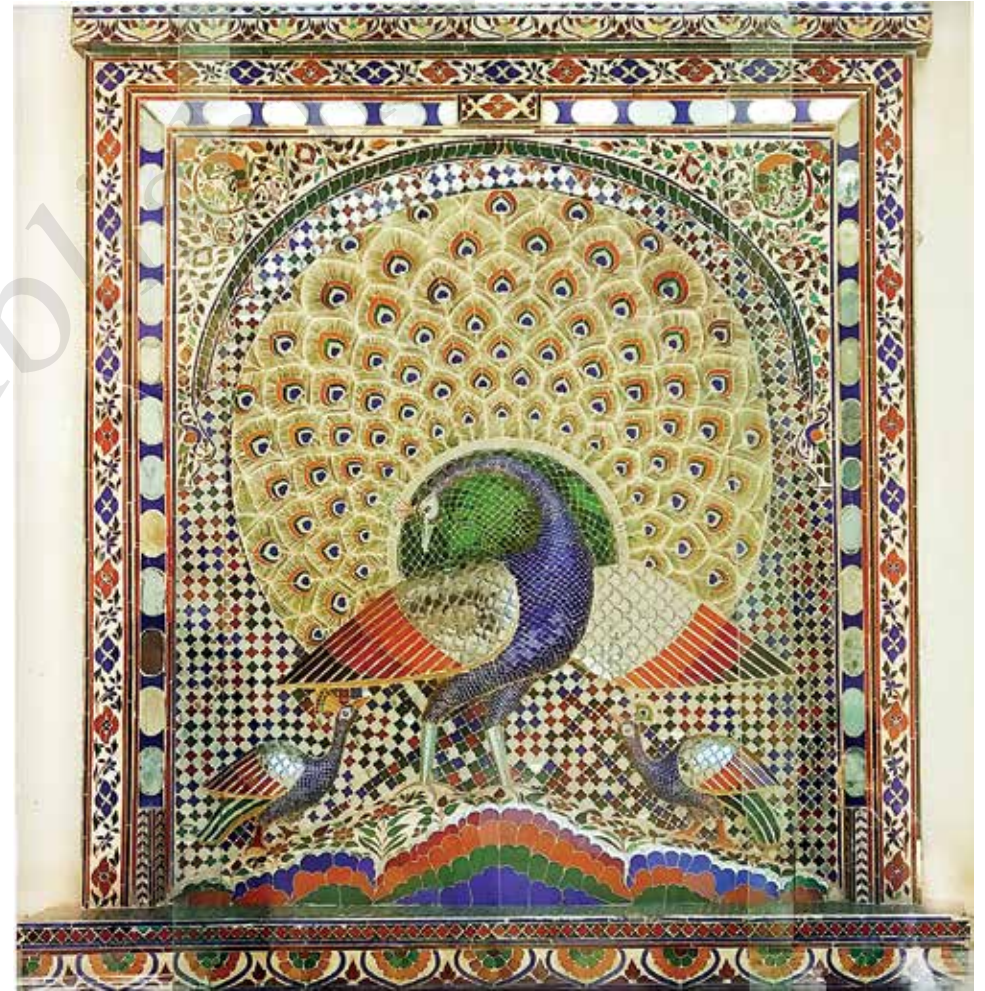
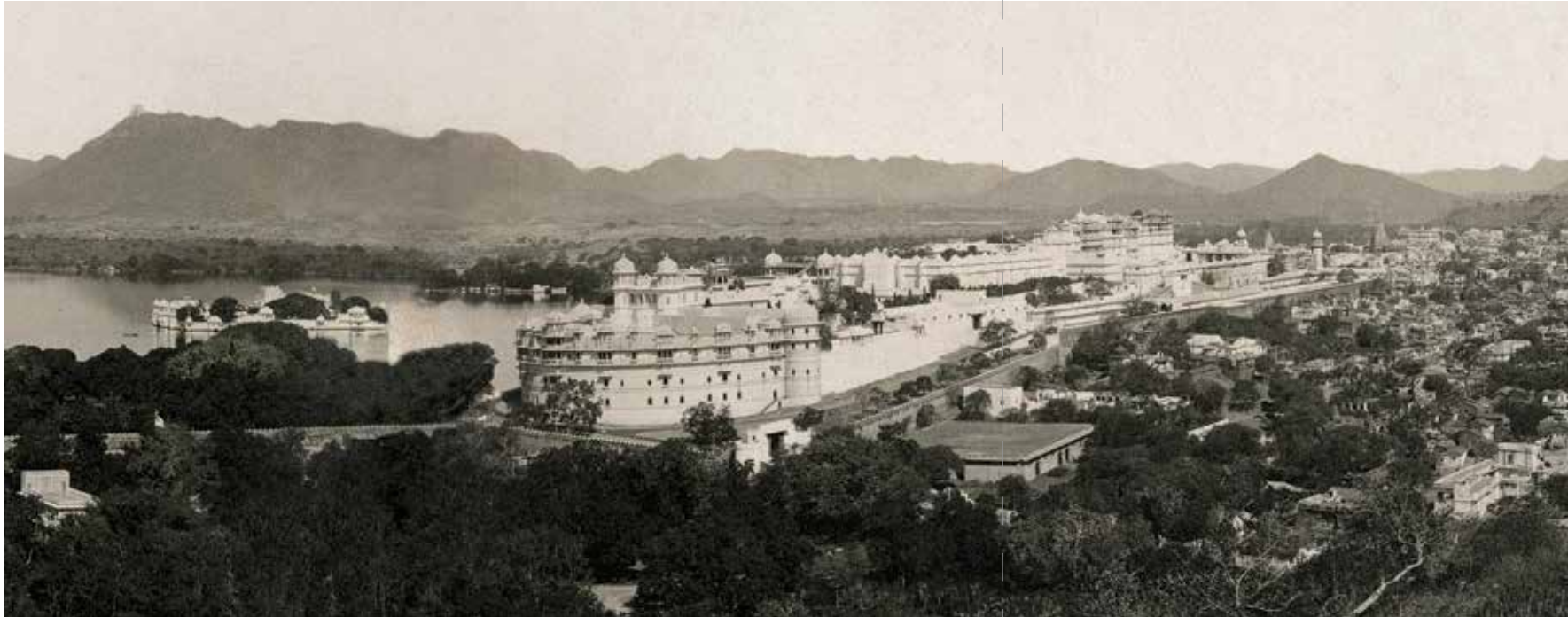


Bappa Rawal receiving 'Mewar' from his Guru Maharishi Harit Rashi  
Painting by Pannalal Parasram Gaud, c. 1934  
Acc. No. 2012.18.0147\_R



Inlay mosaic in the Mor Chowk, 19th century engraving



Panorama of Udaipur city seen from the south  
Photograph by Herzog & Higgins, Mhow, c. 1930  
Acc. No. 2009.09.0260-00058\_R



The City Palace, Udaipur, Rajasthan  
Photograph by Prashant Lohar, Udaipur, 2017



Maharana Fateh Singh of Udaipur (r. 1884–1930 CE)

Painting by S.H. Pandit, c. 1900, photograph by Bourne & Shepherd  
Acc. No. 2008.07.0297\_R

## MAHARANA FATEH SINGH

Anyone who visits the enchanting city of Udaipur for the first time and finds himself a guest at the serene hill-top Palace of Shiv Niwas or the dream-like floating Lake Palace (properly called “Jagniwas”), will feel around him the spirit of a remarkable ancestry, renowned not only for its extreme antiquity, surpassing that of any European royal house, but, more importantly, for its gentle ideals and correspondingly firm tenacity in upholding them. Indeed, it is fitting that one should regard oneself as a guest at Shiv Niwas rather than a lodger, for it is part of the sacred purpose of the Hindu to bestow selfless hospitality upon the traveller. Equally, it is the solemn obligation of the Hindu ruler to protect and serve the people who depend on him as well as to administer and govern the affairs of the State. There are profound and subtle reasons for this view of the ruler as humble guardian of a trust, reasons that will become clear later. This is a view different in kind, not just in degree, from the European tradition of monarchy. For the moment it is enough to remember that the word “raja”, normally translated as “king” in the original Sanskrit, combines two meanings—“he who rules”, and “he whose duty it is to please”. Nobody embodied the significance of this duality more movingly than the man who built Shiv Niwas Palace at the end of the nineteenth century, Maharana Fateh Singh, the revered 73rd sovereign of the State of Mewar.

To call Fateh Singh an extraordinary man is almost to belittle language. Only superlatives can adequately describe his qualities, yet only simplicity can properly convey his virtue. He was regarded by many as the last true monarch in India, by his people as not only head of all the Rajputs but virtual leader of the Hindus. His spiritual authority was as unassailable as that of the Pope for



Tripoliya Gate (before restoration)



Tripoliya Gate (after restoration)



North facade of the Zenana Mahal, the City Palace Museum, Udaipur (before restoration)



North facade of the Zenana Mahal, the City Palace Museum, Udaipur (after restoration)