



## Fall 2015 — Society for Asian Art - Arts of Asia Lecture Series

### Arts of Asia Spring 2016: Patronage in Asian Art-Monarchs, Merchants, and Devotees

#### **"Jahanara Begum: The 17th C. Mughal Princess Who Could Be King"**

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**Summary:** The breadth and depth of my research explores the sacred and secular life and contributions of the Mughal princess, Jahanara Begum (1614-1681). Jahanara was the daughter of the emperor Shah Jahan, the patron of the Taj Mahal. Upon her mother's demise, the 17-year-old assumed the role of a consort queen to her father and cultivated "dual personas" that allowed her to artfully articulate her public and private roles. At a time when imperial women legitimized their authority through dynastic reproduction, the unmarried princess negotiated a spiritual and imperial authority through modes of masculinity associated with Mughal males. This talk looks at the numerous ways that princess Jahanara achieved an imperial status that ordinarily would have made her King.

#### **SUGGESTED READING:**

As there is little to no material on the life of Jahanara Begum, I am recommending my own published works as select reading for the attendees. The articles are a combination of academic and general works.

- Duke University Press, 'Masculine Modes of Female Subjectivity: The Case of Jahanara Begum (1614-1681)' in Anshu Malhotra and Siobhan Lambert-Hurley (eds), *Speaking of the Self: Gender, Performance and Autobiography in South Asia*, Duke University Press, pp.
- *Ars Erotica: Visualizing the 'Sensual' Sufi and the Sovereign in 16-18th C. Mughal miniature paintings.* (Marg Art Journal, March 2012).
- "Between Patron and Piety: Jahan Ara Begum's Sufi Affiliations and Articulations" in *Sufism and Society: Arrangements of the Mystical in the Muslim World, 1200-1800 C.E.*, ed. John J. Curry and Erik S. Ohlander (London and New York: Routledge, August, 2011).
- "Imperial Transgressions and Spiritual Investitures: Female Agency in Seventeenth Century Mughal India." *Journal of Persianate Studies*, Special Issue, (June 2011, Brill Publishers).
- "The 'Light' of the Timuria: Jahan Ara Begum's Patronage, Piety and Poetry in 17th C. Mughal India." *Marg Art Journal*, 60.1 (2008): 52-61.

#### **For General Reading on Mughal History:**

*The empire of the great Mughals: history, art and culture* / Annemarie Schimmel ; translated by Corinne Attwood ; edited by Burzine K. Waghmar ; with a foreword by Francis Robinson, London : Reaktion Books, 2004.

