

SYLVIA HOUGHTELING

## THE EMPEROR'S HUMBLER CLOTHES

*Textures of Courtly Dress in Seventeenth-century South Asia*

---

### ABSTRACT

This study reconstructs the humbler components of South Asian courtly ensembles worn by the greatest Mughal emperors, which included relatively inexpensive tie-dyed cloths made in Rajasthan and finely spun cotton muslins from Bengal. Court biographies, popular lexicons, and the letters sent from the Mughal court to its Rajput allies reveal that the fabrics used for dress in early modern South Asia were valued for sensory qualities, such as softness, saturation of color, and coolness on the skin, that went beyond the cost of the materials or the sophistication of the technology used to produce them. This project transports the study of dress in early modern South Asia beyond its current focus on the material wealth of imperial costumes to recover the sensory experience of wearing airy cotton and velvety wool, as well as the sophisticated intellectual, poetic, and political messages that could be carried in the fabric of a courtly coat.

---

In his 1641 autobiography, the Jain merchant Banarasidas described the ways in which the texture of life changed in the north Indian city of Jaunpur following news of the death of Emperor Akbar in 1605. "The people, bereft of their emperor, felt orphaned and hopeless," he wrote.<sup>1</sup> The wealthy feared that chaos would descend; they buried their jewelry and sealed their doors. They also changed their attire:

Men began to wear plain clothes  
And casting off fine shawls, wrapped themselves in rough blankets  
The women too began to dress plainly.<sup>2</sup>

Conditions returned to normal ten days later, when the news spread that Prince Salim, Akbar's son, had ascended to the throne as Emperor Jahangir and now reigned throughout the Mughal Empire. Yet in this passage of his autobiography, Banarasidas revealed the clothing habits of Jaunpur in more precise terms than are typically available for non-imperial cities in early modern South Asia. Banarasidas does not name the fabrics donned by the rich in order to appear poor. It seems to have been more significant to his reader that he repeat twice that the texture of these garments was *moṛā*, an adjective that can mean "plump" and "wealthy" but

### QUICK CITATION

Houghteling, Sylvia.  
"The Emperor's Humber  
Clothes: Textures  
of Courtly Dress in  
Seventeenth-century  
South Asia." *Ars Orientalis*  
47 (2017): 91–116.

also implies “thick,” “rough,” and “coarse.” He writes that instead of wearing *khes*, fine shawls or thin cotton cloths, the rich took to wearing *kambals*, or blankets. The women, too, donned clothing that was *moṭā*. The narrator had a unique sensitivity to textiles, as the reader learns later, when Banarasidas details his experience selling cloth of various qualities, in addition to rubies, sapphires, ghee, and gem dust, in the imperial capital of Agra. Still later, he uses the word “*dukūl*,” which refers to fine and smooth cotton, to describe the valuable Jaunpur cloth that his father sent with him to the market in Agra.<sup>3</sup> Banarasidas’s comments suggest that for a seventeenth-century merchant who had traveled to Agra, the rich began to resemble the poor not when they wore textiles of an inferior fiber but when they abjured from cloths of a pleasing texture. In the sensibility of the seventeenth century, the basest cloth was that which was “thick” and “rough,” “harsh” and “coarse” to the touch.

The descriptions given by Banarasidas open up questions about the status of apparently simple cloths made from cotton and wool in seventeenth-century Mughal South Asia. Unlike silk fabrics or cloths-of-gold, these textiles did not necessarily command the highest prices on the international market because they were not universal symbols of luxury and wealth. Evidence suggests that in Fatimid Egypt, for instance, cotton cloth was typically regarded as a fabric of the poor, and as inferior to linen because it was less durable; wool was the “wear of beggars.”<sup>4</sup> Yet these valuations were not universal, and they shifted over time. In Mughal South Asia, cotton, wool, and goat-hair fabrics held high value not because of their glint or sheen but due to the sensory experience of wearing these finely crafted textiles. Fabrics used for dress in early modern South Asia were valued for softness, warmth, saturation of color, and coolness on the skin, qualities that went beyond the cost of the materials or the sophistication of the technology used to produce them. By looking closely at the Mughal Empire’s ostensibly humbler textiles, this analysis transports the study of dress in early modern South Asia beyond its current focus on the internationally recognized wealth of imperial costume to recover the more localized value of airy cotton and velvety wool, as well as the sophisticated intellectual, poetic, and political messages that could be carried in the fabric of a courtly coat.

A study of these non-silk fibers contributes an alternative perspective to the growing body of scholarship on early modern textiles and mercantile exchange.<sup>5</sup> Art historical narratives tend to consider the luxury decorative arts in the context of connoisseurship and rarefied tastes, and to focus on the social, political, or cultural “distinction” that luxury goods brought to gift-giving elites or aspirational merchants.<sup>6</sup> Since late antiquity, the secular significance of silk and gold-brocaded textiles, along with gems and metalwork, allowed these goods to circulate between geographically and religiously distinct courtly spaces and to forge what Oleg Grabar called a “shared culture of objects.”<sup>7</sup> In the late antique and early medieval periods, silk textiles and textile weavers traveled throughout central, southern, east, and west Asia, and these regions were united by a demand for silk and a common pattern vocabulary of confronting animals and pearl roundels.<sup>8</sup>

In the context of South Asia, important work by Phillip Wagoner and Finbarr Barry Flood has shown that elite garments made of woven silk created transcultural sartorial connections between Hindu and Muslim elites.<sup>9</sup> In South Asia’s Deccan region and along its northwestern frontier, rival sultans and rajas used the same silk fabrics, and alternated between “Islamicate” and “Indic” clothing styles, to communicate their regional authority, regardless of their ethnic or religious identities. As Flood writes, this kind of “cultural cross-dressing” signified in multiple directions: “The associations of dress are not just regional but also hierarchical, operating both

horizontally to link the populations of geographically distinct regions and vertically, creating communities of elites within these populations."<sup>10</sup>

New approaches to trans-regional or global art histories have benefited from excavating this shared culture of luxury objects and the visual connections created by cloth. Recent accounts of trade among Europe, the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, the kingdom of Kongo, New Spain, Ming China, and Mughal India have also uncovered the heterogeneity of both coveted objects and consumer markets for exotic goods. By reconstructing the importance of raffia, lacquered wood, mother-of-pearl, wild silk, and bright feathers, these scholars have expanded the materiality of luxury beyond the better-known gold and silver, mulberry silk, and precious stones.<sup>11</sup> Drawing attention to objects whose value is not always apparent from their materials, these studies explore alternative qualities, such as what Jonathan Hay calls the "topography of sensuous surface," or culturally specific metaphorical associations.<sup>12</sup> Alessandra Russo has written about the ways in which novel luxury items, such as the Mesoamerican featherwork objects that entered Iberian royal collections, necessitated a rethinking of the meaning, and materiality, of "treasure."<sup>13</sup> Could something be treasured because of its vibrating colors and its weightlessness, even if it were not made of gold?

The Mughal imperial court of early modern South Asia treasured a wide variety of textile types that came with a profusion of sensory qualities and metaphorical associations. Their eclectic taste in textiles did not mean that the Mughal emperors renounced the "shared culture of objects" that characterized early modern Islamicate courts, or failed to participate in the practice of gifting a luxury robe of honor, called a *khil'a*, that was a requisite act of securing fealty.<sup>14</sup> Along with robes, they gave turbans and sashes, as well as, at times, jeweled daggers, cash, and horses.<sup>15</sup> Throughout courtly life in the early modern period, it was known that giving a robe of honor could be as much a monetary transfer as a symbolic act initiated by a ruler to signal approval and assert authority over a vassal.<sup>16</sup> As Gavin Hambly notes, when a visitor from Samarqand came to the Mughal court of Jahangir and was given the choice between a saddle made of wool broadcloth or one of silk velvet, he felt comfortable requesting "whichever is most expensive."<sup>17</sup>

Yet recent research on the practices of textile gifting within the Ottoman and Safavid Empires suggests that rulers often commissioned luxury textiles, for their own wardrobes and for robes of honor, based on stylistic and visual criteria that were independent of monetary value. Gülru Necipoğlu has argued, for instance, that the Ottoman development of a floral ornamental style in its silk textiles and ceramics during the reign of Sultan Süleyman I (r. 1520–66) was a strategy to create "distinction" from the prevailing Safavid figural style that flourished under Shah Tahmasp I (r. 1524–76).<sup>18</sup> The "distinction," in this context, was not differentiation by social standing but rather political autonomy from a rival neighbor. In the following century, Mughal South Asia further distinguished itself from the Safavid and Ottoman regimes through the adoption of a naturalistic floral style under Emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58).<sup>19</sup>

From roughly 1575 to 1620, the Mughal imperial court used textiles and dress less to affiliate with international authorities than to forge "more subtle political constituencies" closer to home.<sup>20</sup> The Mughal rulers Akbar (r. 1556–1605) and Jahangir (r. 1605–27) understood that textiles were accompanied by traditional expectations of patronage and existed within a sophisticated metaphorical and social world unique to South Asia.<sup>21</sup> From within the realm, therefore, Akbar and Jahangir collected and gifted Bengali cotton cloth, Rajasthani tie-dyed sashes, and Kashmiri pashmina shawls, and adopted into their courtly vocabularies the multilayered meanings that cloth could hold. The recognition of these "subtle political constituencies," and

the reinsertion of Mughal rulers into local or long-standing regional customs, did not forbid them from also engaging in the culture of objects shared throughout the Persianate sphere. Instead, the purpose of this study is to temporarily suspend assumptions about transcultural luxury and to focus on the more localized sensory and aesthetic values of South Asian textiles in the seventeenth century.

### The Landscape of Cloth in Early Modern South Asia

By embracing a diverse ensemble of textures and fabrics, Mughal dress departed from the international Persianate style, which emphasized woven silk textiles. In part, this shift may have occurred because the Mughals did not encounter an extensive luxury silk industry in India that produced cloth woven from the finest, mulberry-fed silkworms (*Bombyx mori*).<sup>22</sup> Although there is early evidence of silkworm cultivation and woven silk textiles in India, silk production was not prevalent in Mughal territory. The northeastern region of Assam cultivated wild silkworms that produced a thicker, coffee-colored silk. The incorporation of Kashmir and Bengal into Mughal territory during the reign of Emperor Akbar gave the imperial center access to these historical silk-producing regions.<sup>23</sup> Yet the Indian subcontinent remained reliant on silk imports from China, Iran, and Central Asia.<sup>24</sup> The trade in silk, particularly with the Safavid Empire, had a reciprocal benefit for India. In spite of Iran's exports of silk and madder dye-root, the balance of trade favored the Mughals, and the quantities of silk imported were far outweighed by the bullion that trade with Iran brought for Indian goods such as cotton cloth, indigo, and sugar.<sup>25</sup> While his contemporaries were establishing monopolies to control trade, Emperor Jahangir actually encouraged imports and liberalized commerce for overland traders from the Safavid provinces and the Uzbek Khanates.<sup>26</sup>

Loom technology for weaving complex silk fabrics in South Asia also differed from that in Iran and China. Evidence suggests that only a small number of weaving centers used the drawloom, an invention of either Central Asia or China, which allowed weavers to create complex multicolored patterns.<sup>27</sup> To encourage sophisticated silk weaving, Emperor Akbar is reported to have taken an active role in the textile industry, "providing training in the art to expert masters (*ustād*)" and establishing silk weaving centers in Fatehpur Sikri, Lahore, Ahmedabad, and Kashmir.<sup>28</sup>

More importantly, though, it was cotton cloth from Bengal, known as *malma*, or muslin, that was renowned throughout Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe, its popularity dating far back to ancient maritime trade connections.<sup>29</sup> The special traits of the *malma* cloth derived from the naturally soft texture of the short-staple cotton; from the South Asian techniques of processing raw cotton, which kept the fibers elastic; and from the humidity of the climate, which aided in the spinning of fine threads. When cotton is cold and dry, its texture is harsher, and its fibers have a waxy covering that makes them more difficult to spin. If the cotton is hot and dry, the process of spinning generates an electric charge, which causes the fibers to radiate away from each other instead of cohering into thread. The curly cotton fibers are best spun under conditions of warm humidity, when the fibers are most pliable and do not have an electric charge.<sup>30</sup> Expert spinners in Bengal, many of them young women, knew to spin cotton thread in the dewy early morning and the humid late afternoons.<sup>31</sup>

Cotton weavers in Bengal wove fine muslin cloth in pit-looms. As Sonia Ashmore writes, a length of twenty yards of the finest cloth could take two working weavers anywhere from ten days to six months to create. The labor-intensive nature of spinning the thread and weaving the diaphanous cotton cloth meant that it could rival and even surpass silk cloth in cost. Ashmore cites a nineteenth-century observer who noted that the finest cotton thread "could be sold for its

weight in silver.”<sup>32</sup> Subtle white-on-white patterns, still seen on *jamdānī* muslin today, were created through what Rahul Jain calls “hand manipulation” rather than through mechanical adjustments to the loom.<sup>33</sup> South Asian textiles from this period were also patterned using embroidery, block-printing, tie-dyeing or cloth-painting. In many cases, it was the masterly arts of dyeing, for which India was world-famous, that provided patterning for cotton cloth.<sup>34</sup> Dyes were applied with a wooden printing block or with a reed pen. Patterning was also created by tightly tying up portions of the cloth before submersing it in the dye-vat to produce tie-dyed textiles (*bandhānī*).<sup>35</sup>

The imperial court patronized these local textile techniques even though they were not traditionally associated with regal decoration or attire. On the agricultural level, Emperor Akbar supported the production of cotton by lowering levies on crops, a factor that led to a boom in the cultivation of cotton in the seventeenth century.<sup>36</sup> Evidence from remaining objects suggests that the Mughal imperial court began to use painted cottons, renowned for their saturated red colors and light weight, as floor coverings and as the walls for tents, at times to replace the wool and silk carpets that were used in Persianate tent architecture. Akbar seems also to have promoted new composite fabrics that combined local materials with imported silk. South Asian weavers innovated the production of mixed silk and cotton weaves, known as *mashru*, and textiles that had once been silk were transformed into cotton cloths in India.<sup>37</sup>

C. A. Bayly has argued that imperial patronage of regional textiles served three main purposes in Mughal South Asia: purchasing cloth from recently conquered regions, such as Kashmir and Bengal, helped to integrate these territories into the empire; the acceptance of vast quantities of Bengali cotton muslin or Kashmiri shawls in lieu of cash tribute allowed the imperial bureaucracy to justify its taxation policies; and the circulation of textiles throughout the empire encouraged dynamism in the economy.<sup>38</sup> Textile production, economic stability, and political legitimacy were so intertwined in this period that disruption in one area could lead to collapse in another, as can be seen in the example of Bengal. European accounts suggest that in the early seventeenth century, when thin cotton textiles became fashionable at court, Bengal paid a large portion of its tribute to the imperial crown in the form of cloth. At the start of the eighteenth century, when foreign invasions and internal strife disrupted courtly life in Delhi, demand for fine cotton cloth evaporated, and Bengal was no longer able to pay its tribute.<sup>39</sup> Just as grave, however, was the imperial court’s failure to patronize the textile products of its territory, a breach of obligation that, among many other factors, may have contributed to the loosening of imperial control over Bengal. Transactions in cloth amounted to what Bayly argues was a “political discourse upholding the legitimacy of the ruler and pledging the attachment of subjects.” The incapacity on the part of the imperial court to patronize textile production amounted to a “crisis of legitimacy.”<sup>40</sup>

Beyond political expediency, textiles held extraordinary humanistic significance at the Mughal court. Textiles not only were interchangeable commodities within economic markets, or markers of wealth and status, but also conferred messages about faith, nature, personal concerns, and familial preferences within Mughal India. As suggested in evidence from fabrics, paintings, imperial letters, and popular lexicons, the early Mughal emperors, Akbar and Jahangir, viewed the local textiles that they consumed and gifted as powerful aesthetic statements and wove these fabrics into the poetics of the Empire’s courtly life.

### Mughal Cultures of Cotton

The wardrobes of local textiles assembled by Emperors Akbar and Jahangir marked a departure from garments worn by the first Mughal rulers, Babur (r. 1526–30) and Humayun (r. 1530–40;

1555–56), who continued to wear the heavy *postīn*, or leather coat, and the *chapān*, or long coat made from wool, silk, and leather, that were more suited to the cooler climates of Babur’s original homeland in Central Asia.<sup>41</sup> In Persianate and Central Asian dress, like that worn by Babur and Humayun as well as by the Mughals’ contemporaries in Safavid Iran, cotton was used only for veils or for long-sleeved undershirts covered by heavier *qabā’* jackets. Akbar’s adoption of cotton cloth reflected the fact that in India cotton clothing was both ubiquitous and more visible. It was worn as turbans and shawls, wrapped around the waist (as in a traditional South Asian dhoti or lungi), or used in the draped women’s sari. In north India, under the preceding Afghan Lodi Dynasty (r. 1451–1526), a particular type of tailored cotton garment had come into widespread use. Adapted from the *jhaggā*, which was indigenous to the Rajput kingdom of Mewar in northwest India, this cotton garment of translucent material had a tight upper bodice that crossed diagonally at the chest with tassels; long, closely fitting sleeves; and a skirt that extended below the knees. The most recognizable variant of this garment, known as the *chakdar jāma*, had a four-pointed hem along the bottom edge.<sup>42</sup> In South Asia, translucent cotton *jāmas* were often worn with only a thin undershirt or without anything underneath, allowing the glow of the skin, the wetness of perspiration, and the curls of body hair to show through. A painting from a late sixteenth-century manuscript from Mewar (in contemporary Rajasthan) depicts a prince or nobleman wearing the *chakdar jāma* (fig. 1). The artist has rendered three of the *jāma*’s four pointed ends and used heavier paint to capture the decorative fringes that run along the chest of the garment. As the prince arranges his turban in a mirror, with his arms above his head, we can see the faint outlines of his bare torso beneath the translucent white of his cotton *jāma*. His red trousers also show through as a pale pink. The cool white cloth seems to counteract both the strong yellow sun and the deep crimson walls of the pavilion in which the prince is resting. The two female attendants also wear translucent cotton in the form of *dupaṭṭās*, or shawls. The way that the cotton cloth lightly grazes the contours of their hair, backs, and hips, and clings to the torso of the prince, suggests a sensual mood and projects bodily comfort in the midst of a hot day.

Cotton textiles, which could be fashioned into *jāmas* and *dupaṭṭās*, entered the imperial wardrobe through tribute, purchases, and gifts. Akbar’s biographer, Arif Qandahari, enumerated the gifts given to the emperor at a 1572 celebration held at the Agra palace of one of Akbar’s wazirs: “the finest pieces of cloth such as *zarbaft* of Rum, velvet of Europe, *kamkhāb-i Yazdī*, *aṭlas-i khaṭāī* of Bukhara, studded *dupaṭṭā* and turbans, Deccani jeweled boxes, golden thread of Gujarat and the royal muslin of Sunargaon.”<sup>43</sup> The textile gifts of foreign origin included an Ottoman brocade, a European velvet, a richly woven cloth from Yazd, and a piece of *aṭlas-i khaṭāī* (a “silk of China”) produced in Bukhara. From within the realm of the empire, Akbar received gold-wrapped *zarī* thread from Gujarat; his “royal muslin” had traveled from the small but famous textile town of Sunargaon in Bengal.

The importance of cotton within Akbar’s wardrobe is reflected in the fact that the *Ā’in-i Akbarī* (Institutes of Akbar), written between 1591 and 1592, lists thirty different types of cotton fabric and their respective prices, alongside thirty-nine varieties of silk and twenty-six types of wool. When Akbar’s historian, Abu’l Fazl, listed the textiles in circulation in Mughal India at the time, the silk textiles tended to be given Persian or Arabic names (*zarbaft* from the Persian for “woven with gold thread”; *aṭlas* was an Arabic word for a type of silk) even when the actual cloths were produced in South Asia. The most valuable textiles remained the cloths woven with gold and silk; the gold-brocaded silk velvet from Yazd could range in price from fifteen to one hundred and fifty mohurs. Yet the *khāṣa*, the special kingly cotton *malmaḷ*, could rival



**FIGURE 1.** Nasiruddin, *Deshakar Ragini: A Prince Looking in a Mirror Tying His Turban*, illustrated folio from the dispersed “Chawand” *Ragamala*, Rajasthan, kingdom of Mewar, 1605. Opaque watercolor on paper, 16 x 14.6 cm

the cloth-of-gold in cost, as the price for an ambiguously defined “piece” of cloth could range from three rupees to fifteen *mohurs* (almost two thousand dollars in contemporary prices).<sup>44</sup>

Moreover, the cotton textiles, all of which came from within South Asia, bore idiosyncratic names that melded Persian with Indic languages or referred to specific geographic locations and climatic conditions. One of the most valuable cotton textiles was named *tansukh*, a Sanskrit-based word that combines *tan*, for the body, with *sukh*, meaning pleasure, ease, comfort, or happiness.<sup>45</sup> John T. Platts defined *tan-sukh* as “reposing, indulging; idling; bodily ease.”<sup>46</sup> *Tan-sukh* thus suggests both the translation of local vocabulary into Akbar’s wardrobe and recognition of the pleasure of wearing this thin, fine cotton fabric that would put the body at ease in hot temperatures. The *Ā’in-i Akbarī* also lists *atan*, a textile whose name could refer to “incorporeality” or “bodilessness.”<sup>47</sup> While one muslin cloth comforts the body, another is so light that it attains metaphysical bodiless. Spirituality could also be an aspect of the cloth,

as suggested by another cotton textile listed in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, the textile *gaṅgājal*, a word that suggests “water of the Ganges River.” Ganges water itself is a sacred substance, and naming the cloth after this life-giving river that runs from the Himalayan Mountains through eastern India to the Bay of Bengal also aligned it with a particular geography and ecology. Bearing the name *gaṅgājal*, the cloth implies the proximity of its origins to the Ganges, and might even be proclaiming itself to have been bleached and washed in the water of the sacred river, thus enhancing its purity and spiritual value.

Amid the religious diversity of South Asia, cotton provided a fabric of compromise. This was true on a material level: in order to evade Islamic injunctions against indulgence in silk fabrics, weavers produced a combined fabric, with cotton warp and silk wefts, that was known as *mashru*, which translates to “permitted,” thus implying that cotton could neutralize the sin of silk.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, the translucency of the cotton *jāma* also provided a compromise between what Phillip Wagoner has described as the “sharply opposing attitudes to the body that underlie the Islamicate and traditional Indic systems of dress.” In the “Indic” sartorial culture of kingship, the king appeared bare-chested because the body was thought to “reflect the inner state and qualities of the individual.”<sup>49</sup> In “Islamicate” royal dress codes, the king covered his body in rich robes because the “uncovered body is held to be naked and shameful.”<sup>50</sup> The translucent cotton *jāma* allowed the king to be clothed, but his skin to shine through. Translucency of cloth had also been a value held in particular esteem in medieval South Asia: Sanskrit poetic texts describe a lover’s tunic as “clear as sky.”<sup>51</sup> Moti Chandra cites a prescriptive work dating to the twelfth century that enumerates the ideal dress of medieval Indian kings. It emphasizes color and texture, particularly the “lightness” of the cloth: “It is enjoined that in spring the king should wear garments made of cotton and linen—smooth, beautiful, light (*sūkṣma*) and thin (*virala*).”<sup>52</sup> Phyllis Granoff notes that medieval Sanskrit poets described the clothing of heroes and heroines not as thickly brocaded silk but as the rays of light emanating from gems or as “wisps of clouds that veil the beauty of the heavens.”<sup>53</sup> Medieval courtly texts also emphasize the importance of the king’s smooth skin and bodily regimens of perfuming.<sup>54</sup> As can be seen in many Mughal paintings, the sheer fabric of the *jāma* allowed the skin to radiate through the cloth and permitted the king’s perfumed sweat to visibly permeate the fabric (fig. 2).

The wearing of plain cotton garments also had an ethical dimension within Islamicate culture. Sufi texts, influential at the Mughal court, considered cotton the second-best material for pious clothing, after the originary *ṣūf*, or wool. The influential Timurid Sufi thinker Kāshifī (d. 1504/5) wrote that if one were asked why cotton is only “acceptable,” while wool is the “best,” the explanation is: “because its appearance is like that of linen and silk which are finer than the commonness of wool.” Kāshifī implies that the problem with cotton is that it can look like linen and silk, even if its texture has the “commonness of wool.” Yet the Prophet Muḥammad wore a cotton tunic and garments made of wool and cotton mixed together, suggesting that it is “lawful.”<sup>55</sup> Islamic texts in the *akhlāq* genre, which deal with questions of philosophy, morality, and manners, also prescribe simple modes of dress.<sup>56</sup> In the *Akhlāq-i Nāṣirī of Naṣir al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī* (1201–1274), which was a central ethical text of Akbar’s court, it is encouraged that children be “kept from soft clothing” and “brought to avoid light clothing and the cool room in summer, and the heavy cloak and the fire in winter.” In general, the child should be “led to look favorably on contempt for eating, drinking and the wearing of splendid clothes . . . brightly colored and embroidered clothes are fitting for women, while noble and eminent persons pay no heed to such things.”<sup>57</sup> While Tusi does not name cotton as the ideal cloth, his instructions are carried out in the unadorned white fabric of the Mughal *jāma*. It is mostly





**FIGURE 2.** Attributed to Sur Das, *A Royal Entertainment*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1600. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 17 x 11.4 cm

free of bright colors, embroidery, or any other finery, even if the cloth was very soft and light in the summer. Accounts from William Thevenot, a seventeenth-century European traveler at Jahangir's court, suggest that the white *jāmas* seen in Mughal paintings were almost all made of cotton for reasons of both comfort and cleanliness. B. N. Goswamy quotes Thevenot as writing that the *jāmas* were "commonly made of white stuff, that's to say of cotton-cloth, the end they may be the lighter, and the neater by being often washed; and that agrees with the fashion of

the ancient Indians.”<sup>58</sup> During the emperor’s public appearances, the white color of the cloth may have also affirmed for his subjects that the fabric was indeed the more pious cotton, and not fine silk. Thevenot wrote that “when the rich do not wear white they use silk.”<sup>59</sup> The white cotton *jāma* could thus be justified as a fabric of spiritual and ethical piety.

Garments made of white cotton served three essential purposes: they provided a cool, soft body covering in an often-sweltering climate; their translucency revealed the corporeal radiance of the king; and they conformed to the ethics of piety promoted at the Mughal court. In the painting known as *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaykh to Kings*, these three benefits of cotton textiles converge (fig. 3). As Emperor Jahangir sits on a dais made of an hourglass—with a Sufi shaykh, a deceased sultan, and an English king arrayed below him—he appears cool and marble-like in his white garment, while his warm, smooth skin can be seen beneath the cloth. The white *jāma* contributes to Jahangir’s polemical statement in this painting: that the Mughal emperor preferred spiritual leaders to earthly kings. In the context of South Asian sartorial culture, the translucency of Jahangir’s *jāma* allowed viewers access to the smooth, contoured body of the Emperor, which was thought to be a vessel for communicating the qualities of his inner personhood. For the broader Islamic world, Jahangir’s white garment signaled in the painted medium that his clothing was made from the humble cotton material, a gesture that aligned him with the piety of the Sufi shaykh.

A slightly later painting of Jahangir suggests a fourth benefit to appearing in public in a thin cotton garment that, in Persianate sartorial codes, would appear to be an undershirt. In a painting by Abu’l Hasan, which dates to about 1618, Emperor Jahangir embraces his rival, the Safavid Shah ‘Abbās (fig. 4). The scene is based on Jahangir’s dream; the two men never met, and the painting is intended to make Shah ‘Abbās appear diminutive in size and subordinate to Jahangir.<sup>60</sup> The painting has been seen as a nexus of the primary symbols of Jahangir’s royal iconography, including the nimbus around his head and the globe beneath the Emperor’s feet, which is a pun on the name Jahangir, meaning “world seizer.”<sup>61</sup> Jahangir’s garments may also have contributed to this iconography, meant to further assert his independence and superiority. Evidence from the *Jahāngīrnāma* suggests that Jahangir was deliberate about the symbolic meaning of his garment choices, and kept detailed accounts of his daily clothing ensembles.<sup>62</sup> While this painting does not record an actual event, it is nonetheless possible that the Emperor gave deliberate instructions to the painter about the clothing that he and Shah ‘Abbās should be depicted as wearing. Jahangir here has avoided the appearance of wearing a Persianate-style robe, which might be interpreted as a gift from Shah ‘Abbās. Only Shah ‘Abbās wears a rose-colored, long-sleeved robe made of brocaded silk fabric that was consistent with the Safavid style. By contrast, Jahangir wears a simple cotton *jāma* embroidered with faint blue and yellow flowers beneath an idiosyncratic short, green, gold-embroidered vest that he took up wearing and named a “*nādirī*” (rarity).<sup>63</sup> These garments are too simple and specific to be confused with gifts from a foreign dignitary and thus would not be mistaken for robes of honor gifted by another royal figure. By appearing in a sheer cotton *jāma* in this painting, and in the many other *darbār* scenes in which his noblemen are arrayed in the garments given to them as robes of honor, Jahangir was thus able to visually assert that he wore no one’s robe but his own.

### A Tie-Dyed Garden

As the Mughal elite accrued political, practical, spiritual, and even poetic reasons for wearing thin, cotton *malma* cloth in the early seventeenth century, the cotton growing, weaving,



**FIGURE 3.** Bichitr, *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaykh to Kings*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1615–18. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 25.3 x 18.1 cm



**FIGURE 4.** Abu'l Hasan, *Jahangir Embracing Shah Abbas*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1618. Opaque watercolor, ink, silver, and gold on paper, 23.8 x 15.4 cm

spinning, and bleaching industries of South Asia flourished. Painted and written evidence suggests that much smaller, “subtler constituencies” also came to be recognized by the Mughal court’s patronage of cloths of local interest rather than of international value. In his introduction to the section of the *Ā’in-i Akbarī* devoted to the emperor’s wardrobe, Abu’l Fazl writes that Emperor Akbar “pays much attention” to a number of fabrics that were regional specialties of pre-Mughal India.<sup>64</sup> The author makes special mention of “*chhīnt*,” the precursor to the European word “chintz,” painted or printed cotton cloth that was a specialty of Gujarat and south-eastern India. He lists *zardozi*, a fabric worked with golden threads, as among the textiles that Akbar improved more generally. He also mentions *bandhnūn* cloth, a type of tie-dyed cotton fabric that was a specialty of the western Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

The techniques used to make *bandhnūn*, or what is also known as *bandhānī*, preceded the Mughals, and references to this tie-dyed cloth can be found in medieval inventories.<sup>65</sup> The name *bandhānī* comes from the Sanskrit word “*bāndhāna*,” which means “binding, tying or fastening.”<sup>66</sup> In contemporary practice, the maker holds a sharp-pointed thimble beneath the fabric and then ties thread very tightly around the nib of fabric held up by the thimble. The cloth is then submerged in dye. The points that have been tied are not exposed to the dye, and, when released, they are the color of the original cloth. At times, the small points are untied just enough to take a second color of dye. At the end of the labor-intensive process, when all of the ties are removed after dyeing, the tied points form a pattern of hundreds of dots. Although Mughal documents do not list prices for *bandhānī* fabric, the cotton fabric called “*panchtolia*,” produced through a different tie-and-dye technique, is listed in the *Ā’in-i Akbarī* as costing between one and three mohurs, which was roughly equivalent in price to costly silk velvet cloth from Europe,<sup>67</sup> and approaching the price of some fine cotton muslin cloths. Despite being made from cotton and accomplished through handwork, tie-dyed textiles were thus valued monetarily; further evidence suggests that they also had symbolic value at the Mughal court.

Paintings from the early seventeenth century, including Manohar’s *The Elderly Akbar Receives Murtaza Khan* and Balchand’s portrait of Jahangir, both now in the Chester Beatty Library, as well as *Akbar Receives News of the Victory at Gogunda* (fig. 5), depict an emperor wearing a tie-dyed cotton *bandhānī* waist-tie on top of a silk waist sash. Steven Cohen, who identified the tie-dyed textiles in the Chester Beatty Library paintings, has suggested that the prominent display of *bandhānī* textiles from western India arose from Akbar and Jahangir’s familial allegiances to the region of Rajasthan.<sup>68</sup> Akbar’s wife, Maryam al-Zamānī, who was popularly known as Jodha Bai, was a Hindu, Rajput princess from the Kachhwaha royal family of Amber, near present-day Jaipur; she was also Jahangir’s mother. Cohen suggests that by including in these paintings textiles made in the region near Maryam al-Zamānī’s birthplace, Akbar and Jahangir may have been acknowledging her importance. Members of the Kachhwaha royal family, including Mirza Raja Man Singh I, were also crucial generals and ministers within the Mughal imperial army and bureaucracy.<sup>69</sup> The inclusion of a *bandhānī* textile in the painting *Akbar Receives News of the Victory at Gogunda* may derive from this second facet of Akbar’s connection to the Kachhwaha royal family. The battle of Gogunda was fought between Akbar’s Mughal forces and the armies of the Rajput principality of Mewar, and the Mughal forces were led to victory by Mirza Raja Man Singh I of Amber. A more political interpretation of *bandhānī* could be that by wearing recognizably Rajput or Gujarati textiles the Mughal emperors were visually reinforcing the incorporation of these regions into the body of the empire.



**FIGURE 5.** Attributed to Manohar, *Akbar Receives News of the Victory at Gogunda*, from an *Akbarnama*, India, Mughal dynasty, reign of Akbar, ca. 1596–1600. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 26.3 x 14.2 cm

Akbar and Jahangir may also have taken an aesthetic interest in this textile technique, recognizing the value of the workmanship as well as the aesthetic and metaphoric potential of the cloth. In the painting *Akbar Receives News of the Victory at Gogunda*, the emperor has layered a red and black *bandhānī* textile on top of a long, gold-brocaded *paṭkā* sash that drapes over his crossed legs. Likely woven in Gujarat, the silk sash underneath may have resulted from the rise of brocade weaving in the city of Ahmedabad during Akbar's reign. While many of Akbar's attendants in the painting wear sashes made of gold-brocaded silk, only the emperor wears a tie-dyed *paṭkā*. The painter draws attention to the way that the black and red colors on the *bandhānī* sash intermingle, suggesting that the process of dip-dyeing the sash may have caused the colors to bleed together. While the way that the *bandhānī* sash is studded with white dots might echo the protruding jewels on the emperor's throne and dagger, the emphasis on the waving black and red colors affirms the humble origins of the cotton sash in the dyer's vat. The juxtaposition of the luxurious Persian carpets and golden throne with the tie-dyed cloth of the *bandhānī* sash and the plain white cotton of the emperor's *jāma* suggests Akbar's willingness to mix the exalted with the quotidian. In later paintings of Jahangir wearing a *bandhānī* cloth, the contrasts of high and low are even more prominent, as Jahangir mixes the exoticness of New World emeralds with the homegrown indigo- and madder-dyed sash. Moreover, it was consistent with Jahangir's unorthodox, and at times subversive, sensibility to patronize clothing styles that were incompatible with the prevailing concepts of luxury at international early modern courts.

However, Akbar and Jahangir's appreciation for *bandhānī* cloth could also relate to contemporary understandings of crafts, which drew unexpected connections between natural and manufactured objects. In his first-person narrative, the *Jahāngīrnāma*, Jahangir demonstrated that he took delight in both natural and man-made wonder, praising the carpets of flowers that bloomed in Kashmir while also supporting a burgeoning carpet-weaving industry in Lahore.<sup>70</sup> Upon seeing a meadow of flowers in Kashmir, Jahangir composed a verse:

There were flower-carpets and fresh rosebuds,  
The wind fanned the lamps of the roses,  
The violet braided her locks,  
The buds tied a knot in the heart.<sup>71</sup>

In this verse, Jahangir marvels at the capacity of nature to weave its own splendor, with reference to the violet's braids and the buds' tying of "knots," the central component of carpet-making. An early eighteenth-century lexicon that gathered courtly idioms from the previous century also describes the making of *bandhānī* as the growing of a garden. The author renames the process "*gul-bandhī*" (rose-tying) and writes:

Without exaggeration it may be stated that these [textiles] are so nicely colored that these look like flower beds . . . The reason why it is so called is that, if for instance, they desire that the background of the cloth be red and flowers [be] green, they divide its background into so many parts and then fasten them with thread by applying certain devices that what they desire takes shape. In brief, unless the background of the flowers is fastened with a thread, the rose does not take shape.<sup>72</sup>

The description contains a wonderful reversal of process, assuming that the rose preexists the work of the dyer. It is the responsibility of the craftsman to tie the “background of the flowers” so that the rose, latent in the fabric, blooms into shape. Like the Kashmiri carpets of flowers, the “*gul-bandhī*” cloth has, figuratively, been tied with roses. The rich semiotics of the Mughal court encompassed meanings for objects, like the cotton *bandhānī* cloth, whose production extended beyond the international discourse of luxury into the realm of natural creation.

### Pashmina Shawls and the Distribution of Warmth

If the *bandhānī* sash demonstrated the ingeniousness of domestic craft, the pashmina shawls that the Mughal emperors adopted into their wardrobes represented an ecological advantage of the diverse terrain of South Asia and its neighboring regions. Pashmina fibers come from the fine underhair of a domesticated goat that is raised at high altitudes in Tibet, Central Asia, Mongolia, and western China. Weavers in the region of Kashmir obtained this soft fiber from their northern neighbors and spun and wove it into light and warm shawls. While there is some evidence that pashmina was traded from Kashmir to ancient China and to Timurid Herat, it became an export good only with the emergence of the Mughal interregional system of gift-giving.<sup>73</sup> Emperor Akbar’s *Ā’in-i Akbarī* devotes long sections of description to pashmina and its even softer and rarer counterpart, *tūs*, which comes from a wild antelope called the *chiru*. “This kind of shawl,” Abu’l Fazl wrote of the *tūs* shawl, “is unrivalled for its lightness, warmth, and softness. People generally wear it without altering its natural color; his Majesty has had it dyed.” He also altered the fashion of wearing shawls and “commenced to wear them double, which looks very well.”<sup>74</sup>

While the fiber of these shawls is technically a form of goat or antelope hair, the garments woven from these soft fibers were categorized at the Mughal court as being made of wool. The Persian word (*pashm*) from which “pashmina” is derived can refer to sheep’s wool but also to goat, camel, or donkey hair, or even to unspun cotton. In the *Ā’in-i Akbarī*, pashmina shawls from Kashmir are categorized with other wool fabrics, such as the valuable broadcloth imported from Europe and the cheap wool *kambal*, or blankets, that Banarasidas mentioned seeing in Jaunpur. “Wool” shawls from Kashmir could be even more costly than the most expensive *khāṣa* cotton, and Abu’l Fazl lists prices that range from two rupees to twenty-five mohurs.<sup>75</sup> Because pashmina shawls were considered wool, they, like fine cotton *malmal*, maintained a convenient duality: they were exceedingly fine but were also acceptable within the religious and ethical frameworks of the court. While Sufi texts regard cotton as a simple, pious, and unostentatious cloth, wool was seen as superior because of its associations with the original clothing material given by God to Adam and Eve.<sup>76</sup> The word “Sufi” even derives from *ṣūf*, which means “wool,” because Sufi devotees were known to wear wool; the most respected shaykhs from Sufi history are portrayed in Mughal portraits while wearing pashmina shawls, marked by the natural color of the wool and the faint, unhemmed fringe at the ends of the shawl (see fig. 3).<sup>77</sup> The irony of wearing the finest goat-hair textile as a “robe of the poor” would have been clear in Akbar’s time, but it does not seem to have caused discomfort. Abu’l Fazl writes of Akbar’s pious clothing habits: “from his indifference to everything that is worldly, His Majesty prefers and wears woolen stuffs, especially shawls.”<sup>78</sup> Abu’l Fazl does not mention whether Akbar’s shawls were made of pashmina or the even finer *tūs* fiber.

Abu’l Fazl also notes that Akbar changed the name of these garments to “*parmnam*,” an Indo-Persian hybrid. “*Parm*” is a contraction of the Sanskrit *param*, which means “exceedingly,”



“distinguished,” “of the highest degree,” or “perfect.”<sup>79</sup> “*Narm*” is a word of Persian origin that means “soft to the touch” and “smooth.”<sup>80</sup> Other shawls were called “*parmgarm*,” a contraction of “*parm*” and “*garm*,” which is Sanskrit for “warm.” On the sensory level, then, Akbar’s renaming of the pashmina shawl draws attention to its exceedingly soft and smooth texture, or to its perfect warmth. The circulation of these shawls throughout South Asia made pashmina into the paragon of softness; by the early eighteenth century, a variety of silk velvet was praised as being as soft as pashmina.<sup>81</sup> In hierarchies of luxury textiles, it would be assumed that silk velvet would be the “highest degree” or the “perfect” standard of softness. Akbar and his successors assigned that honor instead to goat hair.

The Mughal elite regularly made gifts of *parmnarm* shawls. The *Jahāngīrnāma* and the official letters that accompanied imperial gifts make special mention of the experience of donning these textiles, rather than the intrinsic value of the gifts, and the records for gifts of *parmnarm* shawls stress adjectives such as “warm” and “soft” in addition to “personal,” which suggests that the shawl came from ruler’s own shoulders.<sup>82</sup> For instance, in March 1615, when Rai Suraj Singh was dispatched for service to the Deccan, Emperor Jahangir sent him his own personal “warm shawl.”<sup>83</sup> The pashmina shawl that the emperor sent to the ruler of the Rajput state of Bikaner was noted to be the “private” shawl of the emperor, while a silk robe was described as being “soft.”<sup>84</sup> Jahangir seems to have paid particular attention to climate and to the season in his gifting of robes of honor. In January 1613 he sent “winter robes of honor” to the *amīrs* of the Deccan, and in November 1615 he gave winter robes to Qasim Khan and the *amīrs* of Bengal.<sup>85</sup> Through these repeated references to soft, warm, and winter-appropriate clothing, Jahangir expressed concern for his subordinates’ physical comfort, in addition to their symbolic fealty, in the ritual of giving robes of honor.

As with many aspects of Mughal political-aesthetic life, the pashmina shawl may have contained a double-edged pun. The term “*parmnarm*” could also refer to manners and behavior—specifically, to the ideal personality of a political subject. Used as an adverb, the Persian word “*narm*” can modify verbs to imply that someone undertakes an action “softly, gently, pleasantly, mildly”; it can modify other verbs to mean “obey,” “submit,” “soothe,” or “renounce one’s pride.”<sup>86</sup> This behavioral meaning of gentleness and submission seems like a fitting pun within Mughal imperial metaphors: into the warm and soothing gift of a *parmnarm* shawl the emperor had folded a message about submission and the renunciation of pride. When Akbar and Jahangir sent these gifts, accompanied by letters supplying the new name for the *parmnarm* shawl, they were communicating to Rajput rajas, the sultans of the Deccan, the generals in their military, and their often-rebellious sons that the gift carried an expectation of mild behavior.

### Embroidering the Robe, Embellishing the Prince

Emperor Jahangir was also a prolific patron of embroidery, a textile art that has not received the same historiographic attention as loom-woven silks. In part, this bias reflects an appreciation for the technologies that produced the early modern period’s astonishingly complex compound weave structures and figured velvet textiles. Because it does not rely on a loom and is created instead with individual stitches, embroidery requires less start-up capital and can be carried out domestically. The lower status of embroidery in the contemporary accounts of textiles may also derive from the fact that in recent history embroidery has been a craft practiced by women.<sup>87</sup> Yet highly professionalized male and female embroiderers existed throughout the early modern

world, and embroidered textiles from China and India traveled as coveted merchandise to Europe and colonial Latin America.<sup>88</sup>

An embroidered satin sleeveless hunting coat, of the type that Jahangir named “*nādirī*,” suggests some of the alternative advantages of embroidered silk cloth (figs. 6–7).<sup>89</sup> The embroiderers of the coat used dense chain-stitch embroidery to render a waterfall whose radiations of blue silk floss appear to be shards of glimmering stained glass (fig. 8). They borrowed wispy cloud forms from Chinese textiles to represent air in motion and to show that the birds are caught in a swelling breeze. A lion, its limbs taut and its stomach bulging, tears into the bent neck of a deer. Unlike the precious weft-faced woven silks from Safavid Iran, in which weft moves in a regularized pattern perpendicular to the hidden warp, an embroidered garment contains stitches that move in many directions. The embroiderer can create a swirl of stitches to delineate the lion’s muscular haunches, or can use a dense, linear arrangement of stitches to render water tumbling down rocks. Embroidery, particularly when it includes gold thread, beads, or pearls, is more three-dimensional and sculptural than woven silk cloth.

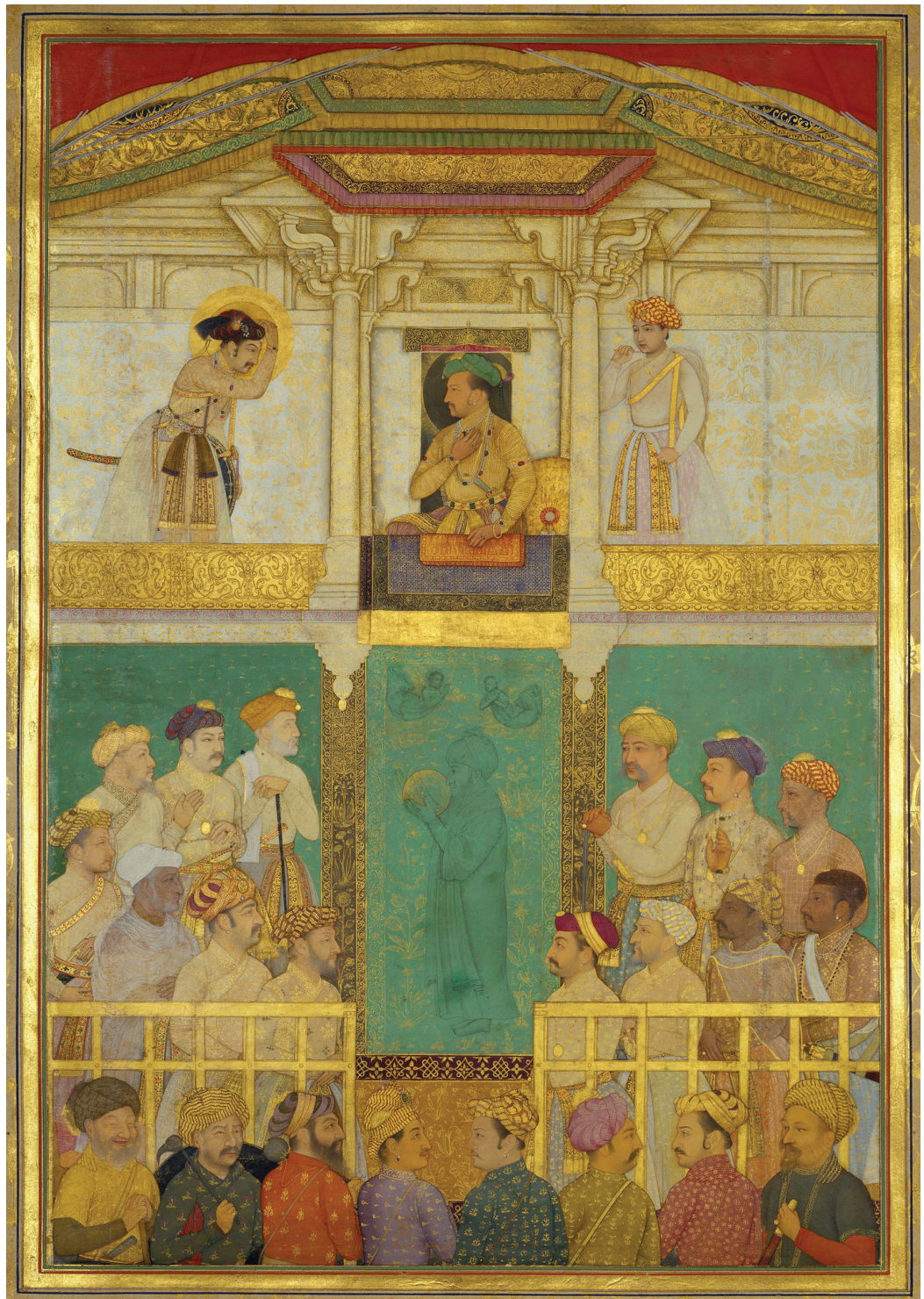
The structural difference between loom-woven silk and embroidery seems to have created a conceptual distinction within Mughal gifting systems. In the case of woven cloth-of-gold textiles, the gold is intrinsically part of its structure, while *zarī*, or gold thread, embroidery and other jeweled embellishments can be endlessly added to an existing garment. At a certain point, an embroidered textile can merge into being a form of jewelry. The *Jahāngīrnāma* suggests that the emperor specifically directed gold-embroidered robes to his sons, the princes of the realm. Prince Khurram, who later succeeded Jahangir as emperor, was the most favored recipient of these lavish gifts. In June 1617, Jahangir sent Prince Khurram “a royal *nādirī* [sleeveless coat], its equal in expensive gold embroidery has not been sewn in my establishment before.”<sup>90</sup> Jahangir then told the bearer of the gift to mention that this garment “had the distinction” of having been the coat that Jahangir was wearing when Prince Khurram led the army to the Deccan. Four months later, Prince Khurram returned to his father’s court, where he was promoted in rank and given the title Shah Jahan, meaning “king of the world.” On this October occasion, the prince received a “gold-embroidered *charqab* [a Timurid-style coat] edged with pearls on the collar, cuffs, and hem worth fifty thousand rupees.”<sup>91</sup> Later in the month, Jahangir’s wife, Nur Jahan, gave Shah Jahan an “expensive” robe of honor in addition to a *nādirī* “adorned with jeweled flowers and precious pearls.”<sup>92</sup>

Alongside these gifts of clothing, Jahangir also presented his son with jeweled daggers whose handles bore floral enamel, jeweled turban ornaments with Kashmiri feathers, pearl earrings, and ruby rings. On occasion, Jahangir also sprinkled his sons with golden coins. These gift-giving events were significant enough to be visually recorded in the *Pādshāhnāma*, Shah Jahan’s illustrated account of his reign (fig. 9). Embellished garments and golden objects were a way of giving enormous sums of money—the fifty-thousand-rupee *charqab* would be worth 755,000 dollars in contemporary prices.<sup>93</sup> As Munis Faruqi has argued, the Mughal princes derived enormous revenue from these gifting rituals with the emperor.<sup>94</sup> Beyond cost, embroidery seems to have been a tool by which the emperor could embellish his sons and ornament their bodies even at a distance, using the medium of a satin robe that had been encrusted with gold thread and gems. In doing so, Jahangir could revise the meaning of *khil’a*. Instead of thinking of the *khil’a* as the heavy robe of submission, the emperor could use the embroidered garment to decorate his sons’ bodies with jewels.



**FIGURE 6 AND 7.** Hunting coat, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1620–30. Embroidered satin with silk, 97 x 91.44 cm

**FIGURE 8.** Detail of the coat shown in figs. 6–7



**FIGURE 9.** Attributed to Abid, *Jahangir Receives Prince Khurram, Ajmer, April 1616*, from the *Windsor Padshahnama*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1635–36. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 35.8 x 24.2 cm

## Conclusion

The textile culture of Mughal India did not lack for luxury. Yet cotton and wool cloth, and tie-dyed and embroidered garments, carried local aesthetic, symbolic, and political meanings that could not always be replicated in the silk and gold-brocaded materials of international exchange. Cotton conferred coolness on the body and highlighted the luminosity of the skin. As an ostensibly humble fabric, it upheld ethical righteousness, and as a textile rarely given as a robe of honor, it proclaimed the independence of those who wore it. When saturated with tie-dyed color, cotton *bandhānī* textiles asserted solidarity with Rajput allies and evoked the blooming of a rose garden. The soft, warming texture of pashmina *parmnam* shawls could both simulate a ruler's concern for his vassals and insist upon their obedience. When a prince donned an embroidered coat from his father, he ornamented his body with the favor of the emperor.

Emperor Jahangir recognized both the usefulness and the generative poetic possibilities of South Asia's regional textile traditions. For this reason, he was confounded when Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador to the Mughal court, gave him gifts manufactured outside of the English realm. Queen Nur Jahan made clear to the ambassador that she would prefer English-made embroidery, and the ambassador began to order objects of English domestic manufacture, such as "sweet-bags, embroidered with gold" for the women of the Mughal court, "fine needlework toys," "fair bone lace," an "embroidered folding case," and an "embroidered pillow."<sup>95</sup> Around the year 1613, Roe gave Emperor Jahangir an English coach for four horses. As Edward Terry, a clergyman who accompanied Roe, recounted: "The coach they sent was lined within with crimson China velvet, which when the Mogol [Jahangir] took notice of, he told the Ambassador that he wondered the King of England would trouble himself so much, as to send unto China for velvet to line a coach for him, in regard that he had been informed that the English King had much better velvet near home, for such, or any other uses."<sup>96</sup> Upon seeing the Chinese velvet, Jahangir could not understand why the English king would pass over English fabric (or perhaps velvets from relatively nearby Italy) and purchase exotic wares from China. His confusion derived from his patriotism. When he incorporated South Asian textiles into imperial ritual, Jahangir did not think of himself as patronizing inferior local items. Instead, he luxuriated in their possibilities.

---

**SYLVIA HOUGHTELING**, PhD (Yale), 2015, is an assistant professor in the Department of History of Art at Bryn Mawr College. Her research focuses on textiles from the early modern period with a particular interest in exchanges among South Asia, Europe, and Islamic lands. E-mail: [shoughteli@brynmawr.edu](mailto:shoughteli@brynmawr.edu)

---

## Notes

- 1 Banarasidas, *Ardhakathanak*, trans. Rohini Chowdhury (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2009), 104–5.
- 2 Banarasidas, *Ardhakathanak*, 106–7. For the original text, see Mukund Lath, *Half a Tale: A Study in the Interrelationship between Autobiography and History* (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2005), 169.
- 3 Banarasidas, *Ardhakathanak*, 118–19.
- 4 S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, vol. 4, *Daily Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 165, 170–71; and Lisa Golombek, "The Draped Universe of Islam," in *Content and Context of Visual Arts*

- in *the Islamic World*, ed. Priscilla P. Soucek (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 25–38.
- 5 Carol Bier, ed., *Woven from the Soul, Spun from the Heart: Textile Arts of Safavid and Qajar Iran, 16th–19th Centuries* (Washington, DC: Textile Museum, 1987); Lisa Monnas, *Merchants, Princes and Painters: Silk Fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings, 1300–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); and Amelia Peck, *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013).
  - 6 See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984); Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004); and Beverly Lemire, ed., *The Force of Fashion in Politics and Society: Global Perspectives from Early Modern to Contemporary Times* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010).
  - 7 Oleg Grabar, "The Shared Culture of Objects," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1997), 115–29.
  - 8 James C. Y. Watt and Anne E. Wardwell, eds., *When Silk was Gold: Central Asian and Chinese Textiles* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 21–29; Thomas Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange in the Mongol Empire: A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 46–70; Morris Rossabi, "Behind the Silk Screen: Movements of Weavers in Asia, Seventh to Fourteenth Centuries," *Orientalism* 29 (1998): 84–89; Michael Meister, "The Pearl Roundel in Chinese Textile Design" *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 255–67; and Alicia Walker, *The Emperor and the World: Exotic Elements and the Imaging of Middle Byzantine Imperial Power, Ninth to Thirteenth Centuries C.E.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 20–44.
  - 9 F. Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 61–88; and Philip B. Wagoner, "Sultan Among Hindu Kings': Dress, Titles, and the Islamicization of Hindu Culture at Vijayanagara," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55 (1996): 851–80.
  - 10 Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 64.
  - 11 Alisa LaGamma, ed., *Kongo: Power and Majesty* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015); Dennis Carr, ed., *Made in the Americas: The New World Discovers Asia* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 2015); Barbara Karl, *Embroidered Histories: Indian Textiles for the Portuguese Market during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2016); and Amanda Phillips, *Everyday Luxuries: Art and Objects in Ottoman Constantinople, 1600–1800* (Dortmund: Verlag Kettler, 2016).
  - 12 Jonathan Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces: The Decorative Object in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 67; and Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden, and Ruth Phillips, eds., *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums and Material Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2006).
  - 13 Alessandra Russo, *The Untranslatable Image: A Mestizo History of the Arts in New Spain, 1500–1600* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 20–21. Hernán Cortés wrote of "jewels of featherwork" in a 1520 letter to Charles V (Russo, *The Untranslatable Image*, 23).
  - 14 *Khil'a*, a term that comes from the Arabic word for "a garment cast off," was a symbolic gift of clothing, originally intended to be a cast-off garment of the ruler, that was given by a ruler to subordinates in order to physically and symbolically incorporate them into the ruler's service. Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 114.
  - 15 Amanda Phillips, "Ottoman Hil'at: Between Commodity and Charisma," in *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination Studies in Honour of Rhoads Murphey*, ed. Marios Hadjianastasis (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 111–38; and Stewart Gordon, "Introduction: Ibn Battuta and a Region of Robing," in *Robes of Honour: Khil'at in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India*, ed. Stewart Gordon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1–30. See also Stewart Gordon, ed., *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).
  - 16 For examples of luxury robes of honor, see Nurhan Atasoy, *İpek, the Crescent & the Rose: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets* (London: Azimuth Editions Limited, 2001); and Louise Mackie, *Symbols of Power: Luxury Textiles from Islamic Lands, 7th–21st Centuries* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2015).
  - 17 Gavin R. G. Hambly, "The Emperor's Clothes: Robing and 'Robes of Honour' in Mughal India," in Gordon, *Robes of Honour*, 40.

- 18 Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Early Modern Floral: The Agency of Ornament in Ottoman and Safavid Visual Cultures," in *Histories of Ornament: From Global to Local*, ed. Gülru Necipoğlu and Alina Payne (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 132–55. See also Gülru Necipoğlu, "L'idée de décor dans les régimes de visualité islamiques," in *Purs décors? Arts de l'Islam, regards du XIXe siècle*, ed. Rémi Labrusse (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2007), 10–23.
- 19 This transformation from a Persianate arabesque style to freestanding floral motifs can be recognized most readily in the carpet medium. See Daniel Walker, *Flowers Underfoot: Indian Carpets of the Mughal Era* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997).
- 20 Mina Rocas and Louise Edwards, "Trans-national Flows and the Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas," in *The Politics of Dress in Asia and the Americas*, ed. Mina Rocas and Louise Edwards (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2007), 2.
- 21 C. A. Bayly, "The Origins of Swadeshi (Home Industry): Cloth and Indian Society, 1700–1930," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 285–322.
- 22 Stephen F. Dale, "Silk Road, Cotton Road or . . . Indo Chinese Trade in Pre-European Times," in *Expanding Frontiers in South Asian and World History: Essays in Honour of John F. Richards*, ed. Richard M. Eaton et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 72–80.
- 23 Irfan Habib, "Indian Textile Industry in the 17th Century," in *Essays in Honour of Professor S. C. Sarkar* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1976), 186; and Irfan Habib, *An Atlas of the Mughal Empire* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 8.
- 24 Rudolph Matthee, *The Politics of Trade in Safavid Iran: Silk for Silver, 1600–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 37.
- 25 Rudi Matthee, Patrick Clawson, and Willem Floor, *The Monetary History of Iran: From the Safavids to the Qajars* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2013), 57; and Stephen Dale, *Indian Merchants and Eurasian Trade, 1600–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 21–22.
- 26 Jagjeet Lally, "The Pattern of Trade in Seventeenth-Century Mughal India: Towards an Economic Explanation," *London School of Economics Working Papers* 120 (2009): 22.
- 27 Rahul Jain, "The Indian Drawloom and its Products," *The Textile Museum Journal* (1993–1994): 51. See also Rahul Jain, "The Mughal Patka: A Technical Overview," in B. N. Goswamy and Rahul Jain, *Indian Costumes II: Patkas: A Costume Accessory in the Collection of the Calico Museum of Textiles* (Ahmedabad: Sarabhai Foundation, 2002); and Rahul Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave Silks in the Collection of the Calico Museum of Textiles* (Ahmedabad: Sarabhai Foundation, 2013), 7–8, 13–17.
- 28 Muhammad Arif Qandahari, *Tarikh-i-Akbari*, trans. Tasneem Ahmad (Delhi: Pragati Publications, 1993), 63; also quoted in Irfan Habib, "Akbar and Technology," in *Akbar and His India*, ed. Irfan Habib (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 132; and Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave*, 11–12.
- 29 Himanshu Prabha Ray, "Far-flung Fabrics—Indian Textiles in Ancient Maritime Trade," in *Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies*, ed. Ruth Barnes (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 16–34; and Dale, "Silk Road, Cotton Road," 74–75.
- 30 Benjamin A. Dobson, *Humidity in Cotton Spinning* (Bolton: G. S. Heaton, 1894), 3–5.
- 31 Sonia Ashmore, *Muslin* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2012), 14. See also Saiful Islam, *Muslin: Our Story* (Dhaka: Drik Picture Library Ltd., 2016).
- 32 Ashmore, *Muslin*, 14.
- 33 Jain, *Indian Lampas-Weave*, 4.
- 34 Mattiebelle Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World: Technique and Trade in Early Indian Dyed Cotton Textiles* (Washington, DC: The Textile Museum, 1982).
- 35 For excellent descriptions of each technique, see Rosemary Crill, ed., *The Fabric of India* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2015).
- 36 H. K. Naqvi, *Urban Centres and Industries in Upper India, 1556–1803* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1968), 147.
- 37 H. K. Naqvi, "Some Varieties of Indian Silken Stuffs in Persian Sources c. 1200–1700," *Indian Journal of History of Science* 18 (1983): 120.
- 38 Bayly, "The Origins of Swadeshi," 299–301.
- 39 Bayly, "The Origins of Swadeshi," 300.
- 40 Bayly, "The Origins of Swadeshi," 302.
- 41 Ritu Kumar, *Costumes and Textiles of Royal India* (London: Christie's Books, 1999), 38; and B. N. Goswamy, *Indian Costumes in the Collection of the Calico Museum of Textiles* (Ahmedabad: Sarabhai Foundation, 1993), 15.
- 42 Roshen Alkazi, *Medieval Indian Costume: India and Central Asia* (New Delhi: Art Heritage, 2008), 268.
- 43 Qandahari, *Tarikh-i-Akbari*, 175.
- 44 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbari*, trans. Henry Blochmann, vol. 1 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873), 92–96. This estimated conversion is derived from

- Munis Faruqui's calculations, which are based on 2009 currency values. Munis D. Faruqui, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire, 1504–1719* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 93. One mohur is equal to 8.825 rupees; 15.1 rupees are equal to one dollar (in 2009).
- 45 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 94; and Arthur Anthony Macdonell, *A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary with Transliteration, Accentuation, and Etymological Analysis Throughout* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), 351, s.v. "sukha"
- 46 John T. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English* (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1884), 338, s.v. "tan-sukh, adj. and singular masculine."
- 47 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 94; and Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English*, 17, s.v. "atanu and atan."
- 48 Bayly, "The Origins of Swadeshi," 290.
- 49 Wagoner, "Sultan among Hindu Kings," 864
- 50 Wagoner, "Sultan among Hindu Kings," 865.
- 51 Moti Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure in Ancient and Mediaeval India* (Delhi: Oriental Publishers, 1973), 117.
- 52 Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure in Ancient and Mediaeval India*, 122–23. From the *Mānasollāsa* by Someśvara, the Western Cālukya king who ruled from about 1124 to 1138.
- 53 Phyllis Granoff, "Luxury Goods and Intellectual History: The Case of Printed and Woven Multicolored Textiles in Medieval India," *Ars Orientalis* 34 (2004): 151, 153.
- 54 Daud Ali, *Courtly Culture and Political Life in Early Medieval India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 147–48.
- 55 Husayn Wā'iz Kāshifī Sabzawārī, *The Royal Book of Spiritual Chivalry (Futūwat nāmah-yi sulṭānī)*, trans. Jay R. Crook (Chicago: Great Books of the Islamic World, distributed by Kazi Publications, 2000), 165–66.
- 56 Muzaffar Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam: India 1200–1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 11–14.
- 57 *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, The Nasirean Ethics*, trans. G. M. Wickens (London: George Allen 1964), 169, 167. On the importance of the thought of *Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī* at the Mughal court, see Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Kingdom, Household and Body History, Gender and Imperial Service under Akbar," *Modern Asian Studies* 41 (2007): 889–923.
- 58 Some scholars have suggested that the very fine white *jāmas* depicted in Mughal paintings are actually made of silk rather than cotton. There is evidence to support this idea. H. K. Naqvi mentions that the wealthiest citizens in seventeenth-century India could afford to wear silk *jāmas* instead of those made of cotton. See H. K. Naqvi, *Urban Centres and Industries in Upper India, 1556–1803* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1968), 196–98. However, Thevenot's comments, cited by B. N. Goswamy, seem to confirm that white *jāmas* were almost exclusively made of cotton. See Goswamy, *Indian Costumes in the Collection of the Calico Museum of Textiles*, 31.
- 59 Goswamy, *Indian Costumes in the Collection of the Calico Museum of Textiles*, 31.
- 60 Sumathi Ramaswamy, "Conceit of the Globe in Mughal Visual Practice," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49 (2007): 754–55.
- 61 Jeremiah P. Losty, "Abu'l Hasan," in *Master Artists of the Imperial Mughal Court*, ed. Pratapaditya Pal (Bombay: Marg Publications, 1991), 81; and Ashok Kumar Das, *Mughal Painting during Jahangir's Time* (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1978), 217.
- 62 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 220.
- 63 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, 223. The pattern on the green vest is of golden angels.
- 64 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 91.
- 65 Chandra, *Costume, Textiles, Cosmetics & Coiffure in Ancient and Mediaeval India*, 153. Chandra's sources are *varṇakas*, or poetic lists of objects, from fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century Gujarat.
- 66 Macdonell, *A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 190, s.v. "Bāndhana, n."
- 67 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 95. I hypothesize that "panchtolia," or *pañchtauliyā*, was also a tie-dyed fabric because of the etymology of the name: "pañch" means "five" and "tauliyā" refers to a copper pot, which is the chosen vessel of South Asian dyers. "Pañchtauliyā" could thus refer to a cloth dipped in five different dye-baths held in five separate copper pots. In order to protect the sections of the cloth not intended to be dyed in the dye-bath, the dyers would tie up those sections of the cloth using similar tie-dye techniques to those used for *bandhānī* cloth. Because *bandhānī* is usually confined to two or three colors, it may have been less valuable than the five-colored *pañchtauliyā* fabric. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English*, 344, s.v. "tauliyā."
- 68 Steven Cohen, "Textiles, Dress, and Attire as Depicted in the Albums," in *Muraqqa: Imperial Mughal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin*, ed. Elaine Wright (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2008), 183.



- 69 S. Inayat A. Saidi, "Akbar and the Rajput Principalities: Integration into Empire," in *Akbar and His India*, ed. Irfan Habib (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 15–24.
- 70 Ebba Koch, "Jahangir as Francis Bacon's Ideal of the King as an Observer and Investigator of Nature," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 19 (2009): 293–338.
- 71 Quoted in the preface to Daniel Walker, *Flowers Underfoot: Indian Carpets of the Mughal Era* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997). On the carpet industry in Lahore under Jahangir, see Walker, *Flowers Underfoot*, 8–9.
- 72 Anand Ram Mukhlis, *Mirat-ul-Istilah: Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Medieval India*, trans. Tasneem Ahmad (Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1993), 110–11.
- 73 Crill, *The Fabric of India*, 26–27; and Steven Cohen et al., eds., *Kashmir Shawls: The TAPI Collection* (Mumbai: The Shoestring Press, 2012).
- 74 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 92; translation in Habib, "Akbar and Technology," 132–33.
- 75 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 95.
- 76 Husayn Wā'iz Kāshifī Sabzawārī, *The Royal Book of Spiritual Chivalry*, 165–66.
- 77 Cohen, "Textiles, Dress, and Attire as Depicted in the Albums," 180–81.
- 78 Abu'l Fazl, *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, 90.
- 79 Macdonell, *A Practical Sanskrit Dictionary*, 153, s.v. "paramā."
- 80 Francis Joseph Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary, Including the Arabic Words and Phrases to be Met with in Persian Literature* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1892), 1395, s.v. "narm."
- 81 Mukhlis, *Mirat-ul-Istilah*, 171.
- 82 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*.
- 83 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, 178.
- 84 Rajasthan State Archives, *A Descriptive List of Far-mans, Manshurs, and Nishans Addressed by the Imperial Mughals to the Princes of Rajasthan* (Bikaner: Rajasthan State Archives, 1962), appendix, 13, 19.
- 85 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, 141, 182.
- 86 Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, "narm," 1395; "ragi gardan narm kardan, to renounce one's pride or arrogance; to submit, to obey," 586, 1086; "kalām narm kardan, to speak gently and kindly," 1041; "narm raftan, to go softly, gently, pleasantly," 1395; "narm kardan, to soften, mitigate, soothe, reconcile, pacify," 1395.
- 87 For the foundational feminist account from the Western perspective, see Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (London: Women's Press, 1984); and, more recently, Constance Classen, "Feminine Tactics: Crafting an Alternative Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Book of Touch*, ed. Constance Classen (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 228–39.
- 88 See Peck, *Interwoven Globe*, Chapters 4 and 7.
- 89 Rosemary Crill, "Man's Riding Coat," in Crill, *The Fabric of India*, 108–9.
- 90 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, 220.
- 91 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, 229.
- 92 Jahangir, *The Jahangirnama*, 229.
- 93 This conversion is derived from Munis Faruqi's calculations, which are based on 2009 currency values. Faruqi, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire*, 93.
- 94 Faruqi, *The Princes of the Mughal Empire*, 99.
- 95 Ellison Banks Findly, "Nur Jahan's Embroidery Trade and Flowers of the Taj Mahal," *Asian Art and Culture* 92 (1996): 13–14.
- 96 Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East-India* (1614; repr., London: 1655), 385–86.

## Figure Credits

- Figure 1. Nasiruddin, *Deshakar Ragini: A Prince Looking in a Mirror Tying His Turban*, illustrated folio from the dispersed "Chawand" *Ragamala*, Rajasthan, kingdom of Mewar, 1605. Opaque watercolor on paper, 16 x 14.6 cm. Kronos Collections, New York
- Figure 2. Attributed to Sur Das, *A Royal Entertainment*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1600. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 17 x 11.4 cm. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1960.27
- Figure 3. Bichitr, *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Shaykh to Kings*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1615–18. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 25.3 x 18.1 cm. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery,

- Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1942.15a
- Figure 4. Abu'l Hasan, *Jahangir Embracing Shah Abbas*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1618. Opaque watercolor, ink, silver, and gold on paper, 23.8 x 15.4 cm. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1945.9a
- Figure 5. Attributed to Manohar, *Akbar Receives News of the Victory at Gogunda*, from an *Akbarnama*, India, Mughal dynasty, reign of Akbar, ca. 1596–1600. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 26.3 x 14.2 cm. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Purchase—Charles Lang Freer Endowment, F1960.28

Figures 6 and 7. Hunting coat, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1620–30. Embroidered satin with silk, 97 x 91.44 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, IS.18–1947  
Figure 8. Detail of the coat shown in figs. 6–7  
Figure 9. Attributed to Abid, *Jahangir Receives Prince Khurram, Ajmer, April 1616*, from the Windsor

*Padshahnama*, India, Mughal dynasty, ca. 1635–36. Opaque watercolor and gold on paper, 35.8 x 24.2 cm. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2017, RCIN 1005025.al, fol. 192b