

PRAJÑĀDHARA

**ESSAYS ON
ASIAN ART, HISTORY, EPIGRAPHY AND CULTURE
in Honour of
Gouriswar Bhattacharya**

Edited by

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Umrao Jan, also written “Umrao Jaan” (*umrāv jān*), is a literary figure and as such became famous in recent years. In 1905 she was introduced in an Urdu novel by Mirza Muhammad Hadi Ruswa (*mirzā muḥammad hādī ‘rusvā*, 1857/58-1931). In this novel, the reader is made to believe that the story is based on an interview given by an elderly Umrao Jan herself to Mirza Hadi Ruswa, probably towards the end of the 19th century.

This article tries to shed some light on historic facts hitherto neglected¹ and also attempts to demonstrate, how courtesans of Lucknow at the time of Umrao Jan’s assumed career, actually looked like.

As a child, Umrao Jan was called Amiran. She lived with her parents at “Fyzabad” (Faizabad, district Faizabad, Uttar Pradesh). Her father was “jamadar” at the tomb of “Bahu Begum”. When Amiran was nine years of age and plans for her marriage were made, she was kidnapped by Dilavar Khan who was assisted by a certain Pir Baksh. The reason for this crime was a grudge that Dilavar Khan had against Amiran’s father, because the latter had given witness to Dilavar Khan’s criminal lifestyle. On the basis of this witness account, Dilavar Khan was sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment. Amiran was brought to Lucknow, where for the sum of 125 Rupees she was sold to Khanum Jan of a “kotha” (*koṭhā*), actually a big room or warehouse, but in Lucknow a kind of elevated brothel which exclusively entertained customers from the highest levels of society. This “kotha” was situated in the “chowk” (*cauk*), actually a market or street, but in Lucknow a kind of “amusement centre” or “red-light district”. This street is marked by two gates, the “Gol Darwaza” at the northern and the “Akbari Darwaza” at the southern end. The somewhat hidden nature of the chowk, however, is not mentioned in the English descriptions of this part of the city:

“The Chauk itself dates from Asaf-ud-Daula (1775-1797), and is one of the most interesting places in Lucknow, containing a bazār of quite unusual attraction and variety. Steep dark stairs lead up to small shops where the light filters reluctantly through diminutive windows. Here the peripatetic purchaser may come upon treasure trove in the form of rare old silver, genuine early Lucknow enamel and characteristic jewellery, once the property of the prodigal kings and their much indulged queens. ... Above all there is the local colour, the indescribable atmosphere of an Indian bazār, with its sights and sounds and smells, its vivid crowds, and its something of unreality, its curious dream-like suggestion of life as a passing show.”²

Here, under her new name of Umrao Jan Ada (*umrāv jān ‘adā*)³, Amiran was instructed in singing, dancing, classical poetry and literature and became a highly educated professional courtesan. In 1905, after the publication of the novel, Umrao Jan is said to have still been alive, as she reportedly complained about the fact that due to the publication of the novel everybody would come to know about her fate.

Umrao Jan's present popularity is based on several movies. *Umrao Jaan Ada*, a Pakistani production, was released on December 29th, 1972.⁴ This was followed by an Indian production, *Umrao Jaan*, released in 1981.⁵ The most recent screen adaptation, *Umrao Jaan*, was released on November 3rd, 2006.⁶ Of Ruswa's novel a number of Indian translations exist, next to a number of well-known and widely distributed translations in English⁷ in addition to somewhat lesser known translations in German,⁸ Italian⁹ as well as in Russian.¹⁰

“Bahu Begum” (H.H. Nawab 'Umat uz-Zohra Begum Sahiba) was the widow of the third Nawab of Avadh or Oudh, Shuja-ud-Daula (H.H. Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab Mirza Jalal ud-din Haidar Khan Bahadur, Nawab Wazir of Oudh, r. 1754-75). Her maqbara, “the finest building of the kind in Oudh” (Carnegy, Woodburn & Noble 1870: 26) was not completed before 1858. This date is important since Umrao Jan expressively mentions that her father worked there as “jamadar”. In *A Historical Sketch of Tahsil Fyzabad, Zillah Fyzabad, including Parganas Haveli-Oudh and Pachhimrath, with the old Capitals Ajudhia and Fyzabad, Pargana Mangalsi and Pargana Amsin*, Lucknow 1870, the account on this monument is as follows:

“*The Bahu Begam's Mausoleum.* – It was arranged by treaty between the British Government, the Bahu Begam, and the Nawáb of Oudh, that 3 lacs of sicca Rs. of her riches, were to be set apart for the erection by her confidential servant Daráb Alí Khán, of her tomb, and that the revenue of the villages to the aggregate amount of sicca Rs. 10,000 per annum, were to be assigned for its support.

The Begam died on the 27th of January 1816. Daráb Alí laid the foundations and built the plinth, when he also died, on the 10th of August 1818.

Panáh Alí, vakíl, and Mirzá Haider, the son of an adopted daughter then carried on the work through a series of years when, with the completion of the brick work, the grant of 3 lacs came to an end, and the beautiful edifice remained unfinished till after the mutiny of 1857.” (*ibid.*: 26).

The report continues here to give details about the finance of the building and states:

“The tomb was finally completed by the Department of Public Works, after the re-occupation of the Province. ... Rupees 1000 per annum are reserved by Government for the repairs, through its own officers, of the building, and the remainder of the annual allowance is spent by the native managers in religious ceremonies, periodical illuminations, &c.”

That this amount of money was only available by September 1859, becomes clear from the details of the report. If Amiran's father was a “jamadar” at the “Bahu Begam ka Maqbara”, this must have been around that time. The abduction of Amiran can hence not be dated prior to that year. An actual photograph of the monument was published in the said report of 1870 (**Plate 14.1**)¹¹. Noteworthy are the enormous proportions of the building, which become apparent when realizing how tiny the two persons in this view appear.

By 1869-70, according to official reports, abductions within the province of Oudh were not too uncommon:

“Kidnapping and abduction give 152 convictions to 133 of the previous year. Since this crime ‘was included in the list of special crimes to be reported to the Inspector General of Police, it has been more vigorously followed up and prosecuted, and with good success’”.¹²

It is not unlikely that Amiran's abduction took place more in the early 1860s rather than the 1840s, a date suggested in some summaries of the two Indian films. This would imply that in the late 1860s/early

1870s Umrao Jan Ada would have been in her bloom, outwitting in beauty any contender. Some of the translations of Ruswa's novel are accompanied by coloured reproductions of Indian miniature paintings. These, as a rule, predate the 1860s and can hence not properly illustrate, what was really to be seen in the days of Umrao Jan. By the 1860s, the courtesans of Lucknow were no longer painted but photographed by local photographers. It is necessary here to quote from another contemporary account on Lucknow, published in 1883, within which all annotations are mine:

“The present state of local painting is very pitiable, as already, stated. The principal requirement of it, the portraiture, has been usurped by photography, which has given it the last stroke of death.

Local photography began to flourish from about 1850, when an Englishman of the military lines came here. *Chotay Miya*,¹³ designer of Hoseinabad and Kaisarbagh buildings, acquired the art from him and practised it to great profit and pleasure. His portrait taking was very creditable, and his architectural views were in high demand, one of which, of Kaisarbagh adorns the frontispiece of Gubbin's “Mutiny of Oudh”.¹⁴ Joining the mutineers he lost his fortune and name and dies a miserable man. The old views of Lucknow taken just after the Mutiny, and at the time of the demolitions engraved in this book, are presumably copies of his photographs. After him, Mushkoo-ud-dowlah was the famous photographer of Lucknow and Oudh. His figures and views are excellent. He had an evenness of tone which common photographers cannot attain. Many of his views are printed in this book.¹⁵ He died a rich man, and is known by the title, which the ex-king of Oudh gave him. After him comes Daroga Abbas Ali, who is a promising and enterprising photographer of no mean merit. He has published some books with photo-illustrations, viz: – “the Lucknow Album” of 50 buildings in English,¹⁶ the beauties of Lucknow, about 25 dancing girls of this city, in Urdu;¹⁷ and lately the “Taluqdar's Album” of about 400 barons of Oudh, in English and in Urdu.¹⁸ Though there are patent faults and defects in them, yet on the whole, they are creditable to one who has no knowlegde of English and the high art. Asgar Jan, the brother of Mushkoo-ud-dowlah is also a known photographer.”¹⁹

Although the above quoted P.C. Mookherji mentions that “Daroga Abbas Ali” photographed “dancing girls” from Lucknow, individual photographs of them which are actually marked as being by Abbas Ali are quite scarce. One of these rare examples is reproduced in **Plate 14.2**, a portrait of a bejewelled “dancing girl” with the line “Abbas Ali.” below the actual *carte-de-visite* photograph. The back of it, our **Plate 14.3**, introduces “Darogha Abbas Ali” as “(Pensioned Municipal Engineer,) / Photographer, / Under the Patronage Of / His Honor The Lieutenant Governor / Of The / N.W. Provinces & Oudh.”

Abbas Ali's *Illustrated Historical Album of the Rajas and Taaluqdar's of Oudh* is illustrated by 343 original *carte-de-visite* photographs, see for an example **Plate 14.4**, a portrait of “Raja Lal Madho Singh Taalluqdar of Amethi”, no. 8 in the said volume.²⁰ An isolated *carte-de-visite*²¹ made from the same negative as our **Plate 14.4**, is represented here under **Plate 14.5**.²² Although the size of the depicted *taluqdar* is identical in both prints, there are a few differences which call for attention. **Plate 14.5** shows the full photograph, whereas **Plate 14.4** is partly covered by an oval-shaped *passe-partout* as part of the tipped-in albumen print. Besides, **Plate 14.4** has the name and title of the sitter below his portrait in *Nastaliq* script. This caption in Urdu was added, because the requirements for a bi-lingual book had to be met.²³

Another *carte-de-visite* photograph from Abbas Ali's book introduces “Mirza Jafar Ali Khan Taalluqdar of Bihta”, **Plate 14.6**.²⁴ For a different *carte-de-visite* photograph of the same man wearing the same

dress, see **Plate 14.7**, which on the back is inscribed in pencil in *Nāgarī*: “*navāb jāphar alī / khān sāhab / lakhnaū*”.²⁵ In **Plate 14.6**, Mirza Jafar Ali Khan holds a sword, in **Plate 14.7** he holds a long barreled gun. More important, however, is the fact that below the albumen print of **Plate 14.7**, the printed name of the photographer appears: “Mushkooroodowlah Photographer, Lucknow.” (all in capital letters). This shows that in Lucknow of the late 1860s and early 1870s, the same persons were occasionally photographed either by Abbas Ali or by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah or possibly by both, as the portrait photographs of both photographers may show identical back drops. In other words: Abbas Ali and Mushkoor-ud-dowlah in all probability, at least for some time, might have shared the same studio premises.²⁶

Of the 343 original *carte-de-visite* photographs in Abbas Ali’s *An Illustrated Historical Album of the Rajas and Talaqdars of Oudh*, 38 are labelled as “Pardanashin” (Hindi and Urdu: *pardānāshīn*, “living in concealment”), in other words: the Ranis and Thakuranis, which are hence not shown. But the women who in Lucknow in course of time were probably eager to be photographed were the courtesans, the “tawā’if” (*tawāyaf; tavāyaph*), as in those days the “tawai’f” was not “living in concealment”, but quite the contrary.

Both Abbas Ali and Mushkoor-ud-dowlah photographed “tawā’ifs” as much as both of them took photographs of “taluqdars” and “nawabs”, the potential customers of the “tawā’ifs”. With the exception of *The Beauties of Lucknow* (1874), no other publication on the “tawā’ifs” of Lucknow seems to exist. This publication, however, is so scarce, that it is occasionally listed in publications on early photographs of India, but without any source.²⁷ Only a single photograph showing a “tawā’if” from Lucknow seems to be published in its proper coherence.²⁸ For this reason we introduce here a number of portrait photographs of “tawā’ifs” from Lucknow, taken from about 1865 onwards, when Umrao Jan should have reached the zenith of her appeal.

Although **Plate 14.8**, a *carte-de-visite*, bears no marks of any studio, it was certainly taken by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah, as a very similar *carte-de-visite* photograph using the same table-cloth and position of the photographed courtesan, exists in the private collection of a “Non Resident Indian” living in Australia. The unpublished, closely related *carte-de-visite* in Australia has on the back a round impression of a seal of “Mushkooroodowlah / Photographer / Lucknow.” (all in capital letters) in a kind of purple colour and the date “1st Jan[ua]ry [18]65” together with the signature of a certain “Robert Man... [rest unlegible]”.

The following five *carte-de-visite* photographs are of identical size, technique and appearance. Each photographed woman is seated and wears heavy ear-ornaments; four of the ladies have crossed their arms, all of them have an almost identical hairdo with a middle parting. No woman smiles. Each woman seems to give the impression as if she had been photographed on earlier occasions, as none of them looks scared or uncomfortable. Since two of these *carte-de-visite* photographs were indisputably made by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah, the remaining three were undoubtedly also made by him.

The young lady of **Plate 14.9** wears the same dress as shown in our **Plates 14.12** and **14.13**. She seems to have been one of Mushkoor-ud-dowlah’s as well as Abbas Ali’s favourite models, as she appears in a number of their *carte-de-visite* photographs. Below the photograph is printed in green: “Mushkooroodowlah Photo[grapher]” (all in capital letters). On the back of the card is an imprint of the coat of arms of the United Kingdom as it appears since 1837, in reddish-brown colour, **Plate 14.10**.²⁹ Below is printed, in three different types of characters: “Mushkooroodowlah, / Photographer, / Lucknow.” (all in capital letters).

The lady of **Plate 14.11** is the only woman in this sequence who does not cross her arms. As this picture is affixed to the same pasteboard as the photograph of **Plate 14.9**, the information on the photographer in front and on the back is identical in both **Plates 14.9** and **14.11**.

The woman of **Plate 14.12** wears the same dress as the woman in **Plate 14.9** and in **Plate 14.13**. The backrest of the chair reappears in **Plate 14.13**. The lady of **Plate 14.13** sits on the same chair as the lady of the preceding plate. Besides, she wears the same dress as the lady of **Plates 14.9** and **14.12**.

Most resolute looks the lady of our **Plate 14.14**. It is rather difficult to decide, if these are all different women, as their faces resemble each other to some extent.

As no name of any women shown in **Plates 14.9** and **14.11-13** is given, it is somewhat problematic to call all of them “tawa’ifs”, especially since the hair of each of them is devoid of any ornaments. That the women are not in their usual dress is worn out by the fact that the same dress appears in three different photographs. It is possible that these photographs were taken in a more private dress, as was done before with a “nautch girl” – the English equivalent of a “tawa’if” – from Sindh.³⁰

Much more like a “tawa’if” looks the lady of our **Plate 14.15**, a *carte-de-visite* which was either photographed by Abbas Ali or by Mushkooor-ud-dowlah. Either of them made a full photographic session, in which the woman, her name is not known, appears either half-seated, standing, or reclining. Her expensive jewellery and her hairdo cannot be disregarded. She leans against the backrest of a heavy armchair, an object which was introduced into Indian photographic studios by Bourne & Shepherd. **Plate 14.16** shows her seated on a chair, wearing the same costly necklace as in **Plate 14.15**. In **Plate 14.17** her left elbow rests on a large pillow with a spittoon³¹ standing in front of her and a “pan-dan”, a betel-box,³² to her right. Spittoon, betel-box and *hookah* are the utensils that a “tawa’if” in the last third of the 19th century in Lucknow usually has around her.

When looking at these *carte-de-visite* photographs one has to consider the fact that each larger city, particularly Benares and Lucknow, was the home of a number of famous “nautch girls” or “tawa’ifs”. By the mid 1860s, photographic *cartes-de-visite* of most of these courtesans were in circulation. Where were most of these *carte-de-visite* photographs of Indian courtesans kept? A search in the “Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections“ of the British Library does probably reveal no significant quantity of such photographs, especially since most of them were taken by Indian photographers, while only very few were taken by West-erners. The majority of British soldiers understood little about the art that the “tawa’if” or “nachini”, the dancing or “nautch girl”, could perform. The Indian woman that had finally to be compliant to the British members of the occupying forces was less heavily bedecked with precious jewelry and obviously had to be prepared to consume alcoholic beverages in the company of these soldiers as shown in another rare photograph from Lucknow, **Plate 14.27**.³³ The *cartes-de-visite* of the courtesans from Lucknow and other places were collected in specially designed *carte-de-visite* albums, which appear in the international art-market but rarely.³⁴ One of these albums is placed on a small table next to a “tawa’if” from Lucknow as can be glimpsed from another *carte-de-visite*, **Plates 14.18** and **14.19**. This photograph was in all probability taken by another Lucknow photographer, “Musuddeelal” who had his atelier in “Sadur Bazar / Lucknow”.³⁵ Since the contact between British soldiers and Indian courtesans, most of which were considered by the British as belonging to a lower social status, was officially not encouraged, there are hardly any “official” photographs showing British servicemen in close contact with educated Indian “tawa’ifs” or “nautch girls”. **Plate 14.27**

is a rare example, being posed in a Lucknow studio, probably in order to serve the phantasies of the members of the occupying British army.

From the late 19th century onwards, a number of “tawa’ifs” from Lucknow became known from photographs, but it is no longer evident, who took their photographs. **Plate 14.20**, an unmounted gelatin silver print in the size of a cabinet-card, introduces, according to the label which is part of the print, “Adhdha Beggan”.³⁶ Fortunately, a picture postcard was “Printed in Austria” on the basis of the same photograph and without the amateurishly cut out *passe-partout*. This picture postcard is captioned on top: “Lucknow (in capital letters) / Addha Biggan Jawaif the famous / Dancing Girl of Chowk”, **Plate 14.21**. This title leaves no doubt that the photograph represents a “tawa’if”³⁷ from the said area of the city of Lucknow. Although her name does not end with “Jan”, as most names of “tawa’ifs” do, the fact that she is introduced as “Dancing Girl of Chowk” confirms her profession. Like a true “tawa’if” in those days, she is surrounded by a spittoon to her left, a *hookah* to her right and a betel-box next to her right elbow on the table, which also accomodates a tea-pot. The same “tawa’if” re-appears in another picture postcard, “Printed in Saxony” like all other postcards shown in the sequel, where she is called “Miss Biggan of Lucknow”, **Plate 14.22**.

“Miss Biggan” was not the only “tawa’if” to be immortalized in picture postcards that were printed in Saxony around 1905 or slightly later. Noteworthy is “Miss Mooshtari Jan of Lucknow” with a “pan-dan” placed on a low stool, a spittoon and a *hookah* of which only the long mouthpiece can be seen, **Plate 14.23**. As with **Plate 14.20**, her name, here written on a label in *Nastaliq*, is also part of the picture.

“Miss Mulka Jan of Lucknow”, **Plate 14.24**, gives a rather resolute expression. Her right hand holds a fan in front of a kind of grandfather clock on a table, and noteworthy is the vertikal zigzag pattern on her costume. Her name in *Nastaliq* is written directly on the photograph. “Miss Mahemuneer of Lucknow”, **Plate 14.25**, shows a similar zigzag design on her dress as “Mulka Jan”. Here, it proceeds horizontally. The teapot on the table, on which her right elbow rests, reminds of **Plates 14.20** and **14.21**, but is not the same. A part of the customary *hookah* is still visible at the righthand edge of the photograph.

“Miss Noor Jhan of Lucknow”, **Plate 14.26**, should either be written “Noor Jahan” or “Noor Jan”. She wears a cap like many other dancers at the Lucknow court and gives the impression to be still quite young.

What do we know about all these courtesans called “tawa’ifs” shown here? Next to nothing. As was observed earlier:

“Fame is illusive: open any book on Indian music and it will be clear how little has been written about the female performers (*tawaiifs* or *baijis*) who were among the most sought-after and admired artists. The reason they have been ignored so badly belongs to the realm of sociology and is rather complex. In a changing society with a mixed morality, where most of the Indian social reformers received an English education, the courtesans became a symbol of decadence. They were portrayed as the sinful practitioners of the *ars amandi*, even though many of them were solely dedicated to the performing arts and recognized as top khyal, thumri, *tappa* and *ghazal* singers as well as kathak dancers. It is hardly surprising that they were the first artists to be recorded by the Chief Recorder of the Gramophone Company, Fred W. Gaisberg, who reached Calcutta in 1902.” (Bor & Bruguere 1992: 33).

Umrao Jan Ada is hence one of those courtesans, about which we know only what she wrote about herself. The early and rare photographs of the “real” ladies of her profession tell us at least, how she must have looked like, if she ever really existed.

Notes

1. I wish to express my gratitude to Prof. Marc Rolland for having made available to me his original text of « *Umrão Jân Adâ: Roman historique indien ?* » published in: *Les Cahiers du G.R.E.A.M.* (= Groupe de recherche en études anglophones du Mans), 2001: 131-158 in addition to the text of his paper: « *Umrão Jân Adâ: Hommes et femmes à Lucknow au XIXe siècle* (communication au Congrès de la SAES, Rennes 1998, atelier ‘Nouvelles Littératures) ».
2. Newell n.d.: 44f. Cf. also Lawrie n.d.: 52; Hilton 1911: 206.
3. “Ada”, according to Marc Rolland, signifies “coquetry” as much as “Ruswa” means “dishonoured”. “Ada” was actually the *nom de plume* of Umrao Jan.
4. Director: Hassan Tariq. Music: Nisar Bazmi. Produced by Sadaf. Cast: Rani, Shahid, Zamurrad, Aasiya, Mumtaz, Rangeela, Lehri, Ladla, Imdad Hussain, Nayyar Sultana, Tamanna, Talat Siddiqi, Allauddin and Talish.
5. Director: Muzaffar Ali. Music: Khayyam. Produced by Muzaffar Ali. Written by Mirza Hadi Ruswa, Muzaffar Ali, Javed Siddiqui, Shama Zaidi. Cast: Rekha, Farooq Shaikh, Naseeruddin Shah, Umme Farwa, Shaukat Kaifi, Dina Pathak, Prema Narayan, Gajanan Jagirdar, Raj Babbar, Bharat Bhushan, Satish Shah. Language: Urdu. Running time: 145 minutes.
6. Director: J.P. Dutta. Music: Anu Malik. Produced by J.P. Dutta. Written by J.P. Dutta (screenplay), O.P. Dutta (story). Based on Novel by Mirza Muhammad Hadi Ruswa. Cast: Aishwarya Rai, Shabana Azmi, Sunil Shetty, Abhishek Bachchan, Divya Dutta, Himani Shivpuri, Kulbhushan Kharbanda. Running time: 188 minutes (in Europe).
7. Probably the best known is: Mirza Mohammad Hadi Ruswa, *Umrao Jan Ada, courtesan of Lucknow*. Translated by Khushwant Singh & M.A. Husaini. Bombay [etc.]: Orient Longmans, 1961 (UNESCO collection of representative works. Indian series), 187 pages.
8. Mirza Muhammad Hadi Ruswa, *Die Kurtisane von Lakhnau*. Roman. Aus dem Urdu übersetzt von Ursula Rothen-Dubs. Zürich: Manesse Verlag, 1971, 437 numbered pages.
9. Ruswa, Mirza Mohammad Hadi, *La cortigiana Umrao Jan Ada : (romanzo indiano)*, traduzione dalla lingua urdu, introduzione e note a cura di Daniela Bredi. Torino: L’harmattan Italia, c. 2001, 208 pages.
10. Tancovščica : povest’ / Mirza Muchammad Chadi Rusva. Perv. s urdu, [predisl. i primeč] Georgij Zografa. Moskva: Chudo_ Lit., 1967, 309 pages.
11. Carnegie, Woodburn & Noble 1870: unnumbered plate facing p.26, albumen print, 15.7 x 20.5 cm, height precedes width.
12. *Annual Report ...* n.d.: 19, no.153.
13. This is Ahmed Ali Khan, of whom there are 337 photographs within Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections of the British Library, London.
14. This is Gubbins 1858. The first edition has 464 pages, the second, published in the same year, accounts for 484 pages, whereas the third edition, published in 1859, has 570 pages.
15. It is not clear, to which book Mookherji, the author of the quoted passage, alludes here. Most illustrations in his own book are presumably based on drawings. Gubbins’ book only calls for three or four illustrations, according to edition.
16. This is *The Lucknow Album* 1874.
17. This is *The Beauties of Lucknow* 1874. Probably the only complete copy of this work is in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

18. This is *An Illustrated Historical Album of the Rajas and Talaudars of Oudh* 1880.
19. Mookherji 1883 (reprint 2003): 182f.
20. *An Illustrated Historical Album ...* 1880: no. 8. Our caption follows the title below the albumen print on p.3 of the pagination of the part containing the photographs. For the historical information on this *taluqdar*, see *ibid.*, p. (8), no. 8 of the third pagination in the English part of the book.
21. A *carte-de-visite* (cdv) is a kind of small-sized photographic print, which became popular through the French photographer André-Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri (1819-89) who in 1854 patented a process for capturing up to eight cdv-sized photographs on a single plate. This process made the production of smaller-sized portrait photographs less expensive. In May 1859, Napoléon III (Charles Louis Napoléon Bonaparte), the last monarch to rule France, reportedly interrupted his march to war to pose for a photograph in Disdéri's studio. This event is said to have made the cdv-photographs world famous and popular.
22. Size of the photograph and the card: 10.1 x 6.4 cm (height precedes width). Inscribed on the back in black ink, in *Nāgarī* script: “*mahārāj amehī*”.
23. The Urdu text of the book starts, in the Western European sense, from the last page of the book as much as the English text starts, for users of the Urdu script, also from the last page.
24. No. 233 from *An Illustrated Historical Album ...* 1880. For the text see p. (92) of the third pagination of the English part of the book.
25. Full size of this *carte-de-visite*: 10.2 x 6.4 cm. There is another inscription in ink in Urdu that gives more or less the same information.
26. As shown by me earlier; cf. Bautze 2004-05, in particular p. 207 and pls. 16.14 and 16.15 on p. 203.
27. See e.g. Thomas 1981: 66, where the title is mentioned as *The Beauties of Lucknow: Portraits of the most celebrated histrionic singers, dancing girls and actresses of the Oudh Court and of Lucknow. – Calcutta, 1874*, but, in contrast to most other titles given in the same “Directory of Books on India with genuine Photographs in them”, without the name of the publisher, the number of photographs therein or whereabouts.
28. The photograph of “Courtesan Bi Haidar Jan” in Sharar 1975: ill. 29, facing p.192. That illustration does not appear in the list of acknowledgements, p. 8. Since ill. 22 is listed twice, once under “India Office Library and Records, London” and once under “by permission of the family of Abdul Halim Sharar”, it is possible that the original photograph is kept within the Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections of the British Library. There, however, it could not be traced so far. The other “22” seems to represent the “real” illustration of that number, since it shows “Maulana Abdul Halim Sharar” in an oil painting. For a woman that looks similar to “Bi Haidar Jan” see our **Plate 14.18**.
29. “The coat of arms of the British King and the United Kingdom consists of a quartered shield and shows in the first (upper left) field three golden leopards on a red background (England), in the second field a red lion on a golden background (Scotland), in the third field a golden harp on a blue background (Ireland), and in the fourth field three golden leopards on a red background again (England). The blazon is surrounded by the Order of the Garter with the French inscription: « *Honi soit qui mal y pense* » → “Evil to him who evil thinks”. The shield holders are an English lion and a Scottish unicorn. Above the shield sits a golden helmet with the crown of the Holy Edward, on which the British lion stands. The coat of arms rests on a pedestal which depicts a meadow with Tudor roses. At the foot of the coat of arms on a banner the motto reads in French: « *Dieu et mon droit* » → “God and my right”. Taken from <http://www.flaggenlexikon.de/fgb.htm> (April 12th, 2007).
30. For an example of a photograph of a “dancing girl”, taken by Henry Charles Baskerville Tanner in a less “official” dress, see Forbes Watson & Kaye 1872: plate entitled ““Dancing Girl, Hindoo, Sind””: the principal class of dancing women in Sind is called Kanyari. Each has her own house, and is usually married pro forma to one of her

musicians; but all are courtezans. Dancing women attend, as an indispensable part of the ceremony, all festive rejoicings public and private, and are rewarded according to their skill and reputation. ... *The figure represented is in undress. She wears the ordinary under shift embroidered* [italics are mine, JKB], full loose trousers, and a scarf over all. On her arms are the curious ivory rings, which reach from the wrist nearly to the elbow, and are worn instead of the glass bangles used by the women of India. On her ancles she has heavy gold or silver bangles, worn over her trousers.”

31. For a similar spittoon cf. Untracht, Parpola & Parpola 1993: 104, no. 215.
32. For closely related betel boxes from 19th-century Lucknow see Untracht, Parpola & Parpola 1993: 24, no. 12; Stronge, Susan: Bidri Ware. Inlaid Metalwork from India. London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1985, p.86, no.82; Lal, Krishna: *National Museum Collection. Bidri Ware*. New Delhi: National Museum, 1990, p.98, no.101.
33. *Carte-de-visite* photograph from the same atelier as **Plate 14.18**, inscribed on the back in ink: “Tommy Atkins / on the spree.”
34. Cf. Bonhams 2006: lot 33: “Nautch girls ... 50 carte-de-visite portraits, ... a number named below in ink, loosely inserted one per page within window-mounts, embossed morocco, ... small 8vo.” This album is presently in a German private collection. Most of the ladies were photographed in Bombay, while some photographs were also taken in Hyderabad, Deccan.
35. This piece of information is taken from the back of another *carte-de-visite* which was produced in and by the same atelier as **Plate 14.18**, the woman resembling “Bi Haidar Jan”, for whom see note 28 above.
36. This name is preceded by three numeral figures, probably “616”.
37. The “Jawaiif” in the caption is possibly a misprint for “Tawaiif”.

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Plate 14.1: The tomb of "Bahu Begam", Faizabad (U.P.) as published in 1870. Albumen print.



Plate 14.2:
A courtesan.
Carte-de-visite
(full length, seated).
Photographer:
Abbas Ali of Lucknow,
1875-80.
Albumen print.

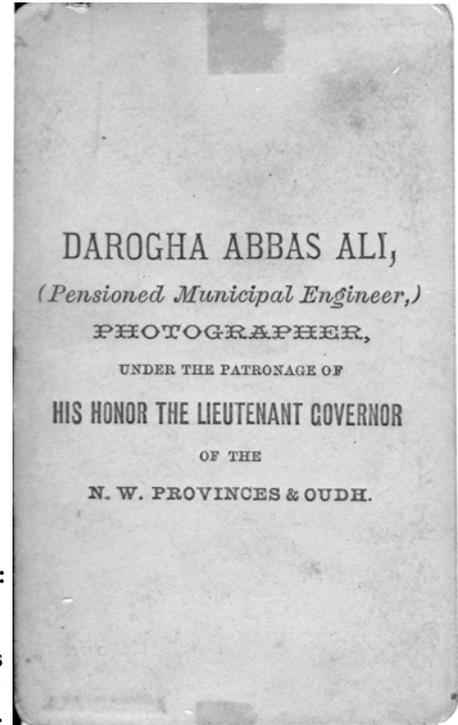


Plate 14.3:
The reverse
of Plate 14.2
giving details
about the
photographer.



Plate 14.4:
"Raja Lal
Madho Singh
Taalluqdar of Amethi"
(half length),
from *An Illustrated
Historical Album ...*
1880: no. 8.
Albumen print.



Plate 14.5:
"mahārāj amethī",
carte-de-visite
(full length, seated).
Photographer:
Abbas Ali
of Lucknow,
c. 1865-70.
Albumen print.



Plate 14.6:
"Mirza Jafar
Ali Khan
Taalluqdar of Bihta"
(half length),
from *An Illustrated
Historical Album ...*
1880: no. 233.
Albumen print.



Plate 14.7:
"navāb jāphar alī /
khān sāhab /
lakhnaū."
Carte-de-visite
photograph
(half length)
by Mushkoor-
ud-dowlah,
Lucknow,
c. 1865-70.
Albumen print.



Plate 14.8: A Lucknow courtesan. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (full length, seated) by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah or Abbas Ali of Lucknow, c. 1865. Albumen print.



Plate 14.9: A Lucknow courtesan. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (head and shoulders) by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah of Lucknow, c. 1865. Albumen print.

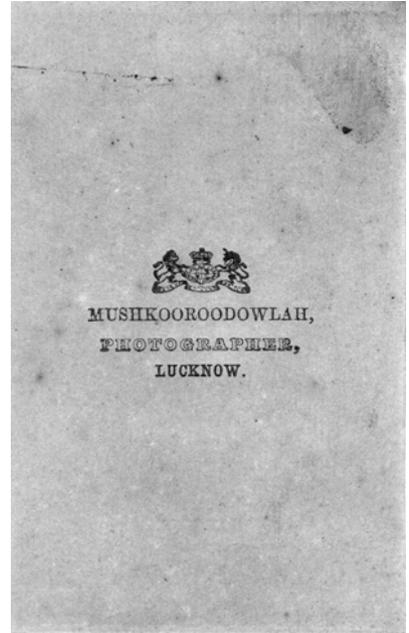


Plate 14.10: The reverse of Plate 14.9 giving details about the photographer.



Plate 14.11: A Lucknow courtesan. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (head and shoulders) by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah of Lucknow, c. 1865. Albumen print.



Plate 14.12: A Lucknow courtesan. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (head and shoulders) by Mushkoor-ud-dowlah of Lucknow, c. 1865. Albumen print.



Plate 14.13: A Lucknow courtesan. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (head and shoulders) by Mushkooor-ud-dowlah of Lucknow, c. 1865. Albumen print.



Plate 14.14: A Lucknow courtesan. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (head and shoulders) by Mushkooor-ud-dowlah of Lucknow, c. 1865. Albumen print.



Plate 14.15: A Lucknow courtesan with studio backdrop. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (half length, seated) by Mushkooor-ud-dowlah or Abbas Ali of Lucknow, c. 1865-70. Albumen print.



Plate 14.16: The lady of Plate 14.15. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (full length, seated) by Mushkooor-ud-dowlah or Abbas Ali of Lucknow, c. 1865-70. Albumen print.



Plate 14.17: The lady of Plate 14.15. *Carte-de-visite* photograph (full length, recumbent) by Mushkooor-ud-dowlah or Abbas Ali of Lucknow, c. 1865-70. Albumen print.



Plate 14.18:
A courtesan from Lucknow.
Carte-de-visite photograph
(full length, seated)
probably by “Musuddeelal”
of Lucknow, c. 1880-90.
Albumen print.



Plate 14.19: Detail of Plate 14.18 showing the *carte-de-visite* album on the table next to the courtesan.



Plate 14.20: Miss “Adhdha Beggan”, Lucknow, cabinet-size photograph (full length, seated), by an anonymous photographer, Lucknow, c. 1895. Gelatin silver print.



Plate 14.21: A lithographed picture postcard based on Plate 14.20, here called “Addha Biggan”, printed in Austria in c. 1905.



Plate 14.22: A lithographed picture postcard of “Miss Biggan of Lucknow” (half length, seated), printed in Germany in c. 1905 or later.



Plate 14.23: A lithographed picture postcard of “Miss Mooshtari Jan of Lucknow” (full length, seated), printed in Germany in c. 1905 or later.



Plate 14.24: A lithographed picture postcard of “Miss Mulka Jan of Lucknow” (full length, seated), printed in Germany in c. 1905 or later.



Plate 14.25: A lithographed picture postcard of “Miss Mahemuneer of Lucknow” (full length, seated), printed in Germany in c. 1905 or later.



Plate 14.26: A lithographed picture postcard of “Miss Noor Jhan of Lucknow” (full length, standing), printed in Germany in c. 1905 or later.

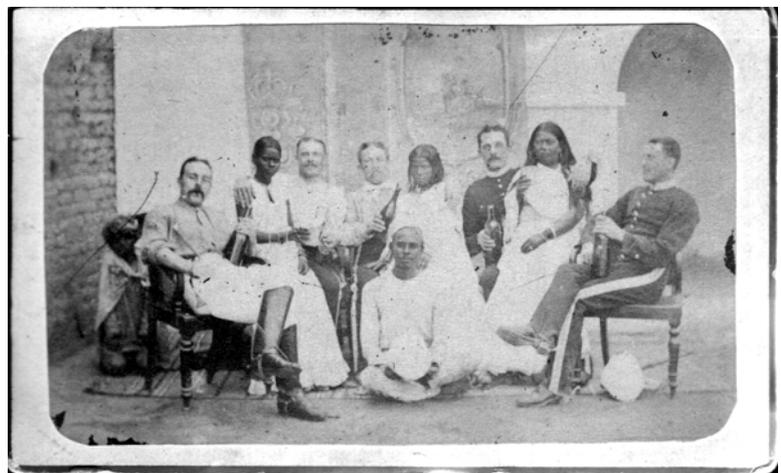


Plate 14.27: Five British soldiers in uniform with wine bottles seated on chairs. Three of them embrace an Indian woman seated on their lap while one Indian gentleman sits on the floor. *Carte-de-visite* photograph probably by “Musuddeelal” of Lucknow, c.1880-90. Albumen print.