

SOUTH ASIA COLLECTION  
prepared by Monica Ghosh

**Title: Views of India.**

Publisher: Delhi : s.n., ca. 1830

Description: [54] leaves of plates : col. ill.

*Notes: An album of 56 Indian watercolors of views of Indian architecture and of architectural decorations.*

An album of fifty-four fine water-color views of architectural sites and details at Agra, Delhi, and Mathura. There are seven views of the Taj Mahal (completed 22 years after construction began in 1653), including two of the interior, and the pietra dura in detail. There are two views of the mausoleum of the Mughal Emperor Akbar located in Sikandara, including a Pah Tak in the surrounding wall, and the interior of the entrance of the mausoleum. Other views include Umur Sing's Gate (named for the Gurkha who resisted the British), Fort of Agra, and Nubbajer's Mosque in Mathura.

From Delhi, there are views of the Qutab Minar (the largest tower in India built in 1310), and the tombs of Humayun -- remarkable as the first garden tomb built on the subcontinent in 1570 that reflected both Indian (chhatris) and Persian (double dome) architectural influences -- and Safer Jung. The Jama Masjid (Mosque of Friday), built by the Emperor Shah Jahan in the mid-seventeenth century, has three domes made of white marble inlaid with stripes of black slate, and a red stone main courtyard. The images are not accompanied by any text. On the backs of some images, there are Urdu inscriptions identifying the image, and notes in English also identifying the images.

**Title: Indian Zoology**

Author: Pennant, Thomas

Publisher: London, Printed by H. Hughs, for R. Faulder, 1790.

Description: 2d ed.

1 p.l., viii, 161 p., 1 l. XVI pl. 26 cm.

*Notes: "An essay on India, its boundaries, climate, soil, and sea. Translated from the Latin of John Reinhold Forster, by John Aikin, M.D.": p. [1]-27. "The Indian faunula [arranged by John Latham and Hugh Davies]": p. [57]-161.*

In the 14<sup>th</sup> century a native of South Asia Madanapala wrote a Sanskrit text that listed native plants used in ayurvedic medicine. Flora and fauna of the subcontinent were depicted in great detail in Mughal and Rajput art. The native systems of knowledge were not always accessible to the Europeans who had begun to travel via sea voyages to far away places around the world. Regardless of the purpose of the voyage, which often combined economic, expansionist, and exploratory aspects, the crew often included naturalists, the most well known being Charles Darwin and Carl Linnaeus. Their job was to record and collect plants, insects, animals, birds, etc. Thomas Pennant's *Indian Zoology* is an early representation of a European perspective on animals on the subcontinent. This book is the second edition and much expanded from the 1769 edition with 16 hand-colored plates and hand-colored vignette to the title.

**Author: Hodges, William, 1744-1797.**

Title: *Travels in India* : during the years 1780, 1781, 1782 and 1783.

Publisher: London : printed for the author, and sold by J. Edwards, 1793.

Description: vi, 156 p., 14 pl., fold. map.

A tangible link between the presence of the British in Polynesia and South Asia can be seen in the person of the artist William Hodges. In 1772, Hodges traveled to the Pacific on the *Resolution* as the accompanying artist on Captain Cook's second voyage. Eight years later, between 1780 and 1784, Hodges traveled to India working for the East India Company as an artist commissioned by his friend Warren Hastings, the Governor of Bengal, soon-to-be Governor-General of India.

Hodges is considered the first European professional artist to sketch the scenic splendor of India and use his own observation to portray the common people. Prior to that, British artists had confined themselves almost wholly to painting portraits of the ruling elite and the Indian princes. Hodges, on the other hand, attuned himself to the sights, color and shape of his surroundings quickly, depicting his subjects with utmost fidelity and amazing detail. Critics of Hodges say his images of places in India are picturesque, devoid of people, distant and in ruin.

Hodges published an account of his *Travels in India* in 1793. He also published a dissertation on Indian architecture and a series of lavish prints entitled *Select Views in India*, a series of 48 aquatints, which were published between 1785-88.

**Author: Callcott, Maria, 1785-1842.**

Title: *Journal of a Residence in India* (1812).

Publisher: Edinburgh, Printed by G. Ramsay and Company for A. Constable and company, 1812.

Description: vii, [1], 211, [1] p. col. front. plates (partly fold.)

British imperial expansion was most active in the nineteenth century. There was a corresponding expansion in travel writings, which, highly popular in their own time, seemed to bring exotic realms within the grasp of the reading public and were a source for ethnographic and cultural information about other societies. The illustrated *Journal of a Residence in India* is her first published work, followed in 1815 by *Letters on India*. The journal is remarkable both for its gendered perspective and for reflecting the ideologies and stereotypes that were in the process of being formed that set the "natives" up as other and/or subhuman and set the stage for a particular kind of intervention – colonialism.

Maria Graham was the daughter of George Dundas, rear-admiral and commissioner of the Admiralty. From an early age she read widely and took great interest in plants, flowers and trees. Early in 1808, Maria sailed with her father for India, where she married Captain Thomas Graham in the following year. In the same year she set out on a traveling tour of India together with her husband. She returned to England in 1811. From 1821-23 she lived in South America. After her husband's death in 1822, she re-married the famous artist Augustus Callcott in 1827. Maria Graham wrote popular descriptions of her travels to and stays in India, Italy, Rome, Brazil, and Chile, and was also the author of many successful children's books. The book by which she is best remembered is *Little Arthur's history of England* (1835).

**Author: Basu, Atul K.**

Title: Hindu gods and goddesses as traditionally known in Bengal.

Publisher: [1903]

Description: 36 art prints: col. ; 27 cm. + carbon typescript (31, 31, [10] leaves ; 27 cm.)

*Notes: Title from accompanying typescript. Title page of manuscript inscribed "W.E. Bemis Esqu. with best respects of Atul K. Basu Calcutta 20 Feb. 1903." Prints compiled from different sources, including publishers P.C. Biswas and B.L. Chatterjee of Calcutta. Includes hand-tinted and multi-colored lithography.*

A collection of 36 art prints (hand-tinted and multi-colored lithography) of Hindu gods and goddesses by Atul Basu that date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in India. Basu was a well-known artist in Calcutta, during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The prints have been compiled from different sources, including publishers P.C. Biswas and B.L. Chatterjee, also of Calcutta. Some prints have the romanized name of the deity inscribed on the larger sheet upon which the print is pasted, such as Vishnu, Siva, Ganesha, Krishna, Saraswati, and Brahmani. Other prints provide the gods and goddesses names only in Bangla, such as Kamala. This selection of gods and goddesses references manifestations and associations in a particular region in India, namely Bengal.

The prints are accompanied by Basu's first carbon typescript titled, *Hindu Gods & Goddesses as traditionally known in Bengal*, which is 31 pages, inscribed and signed by the author, dated February 20, 1903, and includes revisions in red ink. As well as a later version that includes most of the revisions. The typescript provides basic information on the gods and goddesses as noted in the following excerpts: Krishna is "[T]he 8<sup>th</sup> incarnation of Vishnu" and "was born on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after New Moon of Vadra", "Lukshmi is the goddess of wealth and prosperity", and "Gonesha" is "Doorga's first son" and "the God of Wisdom and the giver of success." The manuscript is not as valuable as the art, because the contents have appeared in other texts with more detail, whereas the art is valuable for examples of early art printing processes in India, particularly Calcutta.