It was probably during his visit to Srinagar in 1589, shortly after the conquest of Kashmir by Mughal troops, that Akbar (r. 1556–1605) became acquainted with two important Kashmiri works, the collection of stories known as the Kathāsārītśāgara (Ocean of Streams of Stories) and the chronicle Rājarāvāngini (The River of Kings). Perhaps owing to his wide range of interests, Akbar soon ordered the two texts to be translated into Persian. But it is also possible that he had certain political interests and that these two commissions should be regarded in connection with other translation projects from Sanskrit. It is well known that remarkable activities were initiated during Akbar’s time to render Sanskrit literature into Persian.1 Some of these translations were copied several times and disseminated to important high officials to ensure that they received proper consideration. The case of these Kashmiri texts shows how the military annexation of the region was immediately followed by a second incorporation, into the Persophone culture of the Mughals. This is not to be judged unfavorably, since it led to the circulation of Sanskrit literary works among Muslims, as we can conclude from the number of extant Persian copies. Akbar had some of these texts furnished with illustrations. Manuscripts like the Mahābhārata (The Great Tale of the Bharata Dynasty) and the Rāmāyana (Rama’s Journey), kept in the Maharaja Sawai Mansingh Museum in Jaipur, enjoy worldwide attention today. The aforementioned Kathāsārītśāgara, a collection of tales composed in the eleventh century by the Hindu poet Somadeva (fl. 1070), was also embellished with pictures. Unfortunately, this manuscript has been thoroughly dismembered and most of the text and its illustrations are lost. Only nineteen illustrations, cut out from the folios, were known to have been part of the collection of A. C. Ardeshir, who lived in Bombay in the 1930s.2 In 1964, they found their way, via the Bombay-born American art dealer Nasli Heeramaneck, into either private ownership or various museums in the United States.3 Eighteen of them were tracked down.4 Seven original illustrations are readily accessible and described as follows in the respective catalogues or articles in which they are listed or discussed:

(a) The raja whose guest asked him for 500 dinars daily (13.2 x 13.2 cm). San Diego Museum of Art, no. 1990: 281, formerly in the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection (fig. 1).5

(b) A man hides in an elephant skin and is carried off by a giant Simurgh (14.6 x 18.9 cm). San Diego Museum of Art, no. 1990: 280, formerly in the Edwin Binney 3rd Collection (fig. 2).6

(c) The tale of the cunning Siddhikari (16.5 x 13.4 cm). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M. 78.9.12 (fig. 3).7

(d) The tale of Somaprabha (13 x 13.7 cm). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M. 78.9.13 (fig. 4).8

(e) Harem scene, probably from a Kathāsārītśāgara (15.2 x 19.1 cm). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.78.9.7 (fig. 5).9

(f) Episodes from the tale of the false ascetic (16.4 x 13.5 cm). Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, 68.8.54 (fig. 6).10

(g) Episodes from the tale of Devadatta (13.8 x 13.6 cm). Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, 68.8.55 (fig. 7).11
Fig. 1. King Lakadatta presents a beggar with an orange filled with jewels. © San Diego Museum of Art, no. 1990: 281. (Photo: courtesy of the San Diego Museum of Art)

Fig. 2. A giant bird carries the young brahman Lohazanga to the island of Lanka. © San Diego Museum of Art, no. 1990: 280. (Photo: courtesy of the San Diego Museum of Art)

Fig. 3. The tale of the cunning Siddhikari. Opaque watercolor, gold, and ink on paper, 16.51 x 12.7 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, from The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase M.78.9.12. Photo © 2009 Museum Associates/LACMA. (Photo: courtesy of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art)

Fig. 4. Somaprabha and a celestial nymph listening to music. Opaque watercolor, gold, and ink on paper, 13.02 x 13.65 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, from The Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase M.78.9.13. Photo © 2009 Museum Associates/LACMA. (Photo: courtesy of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art)
Fig. 5. King Putraka in the palace of the beautiful Patali. Opaque watercolor, gold, and ink on paper, 15.24 x 17.78 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, from The Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection, Museum Associates Purchase M.78.9.7. Photo © 2009 Museum Associates/LACMA. (Photo: courtesy of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art)

Fig. 6. Episodes from the tale of the false ascetic. © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, The Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection, no. 68.8.54. (Photo: courtesy of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts)

Fig. 7. Episodes from the tale of Devadatta. © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, The Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection, no. 68.8.55. (Photo: courtesy of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts)
Another eleven original illustrations are in private collections:

(h) Water sports. Probably from a Kathāsaritsāgara manuscript. From a private collection unknown to the author.12

(i) Shri Datta obtains a magical sword. The original illustration (16.3 x 13.5 cm) formerly belonged to the George P. Bickford Collection. Its present whereabouts are unknown to the author.13

(j) A king slays a mendicant as a god observes from the sky (8.9 x 17.2 cm). Formerly in the Ehrenfeld Collection.14 Its present whereabouts are unknown to the author.

(k) Indivarasena, his wives Khadgadamstra and Madanamstra, and his younger brother Anichhasena travel magically to the city of Iravati (8.9 x 13.7 cm). Formerly in the Ehrenfeld Collection.15 Its present whereabouts are unknown to the author.

(l) A man holding up a large flower before two women in a chamber (14.5 x 13.8 cm).16 Text on the back of the picture. Catherine and Ralph Benkaim Collection, Los Angeles (fig. 8).

(m) Chandamahasena cuts off pieces of his own flesh (17 x 13.8 cm).17 Formerly in the Pan Asian Collection. Private collection (fig. 9). My sincere thanks to the private collector who generously made his five pictures of the Kathāsaritsāgara (m–q) available for this publication.18

(n) Beheading of a man at court being witnessed by a man and a woman in a chamber and many other figures ringing the courtyard (11.3 x 13.5 cm).19 Formerly in the Pan Asian Collection. Private collection (fig. 10).20

(o) A fire-breathing man carrying a sword-wielding man on his shoulders toward a small temple that enshrines a blue-skinned figure like Vishnu; two slain men lie before the temple (13 x 13.6 cm).21 Formerly in the Pan Asian Collection. Private collection (fig. 11).

(p) A painting in a nim qalam (half-colored) style shows a prince emerging from a huge fish that has been slit open (12.8 x 12.8 cm).22 Formerly in the Pan Asian Collection. Private collection (fig. 12).

(q) A woman holding court before female musicians and onlookers (9.7 x 13.8 cm).23 Formerly in the Pan Asian Collection. Private collection (fig. 13).

(r) Three figures and four attendants (?) with books in an interior location (8.4 x 13.2 cm).24 Formerly in the Pan Asian Collection. Private Collection.

Only very small fragments of the text are preserved on the backs of some of these pictures. Consequently, the total extent of the Persian rendering remains unknown and the contents of the surviving miniatures could only be partly identified by inferring from the generally known translations of the Sanskrit Kathāsaritsāgara.25 But what kind of text is this? The Kashmiri poet Somadeva put together an extensive collection of tales that was to include all stories the way an ocean absorbs all rivers, hence the name Ocean of Streams of Stories. The collection weaves together about 350 folk tales, fables, legends, short versions of Puranic myths, Buddhist Jatakas (folklore-like literature), themes from the extensive epic stories Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana, and works of ornate poetry.26 The Kathāsaritsāgara, which was presumably composed in Kashmir between 1063 and 1081,27 was dedicated to Queen Suryavati, wife of King Anantadeva (r. 1028–63), from the Lohara dynasty of Kashmir. This book was meant to “drive away for a moment the sorrows from the thoughts and reflections of this queen,” as the author explains in his epilogue. There was indeed much need for comfort, since the reign of Anantadeva was characterized, especially during its later phase, by a deadly enmity between the monarch and his son, culminating in the suicide of Anantadeva and the sati (self-immolation) of Suryavati in the year 1081.28

According to renowned experts, Somadeva’s work is regarded as the zenith of the classical Indian art of kavya,29 a term that signifies a highly stylized court poetry, whose practitioners display their skill not so much by composing original contents but by presenting well-known subjects in a refined and sophisticated poetical form.30 In this respect, we cannot reproach Somadeva for relying on an older book and, as he himself declares at the beginning and end of his work, for “composing this collection, which contains the pith of the Brhatkathā (The Great Tale).” The latter, attributed
Fig. 8. Ashokadatta with a golden lotus. © Catherine and Ralph Benkaim Collection. (Photo: courtesy of Professor John Seyller)

Fig. 9. King Mahasena offers his own flesh to the goddess Chandika. Private Collection. (Photo: courtesy of Professor John Seyller)

Fig. 10. The generous minister Nagarjuna decapitated by the crown prince. Private Collection. (Photo: courtesy of Professor John Seyller)
Fig. 11. A sword-wielding mendicant forces a fire-breathing corpse to carry him to a temple. Private Collection. (Photo: courtesy of Professor John Seyller)

Fig. 12. King Shaktidewa emerges from the belly of a large fish. Private Collection. (Photo: courtesy of Professor John Seyller)

Fig. 13. The pregnant Basawadatta pleased by musicians who look like Vidyādhara. Private Collection. (Photo: courtesy of Professor John Seyller)
to the poet Gunadhya, has not survived. By means of versions that have come down to us, we can roughly estimate its date of origin to be between the second century B.C. and the third century A.D. 

The structure of the Kathāsaritsāgara, subdivided by Somadeva into eighteen books (Skt. lambaka, “rivers”) with a total of 124 chapters (Skt. taraṅga, “waves”), follows the typical form of an Indian framed narrative. In the first book, the reader is informed of the divine origin of the Brhatkathā and of the reasons why it was written down by Gunadhya. Shiva was asked by his wife Parvati to tell her a story that nobody had ever heard before. Now it happened that the Gana Puspadanta, one of Shiva’s attendants, secretly listened and passed on what he had heard. When the goddess Parvati became aware of this, she was so moved to anger that she punished Puspadanta and his friend Malyavat, who had interceded on behalf of Puspadanta, by having them both born as mortals. Puspadanta became a human being called Vararuci; Malyavat was born as Gunadhya. They were not allowed to return to the heavenly realms until these tales of Shiva had become famous worldwide.

The main story of the Kathāsaritsāgara, which, as legend has it, is only one-seventh of the original tale (i.e., the Brhatkathā), starts with the second book. Here, the reader learns first about the life of Udayana, king of the empire of the Vatsa, his two wives Vasavadatta and Padmavati, and the birth of his son, Naravahanadatta. Most of the rest of the book is taken up with the adventures of Prince Naravahanadatta, who, accompanied and assisted by his friend and adviser Gomukha, acquired twenty-six wives and, through their fathers, twenty-six allied kings; finally, after a decisive battle, he became the lord of the demi-gods known as the Vidyādhara.

The great number of interlocking stories in the Kathāsaritsāgara makes it difficult to follow the main plot. As a result, breaks in the logical course of the text are not immediately recognizable. In an outline of their contents, Penzer has pointed out the inconsistent succession of the books. Referring to the studies of Félix Lacôte, he takes the view that the frame story of the Brhatkathā was probably more coherent and dominant than in the later version composed by Somadeva. The poet, perhaps in accordance with an earlier Kashmiri version that is lost, subordinated the narrative of Naravahanadatta entirely to the goal of integrating as many stories as possible, accepting some inconsistencies in the frame story in return. Thus, Somadeva provides us with a colorful kaleidoscope of tales that reflect the customs, manners, and religious life of different sections of the population.

Somadeva’s version of the Brhatkathā (i.e., the Kathāsaritsāgara) bears witness to his veneration of Shiva, for whom most of the benedictions and homages located at the beginning of each of the eighteen lambakas were intended. In the Kathāsaritsāgara, Shiva appears as the origin of the work, because he is the one telling the whole story to his consort. Moreover, the deity and other aspects of the Shaivic form of Hinduism are a frequent theme of the tales within. The religious orientation of his work may result partly from the poet’s personal inclination, partly from the dominant position of Shaivism in Kashmir, and perhaps also from the religious tendency of the royal family. Nothing detracts from the veneration of Shiva and his consort Uma, even if other deities of Hindu mythology are also present, albeit to a lesser extent. Nevertheless, the proclamation of Shaivic values was evidently not the sole aim of the poet, who gives proof in the Kathāsaritsāgara of his erudition and knowledge of the scriptures of all religious and philosophical schools.

Somadeva kept strictly to the principles defined by Dandin (sixth/seventh century A.D.), one of India’s most important theorists of poetic arts, in his manual Kavyādarśa (Mirror of Poetry). An especially important part of this was the thematic consideration of the “four goals of life,” viz. (1) the fulfillment of religious and moral duties (dharma), (2) the acquisition of wealth and power (artha), (3) the satisfaction of sensual pleasures (kāma), and (4) the wish for deliverance (mokṣa). With his profound knowledge of the Dharmashastra, Arthashastra, and Kamashastra literatures, Somadeva also transmits moral values by depicting the struggle for power and worldly possessions as ultimately ephemeral and deceitful. Thus, in spite of all his intentions to entertain and amuse, Somadeva never lost sight of his goal: mokṣa, deliverance from the cycle of reincarnation.
THE PERSIAN TRANSLATION OF THE KATHĀSARITSĀGARA

As to the Persian version of Somadeva’s collection of stories, we are lucky not to be dependent solely on the few fragments of text from the imperial manuscript. We can reconstruct the scope of the translation that was once produced for Akbar with the help of a hitherto nearly unnoticed copy of the Persian Kathāsaritsāgara, indexed as Ms. 2410 in the India Office (henceforth I.O.) Library.39 According to Hermann Ethé, there is an ex libris identifying this manuscript as having formerly been the property of Richard Johnson (d. 1807), who acquired numerous Persian manuscripts during his stay in India as an employee of the East India Company.40 From 1780 to 1782, he lived in Lucknow, working as head assistant to the Resident, and was in contact with Antoine Polier (d. 1795) and Claude Martin (d. 1800), former officers in the British army. Polier and Martin had managed to make a fortune serving under the nawab of Lucknow since 1773 and 1776, respectively, and, much the same as the new elite in Lucknow and the young nawab Asaf al-Dawla (d. 1797) himself, they were avid art collectors—an avocation they engaged in due partly to their aesthetic interests and partly to the conventions of a high social status.

Manuscripts and pictures were especially appreciated, and the Lucknow bazaar had become the place in India where one could buy the most exquisite artefacts, many of which had once belonged to the impoverished old aristocracy of Delhi and the Mughal heartlands.41 Richard Johnson’s collection was in no way inferior to that of Polier and Martin. He not only bought in the Lucknow art market, but also had painters, poets, and writers make special works for him.42 Hence, it was not at all unusual that he commissioned the Kathāsaritsāgara in question. This was, as Hermann Ethé had already mentioned,43 a copy of a manuscript that was once part of the extensive collection of his good friend44 Claude Martin, who must have been in possession of Akbar’s book when he permitted Richard Johnson to prepare a duplicate. After Martin’s death in 1800, his estate was completely sold at auction and Akbar’s Kathāsaritsāgara probably ended up in the possession of an unknown buyer.45

The illustrations of Johnson’s manuscript are even more important than its text: it turns out that they are exact copies of those in the imperial Mughal Kathāsaritsāgara. All the illustrations in Ms. I.O. 2410 (figs. 14–84 [after the Appendix]) are drawings on separate sheets of paper,46 each one partly covered with colored dots indicating the paint colors that were used in the corresponding original from the imperial manuscript. The drawings are loosely fastened to blank spaces on the folios: the plan was no doubt to later paint them directly onto the paper of the manuscript. There are several hints that the illustrations in Johnson’s copy were tracings of the original miniatures found in the imperial manuscript: besides the fact that the original pictures and the drawings correspond with each other exactly in their content, they are, above all, of the same size. In cases in which the originals are complete paintings and not just sections cut out from larger works, we can see the correspondence of the measurements between original and copy. Thus, illustrations (a) “The raja whose guest asked him for 500 dinars daily” (fig. 1), (c) “The tale of the cunning Siddhikari” (fig. 3), and (d) “The tale of Somaprabha” (fig. 4) have the same dimensions as their counterparts on folios 171a, 32b, and 44a of Ms. I.O. 2410 (figs. 82, 27, and 31). The fact that the drawing of “Cunning Siddikari” on folio 32b is actually a mirror image of the original painting further suggests that the pictures of Ms. I.O. 2410 were based on tracings of the works in the imperial manuscript: it is otherwise difficult to explain why the artist might have drawn the picture in this manner. The following pairs of original paintings and corresponding drawings also have the same dimensions: (g) “Episodes from the tale of Devadatta” (fig. 7) and the corresponding image on folio 81b (fig. 44); (i) “Shri Datta obtains a magical sword” and the picture on folio 22a (fig. 22); (n) “Beheading of a man at court” (fig. 10) and the drawing on folio 135a (fig. 63); (o) “A fire-breathing man carrying a sword-wielding man on his shoulders” (fig. 11) and the drawing on folio 47a (fig. 32); and, finally, (p) “A prince emerging from a huge fish” (fig. 12) and the picture on folio 72b (fig. 38).

Among the original illustrations, “The tale of Somaprabha” (d [fig. 4]) and “A man holding up a large flower before two women” (l [fig. 8])47 deserve special mention because they are among the few pieces with text fragments on their backs.48 A comparison with Ms. I.O. 2410 reveals that the corresponding illustrations...
on folios 44a and 75a (figs. 31 and 40) are the same not only in size and all details but also in their position in the text. Here we see that the texts on the back of these illustrations exactly match those on the back of the drawings in the India Office copy.

**THE TRANSLATOR OF THE KATHĀSARITSĀGARA**

Since the first folios of Ms. I.O. 2410 are missing, we have no introduction that offers information on the translator and the date of translation. Moreover, the text abruptly breaks off in the middle of the ninth book and possesses no colophon. Hermann Ethé ascribed the text to the court poet Fayzi (d. 1595). One reason for this assumption may have been that Fayzi had already distinguished himself as a translator from Sanskrit with his rendering of *Lilāvati* (The Beautiful), a manual on arithmetic and geometry by the mathematician Bhaskaracharya (d. ca. 1185). However, there are no indications within the manuscript itself that justify Ethé’s assumption.

In his catalogue, D.N. Marshall lists Ms. I.O. 2410 under the works of Fayzi as well as under those of Bada’uni. Indeed, the Muslim scholar ‘Abd al-Qadir Bada’uni (d. ca. 1615) provides us with extensive information about the *Kathāsaritsāgara*. Today he is especially well known for his historical work *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* (Selections from the Histories), a biting critique of the reign of Akbar, whose service he entered in 1575. In this work, he informs the reader that the beginning of the Ocean of Streams of Stories had already been translated by order of Sultan Zayn al-ʿAbidin, the padišah of Kashmir, and that it had been translated by order of Sultan Zayn al-ʿAbidin, which had already been translated under Sultan Zayn al-ʿAbidin, into contemporary Persian so that it might be intelligible to everyone; his rough translation of the last book, which he had read to the Mughal emperor, was to be kept by the scholar until further notice. Bada’uni wrote in the *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* that he planned to finish this project within two or three months. In 1596, scarcely one year after he had received this order, he brought his Selections from the Histories to a close without mentioning the *Kathāsaritsāgara* again. This means that the *Muntakhab al-tawārīkh* gives no information as to whether or not Bada’uni ever actually finished his revision of the first part of the Ocean of Streams of Stories.

Since the sources mention only Bada’uni in connection with the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, it seemed that this translation could be attributed to him. However, an edition of the text published by Tara Chand and Sayyid Amir Hasan ‘Abidi under the title *Daryā-yi asmār* reveals surprising new information: the manuscript in the India Office is not the only extant Persian copy of Somadeva’s collection of stories. There is another one, recorded as Ms. 2642, in the State Central Library of Hyderabad (Deccan). Although the colophon is missing and it, too, contains no date of composition, the preface, with information on the translator, is still in place. Contrary to expectations, it was not written by Bada’uni, but by a certain Mustafa ibn Khaliqdad al-Hashimi al-ʿAbbasi. Not much more is known about him other than that he completed three translations. During the reign of Akbar he worked not only on the *Kathāsaritsāgara* but also on the *Pañcākhyāna*, a Jainist version of the *Pañcatantra*. Al-ʿAbbasi remained active under Jahan gir (r. 1605–27), for whom he made a Persian translation of the Arabic *Kitāb al-Milal wa-l-nihal* (Book of Religions and Religious Sects) by al-Shahrastani (d. 1153), titled *Tawdīḥ al-milal* and completed in 1612. The *Kathāsaritsāgara* in Hyderabad and the two aforementioned manuscripts also by al-ʿAbbasi, which are located in Delhi and Hyderabad, respectively, seem to have been written by the same scribe, on the same sort of paper with the same sort of ink. This suggests that all three manuscripts are either autographs or that they were copied by the same calligrapher.

We can only speculate as to when al-ʿAbbasi started his translation. His reference to Lahore, where he received Akbar’s orders, suggests a time between 1585...
and 1598, since the Mughal emperor abandoned his residence, Fatehpur Sikri, in 1585 and lived in Lahore for thirteen years. Proceeding on the assumption that Akbar became especially interested in literature from Kashmir after the annexation of the region and that he visited Srinagar in 1589, the time in question could be limited to 1590 and later. We may conclude from the Muntakhab al-tawārīkh that Badaʿuni finished his translation of the Kashmiri chronicle Rājatarāṅgīṇī in 1590–91 and started working on Somadeva’s stories about four years later. If al-ʿAbbasi also began his task about that time, why should there have been two persons working simultaneously on the same text unknownst to one another? Since neither of the two authors mentions the other, we cannot be sure to what extent Badaʿuni’s activities were connected with those of al-ʿAbbasi and to what extent al-ʿAbbasi’s text goes back to Badaʿuni’s.

Badaʿuni informs us that he was initially told to translate only the last book. After he had finished that task, he was ordered by Akbar to go over the first part, which had already been rendered into Persian under Zayn al-ʿAbidin. We do not know whether he ever finished this revision or not, but presumably Akbar entrusted al-ʿAbbasi with this task because Badaʿuni could not go on with his work for some reason or other. In this case, al-ʿAbbasi would have received his orders some time between 1595 and 1598. He writes:

The order was issued that he [sc. Khaliqdad al-ʿAbbasi] should summarize the book Brihat katā that Somadeva Batta, a Kashmiri brahman, had originally made into an abridged version, owing to its wordiness and length. By order of Sultan Zayn al-ʿAbidin, the famous ruler of Kashmir, a person had already translated this [text] into Persian.58

So al-ʿAbbasi himself made no translations of the Kathāsarītśāgara. His version of the work is just a revision of that part of the story that had already been rendered into Persian under Zayn al-ʿAbidin. There is no hint that Badaʿuni’s revision of the first part, if he ever made one, was incorporated into this text; his translation of the final, eighteenth book was not included either, since the two known manuscripts of the Persian Kathāsarītśāgara end in the ninth book.

Badaʿuni seems to have assumed the title Bahr al-asmār from the Kashmiri translation, while al-ʿAbbasi exchanged the Arabic word bahr for the Persian daryā, so that his title now reads Daryā-yi asmār. Al-ʿAbbasi describes the reduction of the Arabic vocabulary as an essential aim of his remodeling of the Kathāsarītśāgara, since he considers the medley of Persian and Arabic words a feature of an obsolete style that obscures the meaning of the text:

Under these circumstances, it is incumbent upon the writer to keep the expression clear from mixing with another language, which causes obsfuscation and obscurity of sense. He even has to take care to leave behind the task of eloquence, which diverts the attention of the listener from understanding the meaning by drawing out [the speech] and the metaphors, which are a veil over the intention. God preserve me from this, because abstruseness of speech and ambiguity of meaning belong to the way of worthlessness of expression, incorrectness of style, and defect in eloquence. Just as some deficient scholars, in order to deceive the laymen, mix Arabic and Persian words inappropriately, insult inkpot and pen, and blacken the immaculateness of the entirely innocent paper59... But since the [Kashmiri] translator mixed up the Persian so much with the Arabic, he [thereby] went away from the perception of the common people, and was also cut off from the attention of the higher classes because of an impurity of expression and a lack of precision; [since] by this the sense of his stories remained concealed from both groups and since the intention of the commander, which is admonition and sharpening of the mind, does not emerge from it, [now] Mustafa ibn Khaliqdad, the lowest of those who rub their forehead on the threshold of the one who is like the heavenly throne, is to write it in an easily understandable and distinct style, prepare the pen/arrow (kīlk) of clear speech and, in consideration of the order of the original script, eliminate everything turning out to be an addition to the narrative and a disturbance of its intention.60

Badaʿuni similarly comments on his target in the treatment of Somadeva’s stories. He says that Akbar wanted him to rewrite the text, which had been translated by the order of Zayn al-ʿAbidin, “in a customary style,” because it had been “composed in generally unknown and obsolete Persian.”61

Al-ʿAbbasi’s preface shows that he is aware of the work’s textual history. He refers to Somadeva as a “Kashmiri brahman,” and describes the Kathāsarītśāgara as a
summary of the original Brhatkatha. Moreover, he elaborates on Somadeva’s introductory benedictions and the invocation of Mahadeva, though he does not mention Ganesha and Sarasvati, who likewise are called upon in these invocations. The detailed blessings with which Somadeva opens each of the remaining seventeen books were all omitted by al-ʿAbbasi. He further explains that when naming the chapters he oriented himself by the meanings of the original titles and hence refers to each of the eighteen books as a nahr, meaning “river,” following the Sanskrit lambaka, and the chapters contained in them as “waves” (Pers. sing. mawj), paralleling the use of the term taraṅga in Sanskrit.

Although al-ʿAbbasi’s Persian version is noticeably shorter than the Sanskrit text, the plots of the stories that he took up are more or less the same. Only some minor details of the tales have been Persianized. For instance, he translates the name Shri Datta as Ibn al-Dawla and, in the story of Putraka, he identifies Patali as the daughter not of a king but of a wali (governor).

THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE KATHĀSARITSĀGARA

Thanks to Johnson’s copy, it is now possible to see how the original illustrations were embedded in the text of the imperial Kathāsaritsāgara and to identify them accurately. The second illustration we come across when leafing through Ms. I.O. 2410 shows the larger tableau from which the heretofore unidentified “Harem scene” (e [fig. 5]) seems to have been cut out. The picture, on folio 4b (fig. 15), is one of two illustrations belonging to the story known as “The founding of the city of Pataliputra.” In this tale, three brahman brothers on their way to see the god Kumara find accommodation in the house of the brahman Bochika, who gives them his three daughters in marriage, divides his property among them, and retires from the world to devote his life completely to prayer and asceticism (illustrated on fol. 2b [fig. 14]). During a famine, the brothers leave their wives, even though one of them is with child. According to the decree of Shiva, this child is given the name Putraka and lives under the protection of the god. Once grown, Putraka becomes king. His generous presents to brahmans entice Putraka’s father and his two brothers to the court. Although they are received with honor, they try to seize royal dignity for themselves and make plans to kill Putraka, who is forced to flee. On his long journey he comes into the possession of magical shoes that enable him to fly through the air. One day he learns about Patali, the beautiful daughter of the governor, and decides to fly at night to the palace. His arrival on an open terrace of the palace is the scene depicted on folio 4b.

The “Harem Scene” (e [fig. 5]), which is now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, was once enframed by two blocks of text. The text on top reads:

When one hour of the night was gone, he put on his shoes and flew in the passion of love like a bird. He landed at the palace of the wali’s daughter and saw her as she was sleeping gracefully on her bed. He thought about a way to wake her up when suddenly one of the watchmen sang a verse fitting his situation.

The three men in front of the palace wall seem to have no special significance in this scene. Perhaps one of them is meant to be the watchman reciting the above-mentioned verse.

“Water sports” (h), is the central part of the picture on folio 15a (fig. 18) of Ms. I.O. 2410. The scene depicts the beginning of a story about King Satabahana and his wives, who, on a fine spring day, play in a pool and pour water over each other. When one of the queens tires of the game, she cries, “Mā udakay!” (Skt. O lord, don’t harass me with the water!) But as the king is not versed in Sanskrit grammar and the formation of compound words, he understands “Harass me with refreshing sweets,” and orders the servants to bring sweets. When his wives make fun of him because of his ignorance, he stops playing and retires to his palace deeply depressed. The rest of the story explains how the king, with supernatural help, manages to learn Sanskrit grammar within six months and becomes happy again.

The illustration “Shri Datta obtains a magical sword” (i), which was copied on folio 22a (fig. 22), was correctly identified by Toby Falk.62 As mentioned above, Shri Datta is usually called Ibn al-Dawla in the Persian version of the text. He was a gift (datta means “given”) of the goddess Shri to his father Kalanemi (hence the name Shri Datta), and, since “Dawla” is the Persian equivalent of “Shri,” his name is translated as Ibn al-Dawla.
The counterpart of the painting “Chandamahasena cuts off pieces of his own flesh” (m [fig. 9]) is found on folio 25b (fig. 23) and illustrates the story of King Mahasena of Ujjayini, who wishes to have a wife of noble lineage and a sword appropriate to the power of his arms. One day, he goes to a temple of Chandika (i.e., Durga) and delights the goddess by cutting flesh from his own body and sacrificing it in the fire. The goddess appears to him, gives him a sword, and predicts that he will soon marry the daughter of a powerful demon. Moreover, she orders that henceforth his name will be Chandamahasena.

The copy of “A man hides in an elephant skin” (b [fig. 2]) appears on folio 28b of Ms. I.O. 2410 (fig. 25); it has not, until now, been ascribed to a particular story. It is one of two pictures illustrating “The story of Rupinika,” in which the courtesan Rupinika falls in love with the poor brahman Lohazanga (the Persian transcription of Skt. Lohajanga) and turns down all other suitors. Her mother, the old procuress Makaradams, is annoyed at Rupinika’s connection to this have-not and finds a way to drive Lohazanga out of the house. While the unhappy brahman is wandering about, he comes to a desert and seeks shelter from the sun in the skin of a dead elephant whose intestines have been eaten by jackals. When Lohazanga falls asleep, it starts to rain heavily and the skin is carried away by the water into the sea, where a giant bird finds it and takes it to the island of Lanka (i.e., Sri Lanka). The scene depicted in our illustration shows the bird hastily flying away upon opening the skin and seeing the man. Since the king of Sarandib thought that Lohazanga was in league with powers from the hidden world (ʿālam-i ghayb), he tried to please him with precious gifts. One of them was a giant bird from the offspring of the Simurgh that finally brought the brahman back to his beloved and enabled him to teach her mother a lesson, as we see in the next drawing, on folio 30a (fig. 26).

Two pictures from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, “The tale of the cunning Siddhikari” and “The tale of Somaprabha” (c and d [figs. 3 and 4]), have been described at some length in an article by David T. Sanford and in the catalogue by Pratapaditya Pal. These scenes were copied onto folios 32b and 44a of Ms. I.O. 2410 (figs. 27 and 31), respectively. The painting “Episodes from the tale of the false ascetic” (f [fig. 6]), which was copied on fol. 37b (fig. 29) of Ms. I.O. 2410, is discussed in great detail by Joseph M. Dye in The Arts of India.

One of the original paintings formerly belonging to the Pan Asian Collection shows a fire-breathing man carrying a sword-wielding man on his shoulders (o [fig. 11]). If we compare this description with the drawings on folio 47a (fig. 32) of Ms. I.O. 2410, there is no doubt that it belongs to the story of the shrewd and courageous brahman Wideshaka, who, as a test of courage, repairs one night to a cemetery, where he beholds a religious mendicant (Skt. śramaṇa) using his magic power to make a corpse carry him to a temple. The legend on folio 47a reads: “The śramaṇa mounts the neck of the corpse, from whose mouth issue flames, and makes it carry him to a temple.” The sword in the hand of the monk is not mentioned in the text.

Another picture formerly in the Pan Asian Collection, “A woman holding court before female musicians and onlookers” (q [fig. 13]), can be assigned to the story of King Udayana; its counterpart in Ms. I.O. 2410 appears on folio 61a (fig. 35). After seeing very beautiful Vidyādhara women playing on wonderful musical instruments in a dream, the king’s consort, Basawadatta, wishes to see them in reality. To please the pregnant queen, the minister Yaugandarayana orders some women who look like Vidyādhara to make music for her.

A third illustration from the same collection, “A prince emerging from a huge fish” (p [fig. 12]), must have been cut out from a larger painting later copied on folio 72b (fig. 38), which depicts a scene from “The story of the Golden City.” In this tale, Shaktidewa is shipwrecked during his search for the Golden City and devoured by a giant fish, which is then caught by fishermen from the island of Utala. Since the fish is extraordinarily big, they drag it to Satibrata, the king of the island, who is highly astonished at the young man who emerges when the fish is cut open. In the illustration, we see Shaktidewa standing in the gutted fish, saluting the king on the shore.

A fragment from the Benkaim Collection (l [fig. 8]), which was generously made available for this publication, depicts a scene in the story of Ashokadatta; its
counterpart is found on fol. 75a of Ms. I.O. 2410 (fig. 40). In search of the mate for an anklet he once took from the horrible she-demon Bidyutshika, Ashokadatta once more encounters this consort of a rakshasa (Skt. rākṣasa [demon]) king, who offers him her daughter in marriage. Ashokadatta agrees to the marriage and flies with his mother-in-law to the Golden City of Trigantha, located on a peak of the Himalayan mountains. After living there comfortably for a while, he wishes to return to Benares. The Benkaim picture shows Ashokadatta bidding farewell to his wife and his mother-in-law, and obtaining two gifts from them: the desired anklet and a golden lotus. However, the painter took the liberty of deviating from the exact wording of the text, depicting an ordinary white lotus rather than a golden flower. Moreover, the anklet is not discernible; we can only assume that it is in the hand of Ashokadatta’s wife.

One of the most horrifying scenes of the Kathāsaritsāgara is to be found in the tale of the gambler Devadatta and the demon princess who cut open her abdomen to remove the embryo inside of her. This scene is depicted in “Episodes from the tale of Devadatta” (g [fig. 7]), and appears on fol. 81b of Ms. I.O. 2410 (fig. 44). The illustration has been described in detail by Joseph Dye.66

Next come fifteen drawings one after the other, for which the original paintings from Akbar’s imperial manuscript are no longer extant. It is not until fol. 125b (fig. 60) that we can recognize the inserted picture as a copy of a fragmentary page formerly in the Ehrenfeld Collection entitled “A king slays a mendicant as a god observes from the sky” (j).67 Based on the bits of text on the back, Ehnbom had suggested that this could have been an incident that occurred at the end of the tale of King Trivikramasena and a demon.68 As we can see now, though, it is actually an illustration of the story of King Bikramadita and a mendicant who wants to sacrifice the king in order to obtain magical powers. King Bikramadita is warned in a dream of what is to happen and cuts off the mendicant’s head with a stroke of his sword. After this, the “Lord of divine treasures” (i.e., Kubera) appears and grants him a favor.

The last fragment from the former Pan Asian Collection that can be identified, “Beheading of a man at court” (n [fig. 10]), depicts two incidents from “The story of King Chirayu and his minister, Nagarjuna,” found on folio 135a of Ms. I.O. 2410 (fig. 63). Well versed in pharmacology, King Chirayu’s wise minister Nagarjuna made an elixir of life that would allow him and the king to live a long life without illness. One day, the son of King Chirayu, Jiwahara, proudly tells his mother that his father has appointed him crown prince. But his mother explains to him that due to the longevity of his father, who is now eight hundred years old, he will have no chance to survive him and ascend to the throne. Nevertheless, she explains to her son that every day at noon Nagarjuna calls upon the poor to ask him for gifts. She says that he, Jiwahara, should go there and ask the minister for his head: since Nagarjuna promises to grant every wish, he will surely let the prince cut off his head. The mother assumes that after Nagarjuna’s death the king will die from sorrow or retire to the forest and Jiwahara will be free to ascend to the throne. Following his mother’s advice, the prince goes to see the minister the next day but is not able to cut his neck, which had been hardened by the elixir. When this news reaches King Chirayu, he rushes out and learns from Nagarjuna that the minister himself caused the delay in order to see the king one last time. The minister then sprinkles on the prince’s sword crumbs of a drug that he had prepared to reverse the effects of the elixir and the young man cuts off his head with one blow.

The first part of the story is depicted in the background: the young man and the older woman on the terrace must be Jiwahara and his mother hatching their plan to kill Nagarjuna. The second part takes place in the foreground: the plates, bowls, and cans to the right hint at the distribution of food to the poor in the house of the minister every day at noon. On the left-hand side, we see the king and his retinue. The beheaded Nagarjuna lies in the midst of the courtyard, while Jiwahara with his sword raised next to the corpse is easily recognizable as the assassin. The prince is thus depicted twice in this illustration.

Flying through the air with or without aid is a frequent theme in the Kathāsaritsāgara. In “The story of Parityagasena,” his son Indivarasena creates a large chariot that can fly through the air with the help of a magical sword that he received from the goddess Parvati. One day, Indivarasena places his golden pal-
ace, his two wives, and his brother in this chariot and returns to his home town, where people behold his landing with astonishment. This scene is depicted in the painting “Indivarasena, his wives Khadgadamstra and Madanamstra, and his younger brother Anicchasena travel magically to the city of Iravati” (k), which Daniel Ehnbom identified in his catalogue of the Ehrenfeld Collection. We find its pendant on folio 138b of Ms. I.O. 2410 (fig. 66).

The first picture in the list of extant paintings from Akbar’s manuscript found at the beginning of this article, “The raja whose guest asked him for 500 dinars daily” (a [fig. 1]), currently located in the San Diego Museum of Art, was thought to illustrate the story of the brahman Viravara, from the land of Malva, who demands this huge sum from the king every day. The basis of this interpretation was probably the text on the back of the picture. But as we can now see, this text belongs to the following story, the tale of King Lakadatta (Skt. Lakshadatta) and the beggar, whose name in the Sanskrit version is Labdhatta but who has no name in the Persian translation. This beggar waited patiently for five years at the gate of the royal palace, accompanying the king on the chase and into battle, where he always displayed his bravery. Nevertheless, Lakadatta bestowed no present on him. It is only at the beginning of the sixth year that the king remembers him, devising a special gift in the form of an orange (turunj) filled with jewels. However, the beggar does not recognize the value of the present and gives it away. The fruit finds its way back to the king, who delivers it again to the poor man. Only on the fourth attempt does the beggar become aware of the precious contents, when Lakadatta lets the orange drop so that the jewels pour out.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, it was the original illustrations of the Kathāsaritsāgara, scattered over a number of collections, that allowed us to identify Ms. I.O. 2410 as a copy of the imperial manuscript. That copy in turn gives us a sense of the extent and range of the lost illustrations and of the contents of the extant pictures that had not been identified until now. Nine original illustrations from Akbar’s Kathāsaritsāgara were identified in this article: illustrations (a), (b), (e), (h), (j), (l), (o), (p), and (q). In addition, I discovered that there is a second manuscript in the State Central Library Hyderabad/Deccan (Ms. 2642) containing the preface of the Persian editor and disclosing his name as Mustafa ibn Khaliqdad al-Hashimi al-ʿAbbasi.

At the beginning of this article, I stated that the original manuscript of the Persian version of the Kathāsaritsagāra had been made for Akbar. However, we should note that Joseph M. Dye expressed doubts concerning the imperial origin of the extant illustrations of the Kathāsaritsāgara. Comparing them with those made for the Harivamśa, he concluded that “these illustrations do lack the complexity, minute finish, and delicacy of documented imperial works from roughly the same period,” so that “possibly, this manuscript was produced for a late 16th century Mughal nobleman or courtier who wished to have a Persian translation of a Hindu text.”

With respect to the quality of the pictures, Dye may be right in his categorization of the Kathāsaritsāgara as a manuscript not of the highest standard. But this does not necessarily exclude its production at the Mughal court. After all, the efforts expended on the illustration of a manuscript bear a relation to its political use. It is not entirely coincidental that great efforts were made to illustrate historical manuscripts with distinct references to Akbar’s Timurid and Chingissid lineage in order to hint at his inherited right to sovereignty. Persian translations of the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana, which are normative religious works for the Hindu population, were of political importance as well. Showpiece manuscripts such as these, which were found in the Jaipur Palace Museum, possessed twofold importance: to the Muslim onlookers, they demonstrated the magnitude of the Mughal empire, comprising much more than only Muslim subjects, while for the Hindu noblemen, they gave proof that their cultural heritage was properly respected. The Kathāsaritsāgara, by contrast, was a collection of tales that was obviously not intended to be
a showpiece; rather, it was meant to be a private source of amusement, similar to the Dārāb-nāma or the Ḥiyār-i dānish.

Thanks to the preface by al-ʿAbbasi in the Hyderabad manuscript, we know that the present Kathāsaritsāgara was indeed translated for Akbar. Nothing in Ms. I.O. 2410 indicates that it was intended for a nobleman. Moreover, it would have been impossible for courtiers to have had a copy produced as long as there was no completely translated Persian text—as seems to have been the case here. It may be that Johnson’s copy breaks off in the middle of the ninth book because the rest of the work was lost. However, all the indications are that Akbar’s Kathāsaritsāgara was simply never finished. This supposition is all the more likely given the fact that the only other known manuscript of the Kathāsaritsāgara, in Hyderabad, ends at nearly the same passage in the ninth book.

Besides, Mustafa al-ʿAbbasi explains in his preface that he had been instructed to summarize the text that had already been translated into Persian by order of Zayn al-ʿAbidin. According to Badaʿuni, this was only the first part of the Kathāsaritsāgara, although he does not mention exactly how many books this first part comprises. The last book of the Kathāsaritsāgara was translated by Badaʿuni himself, although this seems to be lost now. Since al-ʿAbbasi does not mention any instructions to translate passages from the Ocean of Streams of Stories, there is thus far no indication that the eight and a half books missing between the text by al-ʿAbbasi and the last book translated by Badaʿuni have ever been rendered into Persian.

In addition to the textual evidence, there are also some pictorial clues leading to the same conclusion. Most of the extant original paintings, that is to say thirteen of the eighteen—(e), (h), (i), (m), (b), (c), (f), (d), (o), (q), (p), (l) and (g)—belong to the first part of the text edited by al-ʿAbbasi (up to folio 81); another three, (j), (n), and (k), follow between folios 125 and 138, and one (a) is from the last part of his text. The eighteenth painting, “Three figures and four attendants with books” (r), could not be identified without personal inspection. In spite of the uncertainty concerning the last-named picture, we may proceed on the assumption that all the original illustrations come from the available Persian translation by al-ʿAbbasi and that none belongs to a passage not contained in his text. Hence, there are two pieces of evidence that the Persian translation of the Kathāsaritsāgara was never completed beyond the ninth book: first, the texts of the two known manuscripts end at nearly the same point in the ninth book, and second, we have no original pictures illustrating a passage beyond this book.

We know now of only one, incomplete, Persian version of the Kathāsaritsāgara, which was begun for Akbar but never finished. Consequently, it is very likely that the extant original paintings discussed above were likewise produced in the imperial workshop.

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APPENDIX

The folios and illustrations of the manuscript in the India Office Library (Ms. I.O. 2410) are no longer in their original order. Approximately four folios are missing at the beginning. To avoid confusion, I have followed the current numbering; hence, the first folio of the manuscript is regarded as folio 1a. The following list enumerates the folios in their correct sequence: folios 1a–16b; folio 163; folios 17a–162b; folios 174a–188b; folios 164a–173b; folio 189. The catchword on folio 16b is wrong: it points to page 17a in the manuscript whereas in fact it should be followed by folio 163. After folios 89, 163, and 185, one folio is missing. The end of the printed text corresponds with folio 173b. Folio 189, which is not part of the Persian edition by Chand and ʿAbidi, contains figure 84.

Some of the drawings are attached to the wrong page: figure 64 should be on folio 136b but is actually found on folio 137b; figure 65 belongs on folio 137b but is attached instead to folio 141b; finally, figure 67, on folio 136b, actually illustrates the text on folio 141b.

In the Persian translation edited by Chand and ʿAbidi, the numbering of the chapters (mawj) starts anew in each book (nahr). To facilitate their location, the chapters in the list below are numbered continuously, as they are in the English and German translations by Tawney and Mehlig, respectively. The captions are taken from the translations by Tawney and Mehlig; in the Persian
version, the beginning of each tale is either not marked at all or just by a short hikāyat (story) by way of a title.

The Illustrations of Ms. I.O. 2410

The following list provides the reader who is already familiar with the contents of the stories with brief descriptions of what is depicted in the images. The information in the second line refers to the relevant passages in the text, i.e., where the scene depicted can be found in the Persian text edited by Chand and ‘Abidi (henceforth “Persian ed.”), the English translation by Tawney, and the German translation by Mehlig.

A picture usually depicts the episode in the immediately preceding text, although in some cases the drawings refer to later passages of the book, e.g., figures 33, 47, and 77. Occasionally, various scenes of the illustrated story are depicted in one and the same picture. Longer explanations will be provided below only in instances where the contents of the illustrations do not reflect the substance of the text.

The names of persons and locations are transcribed as the Persian text relates them: for example, the Sanskrit \( v \) appears as a \( b \). In cases where the Sanskrit writing is no longer discernible, it is inserted in brackets to aid the reader. All measurements should be understood as height by width.

1. Fol. 2b, 16.7 x 13.1 cm (fig. 14)
Persian ed., 20; Tawney, 1:19; Mehlig, 19.
Book I (Katāpitha), chapter 3
“The founding of the city of Pataliputra”
After enquiring about the origin and family of three brahman brothers, the brahman Bochika gives them his three daughters in marriage.

2. Fol. 4b, 28.2 x 19.2 cm, two text panels in the picture (fig. 15)
Persian ed., 25; Tawney, 1:23; Mehlig, 23.
Book I, chapter 3
“The founding of the city of Pataliputra” (continued)
With the help of his magic shoes, King Putraka flies up to the palace to see Patali, the beautiful daughter of the governor.

The central part of the original illustration (e [fig. 5]) is kept in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

3. Fol. 7a, 30.5 x 18.8 cm, one text panel in the picture (fig. 16)
Persian ed., 30; Tawney, 1:35–36; Mehlig, 32.
Book I, chapter 4
“The story of Upakosha, the wife of Vararuci, and her four lovers”
During a royal audience, Upakosha invokes her “household gods” to be witnesses against the merchant Hiranyakupta. After the four men who tried to seduce Upakosha are freed from the box in which the clever woman had managed to confine them, they stand with their hands in fetters and heads bowed in front of the king.

4. Fol. 11a, 28.5 x 19.6 cm, two text panels in the picture (fig. 17)
Persian ed., 40; Tawney, 1:53; Mehlig, 44.
Book I, chapter 5
Part of the story of Shivabarma
Prince Hiranyakupta betrays his friend, the monkey, to the lion and tries to throw him off a tree.

5. Fol. 15a, 29.5 x 18.2 cm, two text panels in the picture (fig. 18)
Persian ed., 49; Tawney, 1:69; Mehlig, 58.
Book I, chapter 6
“The story of King Satabahana”
King Satabahana and his wives play happily in a pool in the magic garden.

The central part of the original illustration (h) is preserved in a private collection.

6. Fol. 18b, 17.9 x 17.6 cm (fig. 19)
Persian ed., 63; Tawney, 1:95; Mehlig, 77–78.
Book II (Katāmukha), chapter 9
“The story of Sahasranika, father of King Udayana”
Through his messenger, King Shatanika promises that he will help Indra in a battle and commits his son Sahasranika and the kingdom to the care of his principal minister and his commander-in-chief. It seems that the man kneeling on the seat opposite King Shatanika is Indra’s messenger, while the young man performing the taslim (a special form of greeting the emperor in Mughal India) in front of the dais may be the king’s son Sahasranika.
7. Fol. 19b, 19.7 x 13.8 cm (fig. 20)
Persian ed., 65; Tawney, 1:98; Mehlig, 81.
Book II, chapter 9
“The story of Udayana”
Sahasranika’s pregnant consort, Mrigawati, is carried off by a giant bird (jānwar, lit. “animal”) from a tank filled with red dye, and the king falls down fainting.

8. Fol. 21b, 19.5 x 13.2 cm (fig. 21)
Persian ed., 69; Tawney, 1:107–8; Mehlig, 87.
Book II, chapter 10
“The story of Shri Datta (i.e., Ibn al-Dawla) and Mrigawati”
When trying to save a woman from drowning in the Ganga, the young Ibn al-Dawla is pulled into the depths and suddenly turns up in a garden near a temple of Mahadeva.

9. Fol. 22a, 16.1 x 13.7 cm (fig. 22)
Persian ed., 70; Tawney, 1:109; Mehlig, 88.
Book II, chapter 10
“The story of Ibn al-Dawla”
In order to help the daughter of the demon king Bali, Ibn al-Dawla kills a lion, who was actually an enchanted Yaksha (a nature spirit or low-ranking god), and in return obtains a sword to conquer the world.

A number of soldiers sent by King Chandamahasaena emerge from an artificial elephant and capture King Udayana.

11. Fol. 27a, 16.8 x 15.9 cm (fig. 24)
Persian ed., 82; Tawney, 1:134; Mehlig, 110.
Book II, chapter 12
“The story of King Udayana” (continued)

12. Fol. 28b, 29.6 x 18.8 cm, two text panels in the picture (fig. 25)
Persian ed., 85; Tawney, 1:142; Mehlig, 117.
Book II, chapter 12
“The story of Rupinika”
Lohazanga (Skt. Lohajanga), a young brahman, crawls out of an elephant’s hide that was carried by a giant bird to the island of Lanka.

13. Fol. 30a, 17.2 x 13.7 cm (fig. 26)
Persian ed., 88; Tawney, 1:147; Mehlig, 122.
Book II, chapter 12
“The story of Rupinika” (continued)
The procuress Makaradams, who has been fooled by Lohazanga, waits on a high column in front of a temple to be brought into paradise by Vishnu. We see Makaradams, as the text describes, with a necklace of skulls (ustukhān-hā dar rishta), waiting atop the column. Lohazanga, dressed as Vishnu, appears to stand at the bottom of the column.

14. Fol. 32b, 16.4 x 13.6 cm (fig. 27)
Persian ed., 94; Tawney, 1:157–58; Mehlig, 131–32.
Book II, chapter 13
“The cunning Siddikari”
The clever Siddhikari stole the treasures of a merchant from Khurasan. On her way home, she duces a thief into hanging himself. Afterwards, she fools the servant of the merchant: believing her oath of love, he wants to kiss her, but she bites off his tongue. When the horrified merchant sees the dead man and his bleeding servant, he thinks that this must be the work of a demon and gives up pursuing her further.

The central part of the original illustration (b [fig. 2]) is kept in the San Diego Museum of Art.

The original illustration (i) is kept in a private collection.

The original illustration (m [fig. 9]) is part of a private collection.

The original illustration (c [fig. 3]) is kept in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The drawing in Ms. I.O. 2410 is the mirror image of the original.
15. Fol. 34b, 19.6 x 13.1 cm (fig. 28)
Persian ed., 98; Tawney, 1:163; Mehlig, 137–38.
Book II, chapter 13
“The story of Dewasmita”
In an assembly of all the subjects, Dewasmita asks the king to hand over the four slaves who have escaped from her.

16. Fol. 37b, 15.5 x 12.8 cm (fig. 29)
Persian ed., 108–9; Tawney, 2:5; Mehlig, 151.
Book III (Lavanaka), chapter 15
“The story of the hypocritical ascetic”
An ascetic who wishes to smuggle the beautiful daughter of a merchant inside a chest into the cell of his monastery finds not the girl inside but a furious monkey, which bites off his nose and tears off his ears. Meanwhile, the daughter of the merchant enjoys herself with a young prince on a boat.

Unlike the Sanskrit text, the Persian version mentions the barque (kishtā) of the prince. The original illustration (f [fig. 6]) is kept in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

17. Fol. 41b, 18.6 x 12.8 cm (fig. 30)
Persian ed., 118; Tawney, 2:29; Mehlig, 169.
Book III, chapter 16
“The story of King Udayana” (continued)
After a long separation, King Udayana and his consort, Basavadatta, happily embrace in the house of Basavadatta’s brother, Gopalaka.

18. Fol. 44a, 12.4 x 13.5 cm (fig. 31)
Persian ed., 124; Tawney, 2:42–43; Mehlig, 180.
Book III, chapter 17
“The story of Somaprabha”
Every night, the celestial nymph Mah-para-i (Skt. Somaprabha) meets another nymph and listens to heavenly music with her. With the help of the fire-god Agni, Somaprabha’s curious husband finds out where she goes each night. They change themselves into bees and watch her nightly activities.

The original illustration (d [fig. 4]) is found in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

19. Fol. 47a, 13.1 x 13.4 cm (fig. 32)
Persian ed., 132; Tawney, 2:62; Mehlig, 199.
Book III, chapter 18
“The story of Wideshaka”
By his magic power, a religious mendicant (shramana) forces a corpse to carry him to a temple.

The original illustration (o [fig. 11]) formerly belonged to the Pan Asian Collection.

20. Fol. 54a, 15.9 x 13.5 cm (fig. 33)
Persian ed., 152; Tawney, 2:104; Mehlig, 240–41.
Book III, chapter 20
“Kubalayawali and the witch Kalaratri”
The details in the picture do not match the immediately preceding text. What we see is presumably Kubalayawali and two demons devouring the flesh of a corpse in front of them. A young man hides behind some trees. This must be Sundaraka, although he only appears in subsequent stories.

21. Fol. 56a, 15 x 13.1 cm (fig. 34)
Persian ed., 156; Tawney, 2:110–11; Mehlig, 243–44.
Book III, chapter 20
“Sundaraka and the witches”
Sundaraka flies through the air with the royal palace until he reaches Prayaga. When he sees a king bathing in the Ganga, he stops and plunges into the river.

22. Fol. 61a, 9.6 x 13.5 cm (fig. 35)
Persian ed., 172; Tawney, 2:138; Mehlig, 264.
Book IV (Narabāhanadattajanana), chapter 22
“The story of Udayana” (continued)
In order to please the pregnant Basawadatta, the minister Yaugandarayana tells some women who look like Vidyādhara to play all sorts of musical instruments.

The original illustration (q [fig. 13]) formerly belonged to the Pan Asian Collection.

23. Fol. 65a, 13.5 x 13.3 cm (fig. 36)
Persian ed., 182; Tawney, 2:154; Mehlig, 282–83.
Book IV, chapter 22
“The story of Jimutabahana”
The Garuda (Pers. garura ya’ni simurgh) devours Jimutabahana, the king of the Vidyādhara, who had assumed the form of a serpent. Jimutabahana sacrifices himself for Shankasuda, who also demands to be consumed.
Book V (Chaturdarika), chapter 24
“The story of King Udayana and his son Narabahanadatta” (continued)
The king of the Vidyādhara, Shaktibega, appears in front of King Udayana and his consort, Basawadatta, to see Prince Narabahanadatta.

Book V, chapter 25
“The story of the Golden City (Kanakapuri)”
Fishermen from the island of Uṭala (Skt. Utsthala) catch a large fish. When they cut it open in front of their king, Shaktidewa, who later receives the name Shaktibega, emerges from its belly alive.

The original illustration formerly belonged to the Pan Asian Collection (p [fig. 12]).

Book V, chapter 25
“The story of Ashokadatta and Bijayadatta”
Ashokadatta, the son of a brahman, unintentionally helps the female demon Bidyutshika to eat a corpse. Enraged by this, he wants to kill her, but she extricates herself from his grip and only her jewelled anklet remains in his hands.

Book V, chapter 25
“The story of Ashokadatta” (continued)
Ashokadatta bids farewell to his wife and her mother, Bidyutshika, and obtains the desired anklet, as well as a golden lotus.

The original illustration (l [fig. 8]) is part of the Catherine and Ralph Benkaim Collection.

While Ashokadatta is gathering golden lotuses from the lake of King Kapalaswat (Skt. Kapalasphota), the rakṣasa king appears and, upon seeing him, remembers his former brahman incarnation as Ashokadatta’s brother Bijayadatta. He gets back his human shape and falls at his brother’s feet.

Book V, chapter 26
“The story of the Golden City” (continued)
In the palace of Candraprabha, Shaktidewa discovers mysterious resting places where three of the princess’s sisters lie. When he leaves the palace, he sees a beautifully saddled horse near a pond, but while attempting to mount the horse, he is thrown into the water.

The original illustration (g [fig. 7]) is kept in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

Book VI (Madanamanchuka), chapter 27
“The story of the merchant’s son in Takšíla”
In order to teach him a lesson, the king of Takšiša makes the son of a merchant walk around the city with a vessel filled to the brim with oil. If he happened to spill so much as one drop, the two men following him with drawn swords had orders to kill him instantly.
Book VI, chapter 28
“The story of Kalingadatta, king of Takshila”
Disappointed that his wife bore him a daughter, King Kalingadatta seeks comfort in a temple of Buddha and listens to the religious speech of a monk.

34. Fol. 90a, 18.7 x 12.9 cm (fig. 47)
Persian ed., 244; Tawney, 3:40; Mehlig, 399.

Book VI, chapter 29
“The story of Kalingadatta” (continued)
Somapraba, the daughter of the demon Maya, makes friends with Kalingasena. To please her, she brings a chest full of dolls that move with the help of her knowledge of magic.

The illustration does not exactly match the preceding text, since the attendance of the king during the performance of Somaprabha’s magic tricks occurs later in the text.

35. Fol. 93a, 15.6 x 13.6 cm (fig. 48)
Persian ed., 252; Tawney, 3:52–53; Mehlig, 411.

Book VI, chapter 29
“The story of Kirtisena”
Having overheard the words of a female demon, Kirtisena, dressed as a man, figures out how to free King Basudatta from the centipedes in his head with the help of a tube and a vessel of cold water.

36. Fol. 97b, 25.6 x 14 cm (fig. 49)

Book VI, chapter 31
“The story of Usha and Aniruddha”
Usha recognizes among the pictures painted by her friend Chitraleka the man whom she will marry.

37. Fol. 100b, 19 x 12.8 cm (fig. 50)
Persian ed., 271; Tawney, 3:96; Mehlig, 441.

Book VI, chapter 32
“The story of the brahman’s son Bishnudatta and his seven foolish companions”
On their way to the town of Walabi, Bishnudatta and his companions have to spend the night at the house of a young woman. Two murders occur and the eight brahmans are in danger of being held responsible. Bishnudatta, however, manages to convict the young woman of this twofold murder.

The two decapitated corpses on the terrace of the house are inconsistent with the wording and the logic of the story, according to which the woman had buried her lover in an ash heap. Hence, there can only be one body on the terrace.

38. Fol. 104a, 11.2 x 12.7 cm (fig. 51)
Persian ed., 283; Tawney, 3:116ff; Mehlig, 461.

Book VI, chapter 33
“The story of King Shrutasena”
The brahman Agnisharma is warned by seven brahmans not to behold the beautiful Princess Bidutidyota (Skt. Vidyuddyota), because if even a hermit looks at her, he will become a prisoner of the god of love (Pers. sulțan-i 'ishq).

39. Fol. 105b, 28.2 x 19.7 cm (fig. 52)
Persian ed., 283; Tawney, 3:117; Mehlig, 461.

Book VI, chapter 33
“The story of the weasel, the owl, the cat, and the mouse”
The weasel, the owl, the cat, and the mouse all live in a tree, which is depicted together with all the animals mentioned in the right margin of the folio. A farmer ploughing occupies the margin below the text.

40. Fol. 106a, 7.3 x 13.2 cm (fig. 53)
Persian ed., 292; Tawney, 3:134; Mehlig, 476.

Book VI, chapter 34
“The story of Birupacha”
The god of wealth, Bayshrawana (Skt. Kubera-Vaishravana), curses his servant Birupacha to be reborn as a mortal, since by his order some brahmans were slaughtered.

Some elements of the illustration can not be reliably identified: in the foreground we see a number of big-bellied vessels, doubtlessly containing the treasures of
Bayshrawana. Behind them are the brahmans being killed by a demon with his sword. The god is visible on the right side of the picture. However, the two brahmans to the left of Kubera and the two demons on the right side of the god pose some problems. They are possibly Birupacha and his servant, depicted first in demon form and then in the human shape they had to assume after the god had cursed them.

42. Fol. 111a, 17.2 x 19.4 cm (fig. 55)
Persian ed., 295; Tawney, 3:138; Mehlig, 482.
Book VI, chapter 34
“The story of King Udayana and his son Narabhanadatta” (continued)
By her magic skills Somapraba creates a heavenly garden as a wedding present for Narabahanadatta and Madanamanchuka, the daughter of Kalingasena. King Udayana, his consort, and the ministers arrive. They are received by Kalingasena.

43. Fol. 114a, 14 x 12.7 cm (fig. 56)
Persian ed., 302; Tawney, 3:147; Mehlig, 493.
Book VI, chapter 34
“The story of King Udayana and his son Narabhanadatta” (continued)
The wedding ceremony of Narabahanadatta and Madanamanchuka, the human incarnations of the god of love and his heavenly consort, Rati. They will one day return to heaven in their godly forms.

44. Fol. 116b, 10.4 x 13.2 cm (fig. 57)
Persian ed., 310; Tawney, 3:162; Mehlig, 502.
Book VII (Ratnapraba), chapter 35
“The brave King Bikramatunga”
Dattasharma, the son of a brahman, tries to demonstrate to King Bikramatunga how he makes gold out of copper with the help of a special powder. However, all his attempts fail, because an invisible demon keeps taking it away.

Contrary to what is described in the text, Dattasharma turns around to look at the demon, who hurries off, although only King Bikramatunga has the ability to see him.

45. Fol. 119a, 10.5 x 13.1 cm (fig. 58)
Persian ed., 315; Tawney, 3:171; Mehlig, 512.

Book VII, chapter 36
“The story of King Ratnadit (Skt. Ranadhipati) and the white elephant”
The king’s flying elephant is severely injured by a Simurgh and can only recover if a chaste woman touches it with her hand. However, none of the eighty thousand royal wives helps to cure him.

46. Fol. 122a, 6.4 x 13.2 cm (fig. 59)
Persian ed., 324; Tawney, 3:187; Mehlig, 526.
Book VII, chapter 37
“The story of Nishchayadatta”
Nishchayadatta, the son of a merchant, and four beggars spend the night in an empty temple. A female demon approaches some beggars and by her charms and music playing on the kinnara (an ancient Indian string instrument) turns one of them into a ram.

47. Fol. 125b, 8.8 x 13.7 cm (fig. 60)
Persian ed., 335; Tawney, 3:211; Mehlig, 545.
Book VII, chapter 38
“The story of King Bikramadita and the treacherous mendicant”
In order to obtain magical powers, a mendicant wants to sacrifice the king. But King Bikramadita is warned in a dream and cuts off the head of the mendicant with a stroke of his sword. After this, the “Lord of divine treasures” (i.e., Kubera) appears and grants him a favor.

The whereabouts of the original illustration (j) are unknown to the author.

48. Fol. 133a, 11.5 x 12.8 cm (fig. 61)
Persian ed., 355; Tawney, 3:245; Mehlig, 579.
Book VII, chapter 40
“The story of King Bilasashila and the physician Tarunachanda”
The personnel of the royal household and the dignitaries of the kingdom pay their respects to the “rejuvenated” king who sits together with Tarunachanda in an underground cave.

49. Fol. 133b, 15.4 x 19.7 cm (fig. 62)
Persian ed., 356; Tawney, 3:247–48; Mehlig, 582.
Book VII, chapter 40
“The story of King Bilasashila and the physician Tarunachanda” (continued)
Tarunachanda discovers a corpse suspended from a fig tree. Raindrops falling on the corpse and flowing into the river turn into golden lotuses.

50. Fol. 135a, 11.2 x 13.1 cm (fig. 63)
Persian ed., 360; Tawney, 3:255–56; Mehlig, 588.
Book VII, chapter 41
“The story of King Chirayu and his minister, Nagarjuna”
After consulting his mother (in the background), the crown prince Jivahara asks the generous minister, Nagarjuna, for his head; the minister indeed gives him permission to cut it off (in the foreground).

The original illustration (n [fig. 10]) is part of a private collection.

51. Fol. 137b, 12.1 x 14.4 cm (fig. 64)
Persian ed., 364; Tawney, 3:262; Mehlig, 593.
The illustration corresponding to the text on this page (folio 137b) is found on folio 141b (legend: kushtan Narabahanadatta shēr-rā). The picture we see here (on folio 137b) was intended for folio 136b.

52. Fol. 141b, 8.3 x 13.5 cm (fig. 65)
Persian ed., 367; Tawney, 3:268–69; Mehlig, 600.
The picture on this page corresponds to the text on folio 137b.

By the power of his magic sword, Indivarasena creates a large chariot that can fly through the air. He places his golden palace, his two wives, and his brother in it and returns to his home town, where the people behold his landing with wonder.

The whereabouts of the original illustration (k) are unknown to the author.78

54. Fol. 136b, 15.9 x 19.4 cm (fig. 67)
Persian ed., 378; Tawney, 3:289; Mehlig, 617.
The drawing on folio 137b should be inserted here, while the picture on this page (folio 136b) illustrates the text on folio 141b and belongs there.

55. Fol. 143b, 10.3 x 13.2 cm (fig. 68)
Persian ed., 382; Tawney, 3:295; Mehlig, 625.
Book VII, chapter 43
“The story of Arthalobha and his wife, Manapara”
The king and Manapara observe the battle between the merchant Sukhadhara (Skt. Sukhadhana) and the avaricious royal doorkeeper Arthalobha. Arthalobha is thrown out of the saddle and carried off the battlefield by two of his servants.

56. Fol. 147b, 11.5 x 12.7 cm (fig. 69)
Persian ed., 394–95; Tawney, 4:11; Mehlig, 643.
Book VIII (Surajpraba [Skt. Suryaprabha]), chapter 44
“The story of Surajpraba”
In a duel with the Vidyādhara Damodara, King Surajpraba vanquishes his enemy. However, before he can cut off his head, the god Narayana (i.e., Vishnu) appears and stops him. The text gives no hint as to the identity of the gods fighting in the sky.

57. Fol. 148b, 12.8 x 13.6 cm (fig. 70)
Persian ed., 397; Tawney, 4:17; Mehlig, 647.
Book VIII, chapter 45
“The story of Surajpraba” (continued)
King Chandrapraba, his son Surajpraba, and all his ministers have gathered in the assembly hall, when suddenly the ground splits open and the asura (demon) king Maya rises from the crevice.
A friend of King Mahasena named Gunasharma can tell by the sound of a sāz (Skt. Vīnā) that the hair of a dog is hidden inside one of the strings. In order to prove this, he wets the string and twirls it until the dog hair comes out.

The appearance of Maya, who looks like a boy, does not really match the words of the text, where he is described as being "very tall" (Pers. bā qāmatī bas buland).

The pictorial representation precedes the textual one. Immediately under the illustration we read: "Maha-maya slew Kuberadatta, who sometimes assumed the form of a serpent and sometimes that of a mountain; at other times he looked like a tree, and occasionally like a Simurgh, like a thunderbolt (Pers. bagra, Skt. vajra), the weapon of Indra, or like a fire."

Indeed we can see a snake, a little mountain, a tree, and a Simurgh in the upper left-hand corner of the drawing. The right half of the illustration is occupied by a group of men armed with swords, bows, and arrows, while some armed demons stand in the left front. Presumably, these two groups represent the gods and demons mentioned in the text. The identity of the young woman who steps between the two armies and announces something there is uncertain. She may be Siddhi, a sister of Danu (consort of the Rishi Kashyapa). She is mentioned only some pages later (Persian ed., p. 458), when she appeals to the gods and demons in the name of Danu to prevent war between them.
After a beggar has waited patiently for five years at the gate of the royal palace, the king finally presents him with an orange \((\text{turunj})\) filled with jewels. However, the beggar does not recognize the value of the present and gives it away. The fruit finds its way back to the king, who delivers it again to the poor man. Only on the fourth attempt does the beggar become aware of the precious contents, when Lakadatta lets the orange drop so that the jewels spill out.

The original illustration (a [fig. 1]) is kept in the San Diego Museum of Art.

65. Fol. 184b, 13.2 x 12.8 cm (fig. 78)
Persian ed., 458; Tawney, 4:114; Mehlig, 753.
Book VIII, chapter 50
“The story of Surajpraba” (continued)
Mahadeva (i.e., Shiva) declares Surajpraba sovereign of the \(\text{Vidyādhara}\) in the southern world, while Shrutasharma is given the northern half. They thus both obtain a throne.

66. Fol. 188b, 14.4 x 13.2 cm (fig. 79)
Persian ed., 471; Tawney, 4:129–30; Mehlig, 772.
Book IX (\(\text{Alankaravati}\)), chapter 51
“The story of Rama and Sita”

A warrior who wants to marry King Mahabaraha’s daughter impresses everyone with his heroic deeds: one day he kills a mad elephant, the following day two lions.

67. Fol. 165b, 11.9 x 12.8 cm (fig. 80)
Persian ed., 481; Tawney, 4:146–47; Mehlig, 792–93.
Book IX, chapter 52
“The story of King Mahabaraha’s daughter and her four suitors”

The old king Sagaradatta (Skt. Sagaravarman) and his wife go to Payag (Skt. Prayaga) to settle down in this holy place. Their son escorts them and returns to his city afterwards. It seems that the king is depicted two times: once as a bearded man, still in his royal dress, bidding farewell to his son while standing in the court of a castle, and a second time at the bottom right, in very simple clothing, sitting on the banks of the Ganga.

68. Fol. 169b, 14 x 12.8 cm (fig. 81)
Persian ed., 492; Tawney, 4:165; Mehlig, 814.
Book IX, chapter 52
“The story of King Mahabaraha’s daughter”

Chamarabala is in a battle against five kings: King Samarajita (on his horse, on the left side) has already been captured, while king Pratabachandra lies fatally wounded on his horse.

69. Fol. 171a, 12.9 x 13.2 cm (fig. 82)
Persian ed., 496; Tawney, 4:172; Mehlig, 821–22.
Book IX, chapter 53
“The story of King Lakadatta (Skt. Lakshadatta) and the beggar”

While hunting, Narabahanadatta, Gomuka, and the brahman Pralanba (Skt. Pralambabahu) arrive at a large pond with golden lotuses. After taking a bath, they meet four men in beautiful clothes from the island of Narikela (on the left).

On the right side of the picture there is a group of armed men. They seem to be members of the hunting party, although, according to the text, they had been separated from the prince and hence should not be seen here.

70. Fol. 173a, 13.8 x 12.8 cm (fig. 83)
Persian ed., 501; Tawney, 4:184; Mehlig, 833.
Book IX, chapter 54
“The story of Prince Narabahanadatta” (continued)

Chamarabala is in a battle against five kings: King Samarajita (on his horse, on the left side) has already been captured, while king Pratabachandra lies fatally wounded on his horse.
Fig. 14. The brahman Bochika promising his daughters to three brothers. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 2b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 15. King Putraka in the palace of the beautiful Patali. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 4b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 16. Upakosha charging the four men who tried to seduce her. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 7a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 17. Prince Hiranyakagupta and his friend, the monkey, in a tree. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 11a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 18. King Satabahana and his wives in a pool. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsārītṣāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 15a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 19. King Shatanika and Indra's messenger. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsārītṣāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 18b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 20. Queen Mrigawati carried off by a giant bird. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsārītṣāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 19b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 21. Ibn al-Dawla’s adventures with the granddaughter of the demon king. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsārītṣāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 21b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 22. Ibn al-Dawla killing a lion and obtaining a sword to conquer the world. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 22a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 23. King Mahasena offering his own flesh to the goddess Chandika. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 25b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 24. The soldiers of King Chandamahasena emerging from an artificial elephant. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 27a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 25. Lohazanga on the island of Lanka. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 28b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 27. The cunning Siddikari. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 32b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 28. Dewasmita and her four slaves. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 34b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 29. The story of the hypocritical ascetic. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 37b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 30. King Udayana and his consort meeting after a long separation. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 41b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 31. Mah-para-i and a celestial nymph listening to music. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 44a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 32. A religious mendicant forces a corpse to carry him to a temple. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 47a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 33. Kubalayawali and two demons devouring the flesh of a corpse. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 54a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 34. Sundaraka and the flying palace. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 56a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 35. The pregnant Basawadatta pleased by musicians. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 61a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 36. The Garuda devours the king of the Vidyādhara. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 65a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 37. The Vidyādhara king in front of King Udayana and his consort. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 68b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 38. King Shaktidewa emerging from the belly of a large fish. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 72b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 39. Ashokadatta with the anklet of a female demon. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 74a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 40. Ashokadatta with a golden lotus. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 75a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 41. Ashokadatta meeting his long-lost brother. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 76a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 42. Shaktidewa flying past the Bar tree above the fiery abyss. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 78a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 43. Shaktidewa in the mysterious palace of Candra-prabha. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 79a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 44. Dewadatta and the embryo of the demon princess. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 81b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 45. A lesson for a merchant’s son in Takshila. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 83b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 46. King Kalingadatta in a temple. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 86b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 47. Somaprabha magically moving her dolls. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 90a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 48. Kirtisena freeing King Basudatta from the centipedes in his head. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 93a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 49. Usha and the pictures painted by her friend Chitraleka. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 97b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 50. Bishnudatta and his seven companions in the house of a murderess. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 100b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 51. Seven brahmans warning Agnisharma against beholding the princess. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 104a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 52. A weasel, an owl, a cat, and a mouse living in a tree. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 105b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 53. The cat in the hunter’s noose. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 106a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 54. The god of wealth and his servant, who killed some brahmans. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 109b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 55. The heavenly garden of Somapraba. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 111a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 56. The wedding ceremony of Narabahanadatta and Madanamanchuka. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 114a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 57. A demon defeating Dattasharma’s attempts to make gold. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 116b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 58. An elephant that can be healed only by a chaste woman. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 119a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 59. A female demon changing a traveller into a ram. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 122a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 60. King Bikramadita killing a deceitful mendicant. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 125b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 61. The “rejuvenated” king in an underground cave. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 133a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 62. Tarunachanda discovering a corpse suspended from a fig tree. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 133b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 63. The generous minister Nagarjuna decapitated by the crown prince. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 135a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 64. Narabahanadatta killing a lion. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 137b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 65. Indivarasena cutting off the head of the demon Jamadamsha. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 141b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 66. Indivarasena, his wives, and his brother in a flying chariot. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 138b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 67. The story of Arthalobha and his wife, Manapara. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 136b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 68. The wedding ceremony of Narabahanadatta and Karpurika. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 143b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 69. Narayana preventing Surajpraba from killing Damodara. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, Kathāsaritsāgara. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 147b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 70. The asura (demon) king Maya appearing before King Chandrapraba. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 148b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 71. Chandrapraba and Surajpraba visiting King Bali in the underworld. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 152a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 72. Surajpraba on his throne while the gods look down from the clouds. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 156a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 73. Surajpraba seizing the fire-breathing dragon. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 158a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 74. Gods and demons fighting over the nectar of immortality. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 161a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 75. Gunasharma finding a hair of a dog in the strings of a sāz. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 178a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 76. Gunasharma fighting against the royal guards. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 180b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 77. A battle between humans and the Vidyādhara. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 183a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 78. Surajpraba and Shrutasharma, the king of the north and the king of the south. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 184b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 79. Kusha meeting Rama and Lachmana for the first time. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 188b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 80. A warrior impressing King Mahabaraha with his heroic deeds. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 165b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)

Fig. 81. The old king, Sagaradatta, and his wife settling down in Prayaga. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 169b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
Fig. 82. King Lakadatta giving an orange filled with jewels to a beggar. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 171a. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)


Fig. 84. Chamarabala in a battle against five kings. Somadeva Bhaṭṭa, *Kathāsaritsāgara*. London, British Library, Ms. I.O. 2410, fol. 189b. (Photo: courtesy of the British Library)
NOTES

Author’s note: This article is in part a result of the research project “Indo-Persische Übersetzungsliteratur” located at the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Institute of Indology (Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg) and sponsored by the German Research Foundation.


2. A. C. Ardeshir, “Mughal Miniature Painting (with Illustrations from the Collection of Mr. A. C. Ardeshar [sic] of Bombay),” *Roopa-Lekha* 1, 2 (1940): 19–34.


4. Prof. John Seyller kindly drew my attention to the Ehrenfeld Collection and the two illustrations of the Kathāsaritsāgara in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Moreover, he informed me of a picture in the Benkaim Collection (the one labelled (l) in the list provided at the beginning of this article) and six originals formerly belonging to the Pan Asian Collection (m–r) that were sold to a private collector around 1983.

5. Binney, *Indian Miniature Painting*, 50, no. 26b. Note that the titles of the eighteen illustrations from the imperial manuscript are provided here in accordance with the way they are identified in the catalogues and articles in which they are mentioned. In cases where these titles are either wrong or imprecise, they have been altered in the captions to more accurately reflect the contents of the paintings.

6. Ibid., no. 26a.


11. Ibid., no. 82.


14. Daniel J. Ehnbom, *Indian Miniatures: The Ehrenfeld Collection* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, in association with the American Federation of Arts, 1985), 40–41, no. 11. The Ehrenfeld Collection has been dispersed. This item was sold by Sotheby’s on June 16, 2009 as sale LO9724. I thank Prof. Seyller, who kindly provided this information.

15. Ibid., 40–41, no. 10.

16. I would like to thank Prof. Seyller for the information he provided on the measurements and descriptions.

17. Description and measurements by Prof. Seyller.


19. Description and measurements by Prof. Seyller.


21. Description and measurements by Prof. Seyller.

22. Description and measurements by Prof. Seyller.

23. Description and measurements by Prof. Seyller.

24. Description and measurements by Prof. Seyller.

25. See n. 18 above.


34. Ibid., 9:117.
35. Concerning the guideline of Dandin that a mahākāvyya is always to start with a benediction, cf. Mylius, Altindische Literatur, 161.
37. Ibid., 2:801.
38. Ibid., 2:797–800, with reference to a story translated in 2:552f.
42. Ibid., 63–64.
43. Ethé, Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts, vol. 1, no. 1987. I am grateful to Dr. Ursula Sims-Williams, Curator of the Iranian Collections in the British Library, who sent me two photos that show Johnson’s ex libris as well as his inscription on one of the endpapers of the book, which reads “copied from Col. Martin’s copy.”
45. Llewellyn-Jones, Man of the Enlightenment, 96, 367. Unfortunately, the 94-page inventory of Claude Martin from July 1801 (British Library, no. 76 in I/AG/34/27/24) does not mention either an illustrated Kathāsaritgaṅga or even a Persian manuscript. We can only find a note on p. 83 concerning a list that was sent to Calcutta of 505 Persian books.
46. I again thank Dr. Ursula Sims-Williams for the information she so kindly provided regarding peculiarities of the manuscript that could not be discerned on the microfilm.
47. I thank Prof. Seyller for the measurements.
48. There are also a few lines of text on the back of the two illustrations in the Virginia Museum of Fine Art; cf. Dye, Arts of India, 242–43, nos. 81 and 82.
54. The only known manuscript of the Pañcākhyāna is kept in the National Museum of Delhi, no. 62, 272 folios, 20 x 11.5 cm.
55. Tawdīh-al-milal, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Ms. 157/132.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., 3.
60. Ibid., 4.
64. Pal, Indian Painting, 212–14, nos. 51 and 52.
65. Dye, Arts of India, 241, no. 81a.
66. Ibid., 242–43, no. 82.
67. Ehnborn, Indian Miniatures, 41, no. 11.
68. Ibid., 40.
70. Dye, Arts of India, 241.
72. See n. 53 above.
73. See n. 18 above.
74. See n. 26 above.
75. See n. 12 above.
76. See n. 13 above.
77. See n. 14 above.
78. See n. 15 above.