



THE FOLK COLOURED DRAWINGS OF THE KĀLĪGHĀṬ STYLE

(FROM THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM COLLECTION)

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During the 19th century a unique form of Indian folk art was developed in Calcutta which is known as Kālīghāṭ paintings.¹ These paintings were coloured drawings of a very specific style² painted on sheets of paper by folk artists called paṭuyās.³ In the beginning they were probably created near the temple dedicated to the goddess Kālī, Kālīghāṭ, where they were sold as souvenirs to pilgrims. Because of their cheapness, attractive style and colours they became very popular and it seems that in the course of time they were also made at other places in Calcutta and its neighbourhood.⁴ They depicted religious subjects such as idols of Hindu gods and goddesses, heroes of Indian legends and mythology, but there were also pictures with secular subjects. The popularity of this folk art grew until the end of the 19th century when the hand-made paintings started to be replaced by the multicoloured lithographs, and after years of continuous decay they disappeared in the twenties of the 20th century.⁵

Comparatively not many examples of the folk coloured drawings of the Kālīghāṭ style have survived and only a small number of public institutions and private collectors have them in their possession.⁶ The reason why they are so rare now is that the majority of the folk art-collectors and anthropologists of the 19th century underestimated the artistic and historic value of the Calcutta pictures and did not consider them to be an important material worth collecting.

It is a privilege of the Náprstek Museum in Prague to belong to the group of the institutions which have in their possession some examples of this interesting form of Indian folk art. There are twenty six pictures divided into two separate museum units: twenty pictures under the Nos. 56 105 to 56 124 and six pictures under the Nos. 21 284 to 21 289.⁷

The greater part makes a set but it is not known how and when it got into the Náprstek Museum collection.

The author tried to solve this problem and was guided by two pictures: the first one shows a Brāhmaṇ offering a drink to a lady (No. 56 123), the second one shows the same Brāhmaṇ again with a cup in his hand this time in the company of two ladies (No. 56 124). Having consulted the literature,⁸ the author realised that the pictures belonged to the set of paintings inspired by the Tārakeśvar scandal which had shocked Calcutta society in 1873. With this discovery one very important fact came to light — that a least two of the paintings could not have been painted before the year 1873.

The next problem was to find out who was the person who had brought these paintings to Prague and presented them to the Museum. Of great help was the script on the back of the pictures which has been identified as the handwriting of Dr Otakar Feistmantel, a Czech geologist, who was living in Calcutta in the seventies and eighties of the 19th century. His stay in India was of great importance for the Náprstek Museum as is clear from the correspondence between Mr. and Mrs. Náprstek and Dr Feistmantel. He was collecting anthropological material for the Museum during his visit to India and thus he laid the foundations for the Indian section of the Náprstek Museum.⁹

In the letter dated 1st March 1878 addressed to Mrs. Náprstek, Dr Feistmantel writes: "... I have gained a nice collection again and I shall bring it as a present for your museum... There will be also native Indian pictures..." This remark and the comparison of the handwritings on the back of the paintings with that of this letter, have confirmed that the person who brought these coloured paintings from Calcutta to Prague was Dr Otakar Feistmantel.

The contents of Feistmantel's handwriting deals with brief characteristics of the subject of every picture (i.e. with names

of Hindu gods and goddesses), written either in English or German, but the corrupt phonetic transcription of colloquial Bengali in the majority of the pictures bears testimony that Dr Feistmantel did not know the correct form of Indian names and wrote only what he could catch from the spoken language.¹⁰ Only four paintings are described correctly but without diacritical signs;¹¹ four pictures have incomplete description;¹² the description of another four is completely wrong¹³ and three have no description at all.¹⁴

The second unit (Nos. 21 284 to 21 289) has its own problem of how it came to Prague, in the solution of which the author was not so successful as with the previous one. The only datas which are quite certain are: 1. The name of the donor who was Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková as it is written in each of the folios; 2. The number of pictures which is stated in the No. 21 287: "Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková presented six pictures of the Indian deities"; 3. The period in which the pictures were donated i.e. the autumn of the year 1874. This fact is announced in the "Report of the Museum of Czech Kingdom, from September 1 to the end of November 1874".¹⁵ Who Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková was and how and when the pictures came into her possession has remained unknown.

The first proprietor of the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková collection was the Museum of Czech Kingdom. It is also proofed by the date on the back of each picture which contains the Museum's name together with its original number. There is no description of the contents of the pictures. It was not given over to the Náprstek Museum until before the Second World War because at that time the Museum was determined to keep all the material of non-European folk art in Czechoslovakia.

The majority of the pictures (23 from the total number 26) are devoted to the religious subjects, to the icons of Hindu deities, to scenes from Hindu mythology and to the great epics Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa. We can see there all the main gods and goddesses — Viṣṇu, Śiva, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Durgā, Kālī and famous heroes of the Epics Rāma, Hanumān and Kṛṣṇa. This is quite natural if we remember the whole tradition of Indian painting, classic and folk too, which had the same character keeping in mind that the folk coloured drawings from Calcutta were sold

as souvenirs to pilgrims who came to Calcutta to take part in religious ceremonies and processions during the Hindu festivals.

From the pictures with various secular subjects there are three in the Prague collection — two depicting the trial (Nos. 56 123 and 56 124) and one the Calcutta dandy — a young man sitting on a chair (and not on the floor according to the Indian national custom) playing a sitār and wearing western type shoes (No. 21 285). It seems that this type of pictures was very popular, although the number of survived paintings is less than those with religious or mythological subjects. They are of great interest and historical value as they are usually connected with social life of that time depicting e.g. courtesans in various situations, dressing her hair, embracing her lover, smoking a narghile, holding a pān, with a rose and a mirror in her hands, an Englishman on an elephant shooting a tiger, jockey horse-racing, the Indian dandy with signs of westernisation, the trial of 1873, etc.

The material on which the pictures of the Prague collection were painted are sheets of unglued paper, width 27,5 to 28,2 cm, length 45,0 to 46,5 cm. The paper was produced at Serampore or in Calcutta¹⁶ and was very cheap. According to the view of G. W. Archer¹⁷ the production of the cheap paper might even have led to this new type of souvenirs. But who were the artists who started to create these painted souvenirs? Were they folk artists who originally made clay or wooden figures and decorate them with painting? Were they scroll-painters who used to paint complicated compositions of scrolls wandering from one place to the other singing stories and legends while unrolling the scrolls? Or were they members of some other group of painters (e.g. descendents of former miniature painters) about whom we do not know anything so far? If we except the hypothesis that the creators of the Kālīghāṭ style were originally scroll-painters¹⁸ then we must be aware of the fact that it must have been a serious economic reason forcing them to forsake their traditional art and become the souvenirs-painters. It will be rewarding to recall the economic situation of Calcutta at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century: Calcutta city was spreading all round at the end of 18th and the beginning of 19th century and more and more villages were swallowed up and became the suburbs of Calcutta. The farmers lost their land and the majority

of villagers lost their occupations as land-workers. All these people had to change their way of living. In this process the scroll-shows so welcome in the country started to lose their popularity and the audience became less and less. The paṭuyās could not move to the country because it might have been saturated with other families of paṭuyās and at last there was probably no other possibility than to think of a new way of living for them and their families. They could be inspired by other sorts of folk artists creating their art round the Kālīghāṭ temple, the centre of folk artists of various kinds who made the souvenirs for pilgrims mostly clay and wooden figures of Hindu deities. This subject was not unknown to the paṭuyās, Hindu legends were one of the most popular themes of their scrolls. Thus there at Kālīghāṭ they could meet their opportunity to change their profession, but to keep and use their skill of painting.

Even in the oldest paintings which survived, the artistic expression of the paṭuyās had been almost finished and the changes which it was going through during the 19th century did not touch its substance — the graphic abbreviation. It was based on the simplification in which the secondary features were omitted and the typical ones were stressed to characterize the nature of the depicted subjects in the most economical manner. In this way rules of the Kālīghāṭ style were developed.

In the composition there was no place for the background except, for its indication (e.g. a single tree instead of the forest, a curtain indicating the interior of a building, a blue line giving an idea of the sky, a silhouette of a shrine, etc.), but it was rare too.¹⁹ The attention of the painter was always drawn to the main figure. The body of the figure and its parts — head, face, trunk, hands, legs, feet — had been simplified into certain forms which became patterns, with time being learnt and copied by the younger painters from the elder ones. In the same way the simplification of dresses, ornaments, jewellery, symbols, etc. was introduced. Each line or each touch of the brush had its justified place whether it was a subject secular or a religious one. In the pictures of Indian deities, images of which are strictly limited by the iconographic rules, only main symbols were depicted but everybody could recognized at the first sight which god or goddess the painter had in his mind. In the secular pictures the

painter did not have to keep any rule except the inherited style; his artistic conception was to stress the main features of a figure or of typical circumstances of some depicted acts. The stressing of the most typical led sometimes to an expressive exaggeration resembling modern caricature.

As a matter of fact the pictures are drawings coloured with water colours.²⁰ First the paṭuyās laid down the outlines. In the beginning of this folk-art they were done only in pencil. Later since the forties of the 19th century,²¹ with the growing popularity of lithographic presses, they were also lithographed, but this process was not entirely accepted as is evident from the predominance of the pencil outlines during the whole existence of this folk-art.²²

In the Náprstek Museum collection the outlines of the majority of the pictures are drawn in pencil. Sometimes the lines are very gentle so that it is very difficult to find them under the layer of water-colours; sometimes the strokes are very thick, being visible particularly under the light shades (Nos. 56 108, 56 116) or remaining partly uncovered (No 56 113). The thin lines appear in the pictures representing the delicate finishing (e.g. Nos. 21 285 and 21 289) whereas the thick ones are typical for the paintings with patterns of impatient speed.

There are three lithographed outlines in the Prague collection: one from Dr Feistmantel's set (No. 56 112) and two from the collection of Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková (Nos. 21 286 and 21 287). The pictures Nos. 21 286 and 56 112 depict Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī. The subjects, the compositions of the both sketches are the same, but their lithographed outlines are not entirely identical. They differ in details, in the size of the lotus blossom which Lakṣmī holds in her right hand and in the shape of lotus leaves on which Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are standing. Those two lithographs are evidently two different ones which were made on the base of two different originals.

The outlines were always reduced to the most important lines of the whole composition (except some later paintings with lithographed outlines) and after their rapid sketching the painters proceeded to colouring with water colours. First of all they coloured the nude parts of the body,²³ of people with yellow or ochre, of gods and goddesses with the colour corresponding to

the iconographic rule e.g. Kṛṣṇa with blue, of Rāma with green etc., then they continued with other parts of the composition.

Immediately after laying the ground colour they added to it, while still wet, a darker shade leaving it to be freely spread on the inner side of the modelled part, outside using it for strengthening the outlines. With shading they added volume to the picture, plasticity to the face, hands, feet and to the whole body.

The finishing of the face and other nude parts of the body was done again with a brush and followed directly after the colouring and shading: the eyebrows, nose, mouth and the arch of the upper eye-lids in black line, the lower eye-lids, the contours of feet, hands and ears mostly in red or carmine. The brown or silver line was used only when these parts of the body were covered with a dark ground-colour e.g. with dark blue (see Kṛṣṇa, Hanumān in Nos. 21 288 and 56 117) where the red contour would not be expressive enough. The other parts of the picture were not contoured except with "silver" paint which was used by the paṭuyās so often that it can be found in majority of the folk coloured drawings of the Kālīghaṭ style, becoming one of their most typical features. But was it really silver which the paṭuyās used to apply? The author noticed one unusual thing — it keeps shining though it was laid on paper one hundred or more years ago. In fact silver loses its shine becoming faint with time. This problem was solved with a chemical analysis which discovered it was not silver used by the paṭuyās but tin (pewter) in a liquid form.²⁴

Silver paint was applied last. Usually the artist outlined dresses with it, the drapery of sārī or dhotī, lotus-pedestals, seats as cārpāī and chair, or indicated patterns of Indian silk, the richness of gods' and goddesses' ornaments, jewellery and weapons. When the silver line was completely dry, the paṭuyās burnished it in order to get a high shine, making the picture very attractive.²⁵

In the Prague collection the silver paint is used in the above mentioned way. The only difference is in Nos. 56 117 and 56 119. In the former it is used for depicting features of Hanumān's face, in the latter to indicate face, hands and feet of Bālī. The silver decoration has been done quite sensitively, stressing the ornamental character of the painting.

Though the above described style and technology is common to all the pictures of the Prague collection there are some details which are special only to some paintings and without touching the basic characteristics they add different features to some folios not appearing in the other ones.

The differences are in: 1. colour-composition, 2. way of shading, 3. way of finishing, 4. ability to express motion.

Considering these differences there are three groups of paintings:

Group A

To the first group belong six pictures of Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková (Nos. 21 284 to 21 289) the creators of which knew how to combine colours to get a very expressive unit where each colour had its own place being subordinate to the whole composition and never overcolouring other shades. The best examples of it, as well as the best paintings of the Prague collection, are two pictures Nos. 21 285 and 21 289²⁶ where the painter combining grey-blue, light red, green, yellow, black and silver paint got the most delicate harmony. These two pictures are also characteristic documents of the very fine shading, the paṭuyās took great care with it. Using only a little darker tone of the ground-colour they tried to express the plasticity with very slow gradual transitions and they succeeded. The face, limbs and the whole body of their figures are naturally roundish, their gestures are soft and flowing and on their faces there are sometimes hints of an individual expression, of a smile, concentration, etc.

Group B

The common features of the second group to which belong the majority of the Prague collection's pictures (Nos. 56 105 to 56 124) are different. The painters used very deep colours utilizing their contrasts as much as possible: very bright yellow next to very deep carmine, dark blue, or green. There were no dominant schemes accompanied with subordinate ones, because all colours were equally important. The result was a gaudy richness. This

fact was stressed also with the way of shading which was based on very contrasting shades of the same colour (e.g. light carmine with very dark one) or of two different ones (e.g. deep carmine with dark blue or bright yellow with deep orange). In this way the figures became very vigorous resembling the conception of modelling sculptures more than paintings (see especially Nos. 56 115 and 56 121) and the whole picture got a very rustic character both in colours and shapes.

To the best pictures of Group B belong paintings connected with the Rāmāyaṇa (Nos. 56 117, 56 118), and those of the Tārakeśvar scandal (56 123 and 56 124). Figures of Hanumān and Sugrīva were stylized in a very successful way combining mythological elements with the nature of monkeys.

The Tārakeśvar pictures surpass other pictures with the conception of the Mahant in which concentration on the most typical features led almost to the caricature of this figure. The priest with a pleasure-seeking face, corpulent body and potbelly, drinking absinth and having liaison with a married woman can be considered as a symbol of the decaying morals of the 19th century.²⁷

Group C

There is one more picture in the Prague collection which seems to represent a separate group, having qualities of both mentioned groups. It is No. 56 105 depicting the goddess of learning in the form of Kamalākāminī. Considering the Group A it shows the same treatment of shading based on the gradual transition of slightly different shades, the same sense for delicate colour-composition, the fine finishing and the individual expression of face (a light smile of a delightful concentration). The similarity with Group B is in the tonality of colours which are equally bright (e.g. especially carmine which is used in almost all paintings of the Feistmantel's collection).

The differences between these three groups are very important, they seem to show certain elements of the development of folk coloured drawings of the Kālighāṭ style, and in this way they could help in the determination of periods in which the paintings of the Prague collection were painted:

Group A

the characteristics of which are delicate colours, shading and finishing seems to correspond to the period when the paṭuyās, having become the masters of the brush work, reached the peak of their art. It is supposed to be round the middle of the 19th century.²⁸

Group B

evidently shows first elements of above mentioned decay. In the pictures there are patterns of rusticalisation in the colour-schemes and in the forms of figures which seems to appear in the work of the paṭuyās in the second half of 19th century becoming stronger in the course of time.

The date of Group B can be determined quite precisely due to the pictures depicting the Tārakeśvar scandal (Nos. 56 123 and 56 124). The murder was committed in 1873 and the whole set was brought to Prague in 1878. It is evident that these pictures had to be painted within those five years and it can be concluded that not only these two paintings but also the remaining portion of Group B belonged to approximately the same period because of many similarities in style and colour-scheme. If there was some difference in date it could be only a few years before 1873.

Group C

As far as the Kamalākāminī picture is concerned this painting seems to belong to the period when first indications of the decay appeared but the mastery of the style was still alive. According to the author's opinion it could have been done little earlier than the pictures of Group B — probably in the sixties of the 19th century.

One more thing can be mentioned in connection with dating of the Prague collection: It is paper on which the pictures were painted. Some sheets have got rather brownish colour and break on the margine (it is necessary to treat them very carefully). Paper of the others is only slightly yellowish and still keeps its flexibility (one can tear it but not break). The brownish colour and lack of flexibility indicates paper older than that of the

yellowish shade. In fact all the pictures of the oldest group of paintings (= Group A) were painted on sheets of the breakable paper while the paintings from the second half of 19th century (= Group B and C) were painted on paper of yellowish colour. In this way the quality of paper confirmed the above given dating.

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As it has become clear from this account, the Prague collection provides very valuable material and its study throws more light on some problems which have not been discussed in the literature. Many questions still remain to be answered in a comprehensive study for which it would be necessary to analyse and compare at least the majority of folk coloured drawings of the Kālīghāṭ style preserved in public and private collections.

A List of the Folk Coloured Drawings of the Kālīghāṭ style in the Náprstek Museum, Prague²⁹

No. 21284

Kālī, c. 1850, Size 27,7 X 45,7 cm.

The active energy of Śiva has three forms: that which she takes in peace and pleasure is Pārvatī, in fighting attitude is recognized as Durgā and when she is in angry mood she takes the terrific form called Kālī. She is fond of flesh and blood having four hands which hold a hook, a bowl of blood, human skull and trident. Kālī is black like collyrium, terrible with protruding teeth and long tongue, wearing a garland of skulls. The most famous temple dedicated to her is Kālīghāṭ in Calcutta. It was probably there where Indian folk painters started to create the specific style of folk pictures on paper and that is why the goddess Kālī became one of their most popular themes.

From the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková collection (at the bottom of the picture has been written: Presented by Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková).

Cf. No. 56112 of this list which represents the same subject but of later date.

No. 21285

A young man sitting on a chair and playing a sitār, c. 1850. Size 27,7 X 45,5 cm.

Indians influenced by western fashion was another subject which was of interest for painters of Calcutta folk pictures. Hairdress, type of shoes, way of sitting on a chair according to the western style are the characteristics of westernisation on the picture of the Náprstek Museum collection.

From the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková collection (at the bottom of the picture has been written: Presented by Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková).

An illustration of the same subject has been already published in Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta. By W. G. Archer. London 1953. Page 22, plate 11: The Seated Musician. Kalighat, c. 1845.

No. 21286

Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, c. 1850. Size 28,1 X 45,9 cm.

Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are among the most popular Hindu goddesses who came to be respected by the Indian of all Hindu sects.

The principal idea underlying the conception of the goddess Lakṣmī is that of good fortune or luck which brings in blissful prosperity and abundance. Iconographic texts containing the description of this goddess refer to her two, four and rarely many-armed varieties. But the two-armed variety is more common. The attributes placed in her hands are usually a lotus flower, a wood-apple, conch-shell, a pot of nectar, a citron, a shield, a club, etc.

Sarasvatī is the goddess of learning and music. In popular Hindu mythology she was given many names and holds any of the following objects: manuscript, white lotus, rosary, musical instrument, water-vessel, etc. Musical instrument, it is said, was one of the oldest emblems associated with her.

From the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková collection (at the bottom of the picture has been written: Presented by Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková).

Cf. No. 56112 of this list which represents the same subject but of later date.

No. 21287

Viṣṇu flying on Garuḍa, c. 1850. Size 27,5 X 46,4 cm.

Viṣṇu is the second member of the Hindu triad. He is known as the protector of the universe and is worshipped in various forms and under different names. He is now more popular in the forms of his ten incarnations than in his ancient form with four hands, two eyes holding the discus, the conch, the lotus, the club, the sword, etc. His vehicle is Garuḍa, the mythical bird which in the No. 21287 is depicted like a bird-man with wings and beak-like nose. According to myths connected with Garuḍa, it seems Garuḍa was originally the Sun conceived as a bird.

From the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková (at the bottom of the picture has been written: Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková presented six pictures of the Indian deities).

No. 21288

Kṛṣṇa killing Bakāsura, c. 1850. Size 28,0 X 45,6 cm.

Bakāsura, a demon in crane form, was sent by the demon king Kansa to kill Kṛṣṇa. He came to Vṛndāvana and engulfed Kṛṣṇa and the cowherds but Kṛṣṇa became so hot that the demon had disgorged them and Kṛṣṇa killed him tearing him into two.

From the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková collection (at the bottom of the picture has been written: Presented by Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková).

Black and white drawing has been published in Kalighat Drawings, From the Basant Kumar Birla Collection (Formerly Ajit Ghosh Collection). Introduction and Notes by W. G. Archer. Bombay 1962. Plate II.

No. 21289

Balarāma, c. 1850. Size 27,7 X 45,7 cm.

Balarāma the seventh incarnation of Viṣṇu is the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa. He is also known as Madhupriya because it is said he was very much addicted to wine. Symbols connected with this god is usually a club, a ploughshare and a pestle. His body should be of white colour.

From the Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková collection (at the bottom of the picture has been written: presented by Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková).

Cf. No. 56122 which represents this god with his wife.

No. 56105

Kamalākāminī, c. 1860. Size 27,7 × 46,0 cm.

Kamalākāminī, lotus loving woman, is not very common attribute of goddess Sarasvatī (Cf. No. 21286). She is represented as of a white colour, sitting on one of lotus flowers, playing a *viṇā*.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Komolt-Kamon (Sarasvatī). The same form of Sarasvatī shows the picture which has been published by Helmuth v. Glasenapp: *Der Hinduismus*. München 1922. Plate 20. Sarasvatī. Page 481: Sarasvatī, die Göttin der Gelehrsamkeit. Nach einem im Preussischen Museums für Völkerkunde zu Berlin befindlicher Original. It is highly decorated with silver jewellery and ornaments.

No. 56106

Hara (Mahādeva) and Pārvatī on Nandī, c. 1875. Size 27,5 × 45,0 cm.

Hara-Pārvatī or Umāsāhitamūrti of Śiva sitting on Nandī or on a throne with Nandī nearby is an icon number of which is numerousless. It belongs to the peaceful category of Śiva images which are not associated with any particular story. Such images of *saumya* or *śānta* (peaceful) aspect have been given various names mainly of descriptive character. Of symbols which are usually held by Śiva there are two in this picture — the *ṭanka* and the kettle-drum with *trīśula* while Umā has nothing in her hands nor she shows any *mudrā*. Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr. O. Feistmantel's description: Horo [Mahadeva] Parvati auf Nandi.

No. 56107

Mahādeva and Pārvatī, c. 1875. Size 28,0 × 46,1 cm.

Cf. No. 56106 of this list.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Mahadeo — Parvati.

No. 56108

Annapūrṇā with Śiva, c. 1875. Size 27,7 × 46,00 cm.

One of the *dire* (*ugra*) aspects of the god Śiva is *Bhikṣaṭanamūrti*, a form in which Śiva was wandering about as a naked beggar because he had incurred the sin of killing a *Brāhmaṇa* having cut off one or the heads of the god *Brahmā*. He had to beg for food and once he received it also from his consort Pārvatī. Holding a spoon in one hand and a box with food in the other she is very popular in Bengal under the name *Annapūrṇā* (possessed of food). Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr O. Feistmantel's description: Mahadeva-Arnapurna (Parvati).

No. 56109

Jagaddhātṛī, c. 1875. Size 27,7 × 45,7 cm.

Jagaddhātṛī, sustainer of the world, is an epithet given to Durgā. The *Can-dimahātmya* which celebrates ten victories of this goddess over the demons speaks of her under this name when she defeated the Asura army. In this picture the goddess is depicted as sitting on the lion and killing the demon in elephant form.

Acquired from Dr. O. Feistmantel, 1878.
Dr Feistmantel description: Jagrdatri.

No. 56110
Gaṇeśajanānī, c. 1875. Size 28,2 X 45,5 cm.

The picture depicts one of Hindu goddesses in her mother like attitude. Here it is Durgā with her son Gaṇeśa (Gaṇapati, Vighneśvara, etc.) god of worthy wisdom and the lord of obstacles. The main characteristics of his are the elephant's head and dwarflike body with pot-belly. He holds mostly the hook, the noose, elephant's tusk and the wood-apple. Gaṇeśa is very popular in all castes of Hindus and is worshipped at the commencement of every religious ceremony or important secular event.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.
Dr Feistmantel's description: Gones-Jononi (Durga als Mutter des Gones).

No. 56111
Kālī. c. 1875. Size 27,7 X 46,1 cm.

Cf. No. 21284 of this list.
Published in Boží bráhmání, lidé. Čtyři tisíciletí hinduismu (Gods, Brahmans, People. Four Thousands Years of Hinduism). Prague 1964. Plate 9.
Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.
Dr Feistmantel's description: Kali.

No. 56112
Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, c. 1875. Size 27,9 X 45,0 cm.

Cf. No. 21286 of this list, which represents the same subject but of earlier date.
Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.
Dr Feistmantel's description: Saraswati.

No. 56113
Gajalakṣmī, c. 1875. Size 27,9 X 44,7 cm.

Of Lakṣmī eight forms known as Aṣṭa-Mahālakṣmī are recognised. The most popular is Gajalakṣmī, Lakṣmī with elephants. She has usually four arms and is seated on a full-blown lotus. Behind her are represented two elephants pouring water from one or two pots held by their trunks over the head of the goddess. This motif typifies the Indian idea of prosperity.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.
Dr Feistmantel's description: Parvati as Devi.

No. 56114
Narasimha killing Hiranyakaṣipu, c. 1875. Size 27,8 X 44,5 cm.

Hiranyakaṣipu, the demon king, persecuted his son Prahlāda for worshipping the god Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu in the form of Narasimha, the lion-man (Viṣṇu's fourth incarnation), god appeared out of a pillar and tore Hiranyakaṣipu into pieces.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Krischna todtend den Hirono Kasab.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Published in Boží bráhmání, lidé (Gods, Brahmans, People), plate 34.

One illustration of this subject has been already published in Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta. By W. G. Archer. London 1953. Page 41, plate 13: Narasimha rending the Demon King. Kalighat, c. 1860.

No. 56115

Rāma and Durgā, c. 1875. Size 27,7 X 45,0 cm.

Just before the final battle Rāma was in difficulty about killing Rāvaṇa, the king of demons, who carried off Rāma's wife Sītā to Laṅkā. Therefore he worshipped the goddess Durgā and wanted to poke out his eye with his arrow but Durgā stopped him doing it.

The original Rāmāyaṇa does not mention the worship of this goddess by Rāma. It is the Bengali Rāmāyaṇa by Kṛttidāsa, that the worship of the Sun is replaced by the worship of Durgā. The very interesting feature of this picture is the Mongoloid type of the faces of Rāma and Durgā. Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Durgā.

No. 56116

Lakṣmaṇa fighting with Sūrpanakhā, c. 1875. Size 27, X 46,5 cm.

Sūrpanakhā, the sister of the demon king Rāvaṇa, fell in love with Rāma and made advances to him. When she was repulsed she attacked Sītā, whom Rāma was obliged to defend. Rāma then called upon Lakṣmaṇa to disfigure the Rākṣasi, and accordingly he cut off her nose and ears. The mutilated female called upon her brother to avenge, her, and fierce war ensued.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

There is no description by Dr Feistmantel.

No. 56117

Hanumān with Rāma and Sītā in his heart, c. 1875. Size 27,7 X 45,7 cm.

Hanumān is a celebrated monkey chief of divine origin (he was the son of Māruta, the Wind) who assisted Rāma in his war against Rāvaṇa. His power was superhuman, he was able to fly and jump from India to Ceylon in one bound, etc. Hanumān was devoted to Rāma and his wife Sītā so much that he received from Rāma the reward of perpetual life and youth. The exploits of Hanumān are favourite subjects among Hindus and paintings of them are very common.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Hanuman mit Rama und Sita in der Brust.

Cf. W. G. Archer, Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta. London 1953. Page 61, plate 33.

Hanuman with Rama und Sita in his Heart. Kalighat, c. 1880.

No. 56118

Sugrīva carrying Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, c. 1875. Size 27,7 X 45,3 cm.

Sugrīva was a monkey king, who, together with his adviser Hanumān and his army of monkeys, belonged to the allies of Rāma in his war against Rāvaṇa.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr O. Feistmantel's description: Hanuman mit Rama und Sita.

No. 56119.

Bālī fighting with Rāvaṇa, c. 1875. Size 27,7 X 46,0 cm.

Bālī also written Vālī is the name of a monkey who was the king of Kiśkindhā and the brother of Sugrīva. He was supposed to be the son of the god Indra and to have been born from the hair of his mother, whence his name. He was slain by Rāma and his kingdom was given to Sugrīva. Bālī

is said to be of enormous strength. Once in the fight with the demon Rāvaṇa he wound his tail round the body of his enemy and threw him into ocean. Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Rabun and Hanuman.

No. 56120

Kṛṣṇa-Veṇugopāla and Rādhā, c. 1875. Size 27,7 X 45,0 cm.

Kṛṣṇa, Black, is one of the most celebrated hero of Indian mythology and his cult is very popular. He is said to be the eight incarnation of Viṣṇu or the direct manifestation of Viṣṇu himself.

Among the stories of Kṛṣṇa's life the most repeated are those of Kṛṣṇa's amorous adventures with the gopīs, the cow-herd girls, in Vṛṇḍāvana. This subject is most frequent especially in the late Indian painting. The gopī Rādhā was Kṛṣṇa's most beloved. No. 50120 represents Kṛṣṇa playing the flute, Veṇugopāla, while Rādhā is standing behind him.

Acquired from Dr. O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Krischna.

Published together with Nos. 56111, 56112, 56113, 56114, 56119 on the front and back covers of New Orient Bimonthly, No. 5, 1962.

No. 56121

Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, c. 1875. Size 27,8 X 45,4 cm.

This picture shows Kṛṣṇa in love-play kneeling in front of his beloved and stroking her foot.

The black and white drawing has been published in the Kalighat Drawings, From the Basant Kumar Birla Collection. By W. G. Archer, Bombay 1962. Plate III. The Repentant Krishna.

The same picture in the style of the folk coloured paintings from Calcutta is in the possession of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow and was published in the Pamyatniki iskusstva Indii v sobraniyakh muzeyev SSSR. Indian Art in Soviet Collections. Moscow 1957.

Another picture with the same subject is depicted in the plate 9 of Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta. By W. G. Archer. London 1953, page 37. But there it is Rādhā who is kneeling in front of Kṛṣṇa and stroking his foot. Except this the whole composition is just the same as it is in the No. 56121.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Krischna und Radha.

No. 56122

Balarāma with Revatī, c. 1875. Size 28,1 X 46,1 cm.

This picture depicts Balarāma embracing his wife Revatī, the beautiful daughter of King Raivata.

Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

Dr Feistmantel's description: Ballaram — brother of Krischna.

Cf. No. 21289 of this list which represents only Balarāma.

No. 56123; 56124

Tārakeśvar scandal. Mahant Mādhava Candra Giri and Elopeśi, c. 1875.³⁰ Size 28,1 X 45,5 cm Mahant Mādhava Candra Giri and Elopeśi with a woman companion (probably the maid servant Telibau), c. 1875. Size 27,6 X 45,5 cm.

On Tuesday May 27, 1873, Elopeśi, the young Bengali woman, was murdered by her husband Nabin Candra Banerji, a Brāhmaṇ who worked in Calcutta in the office of the Superintendent of Government Printing. The murder was done in the house of Elopeśi's father in Karnool, in Hoogly district. The reason of the murder was the liason of Elopeśi with the chief priest of the Śiva temple at Tārakeśvar. This event became known as Tārakeśvar scandal in the newspaper and rellied orthodox sentiment of Bengal society. It inspired also the fancy of Calcutta folk-painters and many pictures were created to the number of which belong also two pictures of the Náprstek Museum collection depicting Elopeśi in the Mahant house. Acquired from Dr O. Feistmantel, 1878.

There is no description by Dr Feistmantel.

Five pictures connected with this topic were published in Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta, plates 7, 18, 34, 35, 36.

For black and white drawings see Kalighat Drawings, plates XVI to XIX.

Notes

¹ The literature on this subject is rare. Only a few articles and two books have been already published: *Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta. The Style of Kalighat*. By W. G. Archer. London 1953. Pp. 28, 50 ill. in black and white. *Kalighat Drawings*. From the Basant Kumar Birla Collection (Formerly Ajit Ghosh Collection). Introduction and Notes. By W. G. Archer. Calcutta 1962. Pp. 14, XXI ill.

For articles see Bibliography, *Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta*, pp. 16 and 17.

Some additions to the Bibliography:

1. Helmuth v. Glasenapp: *Der Hinduismus*. München. Cop. 1922. Reproduces a painting of Sarasvatī (Plate 20) with the following note on the page 481: Sarasvatī, die Göttin der Gelehrsamkeit. Nach einem im PMV (Preussischen Museums für Völkerkunde zu Berlin) befindlichen Original.
2. Ajit Ghose: *An Old Gostha-Lila Pat*. The Vishva-Bharati Quarterly. Vol. 22, No. 4, 1956. Pp. 283 to 284. One plate in colour.
3. *Indian Art in Soviet Collections*. Pamyatniki iskusstva Indii v sobraniyakh muzeyev SSSR. Moscow 1956. Contains a short reference in Russian on the page 12 and in English on the page 22 and reproduces two pictures with the following notes: Krishna and Radha. — Water-carrier. Popular print. 19th century.
4. *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Books and Prints on Indian Art*. Edited by Jagdish Mittal. Hyderabad 1959, plate 5.
5. Philip S. Rawson: *Indian Painting*. New York 1961. There is a short reference in the last chapter on Modern Survivals (pp. 151 to 154) with one reproduction in colour: *A Synthetic Image of Brahma and Siva*. Kalighat — ca. 1875. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
6. *New Orient Bimonthly*. Journal for the modern and ancient cultures of Asia and Africa, No. 5, 1962: On the front and back covers: *Kalighat Folk Paintings, India*. From the collections of Náprstek Museum, Prague. Contains six reproductions.
7. Boží, bráhmání, lidé. Čtyři tisíciletí hinduismu (Gods, Brahmans, People. Four Thousands Years of Hinduism). Prague 1964. Contains a short account on Kālīghāṭ paintings with two reproductions on plate 9: Goddess Kālī, Kālīghāṭ folk painting, and on plate 34: Viṣṇu as Narasimha, Kālīghāṭ folk painting.

² In the literature the term Kalighat is used. Some scholar reject it (e.g. Prof. D. P. Ghosh, Curator of the Asutosh Museum and Head of the Department of Museology, Calcutta University), considered it too narrow.

The term was derived from the name of the Kālighāt temple in Calcutta and thus it suggests the idea that the paintings were connected only with this temple which seems not to be quite certain. That is why the author introduces another term — the folk coloured drawings of the Kālighāt style — which is a descriptive term expressing the character of this art during the whole period of its existence. I use the term “folk” in the sense of “The matter of cultural consumption not the matter of rise” as it has been defined by Václav Černý in his book “Staročeská milostná lyrika” (Old Czech Love Poetry), Prague 1948, p. 159.

³ Paṭuyās were originally folk painters who used to paint pictures on scrolls known as paṭas.

⁴ For the popularity and prices refers T. N. Mukharji: The Art Industries of Bengal. Journal of Indian Art, January, 1886, p. 20: “The inferior class of pictures” (i.e. folk coloured drawings from Calcutta?) “is done by the painter caste, the patuas, and is sold by thousands at places of pilgrimage, like Kalighat and Tarakeswar and at local fairs, at prices ranging from one piece to one anna each.”

⁵ See Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta. A Short Catalogue, p. 25.

⁶ There are two largest and most representative collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

⁷ See the List of the Folk Coloured Drawings of the Kālighāt Style in the Náprstek Museum, Prague, pp. 53 to 59.

⁸ See Kalighat Drawings, pp. 11 to 13.

⁹ Dr Otakar Feistmantel worked as an officer at the Geological Institute of India, Calcutta, from May 25, 1875 till May 25, 1883. He published many articles about his research in geology of India and a small travellingbook “Eight Years in Eastern India” (1884).

¹⁰ *Dr Feistmantel's Sanskrit reading transcription*

Nos. 56 105	Komolt-Kamon	Kamalākāminī
56 106	Horo	Hara
56 108	Arnapurna	Annapūrṇā
56 109	Jagrdatri	Jagaddhātrī
56 114	Hirono-Kasab	Hiraṇyakaśipu
56 119	Rabun	Rāvaṇa
56 110	Gones-Jononi	Gaṇeśajanani

¹¹ *Dr Feistmantel's Sanskrit reading transcription*

Nos. 56 107	Mahadev-Parvati	Mahādeva-Pārvatī
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- | | | |
|--------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 56 111 | Kali | Kālī |
| 56 117 | Hanuman mit
Rama und Sita | Hanumān with Rāma and
Sītā in his heart |
| 56 121 | Krischna und Radha | Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā |
- 12 *Dr Feistmantel's Sanskrit reading
transcription*
- | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nos. 56 112 | Saraswati | Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī |
| 56 115 | Īdurga | Rāma and Durgā |
| 56 120 | Krischna | Kṛṣṇa (Veṇugopāla) and
Rādhā |
| 56 122 | Ballarama-brother
of Krischna | Balarāma and Revatī |
- 13 *Dr Feistmantel's Sanskrit reading
transcription*
- | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Nos. 56 113 | Parvati as Devi | Gajalakṣmī |
| 56 114 | Krischna tod tend
den Hirono Kasab | Narasimha killing
Hiraṇyakaśipu |
| 56 118 | Hanuman mit
Rama und Sita | Sugrīva carrying
Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa |
| 56 119 | Rabun and
Hanuman | Bālī and Rāvaṇa |
- 14 Nos. 56 116 Lakṣmaṇa fighting with Sūrpanakhā
56 123 Tārakeśvar scandal. Mahant Mādhava Candra
Giri and Elopeśi
56 124 Tārakeśvar scandal. Mahant Mādhava Candra
Giri and Elopeśi with a woman-companion
(probably the maid servant Telīban)

15 The Journal of the Museum of Czech Kingdom, Vol. 49, No. 1, p. 123. I am very grateful to Dr. S. F. Svoboda from the National Museum, Prague, for drawing my attention to this Journal and for assisting me in the case of Mrs. Kateřina Řebíčková.

16 See Kalighat Drawings, p. 6.

17 See *ibid.*

18 The only evidence that some scrolls were painted in a style certain features of which (e.g. way of shading, simplification of face, silver line) were very similar to that of Kālighāt, are two scrolls from West Bengal in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, collected by J. C. French circa 1930. They are however of a later date, probably of the second half of the 19th century, and thus cannot prove the hypothesis that a group of scroll-painters was responsible for the development of the Kālighāt style.

19 Six out of twenty six pictures of the Prague collection have some indication of a background. See plates Nos. 21 284, 56 107, 56 115, 56 119, 56 121 and 56 124.

²⁰ According to the view of W. G. Archer it was due to the direct influence of the English water colour paintings with which the paṭuyās came in touch in Calcutta market.

²¹ For lithographic presses see a remark in Kalighat Drawings, p. 7.

²² That is why it is not correct to characterize them as popular prints as it is stated in Indian Art in Soviet Collection, p. 22.

²³ See e.g. plate 37 in Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta.

²⁴ Details of the analysis: Sn, Si, Mg, Al, Ca and traces of Fe and Cu.

²⁵ Traces of burnishing are evident in all pictures of the Prague collection. In No. 56 120 the silver line is smeared as the painter tried to burnish it when it was not dry enough.

²⁶ It seems both the pictures are work of the same paṭuyā because the way of drawing and colouring is the same in all details.

²⁷ As a real caricature can be considered the picture "Cat with Prawn" which was reproduced in Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta, plate 21. W. G. Archer refers to it in Kalighat Drawings, p. 9: "Private eating of fish or flesh — a practice banned to Vaishnavas — also called for comment and in one picture a cat is shown with a prawn in its mouth, the sect mark on the cat's forehead and rosary round its neck making it only too plain that Vaishnavite hypocrisy is under attack."

²⁸ See Ajit Ghose: Old Bengal Paintings. Rupam No. 27—28. July—October, 1926, p. 103; — Kalighat Drawings, p. 7—8.

²⁹ For the iconographic descriptions see Jitendra Nath Banerjea: The Development of Hindu Iconography. Calcutta 1956. — H. Krishna Sastri: South-Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses. Madras 1916.

For mythology see John Dowson: A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion, Geography, History and Literature. London 1891.

I am deeply indebted to Prof. D. P. Ghosh for helping me in interpretation of the Nos. 56 115 and 56 119.

³⁰ See Kalighat Drawings, pp. 11 to 13 and the note on the page 14. This note corrects the dating of the plates 7, 18, 34, 35, 36 in Bazaar Paintings of Calcutta.



No. 21284



No. 21285



No. 21286



No. 21287



No. 21288



No. 21289



No. 56105



No. 56106



No. 56107



No. 56108



No. 56109



No. 56110



No. 56111



No. 56112



No. 56113



No. 56114



No. 56115



No. 56116



No. 56117



No. 56118



No. 56119



No. 56120



No. 56121



No. 56122



No. 56123



No. 56124