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MINIATURE PASTED ON AN ALBUM LEAF. 'A NURSING PRINCESS'

INDIA, MUGHAL; C. 1580-1585 (MINIATURE)
IRAN; 19TH CENTURY (LEAF)

LEAF: 47.7 × 31.6 CM

The Jesuits introduced European art with Christian motifs at the court of the Mughal ruler Akbar, providing a major source of inspiration for local artists. The point of departure for this painting must be a depiction of Madonna Lactans – the Virgin Mary nursing the infant Jesus. The dish on the ground might also be based on a European model, in which the pomegranates, with their red juice, symbolize the passion of Christ and Paradise.

The mother in this painting, however, is a bejeweled Indian woman wearing blue trousers, with flowers in her golden diadem. The large cushion and groups of cypresses in the background, interspersed by gracefully entwined flowering branches, are also Indian elements, while the chair is a fanciful imitation of European furniture.

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| Kjeld von Folsach, Joachim Meyer: *The Human Figure in Islamic Art – Holy Men, Princes, and Commoners*, The David Collection, Copenhagen 2017, cat.no. 65;