“Diamonds have always been far more than jewels: they are fragments of history twinkling on the skin.”

— Omar Khalidi, Romance of the Golconda Diamonds
Although diamonds have existed since the beginning of time, they were first mentioned by name in early Sanskrit texts dating from the fourth century B.C. Referred to as ‘the jewel above all others’ diamonds were called Vajra or thunderbolt in ancient Sanskrit and were regarded as a gift from the gods. The ability of a pure white diamond to divide light into a range of spectral colors was literally considered ‘magical’ and for this reason only Brahmans were allowed to possess them.

Legends about diamonds abound, but one of the earliest and most enduring involves Alexander the Great who came across the Valley of the Diamonds on his campaign through India. Within this valley, the diamonds were guarded by poisonous snakes whose very gaze could kill a man. Alexander ordered his men to polish their shields to a mirror-like finish and turn them on the serpents so they would be killed by their own reflection. The soldiers then threw carcasses of freshly slain sheep into the valley knowing that the diamonds would adhere to the meat. Birds of prey would carry the meat out of the valley and the diamonds could then be retrieved by the soldiers. Later versions of this tale appear in the Second Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor from Arabian Nights and in the Book of Marvels by Marco Polo. Although the story is likely a fable, it illustrates the fact that diamonds were considered valuable treasures even in ancient times and that certain characteristics of the stone, such as an affinity for grease, were well known.

One of the earliest and most comprehensive accounts of the diamond trade comes from the journals of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689) who made six journeys to India in search of diamonds and other precious gems. One of his best customers was his patron, King Louis XIV of France who made Tavernier a Baron for his efforts. The diamonds that the king and many of his royal contemporaries so eagerly collected originated in the Golconda mines in India. Considered the ‘father of the jewelry trade’ Tavernier was determined to visit the Golconda mines first-hand and stated in his journals “…the diamond is the most precious of all stones, and it is the article of trade to which I am most devoted. In order to acquire a thorough knowledge of it, I resolved to visit all the mines and one of the two rivers where diamonds were found…” Tavernier not only visited the Golconda mines but was eventually received at the Mughal court of Aurangzeb to view the emperor’s priceless collection of gems, including the ‘Great Mogul’ diamond.
The ancient kingdom of Golconda was located in south central India in what is today the state of Hyderabad. The very name Golconda conjures up images of princes decked in jewels, splendid palaces, and exotic bazaars where men in turbans conducted their trade. Once a vast fortress and gem trading center, the Golconda of old no longer exists but the name remains as a synonym for the historical diamond mines of India and for the world’s most beautiful and rare diamonds.

The Indian diamond fields were scattered across a broad area of ancient rocks on the eastern side of the great central Deccan plateau. Within this area diamonds were mined in five distinct districts, the most important being Golconda. Most of the diamonds were found in alluvial (riverbed) deposits giving rise to the terms ‘river’ and ‘of the first water’ when describing diamonds of a fine white color.

Today, Golconda diamonds are as sought after as they were in the times of the Mughal princes. Then, as now, only a few privileged individuals will ever have the opportunity to own one. In addition to the history and romance inherent in these rare stones, they are set apart by unique chemical and physical properties. Graded as type II diamonds, they have little or no nitrogen in their atomic structure. Less than 2% of the world’s gem diamonds fall into the type II category. The group can be further divided into IIa and IIb. Type IIa diamonds are the most chemically pure, being virtually all carbon, and they often display an exceptional optical transparency. These rare stones were first identified as being of Indian origin and from the Golconda region. The unique optical qualities have been compared to the clarity of ice or a limpid pool of water. The GIA report to the present stone mentions two famous diamonds in the same type IIa category as the present stone – the 530.20 carat Cullinan I and the 105.60 carat Koh-i-Noor – both of which are in the British Crown Jewels.

Dr. Eric Erel, a gemologist with the Gübelin Gem Laboratory in Switzerland, stated in his article “The Golconda Mystique” that since the 1980s, the Gübelin lab has been issuing an appendix to their diamond reports for certain exceptional stones. To warrant this Golconda Appendix a diamond must show a combination of rare properties, such as an antique cutting style and superior color and clarity. They must also qualify as type IIa diamonds, signifying that they are free from nitrogen and chemically pure.

The diamond offered in this sale meets all the qualifications required to merit the Golconda Appendix from Gübelin. It is a truly exceptional gem of likely royal provenance awaiting the next chapter in its history.
### White Golconda Diamonds of Over 20 Carats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diamond Name</th>
<th>Carats</th>
<th>Cut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Orlov</td>
<td>189.60</td>
<td>half-egg shape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Regent</td>
<td>140.50</td>
<td>cushion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Taj-i-Mah</td>
<td>115.06</td>
<td>Mogul cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Koh-i-Noor</td>
<td>105.60</td>
<td>oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ahmadabad</td>
<td>78.86</td>
<td>pear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Archduke Joseph</td>
<td>78.54</td>
<td>cushion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Idol’s Eye</td>
<td>70.20</td>
<td>modified old-mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sancy</td>
<td>55.23</td>
<td>pear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The El Mansour</td>
<td>50.82</td>
<td>emerald-cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Indore Pears</td>
<td>46.39</td>
<td>pear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nassak</td>
<td>43.38</td>
<td>emerald-cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Polar Star</td>
<td>41.28</td>
<td>cushion</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Ashoka</td>
<td>40.45</td>
<td>cushion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Evening Star</td>
<td>39.00</td>
<td>pear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Arcots</td>
<td>33.70</td>
<td>pear</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Hastings</td>
<td>26.77</td>
<td>circular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rajah</td>
<td>26.14</td>
<td>cushion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The cut of a diamond can contribute to its attractiveness or detract from its overall appearance. Unlike color and clarity, which can be graded precisely in a laboratory, the right cut is harder to evaluate because personal taste can account for some of its desirability. While it is certainly possible by today’s standards to have a diamond cut to perfect proportions, this perfection does not always guarantee the same indescribable, almost emotional response that an ‘old’ cut can provide.

When examining some of the world’s most famous and historical diamonds it is apparent that they are products of the skill of the cutter rather than a precise mathematical equation. Much like an old master painter, the cutter was an artist who relied solely on eye and hand to produce an enduring work of art. We know from documentation that many of these old stones were re-cut, usually several times, in their long history owing to the owner’s wishes and/or technical advances in cutting. As always with large and important diamonds, weight retention was important and this aspect must be taken into consideration when re-fashioning a stone of significant size.

In earlier times, before the art of cutting was developed, diamonds were virtually found objects. As early as the 6th century, an Indian text described the ideal diamond as ‘six sharp points, eight very flat and similar sides, twelve straight and sharp edges’ which describes a perfect octahedral crystal. Regarded as talismans, they were kept in their original state as changing the form of the crystal in any way would diminish its magical power. Because of these strong beliefs diamond crystals were mounted just as they were found into rings and other ornaments. As superstitions about changing a diamond from its original state subsided, the skill of cutting a diamond with diamond dust was beginning to evolve.
The first evidence of a diamond-cutting industry appeared in Venice around 1330. These new techniques soon spread to Paris, then to Bruges and Antwerp, following the established trade route from the East. The first known cut was the point cut, basically a refinement of the diamond crystal in which the natural surfaces were polished flat and a 'point' was created at the top. The subsequent table-cut was obtained by the simple truncation of one of the points, resulting in a flat surface known as a 'table.' This cut greatly improved the amount of light returned to the eye and therefore increased the brilliance of the diamond. The table-cut first appeared in the mid 15th century and remained popular into the 17th century. It is assumed that many point cuts were ground down into table-cuts during that time.

An inventory of the jewels of Louis XIV in 1691 makes mention of diamonds in cuts described as ‘brilliant’ although the term was used in a much broader sense than it is today. According to Herbert Tillander in his book *Diamond Cuts in Historic Jewellery: 1381-1910*, the brilliant-cut was well established by the beginning of the 18th century. It is assumed that many of these early brilliants were re-fashioned from styles that had become obsolete. Parisian cutters had become expert at reworking the more primitive cut Indian stones delivered to King Louis XIV by Tavernier to more modern tastes. It was discovered that table-cut stones could be rendered more brilliant by placing many small facets, sparkling like many rays of light, around the central table. The pavilion could also be re-fashioned in order to take full advantage of crystals that were well developed. The increased brilliance delivered by these new cuts was extremely important at the time as the fashion for evening parties was at its height and it was imperative that diamond jewelry would be seen at its most dazzling and impressive under candlelight.

Traditionally the typical Golconda shapes were table-cut and the succeeding more faceted cuts in shapes such as cushion, oval and pear, usually with rounded ends or irregular outlines. As in most antique cuts, they usually display a large culet, as can be found in the present stone. The shape and cutting style of the diamond offered here indicates that it was likely fashioned in the 17th or 18th century. Comparisons can be made with other famous Golconda diamonds that have appeared at auction such as the Arcots, the Indore Pears and the Idol’s Eye.
Jewelry has always been viewed as far more than adornment in India. To royals it was a symbol of the power and wealth of their realm and served as portable treasure to fund wars or buy loyalty. India’s tumultuous history is interwoven with stories of its great jewels and the rulers who owned and fought for them. Jewelry also had a deep religious and mystical significance. The Sanskrit word for a gem is ratna which means ‘bestowed’ indicating that India’s vast mineral wealth was considered nothing less than a gift from the gods. Although jewelry was worn in abundance by men, women and children in India, it is the sumptuous jewels that adorned Sultans, Maharajas and Nizams that are the most fascinating to us today.

How Diamonds Were Worn in India

PORTRAIT OF SHAH JAHAN AS PRINCE MUGHAL, C. 1616-1617; OPAQUE WATERCOLOR ON PAPER; 20.6 X 11.5 CM

© Victoria and Albert Museum, London
European visitors to the royal courts of India were aghast at the unabashed displays of wealth that far exceeded that of even the most flamboyant rulers in their native countries. François Bernier (1620-1688) a French physician at the court of Aurangzeb described the emperor’s headdress: “... a turban of gold cloth, had an aigrette whose base was composed of diamonds of an extraordinary size and value....” A fellow countryman, Jean de Thevenot (1633-1667) was equally impressed by a sultan of Golconda’s turban ornament: “... a jewel almost a foot long, which is said to be of inestimable value; it is a rose of great diamonds, three or four inches in diameter....”

As the symbols of princely magnificence, a turban ornament (sarpech) was reserved exclusively for royalty or those in royal favor. They evolved from a simple plume (kalgi) during the early days of the Mughal dynasty, to a more elaborate gem-encrusted jewel with a pendant drop during Shah Jahan’s reign. Over time, turban ornaments became more and more flamboyant often incorporating some of the treasury’s finest jewels. In this they became the Indian equivalent of an imperial crown – the perfect way to display an important diamond or other gem of significance. A well-known miniature of Shah Jahan at age 25 shows the monarch admiring a turban ornament set with a large emerald above a diamond of similar large size.

Another favorite ornament of Indian royalty was the bazuband, an armlet worn above the elbow that ties around the arm with cords. The Koh-i-Noor, or Mountain of Light, probably the most famous diamond in history, was once the center of such an armlet. At one stage of its long and complicated history, it came into the possession of Ranjit Singh, the ‘Lion of Punjab,’ well known for his love of jewels. Ranjit Singh was extremely proud of this large diamond and enjoyed showing it to distinguished visitors at court. After the annexation of the Punjab by the British, the Koh-i-Noor was ceded to Queen Victoria. Most recently it was set in the Queen Consort’s crown made in 1937 for Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, the late Queen Mother, to wear at the Coronation of King George VI.

Although the Mughals, Maharajas and Nizams are part of a bygone era, we can catch a glimpse of their magical universe in the jewels that have survived from that era. As the full story of the present diamond is lost in time, we can only speculate as to its possible history as part of an exotic court jewel. The mystery aside, it remains an extremely rare and beautiful diamond, displaying all the transparency and limpidness for which Golconda stones are justly famous.
443 AN EXCEPTIONALLY RARE DIAMOND RING  The old mine cushion-shaped diamond weighing 33.03 carats, mounted in platinum, size 6.

Accompanied by a GIA report no. 1132099959 stating that the diamond is D color, Internally Flawless. Together with a letter from the GIA stating that the diamond has been determined to be type Ila.

Accompanied by Gübelin report no. 11070062 stating that the diamond is D color, Internally Flawless. Together with a note stating that the diamond is classified as type Ila, and an appendix stating “the diamond of 33.03 carats possesses an antique cutting style which is rarely encountered in the gem trade today. In addition, this diamond is classified as type Ila (a chemically very pure type of natural diamond). It displays a colour and degree of transparency which are particular to the finest of these unique gemstones. Diamonds of this type, exhibiting an antique cutting style as well as a superior quality, are very rare and will most certainly evoke references to the historic term of ‘Golconda’.”

Estimate Upon Request
August 01, 2011

Shape and Cutting Style .......... Old Mine Brilliant
Measurements ..................... 29.19 x 20.33 x 6.38 mm

GRADING RESULTS

Carat Weight ......................... 33.03 carat
Color Grade .......................... D
Clarity Grade ......................... INTERNALLY FLAWLESS

ADDITIONAL GRADING INFORMATION

Finish
Polish .................................. Very Good
Symmetry ............................... Fair
Fluorescence .......................... None
Comments:
Crown angles are less than 25 degrees.

KEY TO SYMBOLS

^ Extra Facet

Red symbols denote internal characteristics (inclusions). Green or black symbols denote external characteristics (blemishes). Diagram is an approximate representation of the diamond, and symbols shown indicate type, position, and approximate size of clarity characteristics. All clarity characteristics may not be shown. Details of finish are not shown.
DIAMOND TYPE CLASSIFICATION FOR GIA DIAMOND GRADING REPORT #1132099959

Scientists classify diamonds into two main "types" - type I and type II - based on the presence or absence of nitrogen which can replace carbon atoms in a diamond's atomic structure. These two diamond types can be distinguished on the basis of differences in their chemical and physical properties. Type II diamonds contain little if any nitrogen and they are subdivided into two groups (Ila and Iib) both of which are quite rare (less than 2% of all gem diamonds).

According to the records of the GIA Laboratory, the 33.03 carat Old Mine Brilliant diamond described in GIA Diamond Grading Report #1132099959 has been determined to be a type Ila diamond. Type Ila diamonds are the most chemically pure type of diamond and often have exceptional optical transparency. Type Ila diamonds were first identified as originating from India (particularly from the Golconda region) but have since been recovered in all major diamond-producing regions of the world.

Among famous gem diamonds, the 530.20 carat Cullinan I and the 105.60 carat Koh-i-noor are examples of type Ila.
### DIAMOND REPORT

**No.** 11070062  
**Datum · Date · Date** 12 July 2011  
**Gewicht · Poids · Weight** 33.03 ct  
**Schliff · Taille · Cut** cushion-shape, brilliant cut  
29.17 x 20.33 x 6.40 mm  
**Abmessungen · Dimensions · Measurements**  
- Höhe · Hauteur · Depth 31.5 %  
- Tafel · Table · Table 54 %  
**Proportionen · Proportions · Proportions**  
Rundiste · Rondiste · Girdle very thin to very thick, faceted  
Kalette · Calette · Culet extremely large  
**Politur · Poli · Polish** very good  
Symmetrie · Symétrie · Symmetry fair

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**Reinheitsgrad · Degré de pureté · Clarity grade** IF  
**Farbgrad · Degré de couleur · Colour grade** D  
**Fluoreszenz · Fluorescence · Fluorescence** none  
**Bemerkungen · Commentaires · Comments** See Appendix.

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*Inner Merkmale rot eingezeichnet, äussere Merkmale grün. Siehe Legende der Symbole. Caractéristiques internes marquées en rouge, caractéristiques externes en vert. Voir légende. Internal characteristics shown in red, external characteristics in green. See key to symbols.*
NOTE

to Diamond Report No. 11070062

Diamonds are classified into two fundamental groups based on the relative presence or absence of nitrogen incorporated into the crystal structure, as determined by the infrared spectrum. Type I diamonds contain appreciable concentrations of nitrogen, whereas type II diamonds are chemically very pure and do not reveal infrared absorption characteristics related to nitrogen.

A further separation of these two groups includes type Ia (nitrogen atoms present in pairs or groups), type Ib (isolated nitrogen atoms), type IIa (no measurable traces of nitrogen) and type IIb (traces of boron).

Based on its infrared spectrum, the 33.03 ct diamond described in Diamond Report No. 11070062 is classified as a type IIa.

Gübelin Gem Lab

Pierre Hardy, B.Sc.
Susy Gübelin, G.G.

Lucerne, 12 July 2011
APPENDIX

to Diamond Report No. 11070062

The diamond of 33.03 ct possesses an antique cutting style which is rarely encountered in the gem trade today. In addition, this diamond is classified as type IIa (a chemically very pure type of natural diamond). It displays a colour and degree of transparency which are particular to the finest of these unique gemstones. Diamonds of this type, exhibiting an antique cutting style as well as a superior quality, are very rare and will most certainly evoke references to the historic term of "Golconda".

Gübelin Gem Lab

[Signatures]

Pierre Hardy

Susy Gübelin

Lucerne, 12 July 2011
Bibliography


