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Nota di contenuto	Front Cover -- Title Page -- Copyright -- Contents -- List of Illustrations -- Acknowledgements -- Note on Transliteration and Conventions -- List of Contributors -- Introduction Portraiture in South Asia -- What is a Portrait in South Asia? -- Court Portraiture in Mughal India -- Portraying the Ideal Rajput -- What were Portraits for? -- Colonial Modernity and Court Portraiture in South Asia -- 1. Portrait or Image? Some Literary and Terminological Perspectives on Portraiture in Early India -- The Prevalence of Portraiture in Early India -- Literary Testimonies and Vocabulary -- Narratives of the Origins of Portraits and Images -- 2. Tracing the Rise of Mughal Portraiture: The Kabul Corpus, c. 1545-55 -- Introducing the Kabul Corpus (c. 1545-55) -- Individual Portraits -- Portraits within Larger Compositions -- The Paintings' Raison d'etre: Presentation Pieces for the Nawroz Festival? -- Approved Likenesses and Master Drawings -- The Timurid-Safavid Legacy -- Conclusion -- 3. Jahangir as Publius Scipio Maior: The Commensurability of Mughal Political Portraiture -- The European Connection -- The Standing Portrait -- Jahangir as the Queller of Rebellion -- Archduke Matthias as Publius Scipio Maior -- The Standing Portrait before a Landscape under Shah Jahan -- Jahangir and Archduke

Matthias in Political Crisis -- Commensurability or Incommensurability?  
-- 4. Portraits in the Mirror: Living Images in Nasir 'Ali Sirhindi and  
Mirza 'Abd al-Qadir Bidil -- Nasir 'Ali Sirhindi's Naqqash u surat -- The  
Story of Bidil's Portrait -- Conclusion -- 5. Becoming the Hero:  
Metamorphosis of the Raja -- 6. The Prevalence of Portraiture in the  
Development of the Devgarh Style -- 7. Heroic Rulers and Devoted  
Servants: Performing Kingship in the Tamil Temple -- Performing  
Devotion on Venkatam Hill -- Dynastic Genealogies on Display in  
Nayaka Madurai.

Portraiture and Pilgrimage to Rameshvaram -- New Royalty and Temple  
Portraiture in Colonial Madras Presidency -- Conclusion -- 8. Village  
Portraits in William Fraser's Portfolio of Native Drawings -- The Road to  
Delhi -- A Gentlemen Settler for Delhi -- Shaping Boundaries, Mapping  
Figures -- Delineating the Immeasurable: Rania and Pastoral Portraiture  
-- Capturing a Likeness -- Empiricism of the Heart -- The Delhi Artist  
between Court and Company -- 9. The Role of Portraiture in Pakistani  
Contemporary Miniature Painting: The 'Mughal Connection' -- Chance  
-- Artists -- Bibliography.

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Sommario/riassunto

"One of the most remarkable artistic achievements of the Mughal Empire was the emergence in the early seventeenth century of portraits of identifiable individuals, unprecedented in both South Asia and the Islamic world. Appearing at a time of increasing contact between Europe and Asia, portraits from the reigns of the great Mughal emperor-patrons Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan are among the best-known paintings produced in South Asia. In the following centuries portraiture became more widespread in the visual culture of South Asia, especially in the rich and varied traditions of painting, but also in sculpture and later prints and photography. This collection seeks to understand the intended purpose of a range of portrait traditions in South Asia and how their style, setting and representation may have advanced a range of aesthetic, social and political functions. The chapters range across a wide historical period, exploring ideals of portraiture in Sanskrit and Persian literature, the emergence and political symbolism of Mughal portraiture, through to the paintings of the Rajput courts, sculpture in Tamil temples and the transformation of portraiture in colonial north India and post-independence Pakistan. This specially commissioned collection of studies from a strong list of established scholars and rising stars makes a significant contribution to South Asian history, art and visual culture."--Bloomsbury Publishing.

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