca. 1620.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
34.5 x 19.5 cm.
Plate 17. Jahangir in Darbar (probably by Abu’l Hasan and Manohar), 14.654

XXII.  
Album Painting *Peacock*, ca. 1610  
Private Collection, courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum  
19.1 x 9.9 cm.


XXIII.  
Album Painting *A Zebra*, dated 1621  
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
18.3 x 24.1 cm. miniature/26.8 x 38.7 cm. folio

Plate 27. *A Zebra* (Attributed to Jahan-pur, "A Zebra which the Rumi Shirazi (Turk) brought from Abyssinia with his wife painted by Nadir al-Azar, the Miracle of the Age, Ustad Mansur, in 1621, the sixteenth year of the reign"), I.M. 23-1925

XXIV.  
Album Painting *A Rustic Concert*, ca. 1625  
The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin  
23 x 16.5 cm.

Plate 28. *A Rustic Concert* (by Gouvardhni), Royal Album 7, 11

XXV.  
Album Painting *A Scribe*, ca. 1625  
Private Collection, courtesy of the Fogg Art Museum  
10.5 x 7.1 cm.

Plate 29. *A Scribe*

XXVI.  
Opening folio from an album *Shamsa* ("Sunburnt," inscribed with the titles of Shah Jahan (1627-38) "May God Make His Kingdom Last Forever"), ca. 1640.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
91.5 x 63 cm.

Plate 30. *Shamsa*, 55.121.10.39

XXVII.  
Double page miniature painted for the *Shah Jahan-nama* ("The History of Shah Jahan") in the Windsor Castle Library, completed in 1656-57 by the scribe Muhammad Amin of Mashhad, ca. 1650  
Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington  
35.1 x 24.2 cm. inside borders

Plates 31 and 32. *Shah Jahan Honors the Religious Orthodoxy* (attributable to Muraqddin, 42.17A and 18A

XXVIII.  
Miniature painted for the *Shah Jahan-nama* ("The History of Shah Jahan") in the Windsor Castle Library, completed in 1656-57 by the scribe Muhammad Amin of Mashhad, ca. 1653  
Private Collection, courtesy of The Fogg Art Museum  
34.3 x 23.9 cm.

Plate 33. *An Incident at the Siege of Qandahar* (attributable to Payag)

XXIX.  
Album Painting *An Abyssinian from Abanadnagar*, ca. 1633  
Private Collection  
15 x 8.1 cm.

Plate 34. *An Abyssinian from Abanadnagar* (inscribed "the work of Hashim")

XXX.  
Album Painting *Royal Lovers on a Terrace*, ca. 1633  
Private Collection  
22.5 x 13.1 cm.

Plate 35. *Royal Lovers on a Terrace* (signed "the work of Bal Chand")

XXXI.  
Album Painting *Dara Shikoh with Sages in a Garden*, ca. 1640–50  
The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin  
27.7 x 19.8 cm.

Plate 36. *Dara Shikoh with Sages in a Garden* (signed "the work of Bichitr"), Royal Albums, 7, 7

XXXII.  
Album Painting *Darbar of Alagir*, ca. 1658  
Private Collection  
19.1 x 21.4 cm.

Plate 37. *Darbar of Alagir*

XXXIII.  
Album Painting *Alagir Hunting Nilgai*, ca. 1660  
The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin  
23.7 x 39.4 cm.

Plate 38. *Alagir Hunting Nilgai* (attributable to Bichitr), Separate Miniature no. 27

XXXIV.  
Album Painting *Muhammad Shah Viewing a Garden*, ca. 1730-40  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
38.3 x 42.5 cm.

Plate 39. *Muhammad Shah Viewing a Garden*

XXXV.  
Album Painting *Bahadur Shah II*, dated 1838  
Private Collection  
32 x 38 cm.

Plate 40. *Bahadur Shah II*
Black-and-White Figures

I.
Painting on cloth  *The House of Timur*, ca. 1550-60
The British Museum, London
108.5 x 108 cm.
Figure 1.  *The House of Timur*, 1913.2.8.1

II.
Miniature from a dispersed copy of the *Baburnama* ("The History of Babur"), a Persian translation of Babur’s *Memoirs* prepared for Akbar in 1589, ca. 1589
The Victoria and Albert Museum, London
24.2 x 13.7 cm.
Figure II.  *Babur Receiving Uzbek and Raiput Envoys in a Garden at Agra* (painted by Ram Das), I.M. 275-1913

III.
Album Painting  *Cow and Calf*, ca. 1570
Private Collection
28.3 x 18.3 cm.
Figure III.  *Cow and Calf* (attributable to Basawan)

IV.
Album Painting  *A Muslim Nobleman*, ca. 1585, border ca. 1610.
Private Collection
20 x 11.8 cm. folio/10.1 x 6 cm. miniature only
Figure IV.  *A Muslim Nobleman*

V.
Preparatory Drawing  *The Death of I’timad Khan*, ca. 1618
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
9.5 x 13.3 cm.
Figure V.  *The Death of I’timad Khan*, 14.679
PLATE 1

**Hamza’s Spies Attack the City of Kaymar**

The most powerful of all Mughal pictures are doubtless the large illustrations to the tale of Hamza, an uncle of the Prophet, whose deeds became confused with those of a namesake from Sistan during the reign of Harun al-Rashid. His picaresque exploits in China, Central Asia, Rum (Turkey), and Ceylon were grist for the storyteller’s mill, whose embroideries upon them were interpreted with imaginative flair by Akbar’s artists. According to Abu’l Fazl, in the AkbarNama, in 1564 the emperor relaxed after an elephant hunt at Narwar by listening to these stories. No doubt, they were read with dramatic flourishes to him and his companions by a professional reciter whose descendants still delight Indian audiences. Conveniently, the text was written on paper stuck to the backs of the large cotton cloth pictures which he held up to the listeners.

Although fewer than one hundred and fifty pages have survived, this vast project, according to Abu’l Fazl, once consisted of twelve volumes, with 1400 illustrations. Bada’oni, another contemporary chronicler, tells us that the project took fifteen years to complete. A reliable eighteenth-century source, the Ma’asir al Umara (“The Feats of the Mughal Commanders”) adds that fifty painters of the calibre of Bihzad, generally considered the greatest Persian artist, worked on the project, which was begun with Mir Sayid ‘Ali in charge and was later directed by Abd ur-Samad. On the basis of a close reading of relevant sources, Pramod Chanda has proposed convincingly that the project dates from 1567 to 1582 (op. cit., Tuti-nama).

*Hamza’s Spies*, with its magnificent trees, charming monkeys, and blood-and-guts action, combines eye-boggling power and beguiling subleties, and typifies this project at its best.
PLATE 2
Mirdukht's Escape from Dangerous Men

Akbar's vital power, harmoniously attuned to nature's force, was never better expressed than in the illustrations to his Hamza-nama. According to Abu'l Fazl, he met with his artists once each week. If this is accurate, and we suspect that it refers to his later, less intense years rather than to the period of the Hamza, enough time was provided for him to so inspire his painters that he virtually painted through them, in much the same way that Abu'l Fazl was his literary amanuensis. Abd us-Samad, the second director of the project, had been a somewhat conventional artist prior to the time when, according to Abu'l Fazl, "he was stirred to new heights by the alchemy of Akbar's vision, and he turned from outer form to inner meaning" (see Dickson and Welch, The Houghton Shakhnameh, forthcoming).

Few pictures are more spirited than Mirdukht's Escape, with its whiplash division of land and water, dashing figures, and dramatic gesticulations, worthy of the grandest opera. The water is a sinuous maelstrom of leaping fish and other aquatic life. Pondering it imaginatively releases yet other, wilder forms, cavorting in its turbulence: ape-like faces, the profile heads of a ram and an ibex, a lion bellowing at a fish, and numerous other grotesqueries. Such hidden images abound in the rocks, water, and tree stumps of early Akbari painting, but become scarcer towards the end of the sixteenth century, when increasing orthodoxy discouraged all that was so earthy, intuitive, and "superstitious." (Enjoy, however, the horse's head poking from a stump in Plate 8.)
PLATE 5

A Banquet for Two Spies at Akiknigar

Akbar’s pictures reflect his achievements as well as moods and interests. Here, the spies and their party are entertained by strange men probably based upon people Akbar encountered on some expedition. They resemble exponents of tantric religion, perhaps from Nepal or Tibet. One, sporting a white plume, has slanted eyes and a flattened Mongol nose. A Tibetan horn is among the weapons and musical instruments strung in an arcade behind the figures. In the background, at the right, other extremists strain bhang, a concoction of marijuana often used by holy men. Surrounded by their mysterious bowls, the busy pair sits beneath a writhing tree, with branches and bark suggestive of hallucinations to come.

Like the other paintings of the Hamza series, this one was designed to be effective across a room or courtyard. The colors are high in saturation and contrast: whites are dead-white; oranges and yellows leap at us. Similarly, the patterns of tiles, stonework, and ornamentally disposed foliage are daringly bold. Nonetheless, close inspection is rewarding. The characterizations were painted for a man who could size up his fellows at a glance, and wherever we look, whether at the host’s coral and turquoise belt, also typical of Nepal and Tibet, or at the outlandish gilt-bronze incense burner in the foreground, there is something to surprise and delight. It is no wonder that of all the loots carried off from Delhi by Nadir Shah in 1739 (including the Peacock Throne), it was only the Hamza-nama, “painted with images that defy the imagination,” that Emperor Muhammad Shah pleaded to have returned.
PLATE 4

The Ape Outsmarts Thieves

Fable books were popular at Akbar’s court, particularly when he was young. The Brahmin Bidpai’s ancient stories, amusing yet moralistic and didactic, were retold by royal command, like glittering beads refaceted and restrung.

This painting illustrates the story of a clever and honorable ape who befriends a traveller who had been robbed. Noting that the robbers had fallen asleep after hiding their loot, he removed many of the valuables and secreted them elsewhere, after which he climbed a tree and had the satisfaction of seeing the thieves awaken, discover their loss, and, in the belief that their hiding place was haunted, rush off in terror. Later, the ape led the traveller to his stolen goods.

This painting is from one of the earliest dated Mughal manuscripts, and proves that by 1570 Akbar’s artists worked in a thoroughly synthesized style drawn mostly from Safavi and indigenous elements. Although no artists’ names are inscribed, the miniatures all seem to be by the most admired masters, presumably working under the strict control of Abd al-Šamad, Mir Sayyid ‘Ali, and the emperor himself. Paper, calligraphy, illumination, and paintings in this volume are all of the highest quality. It is probably the earliest surviving specimen of Akbar’s de luxe series of illustrated classics.
PLATE 5

Shah Ardashir's Fate

Although undated and bearing neither the name of the scribe nor the place of origin, the Darab-nama with its 155 miniatures can be assigned to Lahore, shortly after Akbar moved there in 1565. Many of the miniatures are inscribed by the clerk in charge of the project with the names of notable court artists, including Miskin, Basawan, Farrukh Chela, and Abd us-Samad. Several pictures in an old-fashioned Persianate style almost uninfluenced by the court idiom bear such names as Ibrahim of Lahore, leading one to further conclude that their style lingered from the days of Lahore's pre-Mughal rulers.

The paper for this volume is relatively coarse, and its calligraphy is inelegant, perhaps because it was created before the imperial workshops were fully settled in the new capital. Nevertheless, it contains many exciting pictures, painted somewhat thinly but with enlivening inventiveness.

This painting shows Shah Ardashir, who, while riding in the mountains, was surprised from behind by a dragon and devoured in a gulp. When the news of his terrible fate spread, all the princes of the world went into deep mourning for three months. His son went off to Hindustan and never returned.

Although the artist's name is illegible, he rivalled Basawan for originality and power of design. With its all-encompassing landscape, the painting seizes the two blocks of text like a dragon, as fiercely as the monster gobbled up Shah Ardashir. Through his total conviction and such subtleties as Ardashir's almost blank expression, a response sloved by the utter horror of circumstance, the artist makes us believe a fantastic tale.
PLATE 6

*Tamarusa and Shapur at the Island of Nigar*

Abu’l Fazl tells us that “the works of all painters are weekly laid before His Majesty by the Daroghas and the clerks.” (A’u, p. 113) At such meetings, Akbar and his artists must have exchanged views and decided what subjects to depict. Here we find the work of one of Akbar’s recruited Hindu artists, Basawan, one of the four artists singled out by Abu’l Fazl as “among the forerunners of the high road of art.” Of Basawan he wrote, “In designing, painting faces, coloring, portrait painting, and other aspects of this art, he has come to be uniquely excellent. Many perspicacious connoisseurs give him preference over Dusanth,” the other Hindu master discussed by Abu’l Fazl (translation after P. Chandra, *op. cit.*).

This painting, one of the best from the *Darab-nama*, shows *Tamarusa (or Tahruqiyeh) and Shapur at the Island of Nigar*, a remarkable place ruled by a king named Kharikus, prior to whose reign it was engulfed by the sea. Under his direction, a huge city was built on pilings, which are clearly visible in the painting. Basawan is here represented at the height of his form, stimulated perhaps by the move from Fatelpur Sikri to Lahore, with its new sights and sounds. He approached the subject freshly, as though glad to go back to work. The geometric cityscape (an idealized view of Lahore?), the strongly shaded bulk of Kharikus, and the challengingly honest foreshortening of the bailing sailor make this picture memorable.
Akbar was intrigued by the exotic merchant-adventurers from the west. He first encountered them at Cambay in 1572. A year later, during the Siege of Surat, a large party of Christians came for an audience with him and was asked to guarantee the safety from pirates of Muslim pilgrims to Arabia. In 1576, Akbar met two Jesuit priests in Bengal with whom he discussed religion, one of his favorite topics. He tried unsuccessfully to learn more about Christianity a year later, from the commandant of the port at Hugli, a Portuguese trading center in Bengal. In the next year, another such encounter proved unrewarding, and in 1579, he requested that missionaries be sent to court from Goa, the Portuguese center on the West coast. In 1580, Fathers Aquaviva, Monserrate, and Henriques came to Fatehpur Sikri "to convert the inhabitants of Mogor." Abu'l Fazl, author of the Akbarnama, was asked by Akbar to translate the Gospels. No copy has survived, if indeed the project was completed. Although Akbar is said to have kissed the image of Christ, and Christian paintings were made by Mughal artists at this time, the Jesuits commented that "giving the pearl of the Gospels to the King was exposing them to be trampled and trodden underfoot." In 1590 and 1594, further missions were sent from Goa to the Mughal court. Brother Benedict de Goes remained in Lahore until 1615. Although the Jesuits never completely gave up hope of converting Akbar, and later Jahangir, Jesuits were not allowed to visit Akbar when he was on his deathbed.

This portrait of a European was probably based upon imported prints as well as direct observation. The Christian ladies at worship resemble Hindus bowing before a Sivaite image, and their shrine recalls contemporary Hindu architecture.