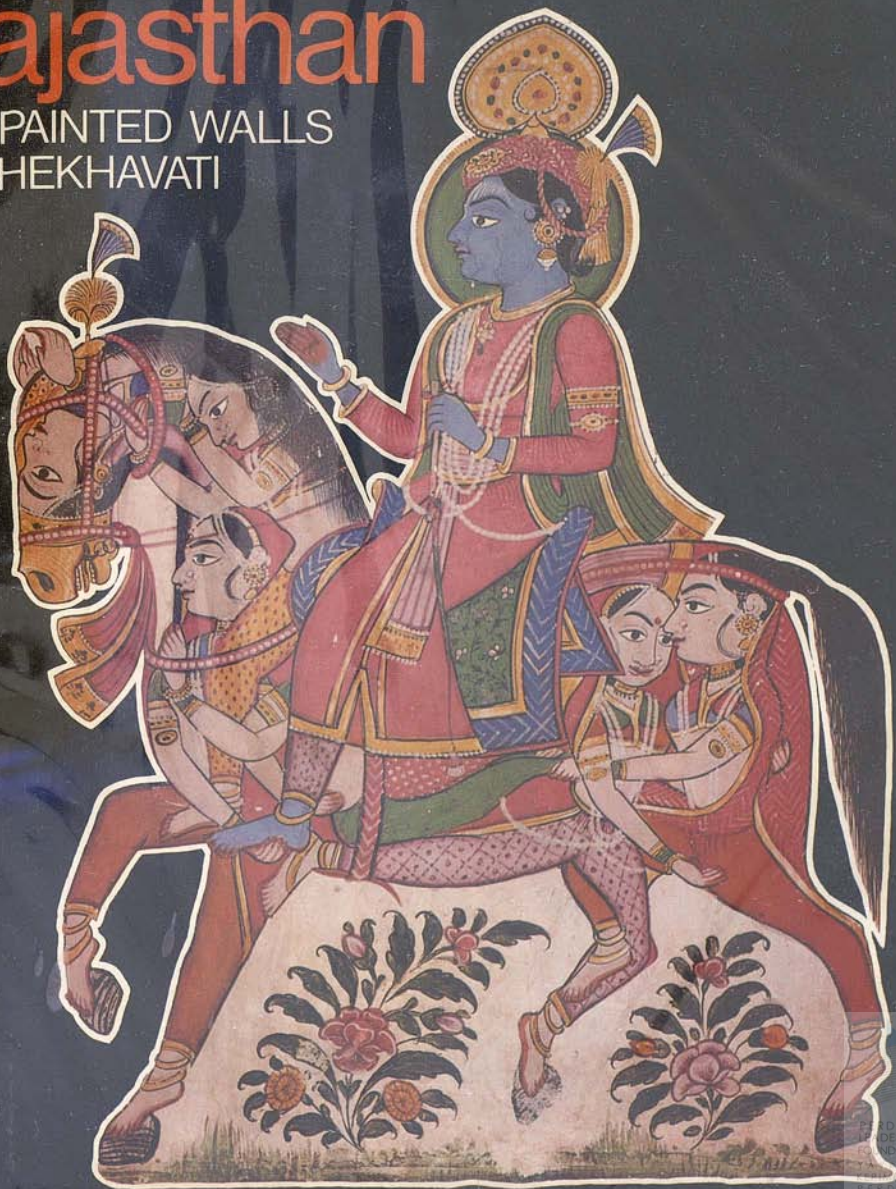


FRANCIS WACZIARG & AMAN NATH

Rajasthan

THE PAINTED WALLS
OF SHEKHAVATI



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Rajasthan

THE PAINTED WALLS OF SHEKHAVATI

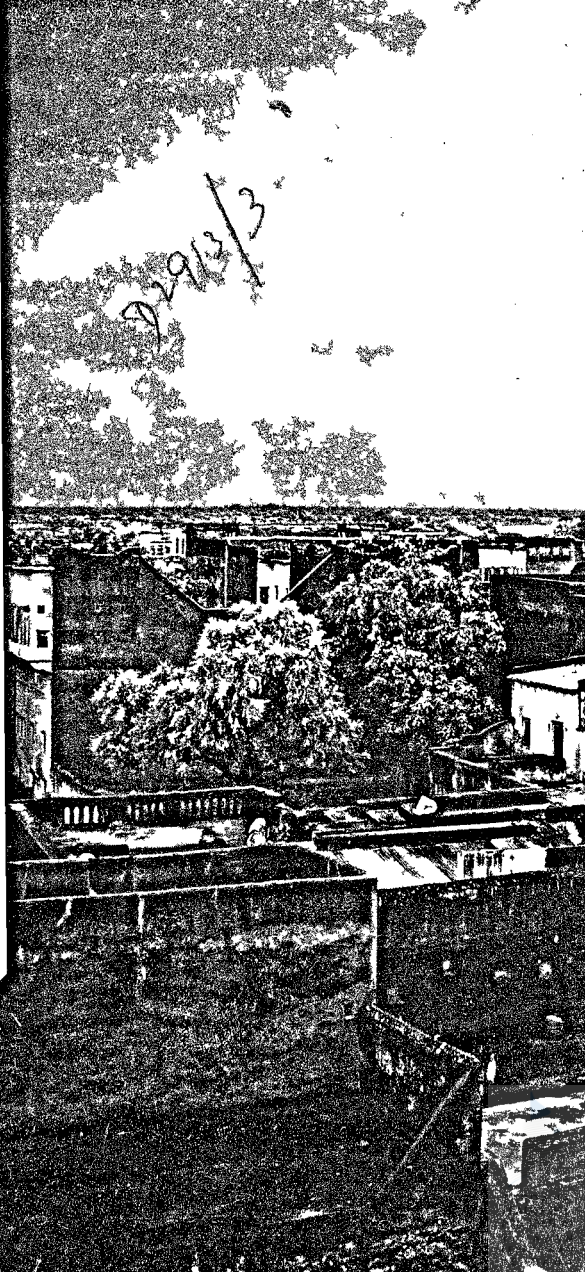
WITHIN THE REGION in India known as Rajasthan lies Shekhavati, and in Shekhavati lie the empty forts of the Rajputs – the once powerful warrior caste – and the huge, painted mansions of merchant families who have long since departed to the cities, leaving their beautiful frescoed houses to the ravages of time.

This beautiful book of the frescoes from that region, is a testimony to Shekhavati, to the past prosperity of a society which once proudly displayed its vitality by elaborately decorating courtyards, walls and ceilings with a pictorial record of its customs, beliefs, mythology and history. Portraits, war scenes, religious ceremonies and floral designs cover practically every inch of the houses of the Rajput warriors and mercantile classes, revealing far more clearly than words the history of the people of Shekhavati from Mughal times, through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, until the influence of the British, with their customs and new technology, began to dominate.

This celebration of Shekhavati is not, however, confined to school history; it is also a tribute to Indian fresco painters, whose work is stunningly beautiful, and a unique record of decorative skill now almost forgotten.

Francis Wacziarg and Aman Nath's text is exemplary. It recreates vividly the physical atmosphere of life in Shekhavati, and, in highly informative captions, reveals a mine of information on Shekhavati past and present.

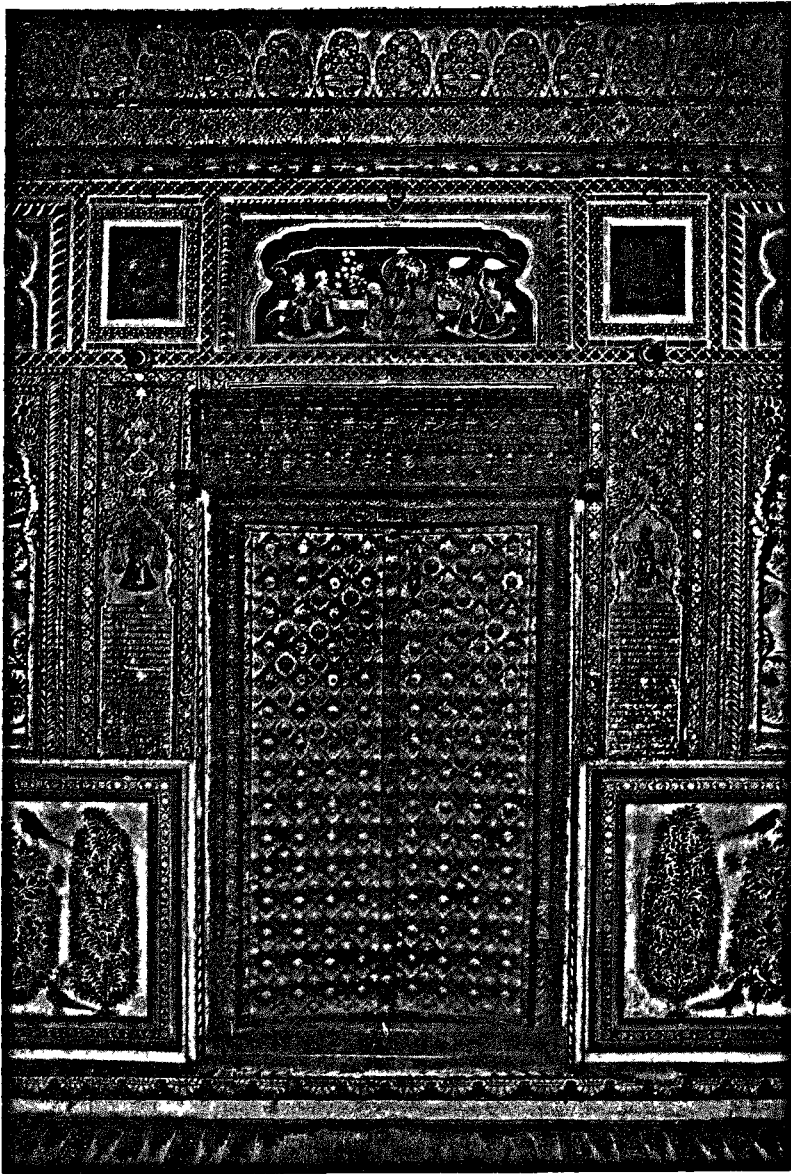
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Ganesha, the elephant-headed God of the Portal who is believed to remove obstacles. Here he is painted above a door in the *Sone Chandi Ki haveli*, 'the house of gold and silver', built at Mahensar in 1846 by Sej Ram Podar.

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