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Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World

In a fascinating and innovative study, Ruby Lal explores domestic life and the place of women in the Mughal court of the sixteenth century. Challenging traditional, Orientalist interpretations of the *haram* that have portrayed a domestic world of seclusion and sexual exploitation, the author reveals a complex society where noble men and women negotiated their everyday life and public-political affairs in the "inner" chambers as well as the "outer" courts. Using Ottoman and Safavid histories as a counterpoint, she demonstrates the richness, ambiguity, and particularity of the Mughal *haram*, which was pivotal in the transition to institutionalization and imperial excellence.

RUBY LAL is Assistant Professor in the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian studies at Emory University. Her research focuses on issues of gender relations in Islamic societies in the pre-colonial world.

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To Prabha and Manmohan
and
to Gyan

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Note on transliteration and citations

There is no standard system of transliteration from Persian into English. I use the modified version of the *IJMES* (*International Journal of Middle East Studies*) system developed by Layla S. Diba and Maryam Ekhtiar for their edited volume, *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch, 1785–1925* (New York, 1998).

The following page explains the form of transliteration used for different consonants, vowels, and diphthongs. However, I have omitted all diacritical marks. For non-specialists this removes a source of visual distraction and makes the text less cumbersome. The specialist, by contrast, should have no difficulty in recognizing the Persian terms. I have made two exceptions to this rule:

1. I retain the common English form of all well-known names of persons, places, and Persian texts. Thus: *Baburnama* and *Akbarnama*, rather than *Baburname* and *Akbarname*; Agra rather than Agreh; Begum/Beg rather than Bigum/Biyg; and Husain rather than Husiyn.
2. Original spellings have been retained in quotations. As a result, certain names appear with different spellings in my text, on the one hand, and in some quotations, on the other.

The spellings of Turki words have been kept as they appear in the original texts. Dictionaries and other secondary texts used to cross-check the meanings and spellings of these words are listed in the footnotes.

In citations throughout the book, all information included in square brackets is mine.

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Consonants, vowels and diphthongs

CONSONANTS

Hamzeh	'	ص	ṣ
ب	b	ض	ż
پ	p	ط	ṭ
ت	t	ظ	ẓ
ث	s	ع	'
ج	j	غ	gh
چ	ch	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ک	k
د	d	گ	g
ذ	z	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
ژ	zh	و	v
س	s	ه	h
ش	sh	ی	y

VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS

Long		Short		Diphthongs		Other	
ا	ā	ـَ	a	ـَو	aw	(Silent) ـه	eh
و	ū	ـُ	u	ـَی	ay		
ی	ī	ـِ	i				

Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch, 1785–1925, ed. Layla S. Diba with Maryam Ekhtiar (New York, 1998)

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