Wounded Tiger does not reflect a Comptonian sense of cricket as a game of fun to be enjoyed by player and spectator alike. More than seventy years ago Orwell suggested that the "true test" of a cricketer is that he or she should prefer village cricket to "first-class" cricket (*CEJL*, III, page 66). Yet again, the mighty Orwell was spot on.

Anthony V.M. Horton

FRANZ-JOSEF VOLLMER / FRIEDERIKE WEIS, *Angels and Madonnas in Islam. Mughal and other Oriental Miniatures in the Vollmer Collection*. Berlin: Jörg Lehmann, 2015. 116 pages, €24.90. ISBN 978-3-00-048460-5 (The book can be ordered from www.amazon.de or dr_joerg.lehmann@web.de.)

In this work, Franz-Josef Vollmer allows us a glimpse into his impressive collection of miniatures from India and Iran. The subject of the miniatures is unusual: they depict Christian motives, but stem from the hand of Muslim painters and were sold in a market dominated by Muslim buyers.

In his introduction, Vollmer describes the history of the artworks. In the late 16th century, Mughal emperor Akbar – the first Mughal to reside permanently in India, and well aware that most of the subjects of his Muslim dynasty were non-Muslims – encountered the Portuguese and showed himself impressed with Christian teachings. Jesuit fathers came to Akbar's court and acquainted the emperor with Christian theology. Vollmer remarks, illustratively, that Akbar was highly impressed with one of the presents he received, a beautifully illustrated bible dedicated to the Spanish (and subsequently Portuguese) king Philip II; he was enraptured that the most holy book of the Christians could be dedicated to a sovereign.

Persian and Indian Islam has never strictly observed the Islamic interdict on depictions of living beings. Consequently, a good deal of interest was shown in illustrations, and in the following period a thriving market for miniatures depicting Christian scenes emerged. To find Christian motives in Islamic art is less surprising than appears at first glance. Mary and Jesus were and are venerated in Islam, the former as a model of chastity and purity (there is an interesting reference in the introduction to a legendary ancestor of the Mughal dynasty, Alanqu'a, who like Mary experienced a virgin birth). Jesus, needless to say, is revered as the last prophet before the prophet Muhammad. Saints, likewise, are an important part of Islamic lore, particularly among Sufi brotherhoods, of which many existed in India.

Vollmer explains that the model pictures with Christian motives were not sent from Europe to India as paintings, but rather as engravings. This made them more resilient to the Indian climate, and also offered Indian artists the opportunity to colour and adapt them to local taste – the majority of the published works of art show Christian scenes in a clearly localized style. The publication

contains fifty works of art spanning at least three centuries and covering a wide range of Christian/Islamic topics. Rather than focusing entirely on Christian motives (the virgin and child, individual saints, etc.), some of them refer directly to the encounter of Muslims and Christians and almost attempt to effect a symbiosis between the two related, yet different faiths. In this context, Depiction 47 ("The Day of Cursing") is the *pièce de résistance*.

The miniatures draw on a remarkable range of artistic styles. Picture 18 ("Madonna with Putti"), Picture 48 ("Christ on the Cross") and Picture 24 ("Madonna and Child/Hastings Madonna") resemble original European works extremely closely. Other works clearly reflect local influences; there are substantial differences in style, depending on date and regional origin. "Pietá with Angels" (Picture 37) shows a close resemblance to the Venetian original, which was probably painted in the 15th or 16th century. Friederike Weis, an art historian specialized in Christian motives in Islamic art, suggests that the painter might have seen the European original.

A painting, tentatively thought to have been created in Masulipatnam in the 19th century, shows a different artistic style (Picture 38, "Hazrat Maryam wa 'Isa Ruhullah [The venerable Mary and Jesus, the spirit of God]") and is connected with a motive not of Islamic, but of Hindu origin: the popular story of Yashoda caring for the little Krishna. Picture 44, from Safavid Iran, dated to 1649 and attributed to Muhammad Zaman ibn Hajj Yusuf Qumi, is called "The Victory of Truth": it clearly resembles European baroque painting. That is not surprising, as the painter was known to have created a number of artworks "in the European style" (*farangi sazi*). This item is remarkable as evidence of considerable curiosity among Muslim artists not only about the motives of occidental painting, but also about its artistic style. Picture 21 ("Sultan Ibrahim ibn Adham of Balkh") is an interesting example of how an Islamic legend (the sultan becoming a dervish who lived as an ascetic and was nourished by food brought to him by angels) was expressed in a work of art based on a Christian source, namely an engraving in the *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* by Jeronimo Nadal, a book published in 1593 in Antwerp. The book contained illustrations from the gospels, and due to the absence of text it was soon described as a "paupers' bible" (*biblia pauperum*). The book was used extensively by the Jesuits in India until they had to leave in 1773.

Vollmer's collection in general and the choice of motive in particular deserve high praise. They point to a religious and cultural attitude that is entirely alien to the all too frequent exclusionism and intolerance observable in our time. The miniatures are thus witnesses of a probably – and regrettably – bygone age of Islamicate culture which showed considerable interest in a religious culture and art that was not its own – but not completely alien either. Such cultural hybrids could and should serve as a reminder that in the past the dividing lines between religions and cultures were not drawn as strictly as modern-day extremism would have us believe.

Tilman Lüdke