

List of illustrations in the *Mahābhārata*

Edinburgh University Library, Or Ms 510

Sequence of miniatures:

The text is preceded by a series of 15 large miniatures, with others between the various *parvans* (books), as well as a series of small quatrefoil-shaped ones interspersed through the text of the *Ādīparvan* and *Sabhāparvan*, as detailed below. There is no special treatment for the *Bhagavadgītā*. All the miniatures have gold backgrounds with red and white flowers, green leaves, blue diamond shapes and gold flowers in orange cartouches.

The main subjects of the 15 preliminary miniatures are as follows:

1. The syllable *om* [ॐ]
2. Gaṇeśa worshipped by seven women and one man
3. Brahmā and Sarasvatī (?)
4. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa seated before Brahmā
5. Rama and Sītā seated before Brahmā
6. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa on a swing
7. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā dancing the round dance
8. A princess on a balcony offers a garland to three nobles below
9. A ruler giving audience beneath an awning
10. Kṛṣṇa on a chariot accompanied by Rādhā (?)
11. Kṛṣṇa, armed with a bow and arrow, on a chariot, pursued by another chariot.
Probably a depiction of Kṛṣṇa's abduction of Rukminī.
12. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā (?) giving audience beneath an awning
13. Kṛṣṇa lifting Mount Govardhana
14. Kṛṣṇa playing his flute before Brahmā and cowherds
15. A ruler (?) seated on a throne, with Kṛṣṇa on a low seat, Brahmā, Śiva/an ascetic and five others seated before him.

The text then begins with the *Ādīparvan*. Incipit: *śrīgaṇeśāya namaḥ om namaḥ paramātmāne śrīpurāṇapurūṣo namāya * nārāyaṇaṃ namaskṛtya ...* [= Mbh.1.1.0]

Interspersed within the text of the *Ādīparvan* are 36 small miniatures (the first 22 are spaced 11.5 cm apart, the next six 28 cm apart, and the last three 46 cm apart), whose subjects are as follows:

16. Matsya avatāra (the fish, the first avatāra of Viṣṇu, the other nine following):
17. The churning of the ocean (= Kūrma avatāra)
18. Varāha (boar) avatāra
19. Narasiṃha (man-lion) avatāra
20. Vāmana (dwarf) avatāra
21. Paraśurāma (Rāma with the battle-axe)
22. Rāma Dāśarathi beheads Rāvaṇa
23. Vasudeva carries the swaddled baby Kṛṣṇa across the river
24. Kṛṣṇa in image form, flanked by two brāhman attendants
25. Kalkin (the tenth and future avatāra) leading a white horse

26. Viśvarūpa Viṣṇu (lion, human, boar and monkey heads surrounding central blue face) addresses a warrior with a bow
27. Three ascetics seated in a rural setting
28. Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā on a terrace at night
29. An ascetic seated on a terrace
30. Kṛṣṇa playing his flute between two gopīs
31. Three figures, similar to illustration no.27
32. Kṛṣṇa seated on a terrace with two ascetics
33. Śiva (?) seated between three ascetic figures
34. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma seated on a cushion before two gopīs
35. Kṛṣṇa seated on a terrace with Rādhā
36. Two seated ascetics (?) in conversation
37. Three seated ascetics in conversation
38. Kṛṣṇa addresses two princes in a rural setting
39. Yaśodā chastises the infant Kṛṣṇa
40. Three seated ascetics
41. A prince and an ascetic seated on a terrace
42. Kṛṣṇa and two companions herd the cows
43. A prince converses with an ascetic seated on a tiger-skin
44. Two seated ascetics in conversation
45. An ascetic seated on a tiger-skin, flanked by two other ascetics
46. A prince and a brāhman seated on a terrace
47. A brāhman and a woman seated on a terrace
48. A prince and a brāhman seated on a terrace
49. A prince and a brāhman seated on a terrace (variant)
50. Two princes seated on a terrace
51. Kṛṣṇa and a brāhman seated on a terrace

The end of the *Ādiparvan* is then followed by another large miniature:

52. Two princes seated on a mat on a terrace (possibly Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana at the dicing match), surrounded by eight attendants

The start of the *Sabhāparvan* then follows immediately and its text includes the following small miniatures:

53. Two brāhmins in conversation on a terrace
54. A prince and a brāhman in conversation on a terrace
55. A prince and a brāhman in conversation on a terrace (variant)
56. Kṛṣṇa and a prince in conversation on a terrace
57. Two princes in conversation on a terrace
58. Two brāhmins in conversation on a terrace
59. A prince and a brāhman in conversation on a terrace
60. A prince and a brāhman in conversation on a terrace (variant)

The end of the *Sabhāparvan* is then followed by a large miniature:

61. Two ascetics seated on tiger skins in a rocky landscape receive a prince with one female and four male attendants (i.e. the five Pāṇḍavas and Draupadi entering their forest exile)

The *Āraṇyakaparvan* then commences, and its conclusion is followed by the next large miniature:

62. A battle scene, including Kṛṣṇa as Arjuna's charioteer facing a chariot-warrior of the Kuru side

The *Virātaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

63. Two princes (with nimbuses) in conference on a terrace before a lake; weapons are laid out between them and there are seven other figures

The *Udyogaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by :

64. A battle scene, with chariots, cavalry and infantry

The *Bhīṣmaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

65. A cavalry battle, with two warriors in the foreground and a palace in the background

The *Droṇaparvan* then begins and its conclusion includes the colophon:

samāpto yam iti droṇaparvaṇi śubhaṃ bhadraṃ kalyāṇam iti saṃvat 1852 śrāvaṇa śudi 13 budhe ||. The date given corresponds to Wednesday, 29th July 1795. There then follows:

66. Two chariots opposing each other, on one of which Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna are mounted: a tree and a palace in the background

The *Karṇaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

67. A battle scene of opposing chariots, with two bodies and one head on the ground

The *Śalyaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

68. A duel between two warriors on foot, armed with maces; Kṛṣṇa and four others watch on the left, while two warriors watch on the right (i.e. the duel between Bhīma and Duryodhana, with Kṛṣṇa watching with the four other Pāṇḍavas)

There is a gap of 12.5 cm blank following this miniature and preceding the start of the *Gadāparvan* (without the usual invocation). The conclusion of the *Gadāparvan* includes a date obscured by the gilding round:

69. Aśvatthāman and a companion (? Kṛpa or Kṛtavarman) slay the sleeping sons of the Pāṇḍavas, depicted lying on charpoys on a rooftop, while Śiva waits below

The *Sauptikaparvan* then begins and its conclusion (which again includes a date partially obscured by gilding, but probably saṃvat 1852 [= 1795 CE]) is followed by:

70. Kṛṣṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira (or possibly Arjuna) visit Gāndhārī, shown under a canopy and attended by three other women

The *Strīparvan* then begins and its conclusion includes the date: *saṃvat 1852 āṣāḍha vadi 11 śanivāsare* [there must be an error in this date, since the corresponding day

(12th July) in 1795 CE is a Sunday, and presumably Saturday, 30th July 1795 is intended]. It is then followed by:

71. Bhīṣma on his bed of arrows instructs the five Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa

The *Rājadharmā* section of *Śāntiparvan* then begins and its end is followed by a 1 cm blank, before the start of the *Āpaddharma* section, the conclusion of which is followed by a large miniature set in a frame of the same shape as the small miniatures within a plain area:

72. Bhīṣma on his bed of arrows instructs the five Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa (another depiction)

The *Mokṣadharmā* section of *Śāntiparvan* then begins and concludes with the date: *saṃvat 1852 śanau*. It is followed by:

73. Bhīṣma on his bed of arrows instructs the five Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa (another depiction, including a further smaller figure of a brāhman)

The *Anuśāsanaparvan* then begins and its conclusion, which treats it as a fourth section of the *Śāntiparvan*, is followed by:

74. A depiction of the horse sacrifice (aśvamedha), showing Kṛṣṇa and five brāhmanas (the Pāṇḍavas) to the left of the fire brazier. Yudhiṣṭhira with nimbus and an attendant to the right, and a small riderless horse in front

The *Aśvamedhikaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

75. Kṛṣṇa on the left with (the same) five brāhmanas (the Pāṇḍavas) talks with Yudhiṣṭhira and an attendant on a terrace before trees

The *Āśramavāsikaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

76. Two Vṛṣṇi warriors battle on foot with clubs, watched by three others on the left and two on the right, before a lake

The *Mausalaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

77. Yudhiṣṭhira, then Kṛṣṇa, then five brāhmanas (the Pāṇḍavas) walk towards a doorway in a palace area

The *Mahāprasthānikaparvan* then begins and its conclusion is followed by:

78. Yudhiṣṭhira, followed by Kṛṣṇa, ascends steps leading to heaven, with five brāhmanas (the Pāṇḍavas) still on the ground

The *Svargārohanaparvan* then begins and concludes with the colophon (following Mbh.18.5.54): *iti ... samāptaḥ śubham astu // śrīkrṣṇāya namaḥ // śrīrāmāya namaḥ* [pattern] // *rāma*.

End of the MS.

Compiled by John Brockington, 1998.

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