

99. Persian 4, Northern India, 18th century

Contents: *Razmnāma*, Persian translation of the Indian Mahabharata.

Folios: 587 fols. (with two fly-leaves at each end); paper, 33.5 x 21 cm.

Rulings: 20 lines per page within a ruled frame of red, green, gold and black, measuring 24.5 x 14 cm

⁵⁴ N. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts* (B.L., London, 1977), 144, no. 326. For Kashmiri manuscripts see also N. Titley, *Persian miniature painting and its influence on the art of Turkey and India* (B.L., London, 1983), 211-212, plate 44.

⁵⁵ Waley, *List*.

Script: Indian *naṣṭa'ālīq* in black ink, with some punctuation marks in red ink.

Binding: Plain leather covered boards, spine broken (but see Conservation below.)

Provenance: The manuscript's miniature painting well conforms to the following description of manuscript painting of North India, such as Mankot, one of the Hindu Kingdoms of the Punjab Hills, around the mid-18th century '... the horizontal format, the use of flat planes of bold reds and yellows, the stylised architecture and figures ... The stylised faces, with exaggerated bulging eyes and straight profile ...'⁵⁶ The seated profile figures in fol. 585v reproduced here (plate 39) are consistent with portrait painting of rulers of Mankot of shortly before the mid-18th century.⁵⁷ There are ownership seals of Ālamgīr at the front and back of the manuscript, dated

⁵⁶ J. Guy and D. Swallow (eds.), *Arts of India: 1550-1900* (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1990), 143.

⁵⁷ For example that of Raja Ajmat Dev of Mankot of c. 1730 reproduced in *Id.*, 145, plate 124.

1107 A.H. (1695 A.D.), the time of Aurangzeb (Ālamgīr I), but the seals appear to have been reused during the time of Ālamgīr II (1754-59). This second ruler's dates corresponding better with the date of the manuscript on art historical grounds.

Illustration: 27 full-page illustrations (15.5 x 14 cm) through the text, occupying almost half the text column and for which the text frame is extended and completed by a canopy at the top. Fols. 1v, 30r, 113v, 140v, 152v, 226v, 245v, 278r, 288v, 318v, 321v, 357r, 360v, 389r, 392r, 406r, 410r, 413v, 421r, 463r, 466r, 473r, 560v, 569r, 574r, 583r, 585v (plate 39). The miniatures are in bright colours, in which orange, pink, red and yellow predominate, with gold and silver. Each is marked with a red tab attached to the outer edge of the page.

Conservation: Since 1994 work has been in progress to conserve the manuscript and rebind it in 'Islamic' style.