

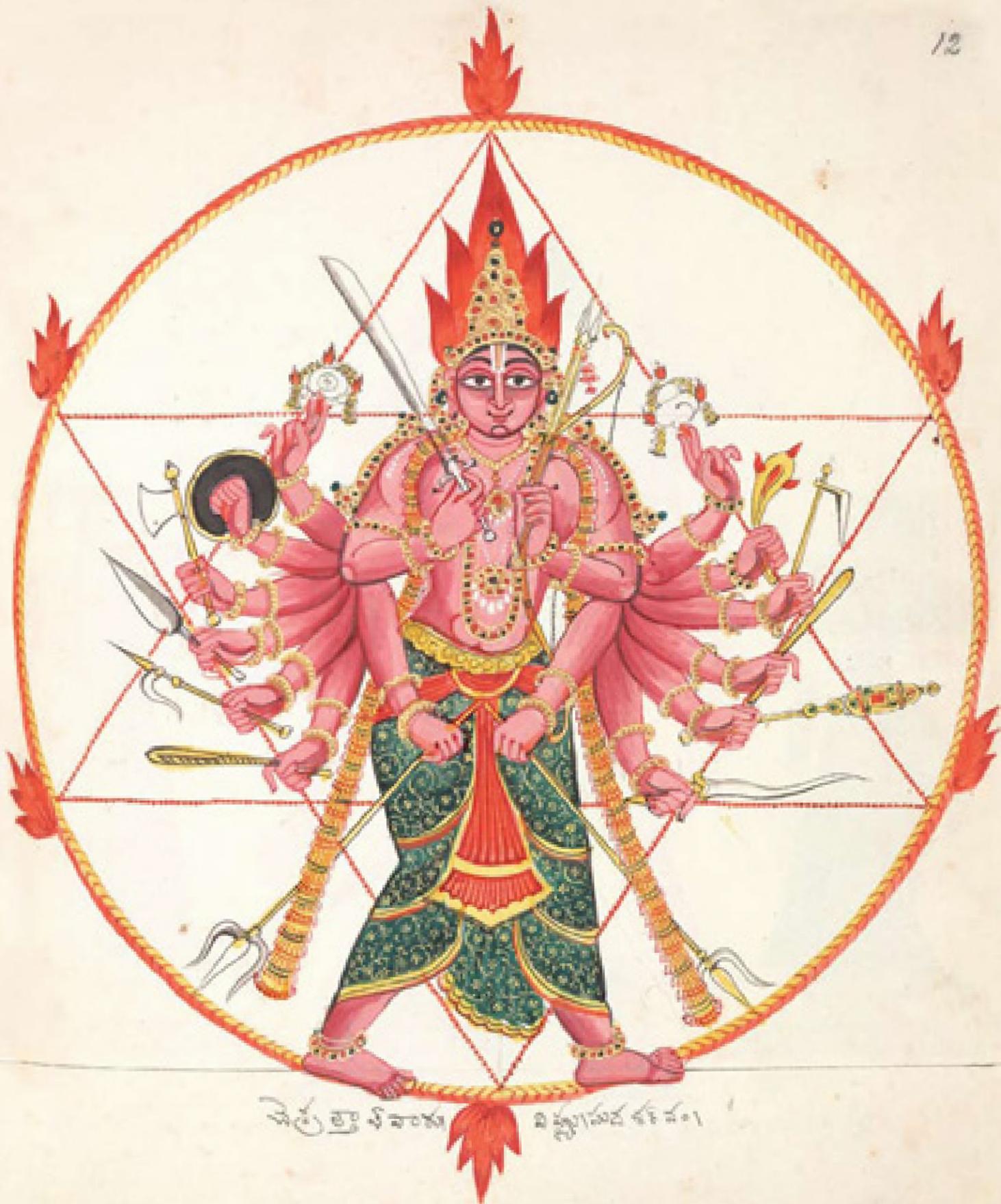
South Indian Paintings

A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection

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Cat. 5.12

Part I

Hindu mythology

Constituting the core of the present collection are some five hundred drawings of gods, goddesses, saints and views of the major temples in the area of present-day Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. A substantial number are neatly presented in bound albums, such as cats 4, 5, 7 and 9. Others, which were parts of extensive sets, have survived in a fragmentary state ranging from a few leaves (e.g. cat. 1) to over sixty drawings (cat. 3). A noteworthy item among these holdings is a fragmentary series of twelve pen and ink drawings, cat. 6, which depicts with documentary precision various festivals, both Vaishnava and Shaiva, taking place at the Shri Jambukeshvara and Shri Ranganatha temples respectively, both on Srirangam island.

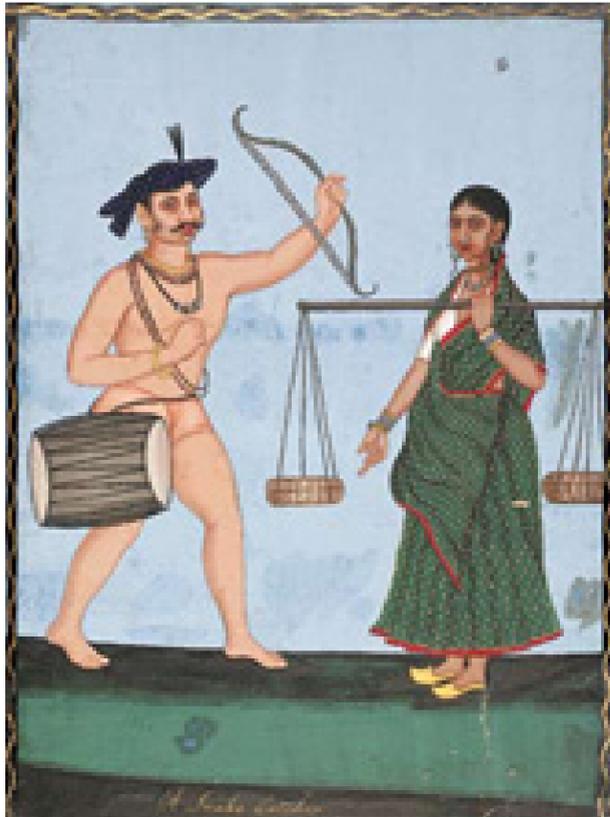
Some of the items, listed under the heading 'Individual drawings' (cat. 12), may have been parts of sets either illustrating

the various ceremonies in a single temple, such as Shri Venkateshwara, and *Pulangi seva* of Shri Venkateshwara (cats 12.2 and 12.3), which refer to the liturgy in the Shri Venkateshwara temple at Tirupati, or of a series depicting 'Hindu mythology', like the paintings on mica (cat. 11). Two paintings, cats 12.4 and 12.5, are of particular interest because they are executed in a style similar to that of the traditional 'Thanjavur' paintings, with relief work and lavish gilding.

The collection has only one large painting from Mysore, Virabhadra, Daksha and Sati (cat. 12.11). Its size suggests that it was hung either in a private house, perhaps as a memento of a pilgrimage to the temple, or in a meeting hall of a *matha*.



Cat. 6.7



Cat. 13.17

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Snake Catcher' and in Marathi on the reverse (partly cropped)

13.18 A running footman

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.18

Dimensions: 24.4 x 18.0 cm (drawing)

A man with a moustache wears a short garment, a jacket and a turban, a *tilaka* on his forehead. Small earrings adorn his earlobes and helix; around his neck is a choker, and an amulet tied on a black string hangs over his chest. He bears a long spear in his right hand.

His wife wears a plain white sari and the customary jewellery. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'An Hyrcarrah – a Spy or Running Footman' and in Tamil on the reverse (partly cropped)

13.19 A tailor

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.19

Dimensions: 25.0 x 17.5 cm (drawing)

A man wears a short dhoti, a jacket tied at the waist by a string, and a tall turban made of an orange-red tie-dyed material. He has a closely cropped beard and moustache, and on his forehead is a small *tilaka*. A large oval earring hangs from his earlobes and a smaller one from the helix. In his right hand he holds a needle, with thread in his left.

His wife wears a dark sari with patterned stripes. Among her jewellery, of particular interest is a disk-like earring worn on the helix of the ear. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Dirzee or Taylor' and in Marathi on the reverse (indecipherable)



Cat. 13.20

13.20 A Maratha

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.20

Dimensions: 25.0 x 18.2 cm (drawing)

A man wears a dhoti with an *angavastra* across his chest. On his head is a turban with a delicate floral design and a golden band. He sports a flowing beard and bushy moustache. In the cloth wound round his waist is a sword with an elaborate hand-guard and in his right hand he holds a spear. Vaishnava *namams* are drawn on his forehead, arms and stomach. On his earlobes and helix are the usual large and small earrings.

His wife wears a white sari with a red border with a geometric pattern and a floral design on the *pallu*, with a deeply cut short blouse and the usual jewellery. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Mahrattah'



Cat. 13.21

13.21 A hakim

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.21

Dimensions: 24.2 x 17.4 cm (drawing)

The *hakim* feels a woman's pulse with his left hand while holding her hand with his right. He wears a white dhoti with a red border and a green turban enlivened by a floral motif and golden band; a shawl is draped over his right shoulder, and in the crook of his right arm he clutches a large bag. On his forehead are a *tripundra* and a *chandana tilaka*. He wears two oval earrings, each embellished by a stone, in his earlobes, and a smaller one in the helix.

The woman wears a dark red striped sari and the usual jewellery. Her hair is gathered at the back of her head in a rather perfunctory way. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Hakim or doctor' and in Marathi on the reverse (partially cropped)

13.22 A Brahmin

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.22

Dimensions: 24.5 x 18.4 cm (drawing)

This may be a portrait: a Brahmin in a white dhoti with a red border and with a delicately drawn *yajnopavita* hanging over his portly stomach wears a yellow shawl with a floral pattern draped over his left shoulder. In his left hand is an unidentified object. His head is shaven except for a *kudumi* at the back of his head. On his forehead is a Vaishnava *tilaka* and smaller marks in the form of a *shankha* are drawn on his temples, chest and arms. From his earlobes hang large earrings.

His wife wears a green sari with a floral pattern, set off by a red border and *pallu*, with the usual jewellery. On her forehead is a vertical *tilaka*. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Brahmin' and in Marathi on the reverse (indecipherable)

13.23 A bracelet maker

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.23

Dimensions: 24.5 x 17.3 cm (drawing)

The bracelet maker wears a white dhoti with a red border enlivened by a discreet floral pattern. Under his arm he carries an *angavastra* of the same material. A *yajnopavita* and a two-stringed golden chain with a pendant hang upon his chest. Two large oval earrings and an ear stud decorate his ears. On his forehead is a *tripundra*, he has a moustache and a closely cropped beard, and his turban is enlivened by a golden band. In his right hand he carries sets of bangles strung on a rope.

His wife wears a dark sari with a criss-cross pattern, a low-cut blouse and the usual jewellery. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: at bottom of page and on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Manilla or Bracelet Maker' and on the reverse in Tamil (cropped) and in Marathi (indecipherable)

13.24 A ladies' tailor

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.24

Dimensions: 24.0 x 18.1 cm (drawing)

The tailor carries in his right hand a threaded needle and clutched in the crook of his right arm is a white cloth. He is elegantly dressed in a white coat with a floral pattern, which is tied on his left shoulder. Beneath the coat he wears long red breeches and on his feet are slippers with upturned toes.

His turban is made of *ikat* material and is enlivened by a golden band. On his forehead is a *tripundra*, he has a moustache and a large golden earring hangs from his ear.

His wife wears a red tie-dyed sari with a black border, a white blouse and the usual jewellery. On her forehead is a horizontal red *tilaka*. The background is light blue and the foreground dull green.

INSCRIBED: on a label pasted on the reverse 'A Lady's Tailor'

13.25 A huqqa-bearer

Asia 1974,0617,0.7.25

Dimensions: 25.2 x 18.4 cm (drawing)

The *huqqa*-bearer wears wide trousers to just below his knees and a wide coat tied at the waist by a broad sash. A sword hangs from a golden scabbard placed on his right shoulder and across his chest. He carries a *huqqa* in both hands. He has a beard and moustache and wears a turban and shoes.