

218  
Mausoleum for  
Aurangzeb's  
wife,  
Aurangabad,  
c.1678

garden. While its proportions may reflect an altered aesthetic, it lacks the harmony of the earlier monument. It makes no use of inlay, and its startling white appearance is the effect, not of polished marble, but of burnished stucco.

Mughal India is estimated to have had a population of 100 million people; during the 150-year rule of the Mughals, the empire supported a standard of life comparable with that of contemporary Europe. While Mughal rule continued for another 150 years after Aurangzeb, the centre became vulnerable, and by the mid-eighteenth century its territory was confined to the environs of Delhi. During this time, however, art continued to flourish in outlying Mughal provinces such as Murshidabad (see 96) or Avadh with its capital at the vibrant city of Lucknow. In 1858, the British exiled and imprisoned the last Mughal ruler, Bahadur Shah II, and made India a crown possession.



219  
Manek Chowk,  
east façade of  
the City  
Palace,  
Udaipur,  
c.1570 with  
later additions.  
The sun is the  
emblem of the  
Mewar house

Between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries, when much of northern India and the Deccan was under Muslim rule, art and culture flourished in the many Hindu Rajput kingdoms that extended in an arc along the northwestern part of India. The origins of the Rajputs, literally sons of kings, may lie in the highlands of Central Asia. In western India, Rajput clans established numerous principalities, some no larger than the modern state of Monaco. Among the more prominent kingdoms in the plains were Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Kotah and Mewar, while the hill states, termed *pahadi* (of the hills), included Kangra, Chamba, Basohli, Kulu and Jammu. The largest, southernmost and most ancient kingdom was Mewar, bounded to its west by the Aravalli hills and to the south by jungle country inhabited by Bhil tribals, an area rich in zinc, tin and silver. As it is impossible to discuss in detail the art of all the Rajput kingdoms, and as Mewar's circumstances are particularly interesting, the art of Mewar will be the focus of this chapter.

In the past, the art of the Rajput kingdoms was largely analysed in terms of the influence of Mughal art; it is more appropriate, however, to speak in terms of the twin themes of collaboration and resistance. Some Rajput kings collaborated with Mughal emperor Akbar, and offered their daughters in marriage to the imperial household. They were a constant presence at the Mughal court to which they supplied troops as well as active military service. Mewar, by contrast, remained aloof. Early Mewari rulers put up stiff resistance and eventually won the respect of Akbar and Jahangir. When Mewar was finally forced to submit to Jahangir, the emperor refrained from asking for a Mewari princess in marriage. The Mewar rulers were also excused from attendance at the imperial court, a dispensation

that gave them a special status among the Rajputs; however, as heir-apparents, their presence was required.

In the realm of art too, the various Rajput kingdoms reveal differing degrees of collaboration and resistance. The paintings of certain states reveal admiration and emulation of Mughal perspectival rendering and naturalistic colours; local princesses married to Mughal princes may have played an important role in the dissemination of Mughal style. By contrast, resistance is evident in the distinctive painting style maintained by states such as Mewar, even after its rulers had direct access to Mughal painting. Palaces, however, were built in a typically Rajput rather than Mughal mode. Evidently, deliberate choices were made regarding the appropriation or rejection of specific features of the Mughal style. Just as Hindu and Muslim artists worked interchangeably at Islamic courts, so too Hindu and Muslim painters won fame at the Mewar court.

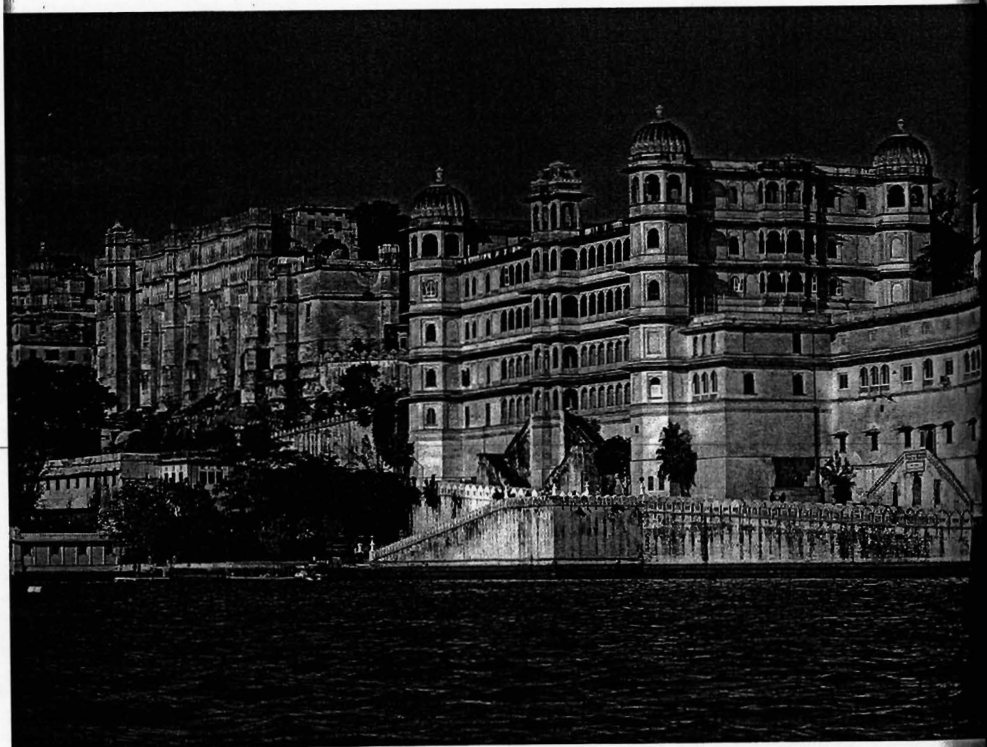
Studies of Rajput art and culture often draw on the two-volume work *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, produced by Colonel James Tod, who was British Political Agent at Mewar between 1818 and 1822. While admiring Tod's commitment to his task, it is judicious to put his comments in their colonial context. To the extent that the Rajput rulers were made to appear unsuitable, the importance of the British mission, and of Tod's own role within it, was enhanced. His many descriptions of the uses to which monuments were put are invaluable; but it is wise to remember his hidden agenda in disparaging such rulers as Jagat Singh II (r.1734–51):

Addicted to pleasure, his habits of levity and profusion totally unfitted him for the task of governing his country ... he considered elephant fights of more importance than keeping down the Mahrattas.

The Mewar kings adopted the title 'rana', and added the honorific 'singh', meaning lion (in valour), to their names. Bardic genealogies speak of Bappa Rawal, an eighth-century chieftain who established a fortress on a vast rocky plateau at

Chitor, 150 m (492 ft) above the plains. Approached by a winding road with a series of gateways, it continued to be the Mewari capital until it was sacked by Akbar eight centuries later and a new capital was built at Udaipur. Bappa is also said to have founded a temple to Shiva at Eklingji which continues to be the dynastic shrine of the Mewar house; even today, in India's secular democracy, Arvind Singh, descendant of the Mewar line, maintains the traditional 'royal' weekly visit to the temple. A clear historical picture of Mewar emerges only in the fourteenth century, when Rana Hamir recaptured Chitor from Delhi sultan Ala al-Din Khalji and established the present line of Mewari rulers of the House of Sisodia. Hardiness and self-sacrifice were upheld as model virtues, but cultural expression was also important. Rana Kumbha (r.1433–68) not only distinguished himself in war against the Muslim sultans of Gujarat and Malwa, but also was a connoisseur of poetry and music; he wrote a major treatise on music, as well as a commentary on the *Gita Govinda*, a twelfth-century sacred poem narrating the love of god Krishna and cowherd girl Radha. He was responsible for rebuilding the thoroughly ransacked city of Chitor.

The Rajput fort-palace, whether constructed during a single period or as a result of gradual aggregation, is usually built on the slope of a hill and comprises a continuous mass of fortification and palace (220). Mughal palaces, by contrast, as we have seen at Fatehpur Sikri and Delhi, consisted of a number of independent buildings on level ground, the entire complex being surrounded by a defensive wall. Rajput palaces are asymmetrical in both plan and elevation, and quite irregular in dimensions. They present a complex, maze-like plan in which spaces are small and often of unexpected shape. Rooms and halls are located at varying levels and connected by stairs or ramps along which attendants could more easily carry royalty seated within palanquins. Ground level within a palace is not an easy matter to determine since a range of high-level courtyards may be open to the sky, several containing shrubs and flowers growing on an elevated portion of the hill. The desire to



220  
City Palace,  
Udaipur, seen  
from Pichola  
Lake, c.1570  
onwards

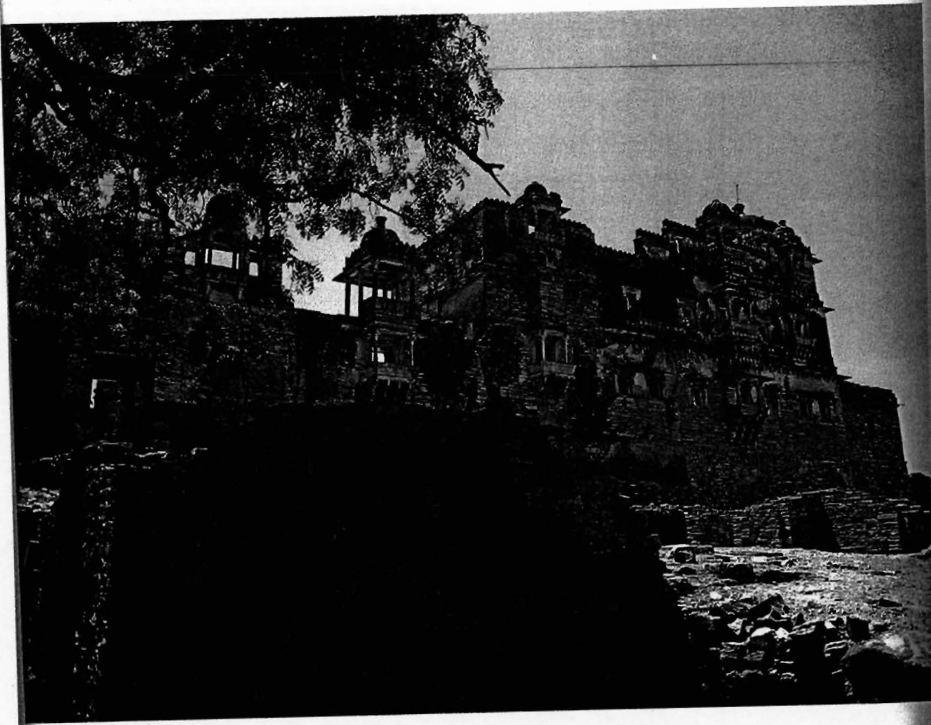
retain coolness resulted in chambers frequently enveloped in a half-darkness that added further to the general effect of architectural disorientation that has been termed elusion. Throughout its history, barring certain details of ornamentation, Rajput palace architecture shared little with its Mughal counterpart. Its origins must lie in an earlier Hindu tradition of palace architecture in perishable material, a tradition which is lost today. The palaces depicted in the murals at Ajanta have a sequence of small spaces, each with its own roof, separated by trees and foliage.

The Rajput palace, as indeed the Mughal, consists of two well-defined areas divided on lines of gender. The *zenana* or women's area had its own separate entrance; each apartment was occupied by a separate queen, and openings were invariably enclosed by lattice screens through which the women could look out on the world below while being themselves screened from public view. The *mardana* or men's area was divided into two sections, one for dispensing affairs of state, the other for the private use of the rana. The public section contained a hall of public audience, a hall of private audience and other structures such as an armoury and treasury. The private apartments include a glass-studded bedroom, a picture gallery with wall-paintings and a temple. Mewari paintings provide a glimpse of the interior furnishings of palaces; instead of furniture we see a range of carpets, silken bolster cushions, embroidered canopies and colourful draperies. Paintings confirm that the use of interior spaces was interchangeable; an inner courtyard could serve for the rana's private worship, as an arena for staging a variety of entertainments or as a space in which to receive formal embassies.

In addition to their main fort-palace, the rulers of Mewar frequently built themselves pleasure palaces located beside a lake, or even at its centre (222); here too the basic division of women's and men's spaces was retained. Some palace-pavilions, built of stone and marble, were little more than picnic

sites. Some so completely cover the islands on which they are built that they create the impression of floating structures.

Rana Kumbha's fifteenth-century palace at Chitor (221), with its complex grouping of small chambers, some open, others enclosed, reveals all the characteristics of the Rajput style. Sets of projecting balconies known as *jarokhas* are supported by richly decorated structural brackets. The *jarokha*, an indigenous motif already adopted by Sultanate architecture, was to become a major feature of the palaces built by the Mughals approximately a century later. Constructed of sandstone and covered with stucco decoration, Kumbha's palace uses the simple post-and-lintel method typical of Hindu India. Yet, the Islamic arch was known; Kumbha's palaces rest on a massive, vaulted substructure that creates a vast underground storage area. Apparently, the arch was valued only as a technical device, having no place in Mewari aesthetics.



221  
Rana  
Kumbha's  
palace, Chitor,  
1433-68

Chitor suffered two great onslaughts that sealed its fate as Mewar's capital. The first was its 1535 capture by the sultan of Gujarat, when child Uday Singh escaped because his nursemaid substituted her own child for the royal infant. Mughal emperor Akbar then laid siege to Chitor in 1567, completely destroying the fort which was abandoned by the Mewar rulers who built a new capital at Udaipur.

Udaipur, or City of Sunrise, was built by Rana Uday Singh (r. 1537-72) in a natural valley ringed by hills and on the banks of the artificial Pichola Lake. Its palace at the east edge of the lake (220) continued the style seen at Chitor, with a huge, vaulted substructure supporting the palace apartments. As at Chitor, the gates open onto a wide terrace, planned as a parade ground for elephants, horses and crowds of people; but whereas Chitor's parade space was natural, here it was created on the hill slope with extensive concealed vaulting. The projecting *jarokha* balconies of the Manek Chowk (219) of the east façade of the *zenana's* Badal Mahal or Cloud Mansion echo the visual effect of Rana Kumbha's palace (221).

In the vicinity of the Udaipur palace were the residences of the nobility and wealthy merchants who built themselves *havelis*, which may be described as townhouses structured around a courtyard. Each *haveli* was occupied by a single, extended family consisting of a set of brothers with their wives and children; the decoration of its individual chambers imitated the palace's, but in cheaper materials, with burnished lime plaster substituted for marble facing.

Special to the people of Mewar is a sixteenth-century woman poet-saint Meera, whose legend has entered Mewari sacred lore. It is believed that Meera was a Rajput princess, given in marriage in 1516 to Mewari prince Bhojraj. But Meera was a devout worshipper of god Krishna whom she considered to be her only lord. She broke all stereotypes and defied Rajput tradition, refusing to bow to her husband, her in-laws or their special deity, goddess Durga. Instead she visited the Krishna

temple where she sang and danced in praise of her dark lord Krishna, whom Mewari paintings portray as being as deep blue as the blue of infinity (223). Such behaviour was unheard of for any woman, but even more outrageous for a Rajput princess. In the context of Rajput honour, Meera's in-laws sent her a cup of poison which, however, turned into nectar. One of Meera's evocative poems refers to this incident (*Caturvedi*, no. 37):

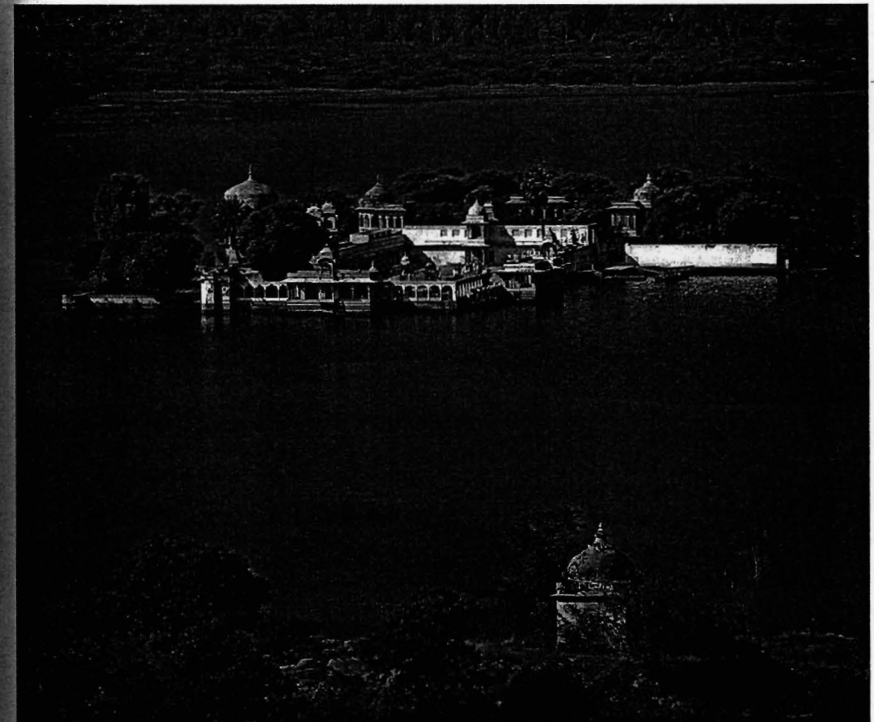
I'm coloured with the colour of dusk, oh *Rana*,  
coloured with the colour of my Lord.  
Drumming out the rhythm on the drums, I danced,  
dancing in the presence of the saints,  
coloured with the colour of my Lord.  
They thought me mad for the Maddening One,  
raw for my dear dark love,  
coloured with the colour of my Lord.  
The Rana sent me a poison cup:  
I didn't look, I drank it up,  
coloured with the colour of my Lord.

While the corpus of Meera's poems suggests varied authorship, her devotees would deny this with great vehemence. A temple named for Meera, enshrining an image of Krishna, stands near Kumbha's palace at Chitor and, to this day, Meera remains a figure of consequence for devotees of god Krishna. No less than ten films have been made on her life; one of her Hindi verses became a favourite with Mahatma Gandhi, India's saintly freedom fighter.

The half century that followed the death of Udai Singh was a story of confrontation with the Mughals. Udai's son Rana Pratap, Mewar's most celebrated hero, fled to outlying hilly regions after a bitter battle against Akbar's forces in 1576. He suffered great hardships, eating off leaf plates and sleeping on straw; his privations were remembered symbolically by later ranas who, on certain days of the year, placed leaves beneath their plates and straw under their bed. Finally, in 1615, when years of intermittent warfare had greatly impoverished Mewar,

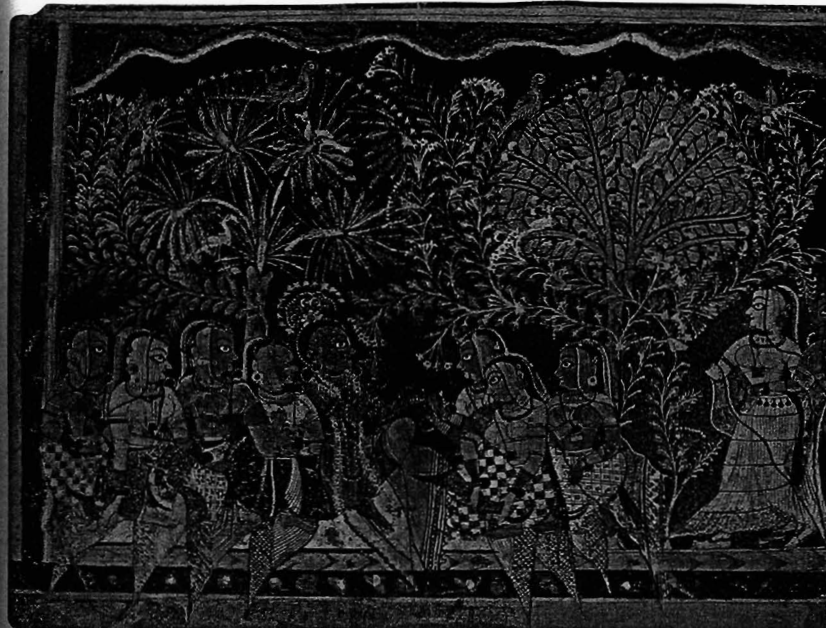
Rana Pratap's son Amar Singh was obliged to make peace with the Mughals. Emperor Jahangir's son, prince Khurram, later to reign as Shah Jahan, admired Mewari resistance and treated Rana Amar with respect, giving him a range of gifts that included a dress of honour, a jewelled sword and a horse with a jewelled saddle. The next two rulers, Karan Singh and Jagat Singh, became familiar with Mughal courtly etiquette and undoubtedly with Mughal art when they attended the imperial court as crown princes. Prince Khurram became a close friend of Rana Karan to the extent that when the Mughal prince rebelled against his father, he sought refuge at Udaipur where the lake palace known as Jag Mandir (222) was set aside for his use. Its circular, marble-lined domed hall, completed soon thereafter, is unique in Mewar for its inlay work, apparently inspired by the technique of *pietra dura* that was becoming the vogue in Agra and Delhi.

222  
Jag Mandir  
Palace,  
Udaipur,  
c.1620–30 with  
later additions



With the advent of peace with the Mughals, the ranas were free to devote themselves wholeheartedly to art, and Mewari painting reached a level of great sophistication under Jagat Singh (r.1628–52). Like the Mughals, the Mewar ranas looked upon the possession of a rich manuscript library as a mark of prestige; since the royal archives at Chitor had gone up in flames, Jagat Singh commissioned his scribes and artists to build up a new library. Important texts were copied and lavishly illustrated, several being produced by Jagat Singh's master painter Sahibdin and his workshop. Mewari manuscripts were stored in loose stacks and carefully wrapped in red cloth. Rejecting the upright Mughal (and European) page, the artist retained the horizontal paper format that had originated from the elongated palm-leaf manuscripts of earlier India. One of the most splendid manuscripts produced by Sahibdin and his workshop is a seven-volume illustrated *Ramayana*. Sahibdin was probably well aware of the techniques of naturalism, portraiture, perspective and realistic colouring perfected in the imperial Mughal workshop, but he chose to reject them in favour of a vibrant and uniquely Mewari visual language.

Western India had developed a painting style that evolved from the Jain manuscript tradition examined earlier, where pert figures dressed in richly patterned skirts with sharp folds were painted with a characteristic protruding eye (see 117). By the mid-sixteenth century, the style had evolved further as seen in an illustrated manuscript of the *Gita Govinda* (223). The artist presents formally arranged figures against a shallow background of broad areas of intense red, blue and black, flanked by stylized trees with enlarged leaves upon which perch enlarged birds. Figures are in strict profile with a single, enlarged eye, while the triangular skirt fold remains a hallmark. It was this style that Sahibdin advanced to perfection in the great illustrated *Ramayana* (224, 225). He created bold areas of saturated colour, using red, green, blue, yellow or lavender for ground, red or blue for skies, flowers that seem to be in eternal bloom, and highly stylized figures invariably shown in profile.



223  
Krishna and the  
Gopis,  
Mewar, c.1550.  
Watercolour  
on paper,  
12 × 19 cm,  
4 7/8 × 7 1/2 in.  
Prince of  
Wales  
Museum,  
Mumbai  
(Bombay)

Sahibdin evinced no interest in the Mughal precedent of the *Akbarnama* pages in which palaces were depicted with a recognizable specificity. Nor was he concerned with any perspectival laws of receding size or vanishing horizons. Instead, he boldly opened up the palace of ten-headed demon-king Ravana, showing us all four of its gateways, as if it were a cardboard cut-out (224); viewers may look into its various interior compartments as well as view the sweep of its outer walls. Narrative was perhaps more fully explored by painters at Mewar than at any other Rajput court, and the chief actor of an incident, whether Rama, Ravana or a Mewari rana, might be repeated several times in any painting. Here monkey-king Sugriva, distinguished by the garland around his neck, is first seen wreaking vengeance within Ravana's palace, then leaping out of the palace and finally kneeling before Rama as he tenders his report. The Mughals did not favour this method of continuous narration in which several incidents from a piece of action



224  
*Ravana's Golden  
 Palace, from the  
 Ramayana*  
 manuscript  
 produced by  
 Sahibdin and  
 his workshop,  
 Mewar,  
 c.1650-2.  
 Watercolour on  
 paper;  
 c.23 × 39cm,  
 9 × 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in.  
 British Library,  
 London



225  
*Rama and  
 Lakshmana  
 Bound by Arrow-  
 snakes, from the  
 Ramayana*  
 manuscript  
 produced by  
 Sahibdin and  
 his workshop,  
 Mewar,  
 c.1650-2.  
 Watercolour on  
 paper,  
 c.23 × 39cm,  
 9 × 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>in.  
 British Library,  
 London



unravel on a single page. A perusal of dozens of Mughal paintings reveals only one single instance – a murder scene in an album made for Jahangir (painted c.1575–80) now in Berlin – in which a figure is repeated within a page; this apparently unpopular experiment was perhaps inspired by Rajput precedent. Jagat Singh himself, for whom the *Ramayana* was created, was in attendance at the Mughal court in the days after Mewar had accepted Mughal overlordship; yet the painted manuscripts he commissioned reveal a defiantly Mewari aesthetic.

Some of the most exciting and complex of Sahibdin's paintings are contained in the *Ramayana's* climactic Battle Book in which Rama finally defeats and kills Ravana and frees his abducted wife Sita. In one particularly complex use of the synoptic mode, in which multiple episodes are depicted within the single frame of the page itself, Sahibdin portrayed eleven scenes (225). To the lower right, Ravana and his son Indrajit confer on how to defeat Rama and Lakshmana. Having come up with a plan, Indrajit leaves the palace followed by his retinue. The left third of the page shows the execution of the plan. From his aerial chariot, Indrajit shoots arrows that turn into snakes, and Rama and Lakshmana lie on the ground, helplessly bound. Seeing them thus, monkey-king Sugriva is afraid, and has to be reassured that the heroes are not dead. Indrajit enters the city gates of Lanka, is admitted to Ravana's presence and is given a victory embrace. In the lower right corner, Sita is seen alone in the Ashoka garden where she is confronted by demoness Trijata, whom Ravana has instructed to apprise Sita of the news. Following instructions, Trijata takes Sita in an aerial chariot, which we see first immediately above the palace, and then above the battlefield where Trijata points out to Sita the figures of the bound heroes. Their release from bondage due to the snakes fleeing in terror at the approach of the divine eagle Garuda forms the subject of the next illustrated page. The rich colours and extraordinary detail make this a spectacular, if challenging, page of narrative. Clearly, Sahibdin wished to intrigue and interest his royal patron, and induce him into

active decipherment of a story he knew well. The popularity of the *Ramayana* with the rajas of Mewar may be due to their having viewed it as their dynastic history; they traced their ancestry to the divine hero prince Rama, and through him to sun god Surya. The sun's full orb is Mewar's emblem (219).

The patronage of painting and architecture went hand in hand. Towards the end of his reign, Jagat Singh built the Jagdish temple at Udaipur which in many ways harked back to the great era of temple-building prior to the arrival of Islam. The temple is in the Chandella style of Khajuraho. Jagat Singh and his successors made important contributions to the expansion of Udaipur's City Palace. Its Chandra Mahal or Moon Mansion displays an extraordinary Mewari adaptation of the cusped arch, which is actually no more than two pairs of cusped brackets that do not meet at the centre but leave the lintel visible between. Such a device, half-way between a true cusped arch and a corbelled arch, made it possible to span a wide space. Within the palace, it is often difficult to distinguish the contribution of individual rulers since their successors modified, adapted and even dramatically altered the structures of their predecessors. Thus the Mor Chowk or Peacock Square used for ceremonial gatherings (226), and the adjoining Surya Mahal or Sun Mansion, both built in the seventeenth century, were much altered by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century additions. An important late Udaipur building, the Jag Nivas palace, is situated on an island in the lake opposite the City Palace. Built by Jagat Singh II (r.1734–51), it is today a hotel.

Gradual additions transformed the City Palace into a rambling series of chambers on different levels. Unexpectedly, enclosed palace spaces open out onto sunlit courtyards, as in the Badi Mahal or Garden Mansion (227) built of sandstone and marble by Amar Singh II in 1703. This addition was built on a natural rise on the hill, so that its trees and shrubs are actually rooted in the hillside. At the centre of the paved courtyard is a square pool; its surrounding colonnade is formed of marble baluster



226  
Upper level of  
Mor Chowk or  
Peacock  
Square, City  
Palace,  
Udaipur, 17th  
century with  
19th-century  
additions

columns of the type used by the Mughal rulers, but connected by the widened Mewari cusped arches. The intimacy of the garden, with its upper storey of small pavilions with trellis screens, is entirely Rajput in flavour. Paintings depicting the monarch lying in the pool while smoking his *hookah* or water pipe confirm that the Badi Mahal was a royal pleasure garden.

However, the interchangeable use of spaces is indicated by another painting that shows a rana worshipping a Shiva *linga* in the colonnaded space, while musicians and dancers perform in the courtyard (228). Multiple perspective is freely used so that we look directly on the tiled squares in the courtyard, but are presented an eye-level view of the trees, the rana and his courtiers. The artist painted the shadows of figures and trees, although they have nothing to do with the direction of the light.

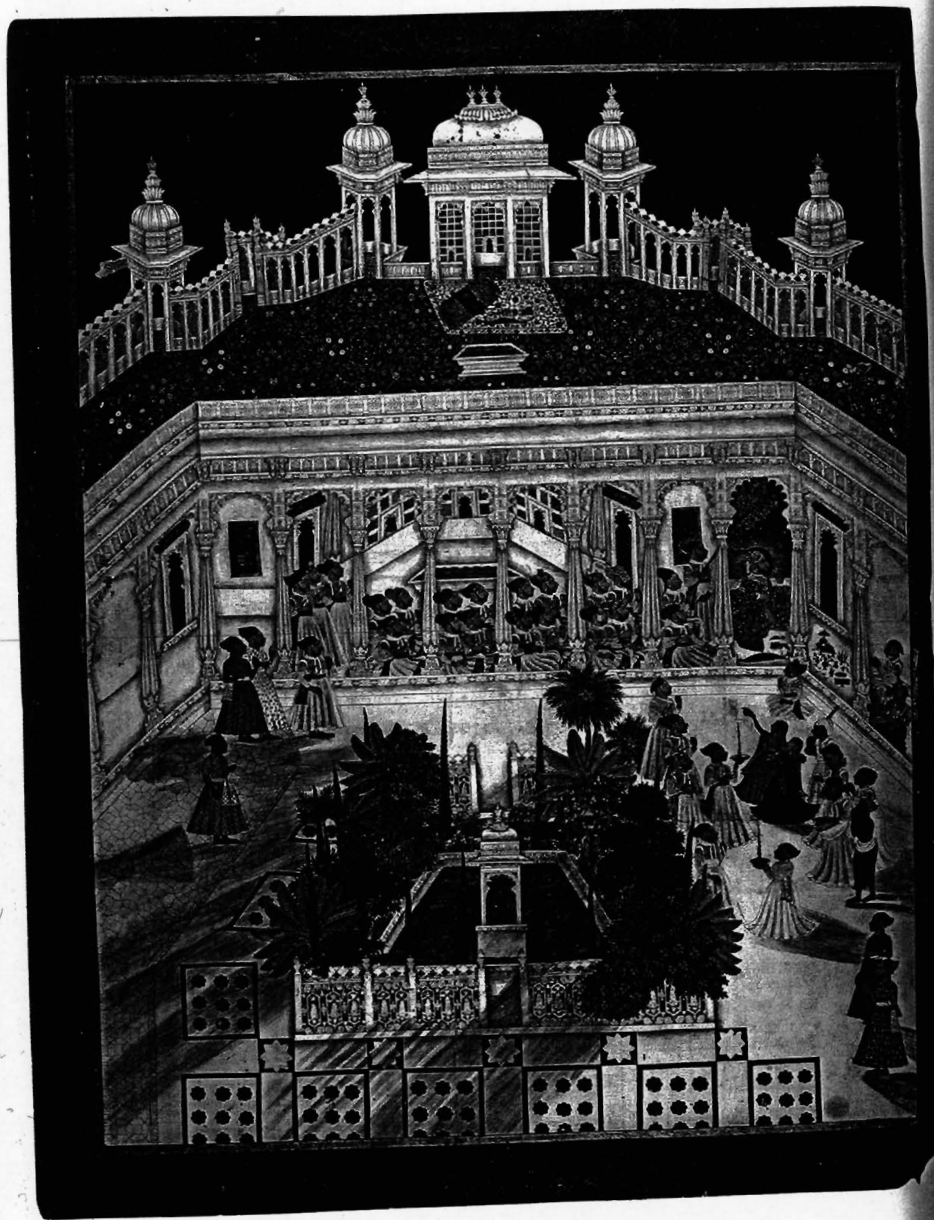
Rana Sangram Singh's (r.1710–34) addition to the Udaipur palace was a charming Chinese Picture Hall or Chini Chitrahshala, decorated with blue-and-white tiles produced in China for export. A few Delft tiles featuring Biblical satires and landscapes with windmills probably reached Udaipur through a party of Dutch East Indian Company officials who passed through the city in 1711. A large Udaipur painting on cloth that immortalizes this visit portrays Johaan Ketalaar, leader of the



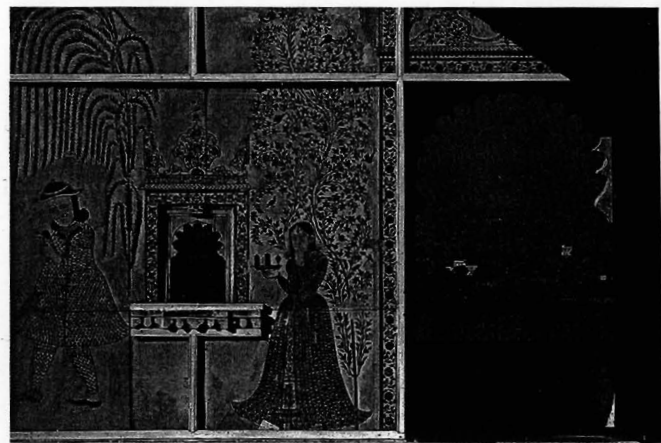
227  
Garden  
Mansion,  
City Palace,  
Udaipur, 1703

Dutch Embassy, seated in the Badi Mahal facing the rana; outside gardeners tend shrubs and feed the fish in the pond. The exotic theme of the Dutchman was picked up by Mewari artists who used it, for instance, in a glass mosaic in a hall adjoining the Chitrahshala (229). Other imports included reverse glass-paintings of the type China produced for the export market from 1740; Mewari paintings occasionally depict these exotic curiosities displayed upon the palace walls.

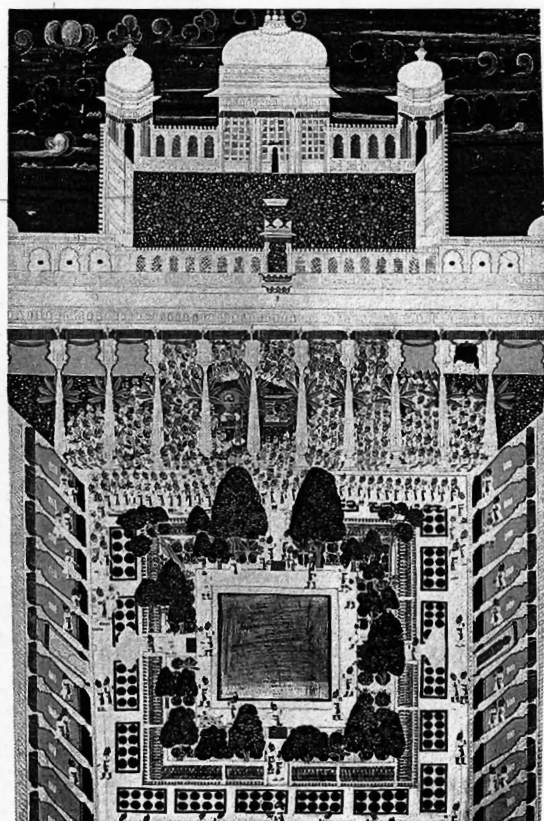
During the eighteenth century, a new trend arose in Mewar for detailed visual reportage of the rana's various activities – the celebration of festivals, hunting expeditions, watching staged elephant fights, receiving visiting dignitaries, worship at shrines, strolling in pleasure palaces. Court painters began to produce large paintings, often 90 cm (3 ft) across, albeit with small figures, using Udaipur's palaces or its natural landscape as a backdrop. Following the typical Mewari narrative style, the figure of the rana is repeated as the action unravels. Artists' names are frequently inscribed on the reverse of paintings, which also contain detailed notations on the event commemorated; however, no artist seems to have acquired the stature of Sahibdin. A painting created in the mid-nineteenth century depicting the palace opened up like a cardboard cut-out (230)



228  
*Rana Ari Singh  
 at Worship in  
 the Garden  
 Mansion,*  
 c.1765.  
 Watercolour  
 on paper,  
 68 × 53.5 cm,  
 27 × 21 in.  
 Freer Gallery  
 of Art,  
 Washington,  
 DC

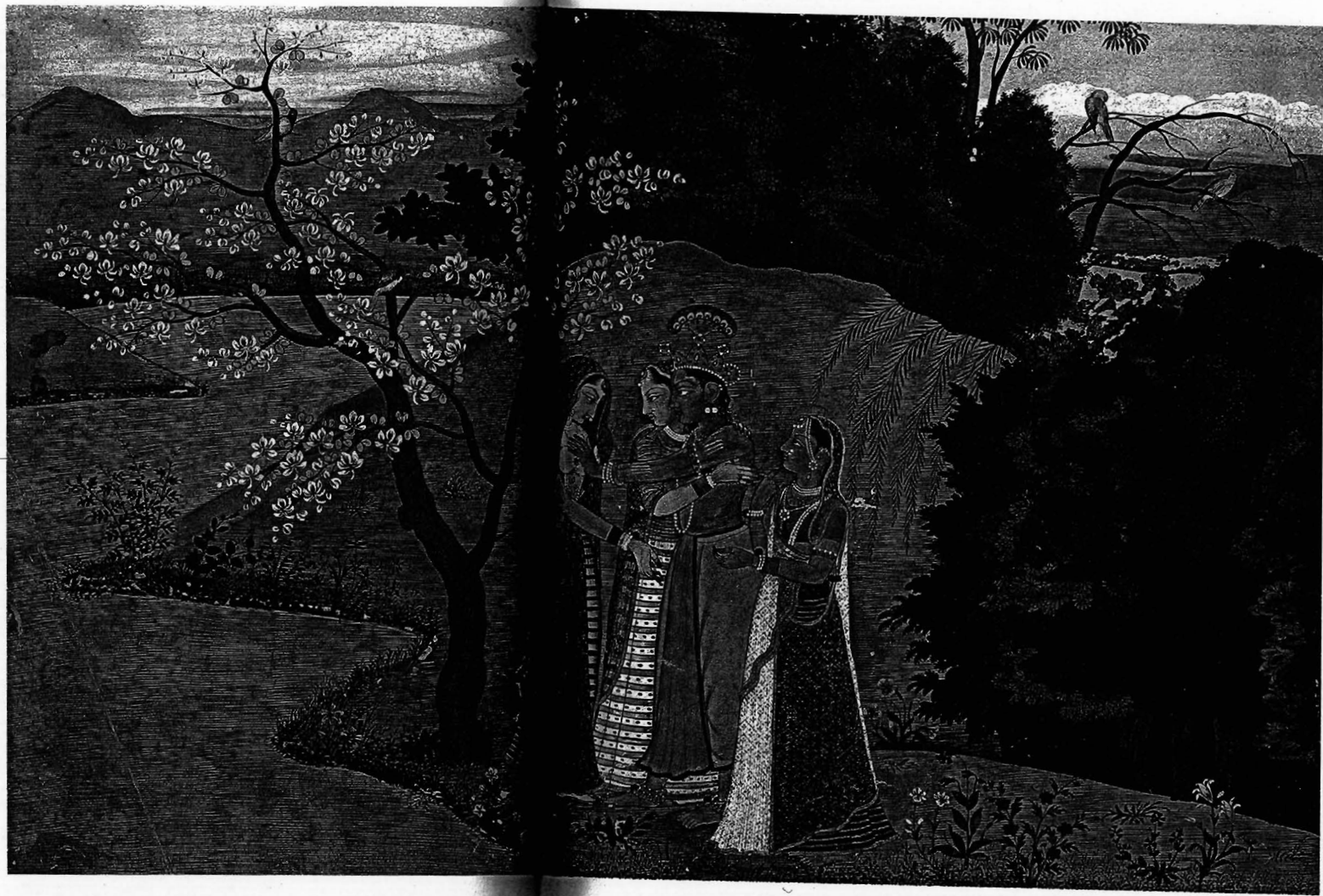


229 Above  
 Glass mosaic  
 decoration in  
 the City Palace,  
 Udaipur,  
 c.1710–34,  
 with a view of  
 the lake



230 Right  
*Rana Javan  
 Singh at a  
 Sacred  
 Recitation  
 in the Garden  
 Mansion,*  
 c.1835.  
 Watercolour on  
 paper,  
 141 × 91.5 cm,  
 55½ × 35 in.  
 City Palace  
 Museum,  
 Udaipur

231  
*Krishna  
Dallying with  
the Gopis,*  
Kangra,  
c.1775.  
Watercolour  
on paper,  
18.2 x 28 cm,  
7 x 11 in.  
Private  
collection





232  
*The Goddess  
 Bhadrakali  
 Worshipped by  
 the Gods,*  
 Basohli,  
 c.1660–70.  
 Opaque  
 watercolour on  
 paper with  
 gold, silver and  
 beetle wing  
 cases;  
 21.7 × 21.5 cm,  
 8½ × 8½ in.  
 Freer Gallery,  
 Washington,  
 DC



233  
*Crowned  
 Ganesh,*  
 Basohli,  
 c.1720.  
 Watercolour  
 on paper,  
 19 × 28 cm,  
 7½ × 11 in.  
 British  
 Museum,  
 London

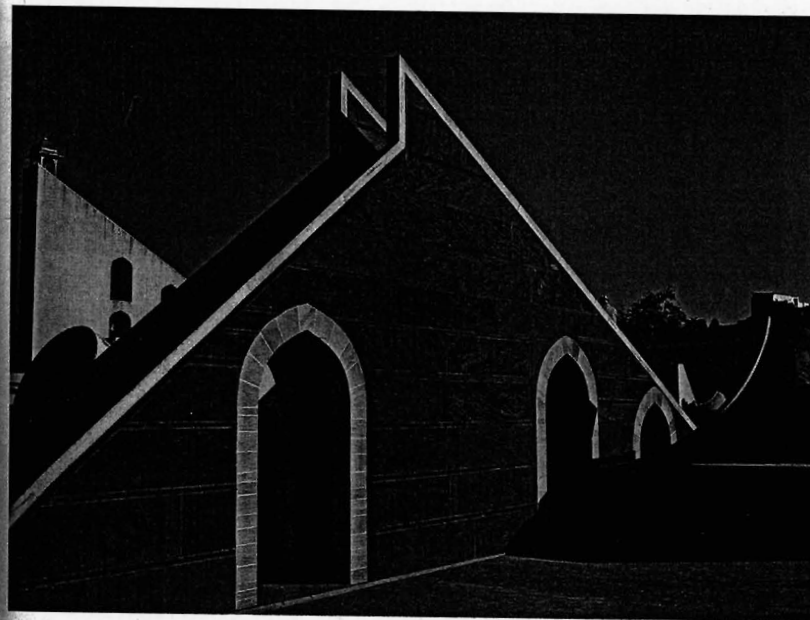
confirms the persistence of the Mewari style. As we look into the Badi Mahal, with its colonnades slanted outwards in incongruous perspective, we see its trees and the rana's party in profile at eye-level. An upper pavilion has its side walls similarly slanted, while the attendants standing in the lower colonnades are portrayed in defiance of every law of perspective.

The paintings produced by Rajput kingdoms like Kangra and Bikaner present a contrast with Mewar in adopting and incorporating several characteristics of Mughal painting. The style evident in the hill state of Kangra, located at a height of 1,200–1,800 m (some 4,000–6,000 ft), was late in emerging. Its use of more varied colours and a sense of receding distance sets it apart from the aesthetic of Mewar. A page painted around 1775 that depicts god Krishna dallying lightheartedly with the *gopis* (cowherd girls), is framed in a background of gently rolling hills of pale green; a grey-blue river winds its way through the valley, flowering trees have birds perched upon their branches and day is breaking over the far horizon (231). The dynamic interaction between Krishna and the *gopis* along the riverbank is in striking contrast with the western India *Gita Govinda* page considered earlier (223). The fallacy of the explanation that Kangra painters were merely portraying the gentle hills of their surroundings, in contrast with the Rajasthan plains, is apparent by a glance at paintings from the adjoining hill state of Basohli (232, 233), located in similar surroundings. We are confronted with figures in profile with large, intense eyes portrayed against shallow space depicted in rich, saturated colours; green beetle wings are applied to simulate emeralds and raised white paint suggests pearls. While the intensity of the Basohli palette lessened with time, artists retained their predilection for pages with red borders within which figures were placed against a deep mustard background with the barest strip of blue at the upper margin to indicate the sky. The sudden emergence of the Basohli style around 1660 remains unexplained. While its intensity suggests connections with folk art, the Basohli paintings, as all other Rajput paintings, are part

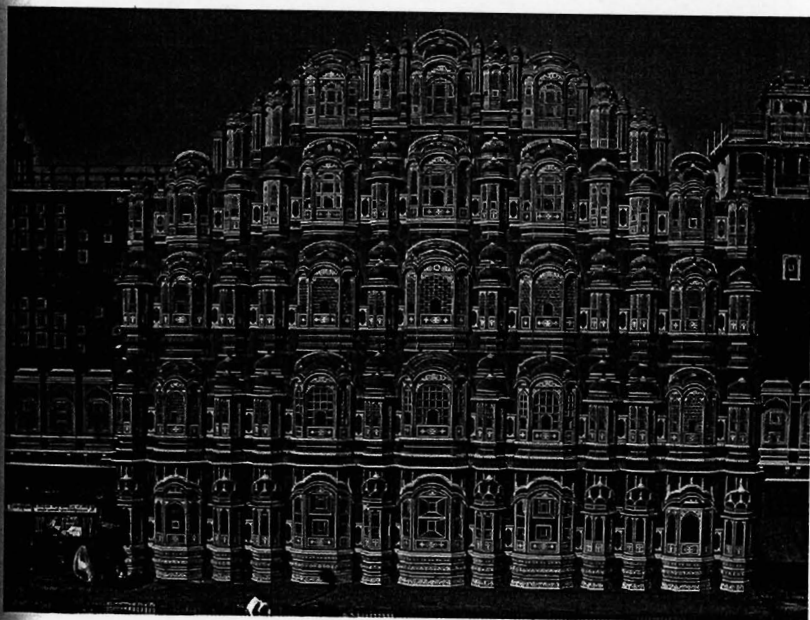
of a sophisticated court art tradition. Possibly the special interest of its painters in the depiction of gems may indicate connections with a jewellery tradition. One thing is certain, artists and patrons were making deliberate choices.

Perhaps the court that most closely modelled its paintings on a Mughal prototype is Bikaner in the plains; the use of restrained, naturalistic colours, the manner of portrayal of the human form, as well as the choice of themes, reveal an admiration of the imperial style. Indeed, the occasional Bikaner page may, at a casual glance, be mistaken for Mughal. Most courts developed a distinctive formula of their own. Kishangadh paintings, for example, are often large and dominated by a perspectival depiction of landscape against which small figures are placed, most often of a king and queen, or of Krishna and Radha. The figures, especially the female, are highly stylized: a sloping forehead, sharp nose, elongated lotus-petal eyes and a curl framing the face. On-going research on Rajput painting suggests that master artists were able to work interchangeably in several styles, adapting their manner of presentation to the court to which they were attached. In turn, it appears that courts used painting style, in a manner akin to the use of a flag or insignia, as a feature that individualized and distinguished them from adjoining princely courts. Within the painting style, the human figure, and most prominently the female form, became the hallmark of a state.

In the architectural context, palaces of the Rajput kingdom of Jaipur make an interesting comparison with Mewar. The fort on Amber Hill upheld the same principles of gradual aggregation, irregularity and elusion seen in Mewar. The Rajput princess who married Akbar, and whose son was to rule the Mughal empire as Jahangir, came from Amber. Subsequently ties with the Mughal court remained firm. Between 1700 and 1744, Jaipur was ruled by Maharaja Jai Singh II, who was given the title Sawai or 'one and a quarter' by Mughal emperor Awrangzeb to suggest that he was that much greater than his



234  
Jai Singh,  
Jantar Mantar  
Observatory,  
Jaipur, c.1740



235  
Hava Mahal,  
Jaipur, c.1799

great-grandfather after whom he was named. In 1727, Sawai Jai Singh decided that his hill fortress at Amber was too small for one of his status, and he built an entire capital city named after himself on the plains 8 km (5 miles) away. The planned city of Jaipur, laid out with methodical symmetry, is startling in the Rajput context. All streets, principal or minor, meet at right angles in a grid that resulted in nine square wards. Jai Singh's desire to include within his city a lake along the hillside led to a small deviation from the regular plan and the relocation of one ward. The plan also distributed people according to their profession, allocating streets to silversmiths, potters, woodworkers and weavers. The use of rubble and plaster rather than stone made it possible to build this city in the remarkably short span of seven years; however, to simulate the much-admired red sandstone appearance of Mughal cities, all of Jaipur's monuments were painted a dusty pink. The palace at the city centre continued to be treated as a single mass of connected chambers, halls and courtyards, but is determinedly symmetrical. The adjoining observatory (234), with its magnificent group of great red sandstone structures as well as brass circles and instruments, was personally planned by Jai Singh who was an astronomer of repute. Jaipur's single most famous structure is its 1799 addition, the Hava Mahal or Wind Mansion (235), a *zenana* structure from which the women could enjoy the breeze while looking out on the scene below. Its façade speaks fluently of Jaipur's desire for symmetry.

In 1730, when Jaipur was under construction, the power of the Mewar ranas was in sharp decline and they were forced to pay heavy tribute to the militant Maratha chiefs, the new masters on the horizons of western India. When Rana Bhim Singh (r.1778–1828) sought British protection against the Marathas, Colonel Tod arrived at Udaipur as British Political Agent. Tod became close friends with Bhim Singh who received him with much honour; this friendship underlies the rana's gift to him of Jagat Singh's outstanding *Ramayana*, a work that now rests in the British Library in London.