Twitter Thread by Vishnupriya Narayan



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Once upon a time this splendid silver throne belonged to Maharaja of Panna descendant of Bundela Raja Chhatarsal who bravely fought the Mughals.

Its history makes this throne priceless.

I wonder how it got sold in Geneva.



In Europe, thrones tended to be gilded rather than made of gold or silver, but in India, the reverse was true because of the local abundance of precious metals: thrones tended to be wrapped in gold and silver sheet, as is the case here.

Of course we were that Rich.



Such throne chairs played an important role in the conception of kingship among the princely states of India during the nineteenth century.

This sinhasan was locally made in benras in 1860 which is why it exudes such flawless artistic skill.



The 2 throne chairs are clad entirely in partly gilded (gold-plated) thick silver sheet that has been embossed, repoussed, chased & engraved & laid over the carved wood base.Both retain their original green upholstery which features zardozi

embroidery using silver-wrapped thread.



The crest comprises a helmet surrounded by foliate flourishes and topped by a pipal tree (ficus religiosa). The motto, in devanagari script, reads ‘praja ch’hatra vajreshah’



Both are decorated with the coat of arms of the royal house of Panna.The arm rests terminate in ferocious lion heads, their mouths open ready to roar revealing sharp teeth.

Lions are traditional Indian symbols of kingship. These ones are made of solid silver.



The throne is still in excellent condition. Barring a little age related tarnishing, even the upholstery is intact.

Such an unique epitome of craftsmanship which is so historically as well as academically important given its royal connection is sold in Geneva at an auction.

